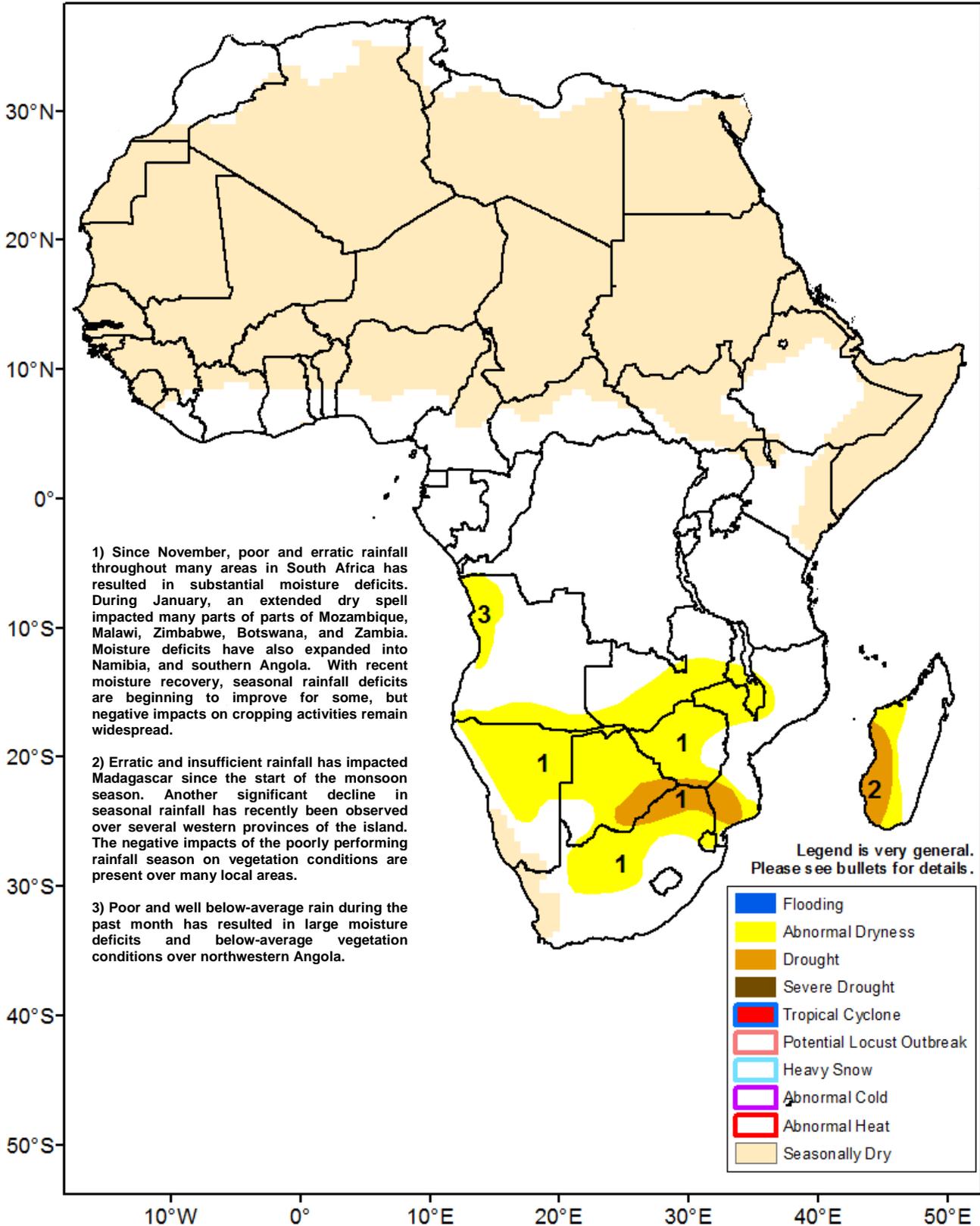




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook February 22 – February 28, 2018

- Rainy conditions continue to lead to improving ground conditions for several areas of southern Africa.
- Moisture deficits are deepening in Namibia.



Abundant rains are forecast through much of southern Africa. Beneficial early Belg season rains also forecast.

The prevailing rainfall pattern continued through the third week of February. The core of heaviest (and above average) rains was observed in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and parts of Zambia. Widespread 7-day totals of more than 50mm were observed in these areas by satellite rainfall estimates (Figure 1). Locally heavy rains caused damage and fatalities around Maputo, Mozambique. The scope and location of the band of enhanced rainfall continues to benefit many areas that had experienced an extremely dry January. Lighter, but still widespread rainfall was observed through many areas of South Africa, Botswana, and Angola. Western Angola experienced a much needed increase in moisture. Rain was nearly absent across Tanzania, as well as in drought-affected areas of Madagascar. Rains were erratic in nature across abnormally dry parts of Namibia.

Major pattern change is apparent since the start of February. During January, much of southern Africa had been under the influence of a suppressed convective pattern, which resulted in a period with significantly low totals and an anomalously low rainfall frequency. Over the last 3 weeks, widespread soaking rains have been present in many of these same areas. Consequently, significant changes are observed in short-term anomalies. While large 30-day deficits had been widespread just 2 weeks ago, surpluses are now as prevalent as deficits. In contrast, the largest 30-day deficits are now present in Tanzania, Malawi, and northern Mozambique (Figure 2). To the west, rains are still erratic in Namibia, approaching 4 weeks without significant rainfall. Impacts from this past January are still felt on the long-term moisture anomalies. Regions in Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, northern South Africa, and northwestern Angola are still experiencing less than 80 percent of their normal rainfall accumulation since November. Southwestern Madagascar has been extremely dry since the monsoon season began, receiving very infrequent rainfall.

