# Crop Situation Update

**United Nations World Food Programme**
Food Security Monitoring and Analysis System

**Update, September 2006, issue 2**

## Drought Impact on Paddy and Maize

The period from August to September marks the growing and early harvesting period for paddy and maize.

This crop situation update provides a brief overview on the current crop situation and outlook for these main crops, particularly in the 32 districts covered by surveillance activities of the food security monitoring and analysis system.

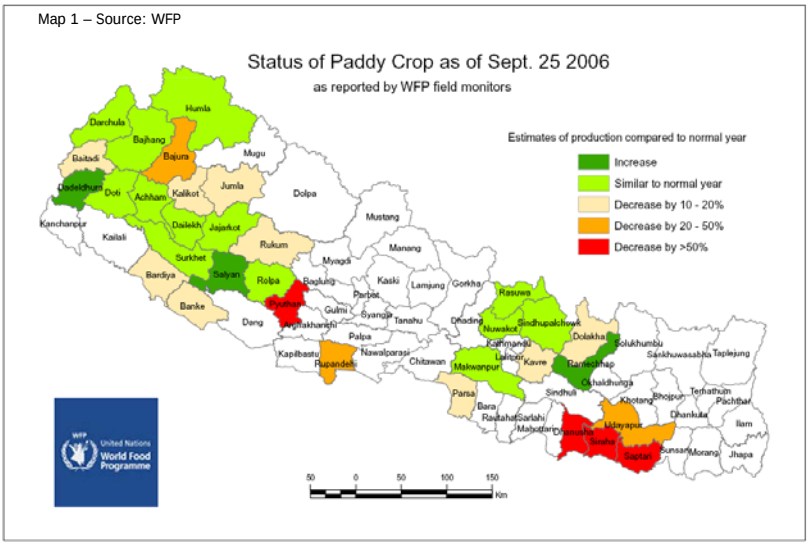
### PADDY PRODUCTION

The previous issue of the Crop Situation Update (August 2006) provided two scenarios regarding the expected decline in paddy production. Scenario I estimated a total loss in national rice production of 527,000 mt. Scenario II, based on more optimistic assumptions, estimated the decline to be 285,000 mt.

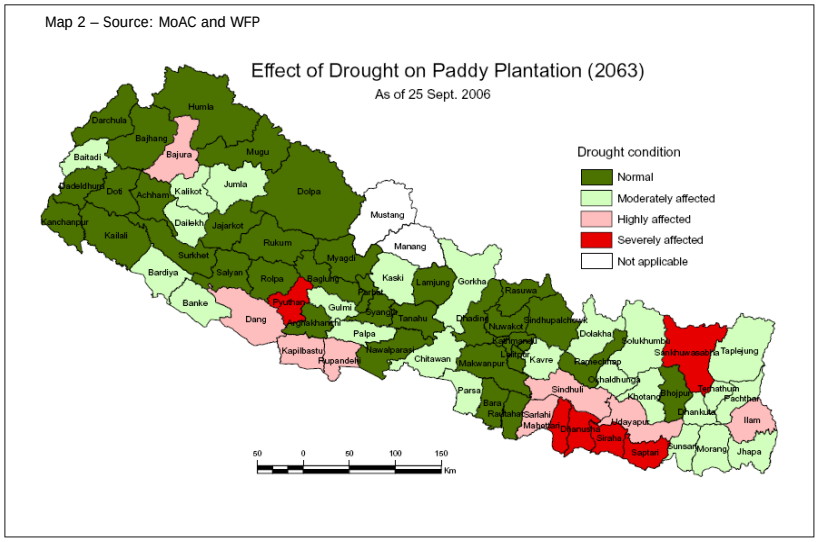
Based on field observations from WFP field monitors, a paddy production status map (Map 1) was prepared showing the current status of the paddy production at the district level. Out of the 32 district surveyed by WFP, three (Ramechhap, Salyan and Dadeldhura) expect an increase in paddy crop production, while in 12 districts the situation is comparable to last year's. Key districts of concern are Bajura Kalikot and Rukum, where WFP is currently implementing an Emergency Operation as a response to the drought which severely affected the winter crops. As reported in the Crop Situation Update of last month, the key rice producing districts of Dhanusha, Siraha and Saptari are severely affected by the late arrival of the monsoon which has resulted in an estimated production decrease of more than 50% in these districts.

An updated country wide map (Map 2), prepared in consultation with the MoAC, ranks the districts according to the extent the drought has affected the paddy crop production.

Map 1 – Source: WFP




Map 2 – Source: MoAC and WFP




Given the additional rainfall during September, the current estimate by the MoAC for the reduction in paddy crop is approximately 600,000 mt down from the original forecast of 850,000 mt. This translates into a decline of more than 15% (372,000 mt) in the national rice supply which needs to be compensated either through increases in production of other cereal crops, additional imports or food aid.

### DISTRICTS UPDATES - RICE

**Eastern and Central Regions**

**Saptari -** Planting started in June-August but rains failed during July and August. Less than 70% of paddy area was cultivated.

