



## The USAID FEWS-NET

# Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

**August 11 - 17, 2005**

### ***Weekly Introduction:***

#### **Update of Locust Activity:**

Please refer to <http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html> for the latest locust situation in Africa from the FAO.

#### **July Monthly Weather Summary from the CPC African Desk:**

In West Africa, despite the drop-off in rainfall late in the month, amounts ended up around 80 to 120 percent of normal for the Sahel agricultural regions from Mali to Chad, and 140 to 200 percent of normal for most of Senegal and adjacent portions of southwestern Mauritania. Three areas with less than 80 percent of normal included southeastern Senegal-southwestern Mali, southwestern Burkina Faso, and southeastern Niger. To the south, amounts tended to be below normal along the coastal areas from Liberia to Nigeria, although a few locations recorded normal rainfall. Temperatures across the region averaged near normal.

In East Africa, Sudan's estimated rainfall generally reached near to above-normal levels, with potentially excessive totals in the northeastern agricultural areas (over 160 percent of normal) and possibly below-normal amounts in northeastern Darfur. Ethiopia and Eritrea saw mostly near normal amounts, while Uganda and Kenya posted generally near to above-normal totals. Temperatures averaged near normal.

In southern Africa, seasonably dry conditions prevailed, although amounts in the winter crop areas of Cape Province tended to be below normal (1-30 mm, 2-75 percent of normal). Temperatures averaged around 2 degrees C above normal in Namibia and western South Africa.

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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. Dryness continues in parts of southern Somalia and Eastern Kenya due to poor 2005 rainfall.

2. Lake Victoria water levels are running approximately 0.8 meters below normal due to poor 2004-05 seasonal rains.

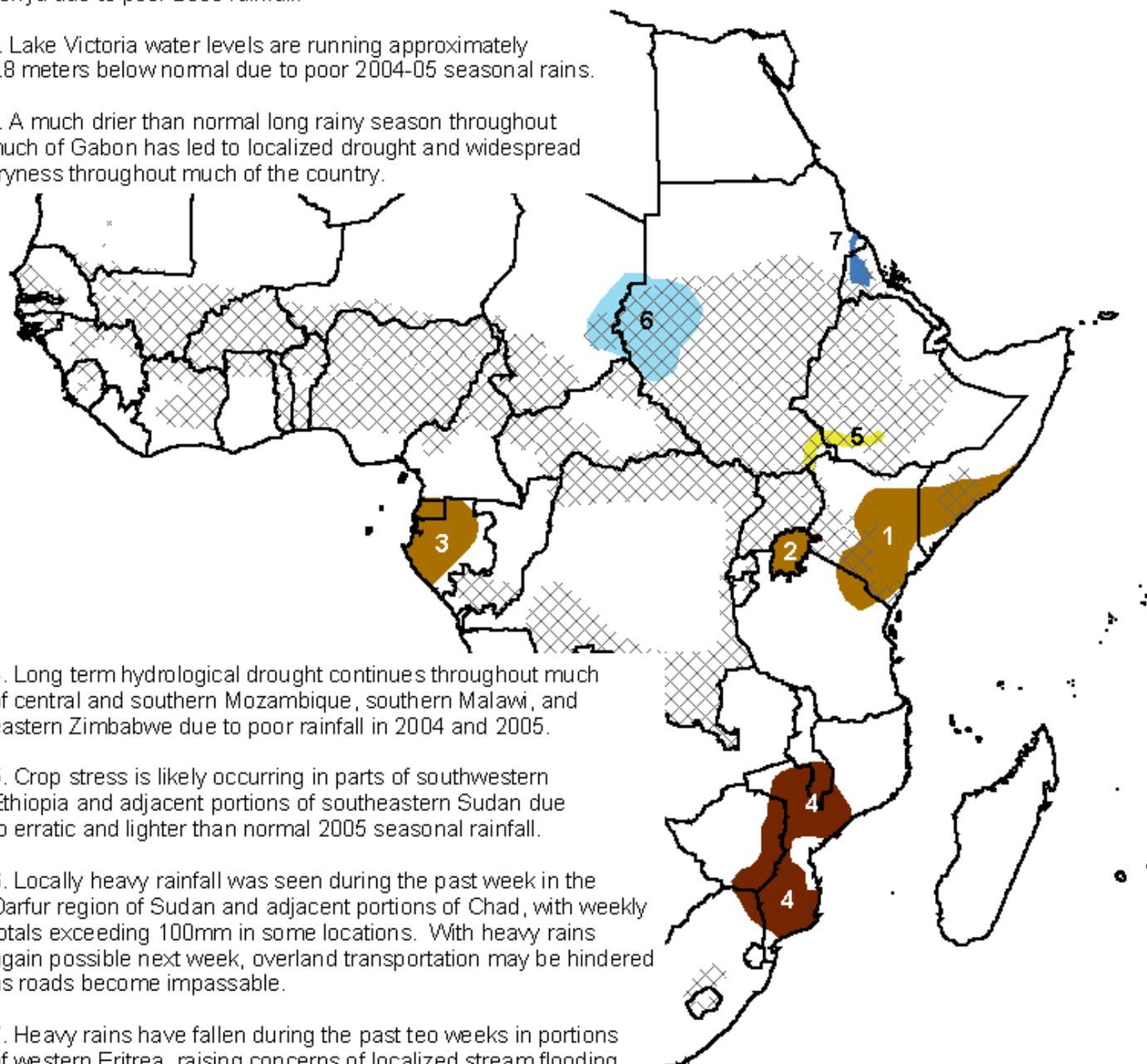
3. A much drier than normal long rainy season throughout much of Gabon has led to localized drought and widespread dryness throughout much of the country.

