



## 2026 Regional Climate Outlook Forum of Seasonal Forecasts of Agro-hydro-climatic Characteristics of the Rainy Season for the Sudanian and Sahelian zones of West Africa and the Sahel (PRESASS, 2026)

April 24, 2026

*For the 2026 rainy season, above-average to average rainfall totals is expected in the Central and Eastern Sahel, while normal to below-average is predicted in the Sudanian zone and the Western Sahel. The onsets of the season are expected to be normal to late in the Western Sahel and normal to early in the Central and Eastern Sahel; cessations of the season are expected to be late to normal in the Western Sahel and normal in the Central and Eastern Sahel. Dry spells are expected to be generally long to average; and river flows are expected to be generally equivalent to normal to above average in the main river basins.*

Organized from April 20 to 24, 2026 in N’Djamena, Chad, by AGRHYMET Regional Climate Center for West Africa and the Sahel (AGRHYMET RCC-WAS), the National Meteorological Agency (ANAM), and the Directorate of Water Resources of Chad, in collaboration with the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD), the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) of the 17 countries of West Africa and the Sahel, river basin organizations, and with the participation of representatives of user interface platforms (from the agriculture and food security, water resources and disaster risk reduction, and climate security sectors) and focal points for anticipatory actions, the 2026 edition of PRESASS reached the following conclusions.

### I. Forecast Summary

Seasonal forecasts are based on a next-generation objective methodology, analysis of the current situation and likely evolution of Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs), forecasts from global climate centers, statistical analyses of data from the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs), and expert knowledge of climate characteristics in West Africa and the Sahel. Based on the 1991–2020 climatological reference, the different analyses have made it possible to establish the following forecasts:

- below-average to average totals rainfall is expected generally during the May-June-July season in West Africa and the Sahel, except in some localities of Niger, northwestern Nigeria, and the coastal areas of the Gulf of Guinea countries. During the June-July-August 2026 season, the rainfall deficit will persist in the same areas, with a decrease over northern Nigeria, Burkina Faso, and northern Mali. Above-average rainfall conditions will therefore persist in Niger, in some localities of far northern Nigeria, central and eastern Burkina Faso, northern Mali, and eastern Mauritania. During the July-August-September period, the rainfall deficit situation will continue in the Western Sahel (western Mali, Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and the central and eastern parts of Guinea), in Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, and in the southern parts of Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, and Chad. Conversely, rainfall totals are expected to be above-



average to normal in the Central and Eastern Sahel zones, covering central Chad, Niger, northern Nigeria, the central and northern parts of Benin, Burkina Faso (except the far south), the central and eastern parts of Mali, eastern Mauritania, and the coastal areas of Sierra Leone and Guinea.

- Normal to early onset of the season are expected across the Sahelian belt covering the agricultural zones of Chad and Niger, as well as central and northern Nigeria, Benin, and Togo, and the eastern half of Burkina Faso. In the Western Sahel, covering western Burkina Faso, almost the entire agricultural zone of Mali, the far north of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Gambia, Cabo Verde, and southern Mauritania, the onset of the season are expected to be normal to late.
- Late to average season end dates are expected in the Western Sahel (the agricultural zone of Mali, central and northern Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, Senegal, Cape Verde, and southern Mauritania). In the Central and Eastern Sahel, end dates are expected to be normal to late, particularly in the agricultural zones of Chad and Niger, Burkina Faso, and in the northern parts of Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as Liberia and southern Sierra Leone and Guinea.
- Long to average dry spells are expected at the beginning of the rainy season across all Sudanian and Sahelian zones of West Africa and the Sahel; and in the second half of the season, these dry spells are also expected to remain long to normal in the agricultural zone of Chad, the central and western parts of Niger's agricultural belt, northwestern Nigeria, the northern parts of Benin, Togo, and Ghana, as well as Burkina Faso and eastern Mali; while they are expected to be normal to longer in the Western Sahel (northern Sierra Leone, central and western Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, The Gambia, and southern Mauritania).
- Equivalent to average river flows are expected in the Senegal River basin (Senegal, Gambia, Mali, and Mauritania), the upper Niger River basin (Guinea, Mali, and Côte d'Ivoire), the Inner Niger Delta (Mali), the middle Niger (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Nigeria), the middle Benue (Nigeria), as well as in the Senegal and Gambia basins (Senegal and Gambia), the Volta basin (Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire), the Comoé (Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire), the Bandama and Sassandra basins (Côte d'Ivoire), the Cavally (Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia), the Chari (Chad), the Mono (Togo and Benin), and the Ouémé (Benin); however, above-average flows are expected in the Logone basin (Chad) and the Komadougou Yobé (Niger and Nigeria), whereas below-average flows are expected in the upper Benue basin (Nigeria and Chad), the Lower Niger Delta (Nigeria), the Lofa (Liberia and Guinea), as well as the Congo and Konkouré basins (Guinea).