**Siraha** – Paddy production is estimated to decrease by 60% compared to normal.

**Dhanusha** – Only 60% of paddy land was cultivated due to drought. Compared to a normal year the paddy

production is expected to decrease by 70%

**Udayapur** – About 20% of paddy land was not cultivated, together with diminishing yields, it is estimated for the paddy crop production to decline by 30-40%

The paddy production in other districts is normal.

**Western and Mid-Western Regions**

**Kalikot –** Two VDCs (Nanikot and Dhoulagoh) are badly affected by the drought with an estimated decline in paddy production by 50%

**Jumla** – Due to heavy rainfall and infestation (blast) a decline of 10% in paddy production is estimated.

**Rukum** – Compared to last year the paddy crop production will increase as rainfall was timely. However, compared to a normal year a decrease of 10-15 % is expected.

**Pyuthan** – Rice production is severely affected (about 70% loss) due to drought and disease infestation (neck blast).

Paddy cultivated in other districts is expected to be normal.

**Far Western Region**

**Bajura** – As was the case last year, the production decreased by 40-50%.

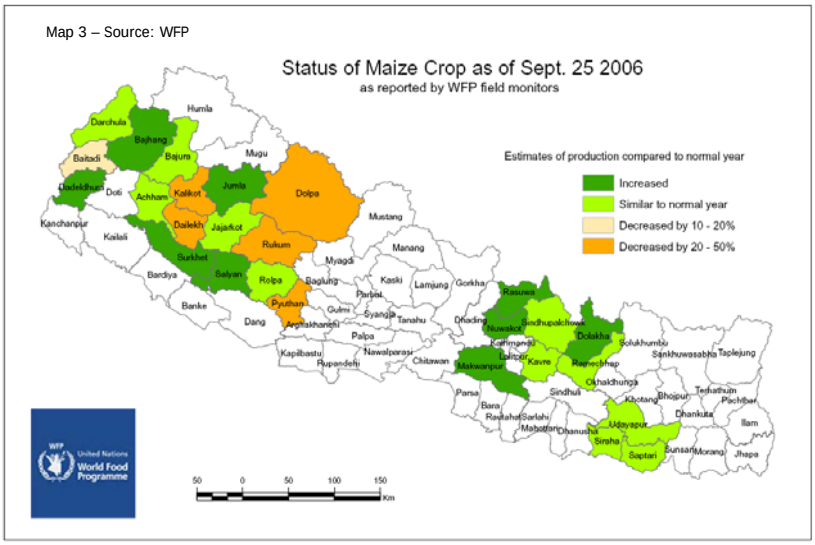
**Baitadi** – Due to irregular rainfall during June, farmers report an expected decrease in production between 15-20%.

In other districts where paddy is cultivated rice production can be considered normal and in the case of Dadeldhura favourable.

## MAIZE PRODUCTION

During the period June through September, maize is harvested in many areas of the country. The maize production estimates collected by WFP field monitors in the survey districts are presented in Map 3. The main area of concern is the very bad crop situation in many of the drought affected areas of the Mid-Western Development Region, including Dolpa, Rukum, Kalikot, Dailekh and Pyuthan where maize production is expected to decrease between 20-50%. In these areas, maize is a key summer crop. The current meager yields on top of the failure of last year's winter crops will exacerbate the suffering of the affected population.

Map 3 – Source: WFP




## DISTRICTS UPDATES – MAIZE

**Mid-western Region**

**Dolpa** – The southern and central area of the district is a key maize growing area. Production in these areas has however been decreasing during the past 3 years.

**Rukum** – Maize crop was affected by excessive rainfall in 5 VDCs – Magma,

Athbishkot, Jhula, Gotamkot and Syalakhadi. Farmers reported about 40% losses.

**Kalikot** – maize has been harvested in most areas. Production has decreased by 20-30% compared to normal year.

**Dailekh** – Although compared to last year the production has increased by 20-30%, compared to a normal year, the maize production is still 40-50% lower.

**Pyuthan** – Production has further declined by 6 % compared to last year's crop.

In other districts the maize harvest has recovered and can be considered normal.

## CONCLUSION

The overall paddy situation remains worrisome with an expected decline in national rice production of around 10-15%. This will mainly affect three districts: Dhanusha, Siraha and Saptari in the Eastern Terai. Subsistence farmers and agricultural wage labourers will be most affected and an increase in labour migration toward India from these districts can be expected. Our field monitor in Siraha reported that, particularly in the northern part of the district, people have no or limited food stocks and are depending on collecting and selling firewood for their income, the price of which has subsequently decreased by half.

One of the main areas of concern remains the drought affected districts in the hills and mountains of the Mid-Western Development Region. In many areas the paddy as well as the maize production has been badly affected by the drought. In addition, many of the winter seed stocks have been consumed which may affect the ability of the farmers to plant timely and sufficiently. Without timely support providing additional seeds, the outlook for the winter season and thus the food security situation in these areas remains grim.

Crop Situation Updates are produced by WFP Nepal as part of the Food Security Monitoring and Analysis System, supported by DFID and OFDA.

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