4. Long term hydrological drought continues throughout much of central and southern Mozambique, southern Malawi, and eastern Zimbabwe due to poor rainfall in 2004 and 2005.

5. Crop stress is likely occurring in parts of southwestern Ethiopia and adjacent portions of southeastern Sudan due to erratic and lighter than normal 2005 seasonal rainfall.

6. Locally heavy rainfall was seen during the past week in the Darfur region of Sudan and adjacent portions of Chad, with weekly totals exceeding 100mm in some locations. With heavy rains again possible next week, overland transportation may be hindered as roads become impassable.

7. Heavy rains have fallen during the past two weeks in portions of western Eritrea, raising concerns of localized stream flooding, especially along the Baraka River Basin. Additional rainfall is likely during the next week.



## ***Weather Hazards Text Explanation:***

1. March through May 2005 rainfall totals were significantly less than normal in the region from southern Somalia, eastern Kenya, and into northeastern Tanzania, leading to localized drought and widespread dryness throughout the area. Although agricultural losses have already occurred, current problems include degraded pasture conditions and low drinking water levels, which will not be improved until at least October when short season rains normally begin to intensify. Coastal areas of Kenya received generally less than 5 mm during the past week, and similar light precipitation is expected during the next period. Temperatures are generally forecast to be normal for the period.
2. As monthly rainfall continued to be lower than normal during July, Lake Victoria water levels continue to decline to near ten year lows. According to NASA telemetry methods, the current lake level remains around 0.8 meters below the long term mean. The area received from 1-10 mm of rainfall during the past week, though little to no precipitation is forecast during the upcoming week. The Lake Victoria water level will remain fairly constant during the period, however, the associated hydrological problems with low water availability will continue.
3. As the monsoonal season ended a month to a month and a half early in much of western Gabon, large precipitation deficits occurred and drought became evident. Light showers that were seen during the past week, along with the possibility for additional rains, especially in the northern areas, will help to increase moisture, though much of the damage has already occurred. Little moisture relief is expected in the near future.
4. A few light rain showers are possible in areas of extreme southern Mozambique that have been affected by long term drought due to poor rainfall during 2004-2005. Current hydrological problems primarily include poor drinking water levels and sub-par pasture conditions, and extend into eastern Zimbabwe, extreme northeastern South Africa, and southern Malawi.
5. Continued erratic rainfall has led to areas of short term dryness primarily in southwestern lowland Ethiopia and adjacent portions of extreme southeastern Sudan, and little precipitation is expected during the next week. Concerns at the moment are more toward agricultural stress due to the increased dryness, however poor pasture conditions are becoming more likely.
6. Very heavy rainfall fell in areas of West Darfur in Sudan and adjacent areas of eastern Chad during the past week, with widespread 7-day accumulations exceeding 100mm and localized regions receiving greater than 150mm. The recent rainfall has been helpful to replenish drinking water reserves, increase pastoral moisture, and increase local agricultural water supply, though road conditions have deteriorated, making overland transportation difficult. Generally from 30-100mm of rainfall is likely during the next week.
7. Heavy rains during the past two weeks have occurred over parts of western Eritrea, and recent 7-day rainfall totals have exceeded 100mm near the upper Baraka River Basin, raising the possibility of localized stream flooding in the area and in downstream regions. Latest meteorological precipitation forecasts indicate a continued chance for heavy rain during the next week.

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