## II. Possible Implications of the 2026 Seasonal Forecasts 2026

Even though, the 2026 seasonal forecasts suggest generally favorable conditions in the Central and Eastern Sahel, they may have negative implications in certain parts of West Africa and the Sahel. In areas where above-average rainfall, normal to early start of the season, normal to long dry spells, and above-average river flows are expected, there may be excess soil moisture, erosive and hazardous runoff, and river overflows. These conditions could lead to various risks depending on the area, including difficulties in the movement of people and animals, as well as access to vital economic and health services, particularly in areas affected by civil insecurity. They also indicate significant risks of flooding, submersion of agricultural and grazing lands, loss of animal and human life, and destruction of infrastructure (including roads, electrical networks, markets, schools, health centers, places of



worship, cemeteries, and properties). In addition, these conditions may promote the spread of waterborne and diarrheal diseases, crop pests, locust swarms, landslides, siltation of watercourses, weed proliferation, and post-harvest losses.

In areas where below-average rainfall, late onset on the rainy season, and long dry spells are expected, uneven rainfall distribution may disrupt crop calendars, crop and pasture growth, and transhumance. This situation could also extend the lean season, increase population vulnerability, lead to farms abandonment, and encourage migration. These areas may also face risks of heatwaves, which could cause delays and losses in sowing and reduce agricultural yields. This situation may further cause inflation, increase food prices, reduce livestock prices, and contribute to food and nutrition crises.

The combination of these likely climate risks with civil insecurity, poverty, and household vulnerability could increase social pressures, land conflicts, conflicts between herders and farmers, disputes over public infrastructure, and contribute to unemployment, banditry, and violence.

### III. Recommendations

#### 1) Regarding flood risk

The globally wet conditions expected in the Central and Eastern Sahel, along with above-average river flows forecast in some river basins, like Lake Chad and the Komadougou-Yobé, indicate risks of flooding. To address this, it is recommended to:

- strengthen anticipatory actions, operational monitoring, and response capacities of organisations responsible for flood monitoring and humanitarian assistance;
- raise awareness among communities, especially those exposed to risks, in order to reduce disaster impacts;
- reinforce protective dikes and ensure maintenance of road infrastructure and dams, with an emphasis on forecast-based management;
- clear drainage channels and improve sanitation in urban areas to facilitate rainwater evacuation;
- strengthen collaboration between hydrological, meteorological, and civil protection services for better anticipatory flood risk management;
- avoid moving livestock into areas at risk of flooding and heavy runoff without adequate supervision;
- promote the cultivation of crops adapted to excess soil moisture conditions, such as rainfed rice;
- ensure the protection of vulnerable people, particularly children, women, the elderly, and those with limited mobility;
- strengthen communication of seasonal forecasts and their use by communities, by supporting the efforts of the media, disaster risk reduction platforms, NGOs, and national Early Warning Systems (EWS);

#### 2) Regarding the risks of diseases and phytosanitary attacks

Wet and flooded areas may promote the development of climate-sensitive disease pathogens (cholera, malaria, dengue, bilharzia, etc.). In addition, late onset of the season and the expected long dry spells



could lead to persistent high temperatures, dust storms, and the proliferation of harmful insects and other pathogens causing respiratory and epidemic diseases. To address this, it is recommended to :

