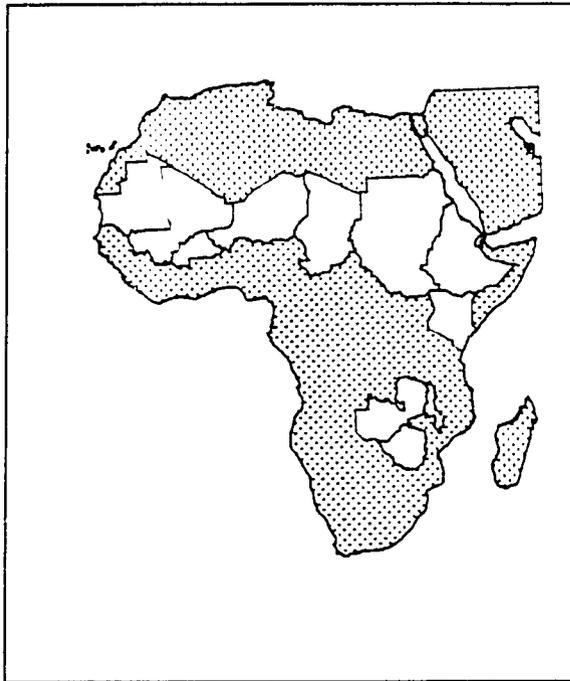


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Mauritania Harvest Assessment

Errata

April 5, 1993



BEST AVAILABLE DOCUMENT

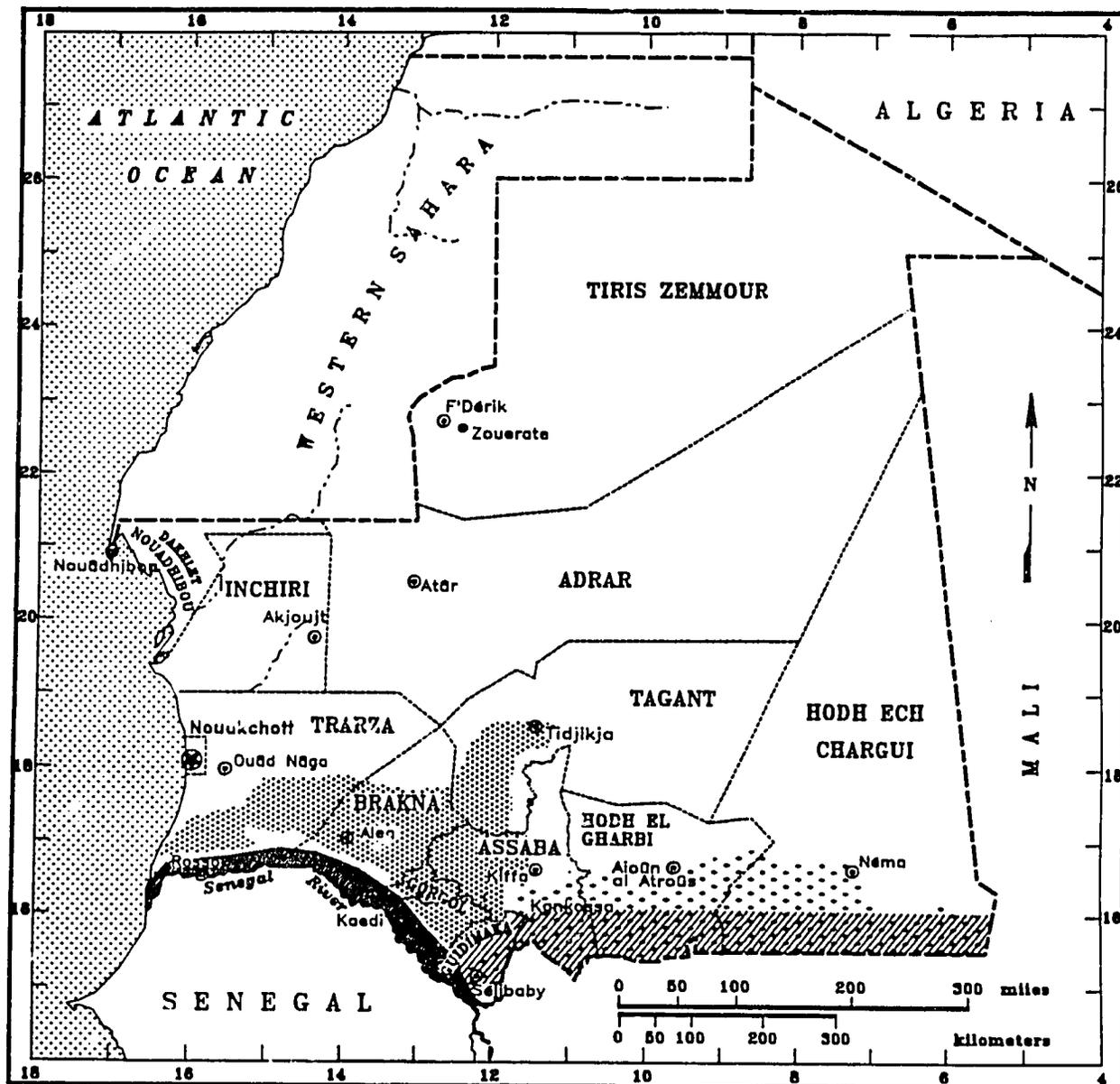
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April 9, 1993