The dearth of seasonal rainfall throughout many regions in southern Africa led to increased concerns for drought, water availability, and impacts on cropping activities. Analysis of remotely sensed vegetation health indices suggests that ground conditions are improving after more favorable rains in February. Degraded ground conditions are still evident in parts of Namibia, Mozambique and Malawi. Analysis of index values in South Africa indicate a lack of recovery in northern regions, but much improvement through the rest of the nation, including the maize triangle.

During the outlook period, models suggest that above-average rainfall is likely for many interior portions of southern Africa and spreading into northwestern Angola. Total amounts reaching 100mm are possible in Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Botswana. Suppressed rains are likely to persist in Namibia.

Significant early season rains were observed last week in Ethiopia. Enhanced rains are forecasted to persist through the outlook period; affording farmers much needed soil moisture.

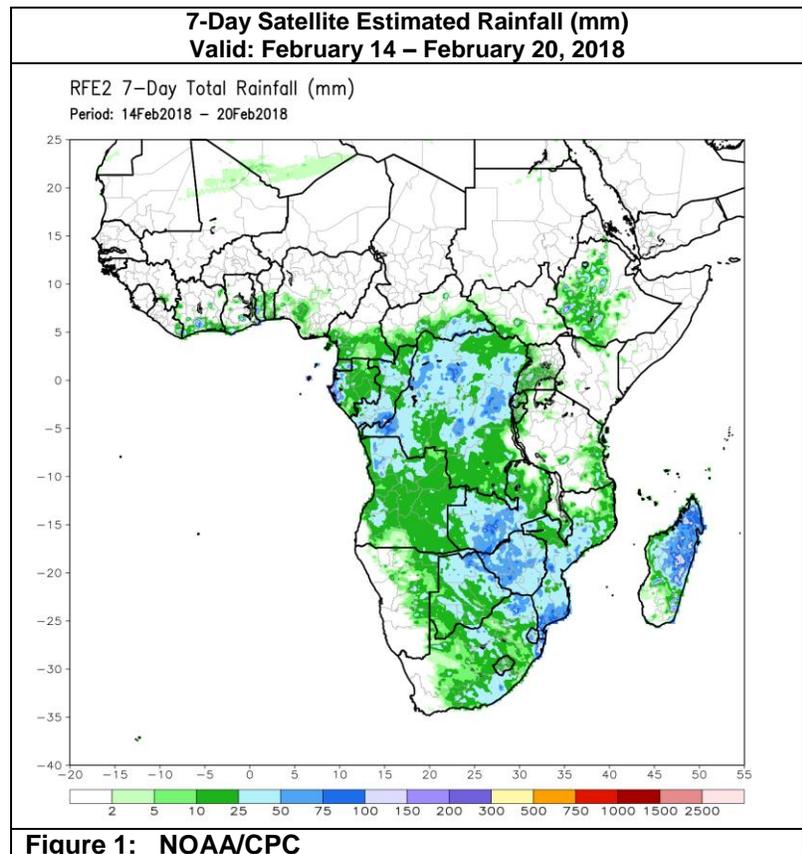


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

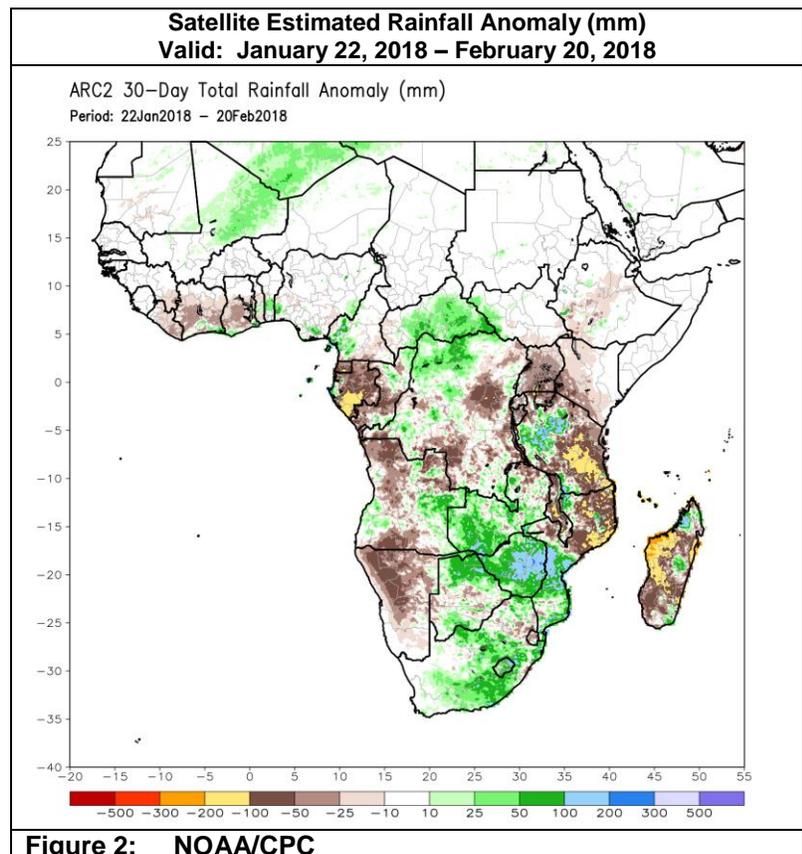


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Note: The hazards outlook map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.