- strengthen the capacity of national health systems and national disaster risk reduction platforms;
- improve sanitation in cities and avoid contact with contaminated water;
- prevent diseases by vaccinating populations and animals;
- prevent epizootics caused by pathogens that thrive in favorable wet or dry conditions;
- strengthen vigilance against crop pests such as desert locusts and fall armyworms, given the expected wet conditions in the Central and Eastern Sahel;
- enhance monitoring of Rift Valley fever, given the above-average rainfall expected in the Central and Eastern Sahel;
- strengthen the dissemination of alert information on climate-sensitive diseases, in collaboration with meteorological, hydrological, and health services, NGOs, community radio stations, etc..

### 3) Regarding drought risk

In areas where long dry spells and early end-of-season are expected, which may lead to water deficits and affect the growth and yields of crops and pasture plants, it is recommended to:

- prevent the proliferation of the millet head ear miner caterpillar;
- ensure rational management of surface water resources to meet different needs and prevent conflicts;
- promote the deployment of climate-smart techniques adapted to drought and strategies to reduce the risk of production losses, including the selection of species or varieties tolerant to water deficits, supplemental irrigation, large-scale irrigation, efficient use of agrometeorological advices, and the development of other income-generating activities;
- promote risk transfer to protect producers against crop losses through subscription to index-based agricultural insurance;
- ensure regular and timely dissemination of meteorological, climatic, and hydrological information, as well as specific advice to users and decision-makers throughout the rainy season;
- interact with national and regional meteorological, hydrological, and agricultural services to obtain specific information and appropriate guidance.

### 4) Regarding conflict risk

In areas where late onset of the season, long dry spells, and early end of the season are expected, that can potentially lead to deficits in agricultural and forage production, it is recommended to:

- strengthen grassroots production capacities by promoting the use of appropriate strategies for adaptation, income generation, and resilience of agro-sylvo-pastoral production systems;
- create and maintain conditions for inclusive, non-discriminatory, and equitable management of public infrastructure and productive, environmental, and socio-economic resources;



- promote job creation, private entrepreneurship, and income-generating activities, particularly for women and youth, in order to reduce idleness. This will strengthen communities' attachment to their local areas and reduce migration and mass departures;
- Strengthen and expand basic infrastructure to support production, storage, and market access;
- promote actions to improve community livelihoods in order to secure agro-pastoral activities, particularly in areas affected by civil insecurity..

## 5) Recommendations to better benefit from the rainy season

Given the generally heterogeneous nature of the season across West Africa and the Sahel, it is recommended that farmers, herders, water resource managers, projects managers, NGOs, and policymakers, have to:

- maximize the benefits of excess water conditions by efficiently utilizing floodplains and surface water resources;
- establish systems for collecting and conserving rainwater to ensure continuity of agricultural and domestic uses during the dry season;
- invest more in high-yield crops adapted to humid conditions and to the expected onset and ending dates of the season, particularly in the Central and Eastern Sahel (rice, sugarcane, tubers, etc.);
- support the deployment of agrometeorological techniques to increase crop and pasture yields;
- strengthen information, advisory, and agro-hydro-meteorological support systems for producers;
- strengthen monitoring actions against desert locusts, particularly in frontline countries;
- facilitate producers' access to improved seeds and agricultural inputs adapted to their needs, for better use of the rainy season;
- encourage both male and female producers to make better use of cultivable land, particularly in hard-to-access areas;
- secure farmers' incomes by promoting subscription to index-based agricultural insurance;
- strengthen interministerial coordination mechanisms to respond more effectively to impacts related to agro-hydro-climatic conditions.

