The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

October 28 – November 3, 2004

Weekly Introduction:

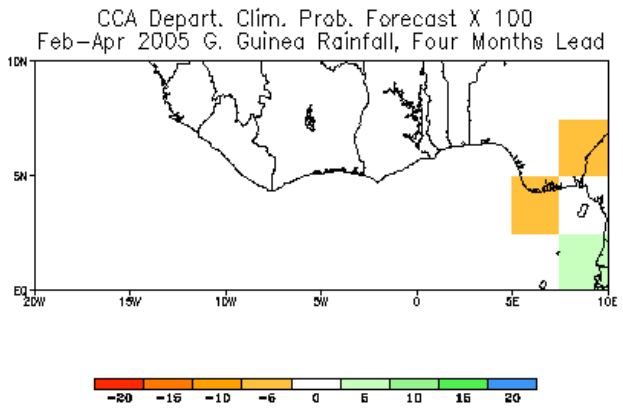
February-April 2005 CCA Outlooks at 4 Months Lead

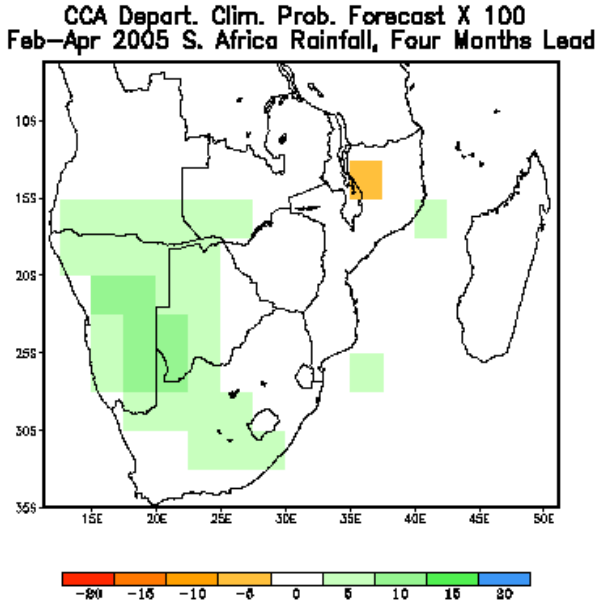
Southern Africa

The outlook for Feb-Apr 2005 southern Africa rainfall at four months lead show a tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall across central South Africa, most of Namibia, the western half of Botswana, portions of southern Angola and, locally, over southwestern Zambia. There is a tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall locally over northern Mozambique. Climatology is expected elsewhere.

Gulf of Guinea

Climatology is expected everywhere except locally over southeastern Nigeria, where there is a tilt in the odds favoring slightly below average rainfall.





Locust Update

The report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations on the locust situation in western Africa was last updated on October 22. Desert Locust infestations are declining in the Sahel due to control operations and the migration of swarms northwards. Additional details can be found at the USAID web site for Assistance for Emergency Locust/Grasshopper Abatement (AELGA) at http://www.aelga.net and the Agrhymet site at http://ww.agrhymet.ne.