The attached chapter from the February 1993 FEWS *Post Harvest Assessment* is reprinted and redistributed as correction to typographical errors brought to our attention after publication.



MAURITANIA

HARVEST ASSESSMENT REFERENCE MAP

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| ⊕ | National Capital | ■ | Very poor '92 crop conditions |
| ⊙ | Wilaya Capital | ▨ | Poor '92 crop conditions |
| • | Cities and Towns | ⋯ | Poor '92 pasture conditions |
| --- | International Boundary | ▣ | Good '92 pasture conditions |
| — | Wilaya Boundary | | |
| - - - | Intermittent Drainage | | |

Source: FEWS/Mauritania
FEWS, January 1993

Map 2: Mauritania Reference Map

Poor Harvest Threatens Widespread Food Stress

Report released by the American Embassy/Mauritania on December 15, 1992

SUMMARY

Harvest prospects range from mediocre to poor in the southeast and poor to catastrophic in most of the Senegal River Valley.¹ Ongoing surveys and anecdotal reports suggest that agro-pastoralists in the southern zone are less vulnerable than they were in 1991/92, but agro-pastoralists in northern and central zones are markedly more vulnerable than average (see Map 2). The 1992/93 cereal deficit was being addressed by donors and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania's Food Security Commission (GIRM/CSA) as of mid-December.

Mauritania's cereal balance² is estimated at an 81,654 metric tons (MT) deficit. Donors have agreed to request up to 51,000 (MT) of cereals and 5,000 MT of high protein supplements from their home offices.

FACTORS AFFECTING FOOD AVAILABILITY

Harvest Outcome

The 1992/93 harvest is expected to fall even lower than the harvests of 1990/91 and 1991/92. All four of the planting schemes used in Mauritania³ have been adversely affected by the late start and the weak outcome of the 1992 rainy season.

With all *dieri* crops harvested, total production was estimated at 27,911 MT net with the majority being harvested in Hodh el Chargui, Hodh el Gharbi and Guidimaka wilayas. The River Valley region produced only nominal rainfed crops this year.

As of mid-December, *walo* crops were still maturing; actual surface-area planted appeared larger than last year in Gorgol

wilaya, but equal to or less than last year in Brakna *wilaya*. Net production is estimated at 10,472 MT.

Bas-fonds crops were at varying stages of maturity; however, insufficient moisture threatened yield. Irrigated crops were also at varying stages of maturity except the rice crops which were maturing.

The joint United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization-Interstate Commission to Combat Drought in the Sahel (FAO/CILSS) assessment in October estimated preliminary gross production of 94,449 MT, leading to a net production at 72,753 MT. This is 10,000 MT less than the FAO/CILSS 1991/92 predictions⁴ (see Table 1).

FEWS has constructed a more detailed table of production statistics to calculate regional food needs and projected cereal deficits. The data are disaggregated by administrative levels and by cropping scheme and will be published in the FEWS *Vulnerability Assessment*.

Pastoral Conditions

The Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) showed above-average green-up in the southeastern pastoral zones (see inside backcover for an explanation of NDVI), in contrast, below-average green-up was seen in the southwestern and north-central regions. Pasture conditions should remain acceptable to above-average throughout the two Hodhs, southern Assaba and Guidimaka *wilaya*, for at least the next several months.