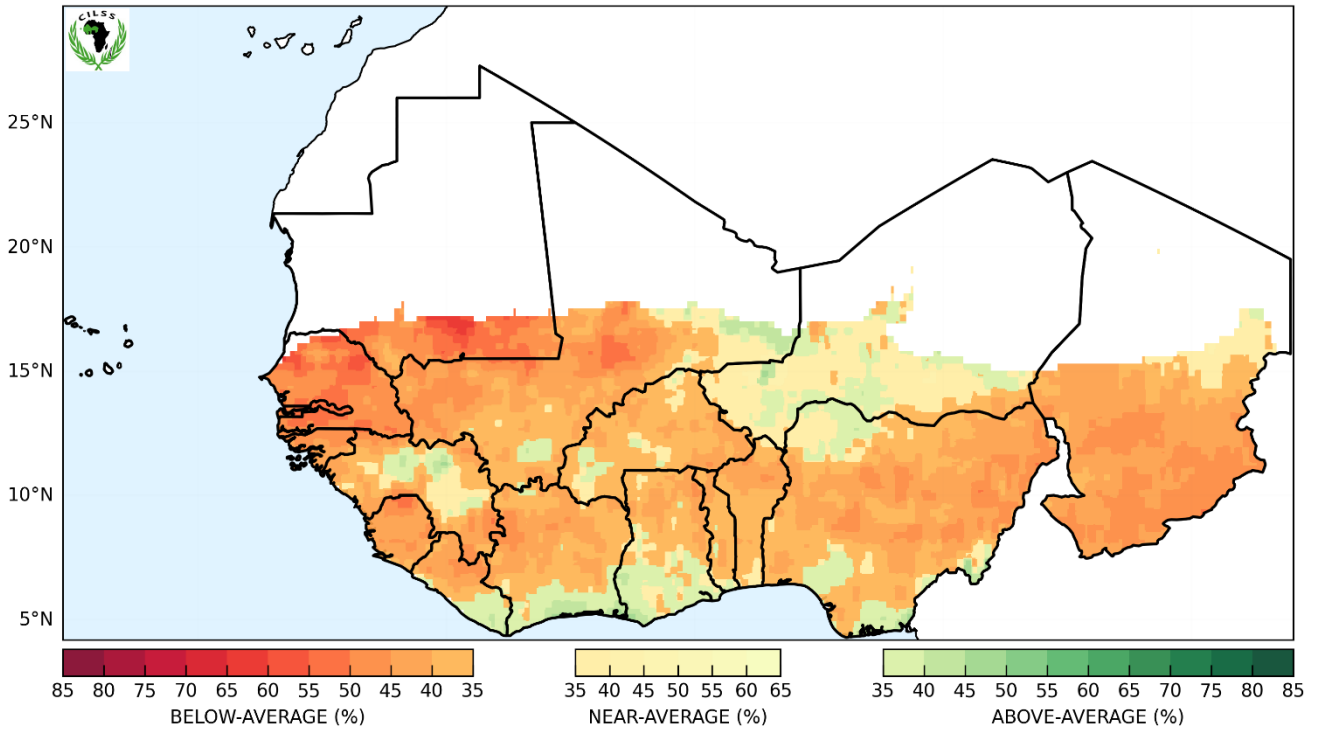
**Finally, users across different sectors are advised to pay attention to updates of these seasonal forecasts, which will be provided by AGRHYMET RCC-WAS and the national meteorological and hydrological services throughout the rainy season.**