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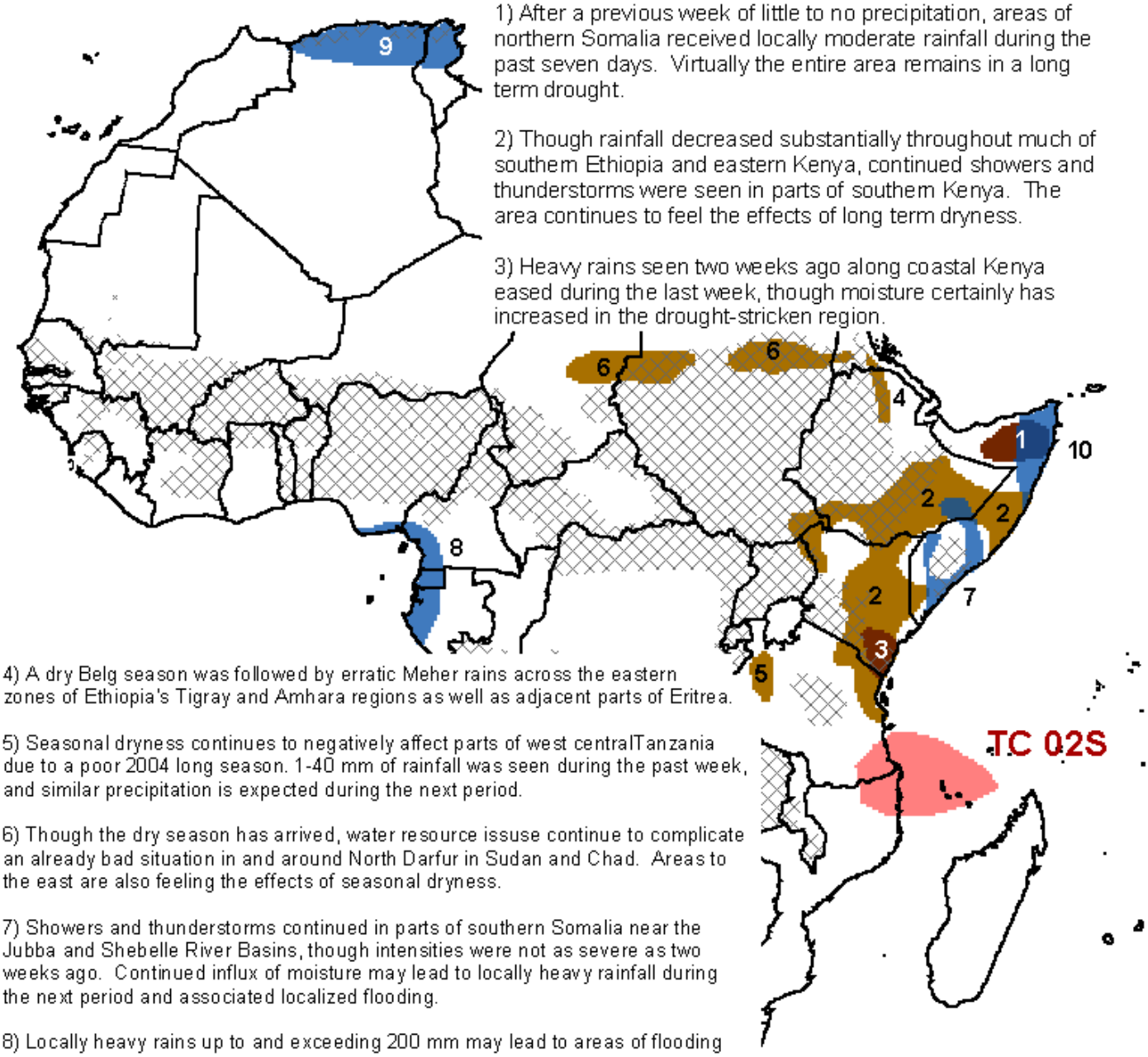
NOTE: Black hatched regions depict combined wheat, maize, sorghum, and millet crop zones which are active (sowing to harvest) during the current month. (from FAO)

1) After a previous week of little to no precipitation, areas of northern Somalia received locally moderate rainfall during the past seven days. Virtually the entire area remains in a long term drought.

2) Though rainfall decreased substantially throughout much of southern Ethiopia and eastern Kenya, continued showers and thunderstorms were seen in parts of southern Kenya. The area continues to feel the effects of long term dryness.

3) Heavy rains seen two weeks ago along coastal Kenya eased during the last week, though moisture certainly has increased in the drought-stricken region.



4) A dry Belg season was followed by erratic Meher rains across the eastern zones of Ethiopia's Tigray and Amhara regions as well as adjacent parts of Eritrea.

5) Seasonal dryness continues to negatively affect parts of west centralTanzania due to a poor 2004 long season. 1-40 mm of rainfall was seen during the past week, and similar precipitation is expected during the next period.

6) Though the dry season has arrived, water resource issuse continue to complicate an already bad situation in and around North Darfur in Sudan and Chad. Areas to the east are also feeling the effects of seasonal dryness.

7) Showers and thunderstorms continued in parts of southern Somalia near the Jubba and Shebelle River Basins, though intensities were not as severe as two weeks ago. Continued influx of moisture may lead to locally heavy rainfall during the next period and associated localized flooding.

8) Locally heavy rains up to and exceeding 200 mm may lead to areas of flooding along the eastern Nigeria, Cameroon, and Gabon coastal regions.

