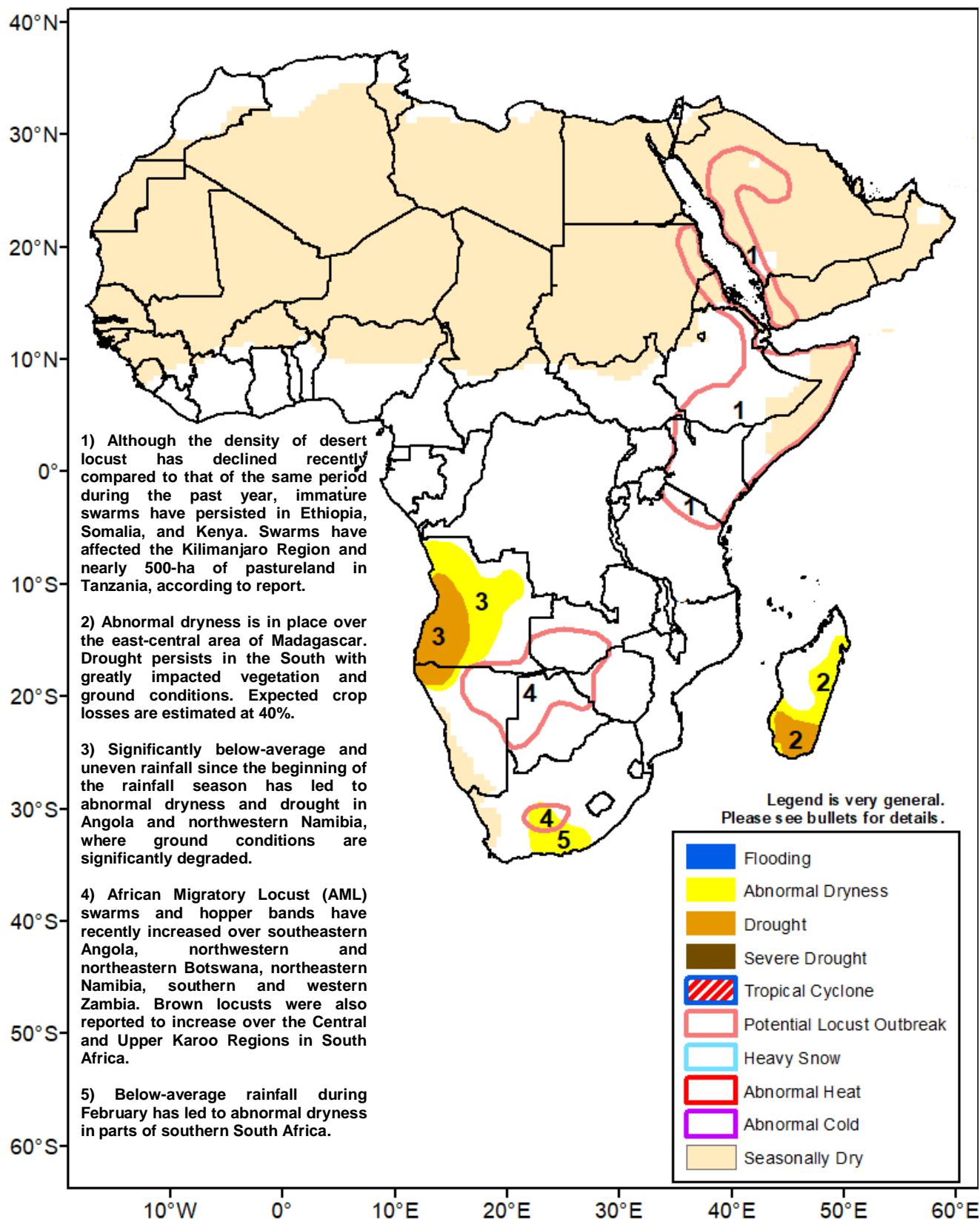




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook March 25 – 31, 2021

- Dry conditions to return in eastern Africa, while near to above-average rainfall forecast in southern Africa



Insufficient rainfall observed in the Horn of Africa

This past thirty days, drier-than-average conditions strengthened over eastern Africa. Cumulative rainfall was below-average, with deficits between 25 – 50 mm over southwestern and eastern Ethiopia, western and southern Kenya, and northern Tanzania (**Figure 1**). Over Yemen, small (< 25 mm) deficits were recorded in the west while awaiting the start to its April – June rainfall season. Larger deficits were registered over some areas, including portions of southern South Sudan and northern Uganda. The persisting dryness was attributable to a lack of rainfall since mid-to late February. This past week, good rains fell over western and southern Ethiopia, parts of South Sudan, and southern Somalia, contributing to reduce deficits over local areas. In contrast, suppressed rainfall continued in eastern Ethiopia, increasing moisture deficits.

The delayed onset to the March – May rainfall season could threaten agricultural activities in the region. An analysis of recent Vegetation Health Index (VHI) product has indicated that well below-average biomass conditions dominated over a wide area of Ethiopia and Kenya, suggesting a poor and difficult start to the growing season. Besides, although declining, desert locust swarms and hopper bands persist in areas of southwestern Ethiopia, northwestern Somalia, and southwestern Kenya, according to a recent update from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

For next week, suppressed rainfall and dry conditions are forecast to return as model forecasts indicate little to no rainfall over much of the Greater Horn of Africa. The forecast below-average rainfall is very likely to strengthen deficits and further poor ground conditions in the region.

Heavy rains led to flooding over parts of Angola.

From March 16 – 22, abundant and above-average rainfall fell over southern Angola, southern Malawi, northern Mozambique, and central Madagascar (**Figure 2**). In Angola, nearly 100 mm of rainfall fell over the Luanda Province in 24 hours on 16 March, resulting in severe flash flood, fatalities, and many people affected, according to media reports. Elsewhere, while widespread light to moderate rains were received over northern Namibia, portions of Botswana, South Africa, and northern Zambia, suppressed rainfall was recorded over Zimbabwe and central Mozambique. Rainfall anomalies for the past thirty days indicated that wetter-than-average conditions persisted in eastern Zambia, Malawi, northern Mozambique, and western Madagascar, whereas drier-than-average conditions spread from southern Angola, northwestern Namibia, southwestern Zambia, northeastern Botswana, Zimbabwe, eastern South Africa, to central and southern Mozambique. Drier-than-average conditions were also registered over eastern and southern Madagascar.

The latest VHI product has shown that poor vegetation conditions dominated over central and southern Madagascar. Although increased rains were observed lately, a continuation of poor rains could further deficits and potentially reduce crop yields in east-central Madagascar. In southern Africa, a second wave of African Migratory Locust (AML) was reported to be more severe in north-central and eastern Namibia, based on reports.

During the upcoming outlook period, heavy and above-average rainfall is forecast throughout the northern parts of southern Africa and Madagascar, whereas light to moderate and near-average rains are expected elsewhere.

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.

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-683-3424.