Done in N'Djamena, April 24, 2026

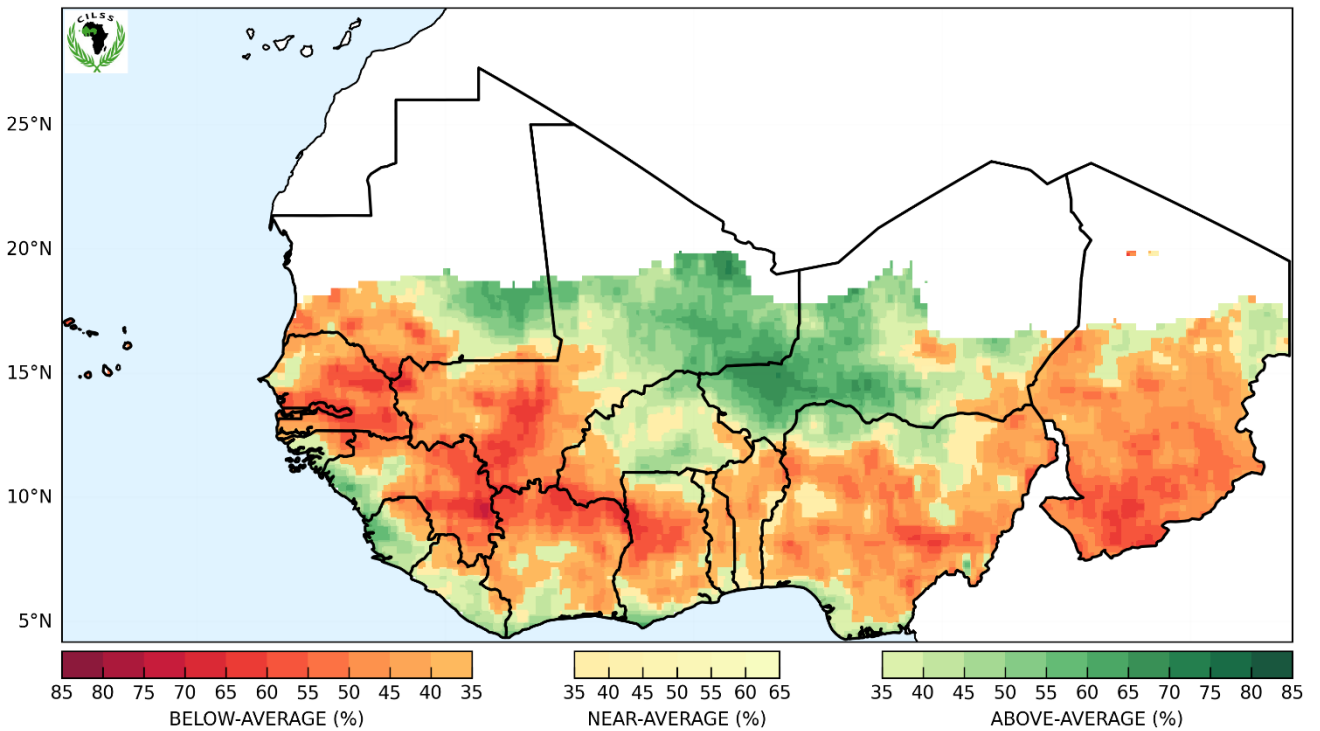




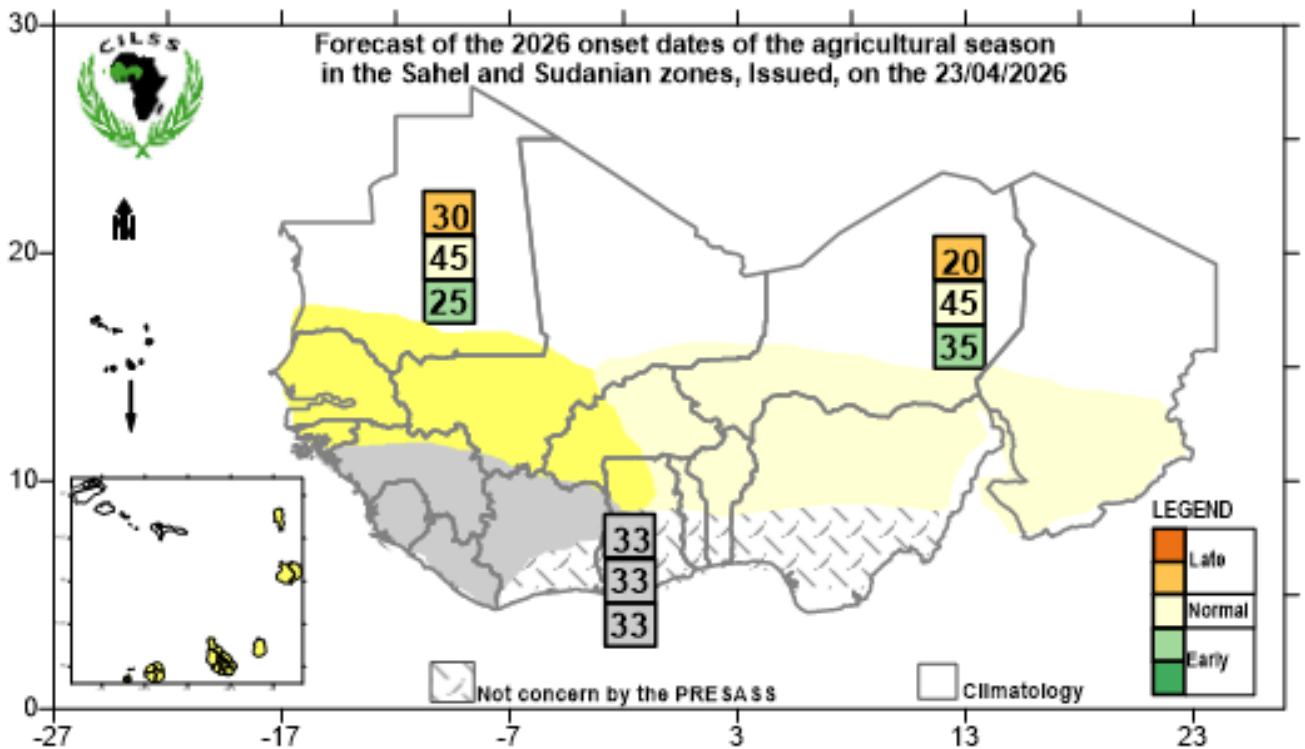
