The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

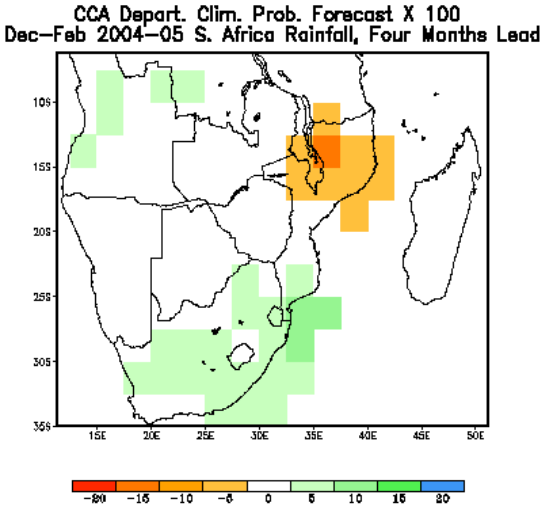
for

September 2 - 8, 2004

Weekly Introduction:

Southern Africa CCA Guidance for November – January at Four Month Lead

The outlook for southern Africa rainfall at four months lead indicates a tilt of the odds for below normal rainfall over northern Mozambique, southern Malawi and southwestern Tanzania. There is a tilt of the odds toward above normal rainfall over much of southern Africa and limited regions of Angola and Zaire. Climatology is expected elsewhere.



Latest Locust Update From FAO

The report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations on the locust situation in western Africa was last updated on August 25. The FAO reports that the situation continues to deteriorate in West Africa where breeding is in progress over a large area of southern Mauritania, in the Sahel and in the north of Mali, in western Niger, and in northern and central Senegal. Hatching has occurred and hopper bands are forming in all of these countries. A few swarms from Northwest Africa reached both western and northeastern Chad earlier in the month. Some of these may have continued into western Sudan although, so far, there are no reports of locusts there. A few swarms reached northern Burkina Faso and there was an unconfirmed report of locusts in northwestern Nigeria. Significant crop damage has been reported in several countries.

Additional details can be found at the USAID web site for Assistance for Emergency Locust/Grasshopper Abatement (AELGA) at http://www.aelga.net.

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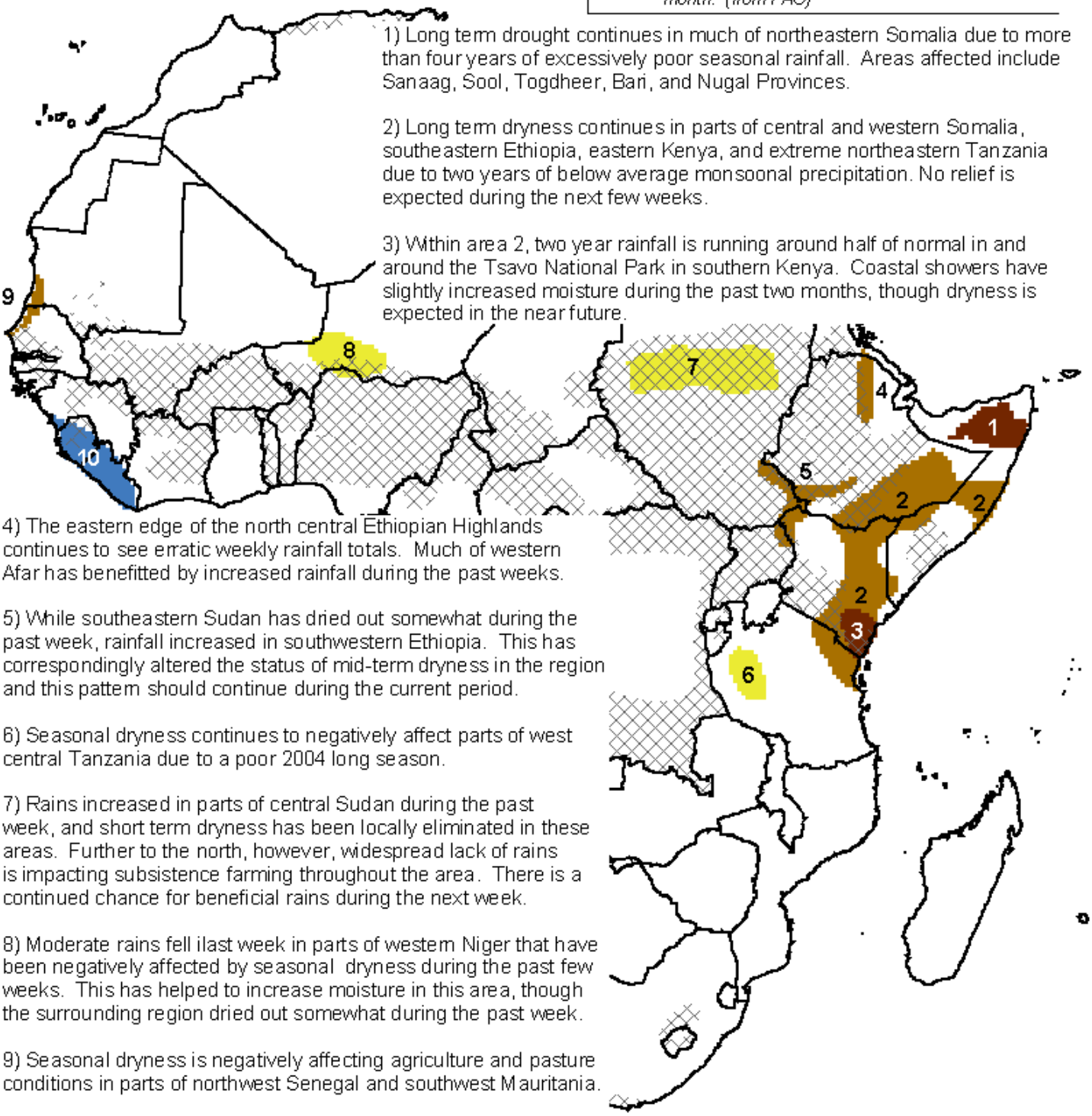
NOTE: Black hatched regions depict combined wheat, maize, sorghum, and millet crop zones which are active (sowing to harvest) during the current month. (from FAO)



1) Long term drought continues in much of northeastern Somalia due to more than four years of excessively poor seasonal rainfall. Areas affected include Sanaag, Sool, Togdheer, Bari, and Nugal Provinces.

