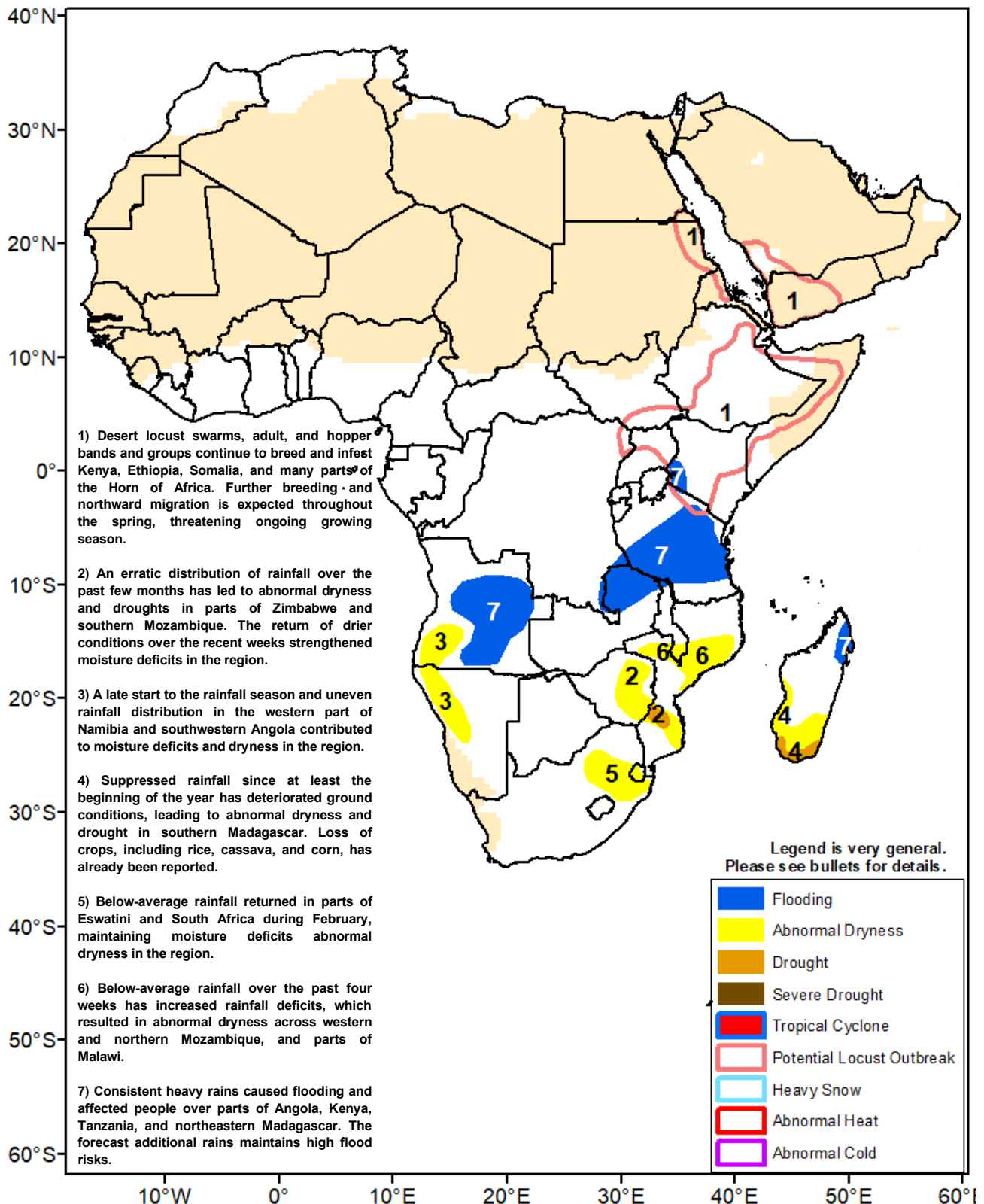




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook March 19 – 25, 2020

- Good rains received in most parts of eastern Africa; but desert locust outbreak threatens the current season.
- While wetness persisted in northern southern Africa, dryness returned in the eastern parts of the sub region.



Favorable rainfall distribution continued over the Horn of Africa during the past observation period.

From March 11-17, a favorable distribution in rainfall was observed in eastern Africa. Moderate to locally heavy rains were received in southwestern Ethiopia, Uganda, and southwestern Kenya, while widespread light rains were registered across South Sudan, western Ethiopia, western and southern Kenya (**Figure 1**). Compared with the long-term average, this past week's rainfall totals were well above-average over most areas, helping to maintain positive short-term rainfall anomalies in the sub region. Over the past thirty days, wetter-than-average conditions were recorded throughout eastern Africa, with many areas accumulating at least twice their average rainfall. The persistent wetness may be attributable to anomalous low-level convergence and upper-level divergence in the area. However, small to moderate short-term rainfall deficits continued to be recorded over parts of northeastern Ethiopia.

For vegetation, a recent analysis of the Vegetation Health Index (VHI) indicated that positive conditions were widespread throughout eastern Africa. However, desert locust infestation continued to negatively impact a wide area of eastern Africa. Further, prospect into the next few months indicated a possible worsening with new swarms formation and migration, potentially negatively affecting crop yields and livelihoods of people.

During the outlook period, wet weather patterns are expected over the Horn of Africa. Moderate to heavy rains are forecast over western and central Ethiopia, Uganda, southern Kenya, and parts of northern Somalia. Light rains are expected elsewhere.

Dryness returned in eastern southern Africa.

Over the past thirty days, drier-than-average conditions persisted over areas of southern Africa, while marginal to wetter-than-average conditions continued elsewhere. These dry portions included southwestern Angola, western Namibia, parts of Zimbabwe, northeastern South Africa, Eswatini, western and southern Mozambique, southern Malawi, and southern Madagascar, where the accumulated rainfall accounted for less than 50 percent of the average (**Figure 2**). In the eastern parts of southern Africa, the return of below-average rainfall was associated with a wide area of anomalous low-level anticyclonic circulation with upper-level cyclonic motion during the recent weeks. Conversely, wetness was recorded over the northern portions of the sub region, including Angola, southern DRC, northern Zambia, Tanzania and other areas such as eastern Namibia, western Botswana, western and central South Africa and Lesotho, and northern Madagascar.

Following mid-season dry spells and an erratic southern African monsoon, very poor and failed crops were depicted over areas of western and central Namibia, parts of Botswana, southern Zimbabwe, and southern Madagascar, according to a recent Water Requirement Satisfaction Index (WRSI) analysis. Previous reports already indicated loss of crops and reduced water availability in many local areas of the sub region.

During the outlook period, while heavy rains are forecast across Angola, northern Zambia, southern Tanzania, and northern Madagascar, which increase flooding risks, limited and reduced rains are expected in Botswana, Zimbabwe, and southern Mozambique.

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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