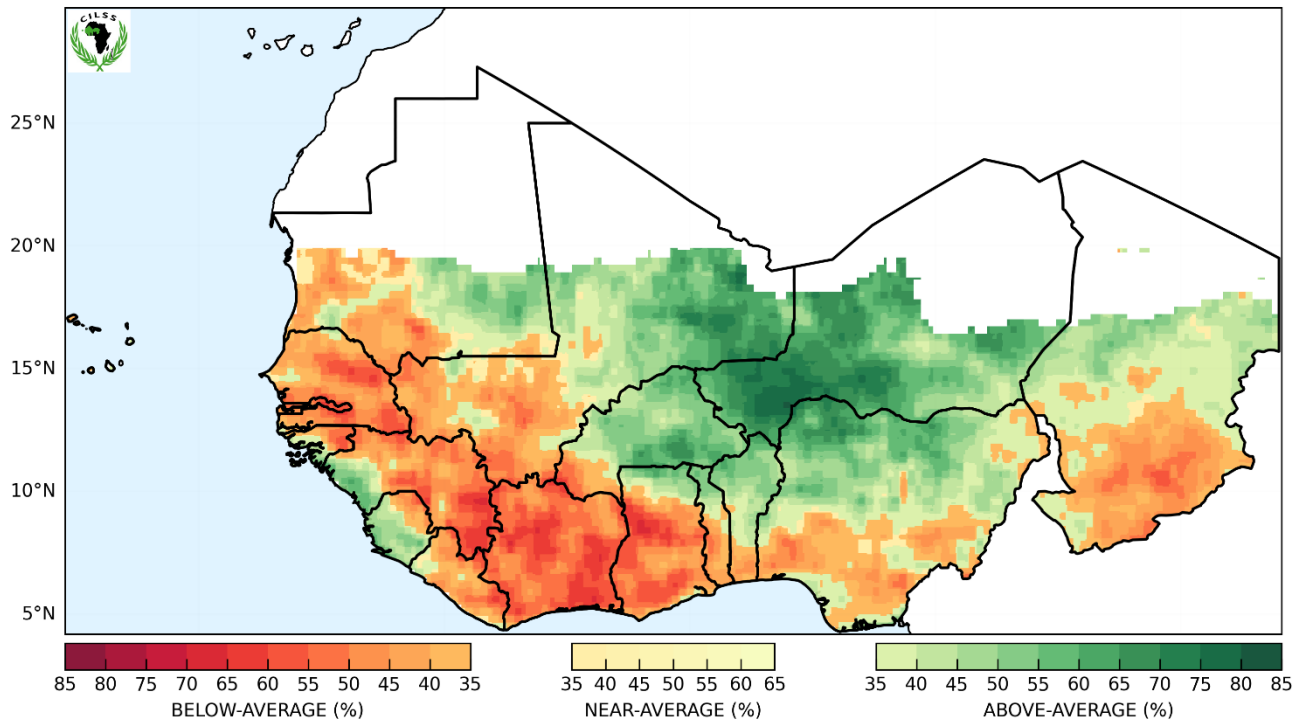
**SEASONAL FORECAST FOR SUDANO-SAHELIAN COUNTRIES  
VALID FOR MAY-JUNE-JULY 2026, ISSUED APRIL 24, 2026**



