

SOMALIA WEEKLY WEATHER FORECAST

Valid From 20th to 26th March 2024

Dry conditions to prevail across the country with moderate rains over northwestern parts and light rains over southwestern parts of the country.

Weather Review for January-February-March Jilal Season

Based on climatology the fourth week of March marks the end of Jilal Season. Unlike last year when there was an early transition into the Gu long rain season, the weather conditions have been predominantly dry throughout the month of March 2023. Wet conditions have only been observed in the southern parts and northwestern parts

Weather Forecast for 20th to 26th March 2024

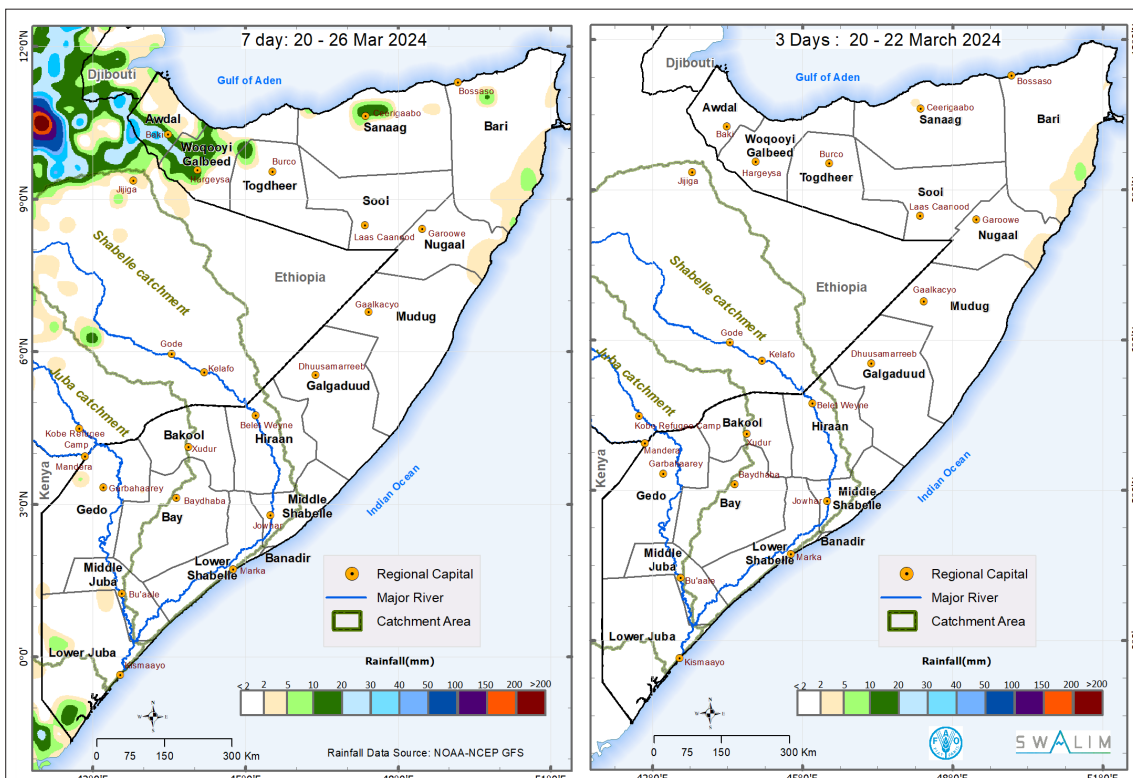
This week marks the equinox; a period of the year during which the Earth's axis is tilted neither towards the north nor south resulting in a "nearly" equal amount of daylight and darkness at all latitudes. The apparent position of the overhead Sun is expected to be generally over the celestial equator, which cuts through the country over Lower Juba region from Alabakuus in Jamaame district to Jana Cabdalle in Afmadow district, today 20th March 2024. Therefore, today and for several days afterwards, the length of day will range from about 12 hours and six and one-half minutes at the equator and the surrounding areas over Lower Juba region.

