

Below-average cumulative precipitation and above-average temperatures expected in 2020/21 season

KEY MESSAGES

- Low precipitation amounts have so far been recorded from October 1-25 throughout the country. According to Global Forecast System 7-day and 14-day total precipitation forecasts, dry weather conditions are likely to continue through mid-November across most of the country. However, 30-40mm precipitation is forecast over the higher elevation areas in the northeast in the week ending November 16. Overall, below-average cumulative precipitation is expected in the October 1 to November 15 period in most areas (**Figure 1**).
- Land preparation for winter wheat is currently underway in anticipation of normal seasonal precipitation in November. However, the forecast prolonged dry spell through mid-November may shorten the planting-window of winter wheat.
- As of November 1, patches of snow 1.0-2.0m deep have formed at higher elevations in the east and northeast, while snow of 0.2-0.8m is seen over the surrounding lower elevation areas.
- NOAA has issued a La Niña advisory for the northern hemisphere through the end of 2020/21 winter season. Consequently, below average cumulative precipitation (**Figure 2**) and above-average temperatures are forecast through March 2021 for Afghanistan. It should be noted that there is a 30-50 percent chance of significantly below average precipitation (precipitation in the lowest 20 percent of the long-term average) across the country from November 2020 to March 2021 according to [C3S ensemble forecasts](#).
- The wide-ranging possible consequences of below-average cumulative precipitation and above-average temperatures through March 2021 include: below-normal snow pack development, reduced snow water volumes and runoff, reduced water availability for the first and second crops, and depletion of groundwater.
- Based on historical trends, northern rainfed areas are particularly at risk of reduced first season production due to below-average precipitation. Meanwhile, reduced runoff from below-average snow pack presents a particular risk for second season irrigated production, as snowpack may be depleted earlier than is typical (due to above-average temperatures) and given higher water requirements of second season crops.

Figure 1: Seasonal precipitation as a percent of average, CHIRPS prelim (Oct 1-31) and GFS forecast (November 1-15)

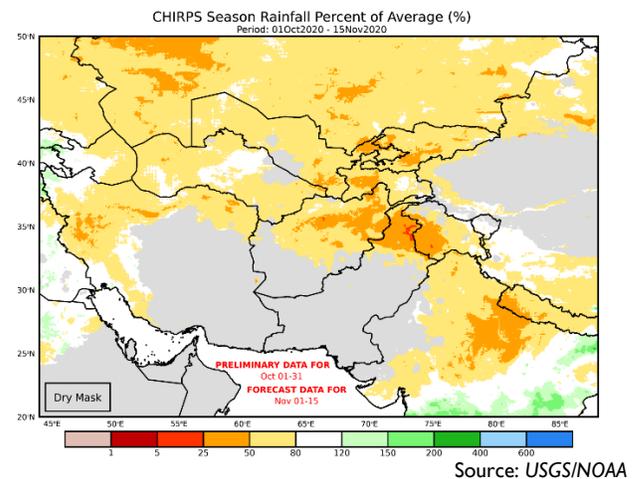


Figure 2: The North American Multi-Model Ensemble precipitation forecast for November 2020-January 2021 with October initial conditions, tercile probability