9) A strong cold front will pass through northern Algeria and Tunisia from October 30 to November 3 and may lead to localized heavy rainfall. Mudslides and other associated phenomena may occur in the small scale.

10) A storm system is forecast to move onshore near northern Somalia during the next few days and may produce heavy rains leading to localized flooding.

Valid: October 28 - November 3, 2004

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

Tropical Cyclone 02S. The cyclone, currently located around 180 miles N/NW of Madagascar (as of 15 GMT Oct 27) is expected to continue moving to the west at around 15 knots during the next three days. This would bring a possible landfall near the Tanzania/Mozambique border around October 29th. This situation should be closely monitored.

1. The four-year drought continues to affect the Sanaag, Sool, Togdheer, Bari, and Nugal Provinces of northern Somalia. The 2004 long and short season rains were about average. During the pervious week there were some isolated storms that may have brought some relief to the Sool Plateau. During the coming week, widespread rain is expected in the region though several seasons of normal rainfall are necessary to ease the effects of the long-term drought.

2. Across northwestern Tanzania, central and eastern Kenya, the Somalia region of Ethiopia, southern portions of Ethiopia's SNNPR and Oromiya regions, down through the Galguduud and Mudug regions of central Somalia, long-term drought continues to strain water resources. March and May were drier than normal creating a late starting season that also ended early resulting in 100 to 150 mm deficits, with higher elevations exceeding 250 mm. This past week some light rain showers reached much of the region and were heavier in Ethiopia's southern highlands. A significant storm in Kenya produced up to and exceeding 50 mm of precipitation. This week, heavy rain is expected in central Somalia and Ethiopia's southern highlands. Significant rain is also expected in central Kenya and along the Sudan-Kenya border with lighter showers anticipated in southeastern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania.

3. Southeastern Kenya is experiencing more severe drought conditions than areas further to the north and west and a dry 2004 March-May season has not mitigated the situation. During the previous week little to no rain fell in the area; however, light rains are expected this week. The flooding that occurred two weeks ago was the result of a single day of very heavy localized thunderstorms.

4. In South Tigray and North and South Wello in the Ahmara region of Ethiopia, seasonal precipitation has been lighter than normal. This dryness extends into south central regions of Eritrea. Half of the normal rainfall fell during the Belg season while erratic and lighter than normal rains were observed during the Meher. Rainfall totals in September were around 50% of normal and the exiting monsoonal pattern will lead to a continued decrease of rainfall in the area during the next weeks.

5. Western Tanzania saw slightly below average rainfall during the 2003-04 season, with totals at approximately 70% of normal. Satellite imagery continues to show vegetation stress, though up to 20 to 40 mm of rainfall is expected during the next week. The next rainy season typically begins in late October or early November and continues until April.

6. Biltine in Chad, Darfur and Kurdufan in Sudan, and Gash Barka in Eritrea, saw below normal and erratic rainfall during July and August. Some relief arrived in September and early October, though pasture conditions continue to suffer while drinking and irrigation water levels remain low. The dry season has arrived and significant relief is not likely until 2005 rainy season.

7. In southern portions of Somalia and southeast Ethiopia along the border of Bale and Harerge, continued localized flooding may continue. Heavy rains that fell along the Jubba and Shebelle River Basins two weeks ago continued last week though they eased somewhat. Rainfall totals of over 125mm fell in some areas over the last two weeks, and latest weekly forecasts indicate a chance for additional heavy precipitation. The continued rainfall could lead to localized flooding in the Jubba and Shebelle River Basins.

8. Heavy rains extending from the southeastern Nigeria coast, southward to coastal southern Gabon, are anticipated this week and may lead to localized flooding in the region. Precipitation totals exceeded 100 mm during the past week in and around Gabon, and equal to greater intensities may occur during the next week.

9. Along the coasts of Algeria and Tunisia, a strong cold front is expected to move through the area during October 29 to November 3rd, and weekly precipitation totals may exceed 50 mm in the area. As a result, localized flooding and associated hazards may occur.

10. An area of convective activity is currently poised to move onto or very close to northeastern Somalia during the next few days. There is sufficient energy available with this weather system to produce locally heavy rains and thus areas of intense runoff and localized flooding.

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