



The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

April 7 – April 13, 2005

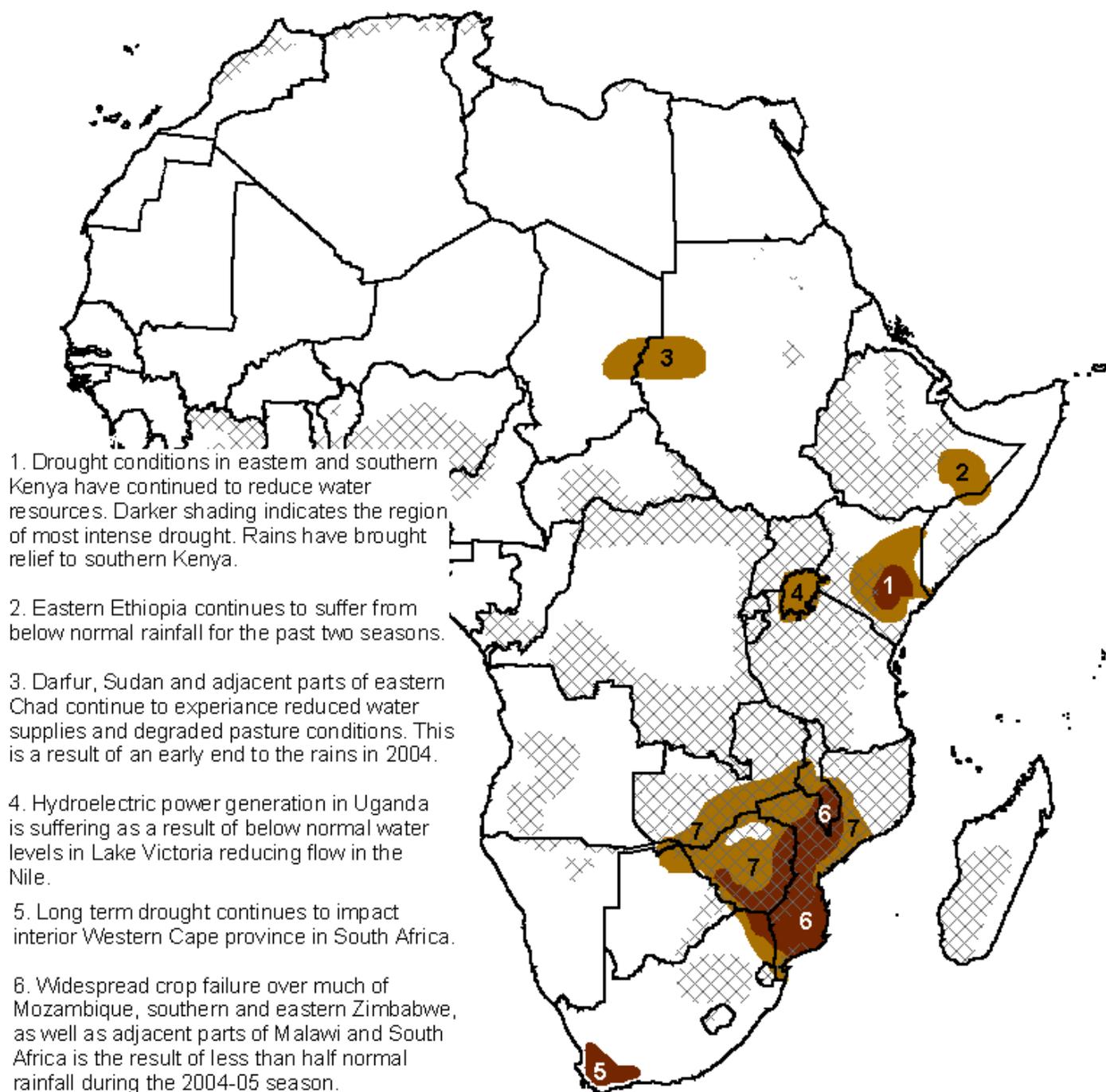
Weekly Introduction:

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 March 16 (<http://www.fao.org/NEWS/GLOBAL/locusts/Locuhome.htm>). While some swarms continue in the region, looking toward this spring, the FAO expects that Northwest Africa will **not** be invaded this spring due to failed winter rains and breeding in Mauritania.

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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. Drought conditions in eastern and southern Kenya have continued to reduce water resources. Darker shading indicates the region of most intense drought. Rains have brought relief to southern Kenya.