Based on NOAA-NCEP GFS, dry weather conditions are expected throughout the country particularly between 20th and 22nd March 2024. The weekly forecast indicates likelihood of moderate rains over the Awdal, Woqooyi Galbeed and Lower Juba regions in between 22nd and 26th March 2024 (Figure 1). The cloudiness and rains in the northern parts of the country are likely to be mediated by the north easterly winds ascending the east-west oriented elevations. While patches of clouds and isolated rains are likely over the elevated areas in Sanaag and Bari, the intensity of the rains over Awdal and Woqooyi Galbeed on the windward sides of the Harage Highlands across the Ethiopian border.

of the country. The following stations have received more than 1 mm of rain since 1st March 2024: Borama (21.5 mm), Camuud (14.0 mm) and Qulujeed (5.0 mm) in Awdal region, Botor (40.0 mm) and Wajaale (8.0 mm) in Woqooyi Galbeed region, Ceerigaabo (47.0 mm) in Sanaag region, and Buale (8.5 mm) in Middle Juba region.

The forecast rains in the southwestern parts of the country are likely to be driven by the arrival of the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and therefore signal the onset of Gu rains. This week may therefore mark the end of dry conditions which was attributed to reduced moisture influx due to the delays in the northward movement of rain-bearing ITCZ because of the lower-level cyclonic circulation associated with tropical cyclone Filipo in the Mozambique channel. Moderate rains are therefore likely over the southwestern parts of Somalia during the first week of April 2024.

As a demonstration of the intense insolation associated with the present position of the overhead Sun, elevated temperatures of above 40°C are expected over southwestern parts of Somalia. While such is associated with thermal discomfort, it is the lifting of this hot and moist airmass that will precipitate into the rains in the coming days. Most parts of the country are likely to observe generally warm conditions of between 30°C and 40°C with only elevated areas in Ceerigaabo and areas in the northern coastal strip recording less than 30°C.



Map 1: Seven-day rainfall forecast for 20th – 26th March 2024 and Three-day rainfall forecast for 20th – 22th March 2024

Current River Levels

Current levels along the Juba River are above the station Long Term Mean (LTM) and almost identical to the 2023 levels at Dollow and Luuq (Graph 1). Today actually marks the day when the river levels at Dollow rose rapidly by about 3 m to cross the moderate flood risk level never falling back below this level till 7th March this year.

Along the Shabelle, the current level at Belet Weyne is almost identical to station LTM and above the 2023 level (Graph 2). At both Bulo Burte and Jowhar, the current level is above both station LTM and 2023 level. It is important to point out that the levels are about 1 m above the 2023 levels along the Shabelle River. During the Gu 2023, the rapid increase in the river level at Belet Weyne was observed on the 23rd March, the overflows of which ended up causing devastating floods two weeks afterwards following the heavy rains observed over the Ethiopian Highlands.

Figures 1 and 2 show the current river levels against the Short Term Mean and 2022 levels for Belet Weyne and Luuq stations respectively.

Impacts Associated with the Weekly Weather Forecast

The levels along both Juba and Shabelle Rivers are expected to remain low until the start of the Gu rains in the first week of April. Given the lag between storm events and run off, noticeable peak in river levels will be observed days after the start of the rains. Shabelle River is particularly known for longer lag of between 10 – 15 days between heavy rainfall over the Ethiopian Highlands and peak flows posing flooding risk at Belet Weyne. A similar lag is observed between Belet weyne and Bulo Burte. Juba River on the other hand is known for relatively instantaneous response to storm events within its catchments.

The generally dry conditions along the Shabelle and Juba River channels favor the completion of any ongoing structural interventions and logistical prepositioning of other flood related anticipatory action items. The forecast onset of Gu rains in the first week of April favors the provisions of land preparatory activities and inputs in time for early crop and fodder planting so as to take advantage of the present warmth and forecast soil moisture conditions.