Food Stocks

An 81,654 MT cereal deficit is projected for 1992/93, approximately twice the 1991/92 initial cereal deficit (*Post Harvest* report, January 1992). Opening stock for 1992/93 are estimated at 70,250 MT (see Table 2).

¹ With most of the irrigated and river recessional crops several months away from harvest as of mid-December, the assessment of River Valley production is at best preliminary.

² The cereal balance is the sum of domestic production, stock on-hand and commercial and food aid imports less domestic consumption needs.

³ Mauritania planting schemes include rainfed (*dieri*), irrigated, river recessional (*walo*) and lowland agriculture (*bas-fonds*).

⁴ None of the production statistics provided by FAO/CILSS are presented in administrative levels, except for *Dieri* crops. A standard 15 percent loss is applied to the traditional cereal crops and a 40 percent loss to paddy crops to arrive at net production. Irrigated (parastatal) figures include both SONADER and M'Pourié perimeters.

Table 1: FAO/CILSS 1992/93 Mauritania Provisional Agricultural Results

Planting Scheme	Sorghum	Millet	Rice	Maize
Dieri	29,520	3,316	0	0
Bas-Fonds	9,000	0	0	720
Walo	11,200	0	0	1,120
Décruce	3,570	0	0	320
Irrigated				
(Parastatal)	5,570	0	12,738	0
(Off season)	0	0	5,500	0
(Private)	0	0	11,875	0
TOTAL	58,860	3,316	30,113	2,160

Source: FAO/CILSS evaluation team October 1992.

Notes: Production is presented in gross. Figures are metric tons.

Projected Food Aid and Commercial Imports/Exports

Early estimates of Mauritania's cereal deficit are much more alarming than were the estimated projections for 1991/92. The annual cereal balance as projected by the *Comité de Programmation Alimentaire* (CPA) indicates a 1992/93 commercial imports total of 195,000 MT (private sector importing 40,000 MT of wheat, 50,000 MT of rice and 70,000 MT of wheat flour; SONIMEX importing 35,000 MT of rice). Although difficult to quantify, unofficial exportation of wheat and wheat flour continues at 8,000 to 10,000 MT per year. No official cereal exports are expected.

Although the 1992/93 deficit is currently accepted at 81,654 MT, this figure includes 30,000 MT of estimated animal food needs. Donors have agreed to address only human consumption needs, which brings the cereal gap to approximately 51,000 MT.

As of the last CPA meeting, held in October, only the European Community (EC) was able to make a confirmed pledge of 5,000 MT of wheat. Various other donors have expressed willingness to close the deficit by obtaining quantities similar to those shown below.

Donor	Quantity in MT	Status
EC	5,000	confirmed
EC	15,000	requesting
WFP	20,000	requesting
France	4,000	requesting
Germany	5,000	requesting
Total	49,000	

FACTORS AFFECTING FOOD ACCESS

The cumulative effect of shortfalls in production and the prevention of traditional pastoral migration for almost four years has led to a sharp drop in the supply of cereals, especially in the areas bordering Senegal and Mali. The central part of Mauritania, which usually receives cereal from the Senegal River Valley has, in turn, been hit hard (see Map 3). The impact is all the greater because agropastoral conditions have also been poor in recent years. In addition, the recent devaluation of the *ouguiya* (Mauritania's national currency) has increased the price of imported cereals (rice and wheat) to the point that many peasants must double or even triple the number of goats and sheep they must sell to purchase the same amount of cereal as before the devaluation.