2. Eastern Ethiopia continues to suffer from below normal rainfall for the past two seasons.

3. Darfur, Sudan and adjacent parts of eastern Chad continue to experience reduced water supplies and degraded pasture conditions. This is a result of an early end to the rains in 2004.

4. Hydroelectric power generation in Uganda is suffering as a result of below normal water levels in Lake Victoria reducing flow in the Nile.

5. Long term drought continues to impact interior Western Cape province in South Africa.

6. Widespread crop failure over much of Mozambique, southern and eastern Zimbabwe, as well as adjacent parts of Malawi and South Africa is the result of less than half normal rainfall during the 2004-05 season.

7. A dry spell that occurred in southeastern Africa during a critical period of crop development will reduce crop yields.

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Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. The long and short rainy seasons of 2004 produced less precipitation than normal in much of eastern and central Kenya. This has resulted in reduced moisture available for the pastoral and bi-modal growing areas. The past several weeks, especially this past week, have brought significant rains to southern Kenya. The coming period will likely bring continued rains to the south, with lighter precipitation totals further to the north.
2. Rainfall in 2004 was between 50 and 70 percent of normal in Korahe, Gode, and Afder zones in Ethiopia's Somali region as well as adjacent parts of central Somalia. The coming week will likely be dry, however a few light showers are possible later in the week.
3. A 2004 wet season that was abbreviated and erratic in Central Darfur in Sudan and Biltine and Ouaddai in eastern Chad, reduced soil moisture, degraded pastures and generally lowered water supplies throughout the region. The on going humanitarian crisis has been aggravated by the drier than normal conditions. The past week was seasonably dry. July will be the next chance for relieving moisture deficits.
4. Lake Victoria's water levels remain at 10 year lows. As of March 25th, the lake surface was 0.68 meters below the normal levels. This has lowered the amount of water flowing out of the lake into the Nile River. In Uganda, where hydroelectric power is generated from water flowing down the Nile, power shortages have resulted, according to IRIN news. Rainfall totals of up to and over 40 mm fell on the lake during the previous week and more rain is expected during the coming week over the Lake Victoria Basin. These rains will likely improve conditions for the lake, however prolonged rainfall is needed to raise lake levels back to normal. This is the wettest time of year for Lake Victoria.
5. Very poor rains over the last year have caused a drought across the interior parts of Western Cape, South Africa. Just 25 to 60 percent of normal rainfall was received from April to September 2004, meanwhile closer to the coast normal conditions are being experienced. This extended drought has caused major shortages in both drinking and irrigation water resources and stressed pastures. Several reservoirs are reporting being at or near record lows. This past week brought less than 5mm of rain for most of the region, and the coming week will not bring any relief, with little or no rain expected.
6. Southern and central Mozambique, southern Malawi, southern and eastern Zimbabwe and adjacent parts of northeastern South Africa are well below normal for the 2004-2005 wet season. Deficits of 150 mm to 400 mm, or 60 to 25 percent and worse have continued to impact a wide area. This has significantly reduced soil moisture, stressed pastures, and lowered river levels causing water shortages. The driest areas are in the Gaza and Inhamambane provinces of Mozambique and Manicaland and Masvingo provinces in Zimbabwe. The last dekad of March actually saw above normal rains for most of the area, with southern Mozambique and much of Zimbabwe receiving up to and exceeding twice normal rainfall. While this will provide drinking water, it will not aid crops, which have already wilted. This moisture however is too late to revive crops. Central Mozambique and Malawi, however have continued to receive little to no rain.
7. A poorly timed dry spell from February to mid March has negatively impacted much of Zimbabwe, central Mozambique, southern Zambia, central Malawi and northeastern Namibia. During a critical period in crop development, rains came to a halt for 3 to 5 weeks. This dry spell will reduce crop yields in affected areas. Isolated rains did fall in the hazard area during the dry spell and have managed to keep some areas from experiencing problems. These rains tended to fall in Midlands and Mashonaland in Zimbabwe. In negatively affected regions, which far outnumber those spared, received anywhere from 25 to 75 percent of normal rain during February and the first part of March. Recent rains, however may improve the availability of drinking water, as up to and exceeding 75 mm of rain fell across Zimbabwe, Zambia and northeastern Namibia with lighter amounts in affected parts of Malawi. Central Mozambique however, has remained dry. The coming week will likely bring little to no rain across much of the area, with a few showers possible across central Mozambique.

AUTHOR: Eric J Wolvovsky

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

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