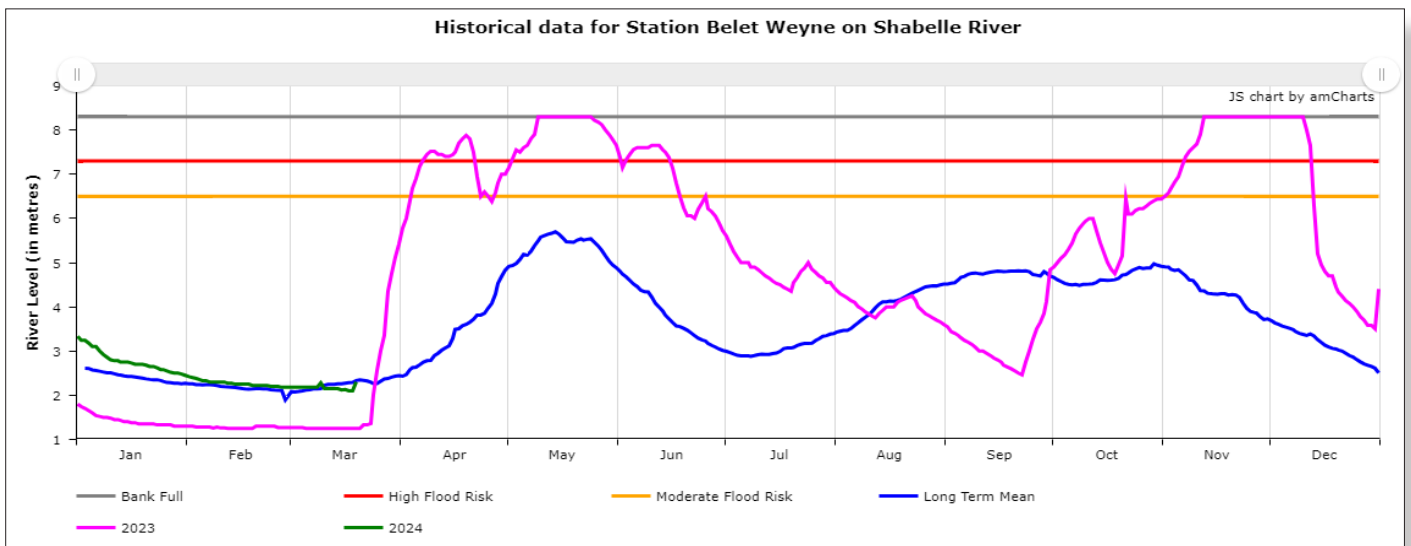


Figure 1: Shabelle river level at Belet Weyne gauging station as at 20 March 2024

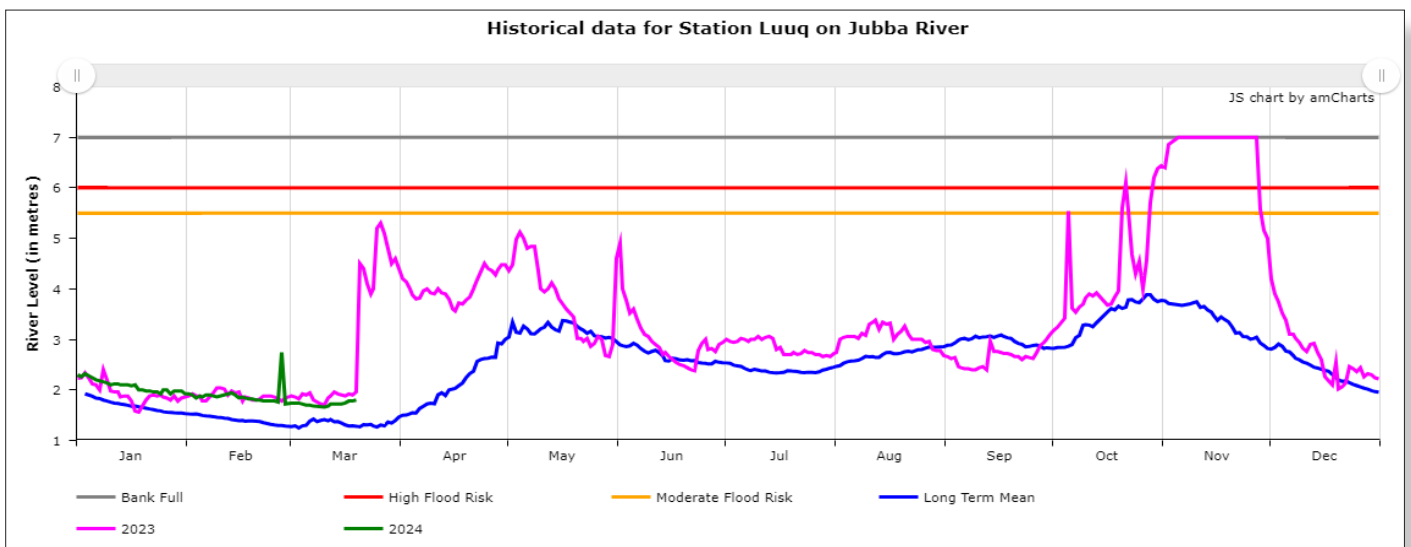


Figure 2: Juba River level at Luuq gauging station as at 20 March 2024

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