Projected Food Consumption Needs

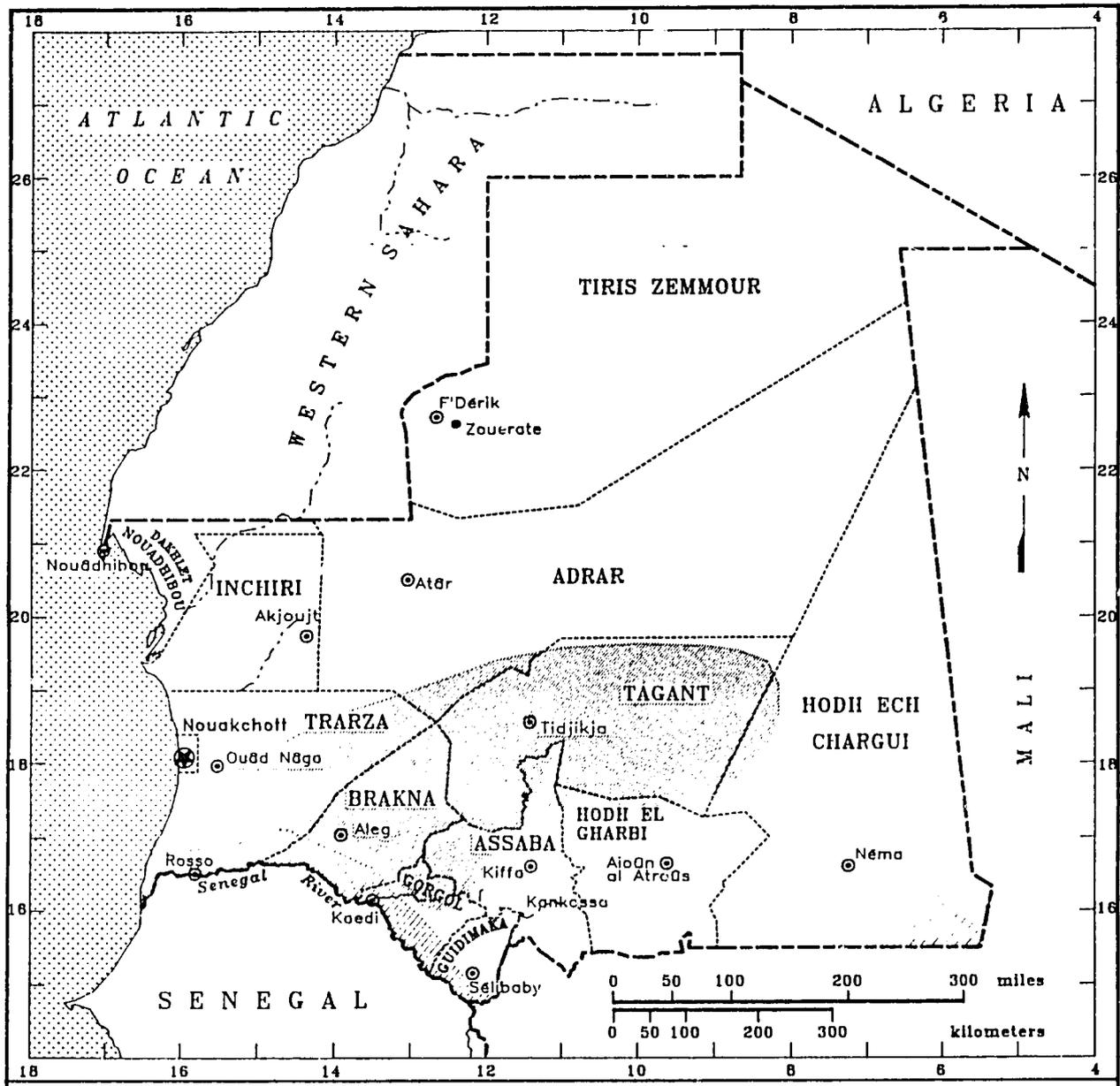
As in the past, for analytical purposes, FEWS has disaggregated this year's global production estimate to the *wilaya* (regional) level by applying several past season production scheme percentages that best compare to this year's conditions.

Table 3 shows the FEWS estimate of Mauritania's cereal consumption requirements by *wilaya*, after 1992/93 net production. Population figures are now being calculated by FEWS using the official results of the 1988 census (obtained in December 1992) as a base, and applying the different growth

Table 2: Mauritania Current Food Stock for 1991/92; 1992/93

Type	1991/92	1992/93
On-farm	5,000 MT	5,000 MT
CSA stock	50,362 MT	7,950 MT
Private		
(commercial)	16,200 MT	49,000 MT
SONIMEX	4,821 MT	8,300 MT
Total	76,383 MT	70,250 MT

Note: SONIMEX is the national import/export company. Private food stocks are quickly disseminated; therefore estimates are not easily obtained. Present estimates are based on quantities stocked at port.