2) Long term dryness continues in parts of central and western Somalia, southeastern Ethiopia, eastern Kenya, and extreme northeastern Tanzania due to two years of below average monsoonal precipitation. No relief is expected during the next few weeks.

3) Within area 2, two year rainfall is running around half of normal in and around the Tsavo National Park in southern Kenya. Coastal showers have slightly increased moisture during the past two months, though dryness is expected in the near future.

4) The eastern edge of the north central Ethiopian Highlands continues to see erratic weekly rainfall totals. Much of western Afar has benefitted by increased rainfall during the past weeks.

5) While southeastern Sudan has dried out somewhat during the past week, rainfall increased in southwestern Ethiopia. This has correspondingly altered the status of mid-term dryness in the region and this pattern should continue during the current period.

6) Seasonal dryness continues to negatively affect parts of west central Tanzania due to a poor 2004 long season.

7) Rains increased in parts of central Sudan during the past week, and short term dryness has been locally eliminated in these areas. Further to the north, however, widespread lack of rains is impacting subsistence farming throughout the area. There is a continued chance for beneficial rains during the next week.

8) Moderate rains fell ilast week in parts of western Niger that have been negatively affected by seasonal dryness during the past few weeks. This has helped to increase moisture in this area, though the surrounding region dried out somewhat during the past week.

9) Seasonal dryness is negatively affecting agriculture and pasture conditions in parts of northwest Senegal and southwest Mauritania.

10) Very heavy rains combined with saturated soils and high river levels may lead to localized flooding during the next week.

Valid: September 2 - 8, 2004

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1) No precipitation was seen last week throughout areas of northern Somalia where more than four years of drought has placed a stranglehold on life in the region. Areas most affected by the drought include southern the Sanaag, eastern Togdheer, Sool, southern Bari, and Nugal Provinces, where pastoral conditions and water resources are especially problematic. Little rainfall is expected within the next few weeks, though light showers may be normally seen in early to mid October.

2) 2003-04 seasonal rainfall was much less than normal throughout areas of central and southwestern Somalia, southeastern Ethiopia, and eastern Kenya, as yearly precipitation totals were from 50-75% of normal with locally drier conditions. Currently in the dry season, these areas are not expected to receive beneficial rainfall until October, and hydrological reserves will continue to decrease. Negative impacts include poor pastoral conditions, little water for irrigation, and low drinking water levels. Pastoral models are showing especially poor conditions in southern Ethiopia.

3) Associated with area #2, dryness is exceptionally noteworthy in much of southern Kenya in and around the Tsavo National Park and extending southward to just inside the Tanzania border. Problems stemming from a near failure of monsoonal rains during the past two years include severe agricultural stress and pasture degradation. Though coastal areas continue to receive light showers, substantial improvement is not anticipated until mid to late October when seasonal rains should resume.

4) Improved moisture conditions are expected in western parts of the Afar Regional State due to a recent increase in shower activity though this trend does not continue further to the west near the eastern periphery of the north central Ethiopian Highlands. Weak rains, especially early in the season and than again in July, have led to concerns about agriculture conditions in the area. Monsoonal showers typically begin to subside between September and October, and this trend may be evident from the slight overall decrease in convection seen from satellite imagery.

5) Dryness continues in parts of southwestern Ethiopia, southeastern Sudan, and neighboring Uganda and Kenya, though increased moisture has been seen recently in local areas to the northeast. While the initial cause of the seasonal dryness were late to start monsoonal rains in Ethiopia, continued erratic and meager precipitation has worsened the situation. Rains should generally be light during the next week.

6) Pastoral and agricultural conditions are stressed in parts of west central Tanzania, as 2003-04 monsoonal precipitation was slightly more than half of normal for the season. Mid-October should bring rains back into the region.

7) Subsistence farming in much of central Sudan is being negatively impacted by continued lighter than normal seasonal precipitation throughout the area. The area of concern runs roughtly from eastern West Darfur to the Kassala Wilayah east of Khartoum, and dryness should steadily increase from north to south as the Intertropical Convergence Zone begins its southward progressions. Hit and miss showers should bring local relief to the region during the next week.

8) Increased moisture has brought local improvement to areas of western and central Niger where seasonal dryness is negatively affecting pastoral and agricultural conditions. The hardest hit area is the department of Tahoua where 3-month rainfall anomalies have reached 150 mm.

9) Though the Groundnut Basin of Senegal is experiencing near normal seasonal precipitation, areas to the west along the coast have accrued substantial rainfall deficits due to a late to start and thereafter erratic monsoon. Potential impacts include millet crop losses and poor pasture conditions.

10) Recent heavy rains combined with weekly forecast precipitation totals exceeding 300 mm may lead to localized areas of flooding in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia during the next week. Any flooding will be confined to low-lying regions adjacent to rivers.

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Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7552

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