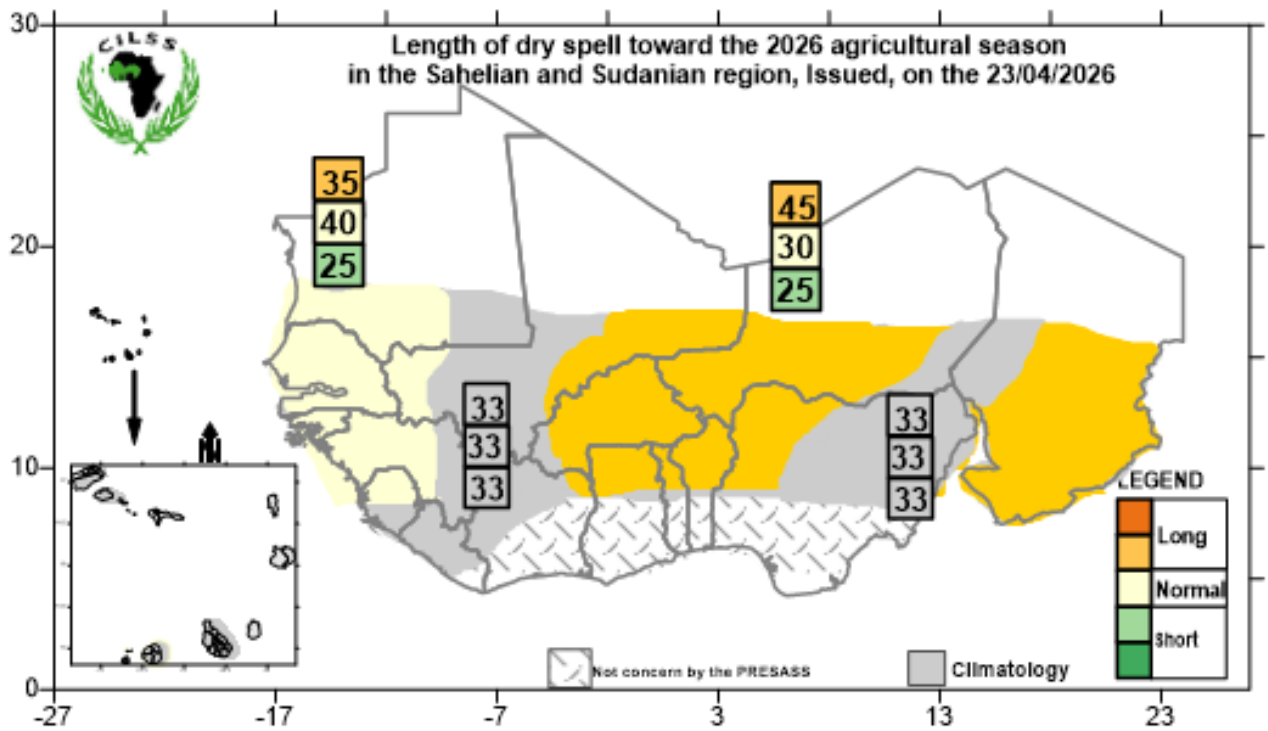
**SEASONAL FORECAST FOR SUDANO-SAHELIAN COUNTRIES  
VALID FOR JUNE-JULY-AUGUST 2026, ISSUED APRIL 24, 2026**



**SEASONAL FORECAST FOR SUDANO-SAHELIAN COUNTRIES  
VALID FOR JULY-AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2026, ISSUED APRIL 24, 2026**







**Forecasts of river flows in the river basins of West Africa and the Sahel during the 2026 rainy season**