M A U R I T A N I A V U L N E R A B L E P O P U L A T I O N S

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ National Capital ⊙ Wilaya Capital • Cities and Towns --- International Boundary ----- Wilaya Boundary - - - - Intermittent Drainage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up to 40% of agropastoralists highly vulnerable, 40% of agropastoralists moderately vulnerable Up to 1/3 of River Valley population highly vulnerable Malian refugees, highly vulnerable |
|--|---|

Source: FEWS/Mauritania
FEWS, January 1993

Map 3: Mauritania Vulnerable Populations

rates observed for each *wilaya*. Cereal needs are calculated using the officially accepted consumption figure of 165 kg per person per year. Malian refugee requirements are included in this table.

Economic Data

As Mauritania relies heavily on imported goods, the 42 percent devaluation of the *ouguiya* in October caused prices of most foodstuffs and other supplies to register a steep increase. During December, prices generally began to stabilize while prices in the interior of the country remained high as evidenced by field trips and informal information. Meat prices continued to reflect poor mid-season grazing and population crowding. As of December, prices of some local cereals as well as imports had fallen. However, visible effects of the devaluation can be observed among the urban poor by a rise in the incidence of child malnutrition as reported by the Doulos Community, a United States Government (USG) supported non-governmental organization (NGO) working in the shantytowns of Nouakchott. It is likely that daily wage earners and salaried employees also have become more vulnerable.

UPDATE ON VULNERABILITY

As reported in the *Pre-Harvest Assessment*, the overall number of people facing elevated vulnerability this year is higher than last year. Following 3-4 poor production-years and the resulting economic hardship, a significant portion of the population has fallen below the critical economic and nutritional threshold as evidenced by visible signs of elevated food stress. In many parts of the country, households are routinely skipping the evening meal.

FEWS believes that up to 40 percent of the agro-pastoral and pastoral populations are highly vulnerable. Approximately one-third of the River Valley population is highly vulnerable due to another poor agricultural season. Malian refugees remain highly vulnerable due to the nature of their situation. However, their immediate needs are being addressed by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR) and GIRM authorities. At mid-December, the latest registered number of refugees approximates 35,000. The UNHCR solicited donors' pledges to address food needs until the end of 1992. In addition, a plan to address refugee needs throughout 1993 is currently under development.

CONCLUSIONS

The harvest outlook for 1992/93 is poor for the fourth consecutive year. Although final estimates of production will not be available for several months, preliminary figures (72,753 MT net) provide a baseline for provisional cereal balance estimates. The currently accepted national deficit is 81,654 MT net, which includes 27,250 MT of cereal food aid pledged by donors. Another 51,000 MT is the target set by donors to help address the human consumption needs (5,000 MT towards this target has been announced by the EC and 44,000 MT is currently being requested by different donors). The vulnerable groups identified in the June 1992 *Vulnerability Assessment* remain unchanged. The gravity of the food situation is being addressed without delay. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen whether donor requests of their home offices will be met with positive results in full or in part and/or whether commercial cereal imports will then be able to close the cereal food gap for 1992/93.

Table 3: Mauritania Projected Food Needs for 1992/93 in MT

Wilaya	Population Total 1993	Cereal Needs	Total Production	Total Deficit	Percent Needs Met by Production
Hodh ech Chargui	241,262	39,808	10,212	(29,596)	26
Hodh el Gharbi	174,158	28,736	8,899	(19,837)	31
Assaba	184,517	30,445	2,141	(28,304)	7
Gorgol	199,587	32,932	12,398	(20,534)	38
Brakna	210,085	34,664	6,686	(27,978)	19
Trarza	195,607	32,275	19,544	(12,731)	61
Guidimaka	134,981	22,272	10,254	(12,018)	46
Tagant	61,106	10,082	2,619	(7,463)	26
Total	1,401,303	231,214	72,753	(158,461)	20
Agricultural Wilayas					
Other Wilayas	841,039	138,772	0	(138,772)	0
Total	2,242,342	369,986	72,753	(297,233)	19.5
Malian Refugees	32,000	5,280	0	(5,280)	—
New Total	2,274,342	375,266	72,753	(302,513)	19.3

Sources: Census Bureau (CEDES), FAO/CILSS evaluation results, UNHCR, FEWS Mauritania.