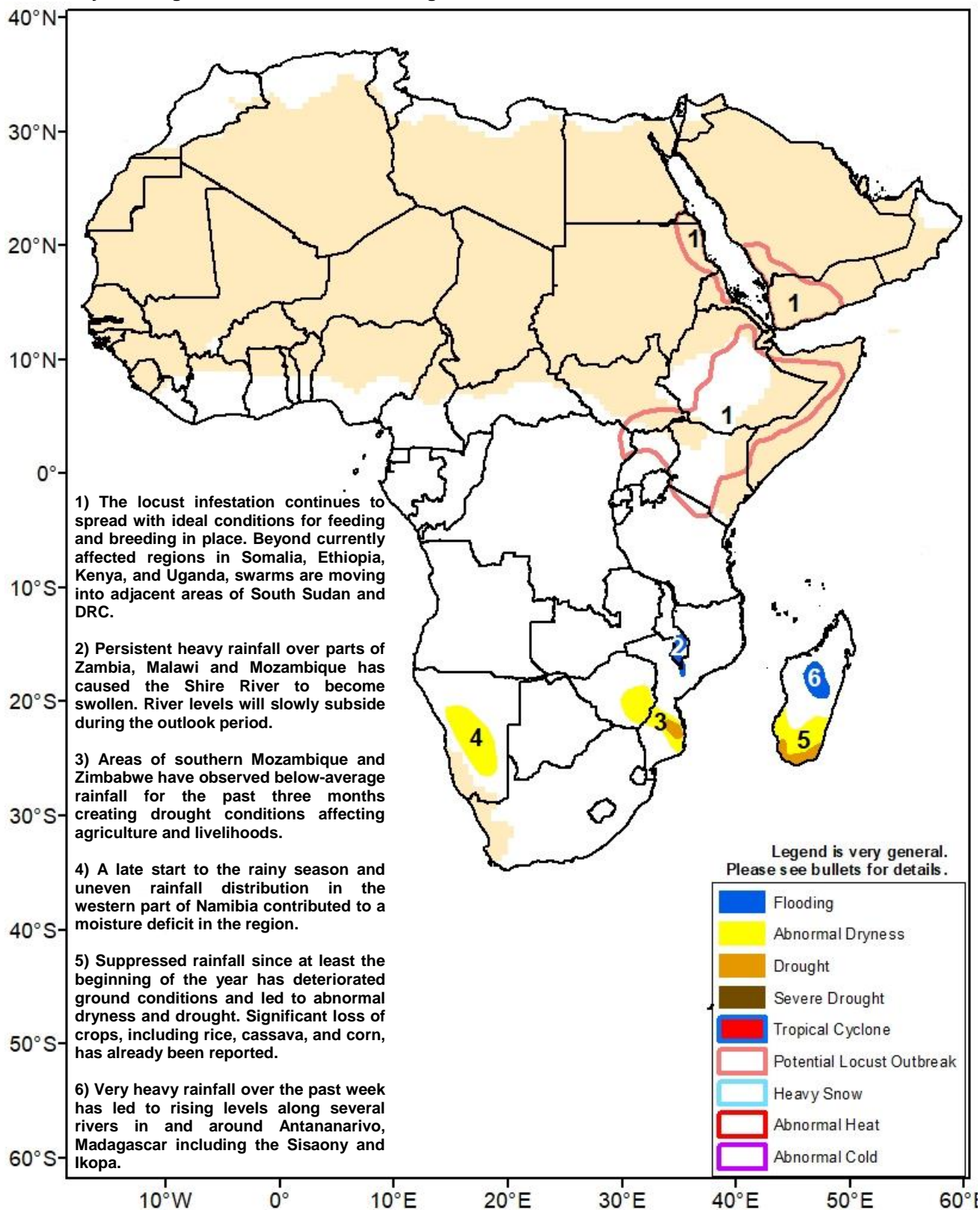




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook February 27 – March 4, 2020

- East Africa cropping activities are seriously threatened by the worst locust outbreak in decades.
- Heavy, flooding rains have returned to Madagascar.



Rainfall diminished in large portions of East Africa this past week.

This past week, rainfall was much less across Tanzania. Rains were lighter and more widely scattered than they have been in recent weeks. According to satellite estimates, areas in the west and south received more than 50mm, while some bimodal areas did not receive any rain (Figure 1). Only a few scattered rain showers were observed over Kenya. Southern Uganda received moderate rainfall, while the northeast saw little rain. Heavy rains were present over eastern DRC and moderate rains over Rwanda and Burundi. Early-season showers continued throughout southwestern Ethiopia and neighboring South Sudan. More than 25mm were recorded locally.

The past few months brought copious rainfall across all the East Africa region. Over the last 30 days, significant rainfall surpluses are extensive across Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. Analysis of 90-day rainfall percentile reveals that most of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda have experienced one of their top 10%, or even 3%, wettest periods in our record. Outside of flooding concerns, the rainy pattern over recent months has led to excellent vegetation health throughout East Africa. Additionally, urgent mitigation measures are ongoing to stop the rapid spread of locusts throughout the region. Wet conditions and ample vegetation are helping to drive reproduction of locust populations that are expected to impact the March-May crop season.

During the outlook period, heavy rains (> 75mm) are forecast to return to Tanzania. Rains should increase again in southern Kenya. Elsewhere, a seasonable distribution of light rainfall is expected.

Rains returned to Madagascar while eastern South Africa & nearby portions of Zimbabwe and Botswana dried out.

Madagascar received heavy and above-average rainfall last week, while the southeastern portion of the subcontinent received suppressed rains. Over 150mm of rain fell across Madagascar according to satellite estimates (Figure 1). These amounts resulted in surpluses of 100+mm. While rainfall generally stayed less than 25 in South Africa, southern Mozambique, southern Botswana and Zimbabwe, much of the rest of the region received 25-75mm of rain. Northeast and central Namibia registered amounts of more than 75mm. Conversely, northwest Namibia and southwest Angola received light and suppressed rains.

Several areas have seen multiple weeks of poor rainfall accumulate into significant rainfall deficits. Analysis of 30-day anomalies shows deficits of more than 100mm across Madagascar despite recent rain (Figure 2). Other areas exhibiting rainfall deficits include southern Angola, parts of Botswana, eastern Mozambique, eastern South Africa, and Namibia. February rainfall shrank short-term moisture deficits in southern Mozambique, but conditions on the ground still appear relatively poor. Cropping activities are negatively affected in both Zimbabwe and Madagascar with a generally inadequate rainy season to date.

During the outlook period, a band of monsoonal convergence and heavy rain is forecasted to be located over southeast Angola Zambia, Malawi, and southern Tanzania. Meanwhile rains are expected to be suppressed in Botswana, southern Zimbabwe, northwestern South Africa, and southern Mozambique. Heavy rain will be relegated to northern portions of Madagascar this week, where tropical cyclone development is possible by end-of-period.

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.

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