

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

August 25 - 31, 2005

Weekly Introduction:

Comments on the Current Niger Weather Conditions:

2005 seasonal rainfall throughout much of Niger has been greater than normal, leading to very good agricultural conditions in most of the region. As a result Niger is not carried as a weather hazard. The current food security crisis in Niger is the result of various factors including an early end to the rainy season and locust infestations last year as well as high cereal prices this year. For more information on the crisis see FEWS NET's reporting on crisis in Niger at www.fews.net/niger

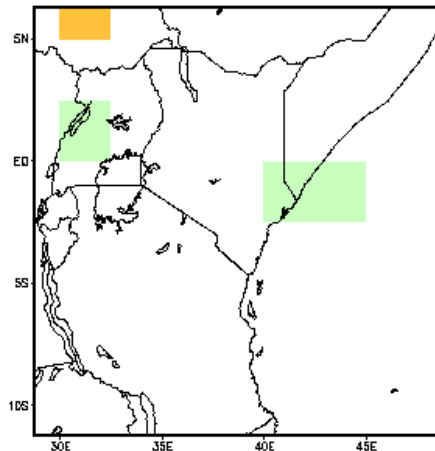
Update of Seasonal Precipitation Outlooks at One Month Lead:

September-November 2005 Forecasts:

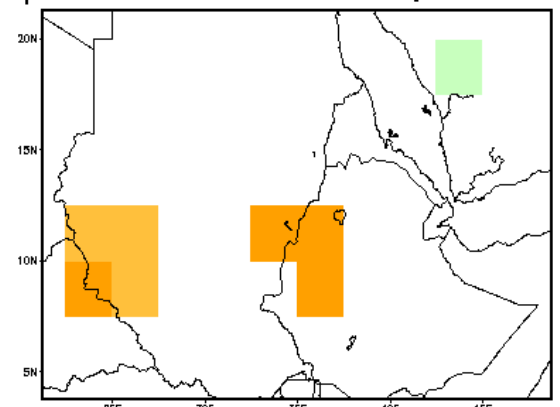
East Africa:

Normal conditions are expected across much of the domain, except locally over southeastern Kenya, southern Somalia, and west central Uganda where there is a slight tilt of the odds favoring above normal precipitation.

CCA Depart. Clim. Prob. Forecast X 100
Sep-Nov 2005 East Africa Rainfall, One Month Lead



CCA Depart. Clim. Prob. Forecast X 100
Sep-Nov 2005 N. Horn of Africa Rainfall, One Month Lead



Northern Horn of Africa:

There is a slight tilt of the odds favoring below normal precipitation over portions of west central Sudan including the Darfur region, and west central Ethiopia. Normal conditions are expected elsewhere during the period.

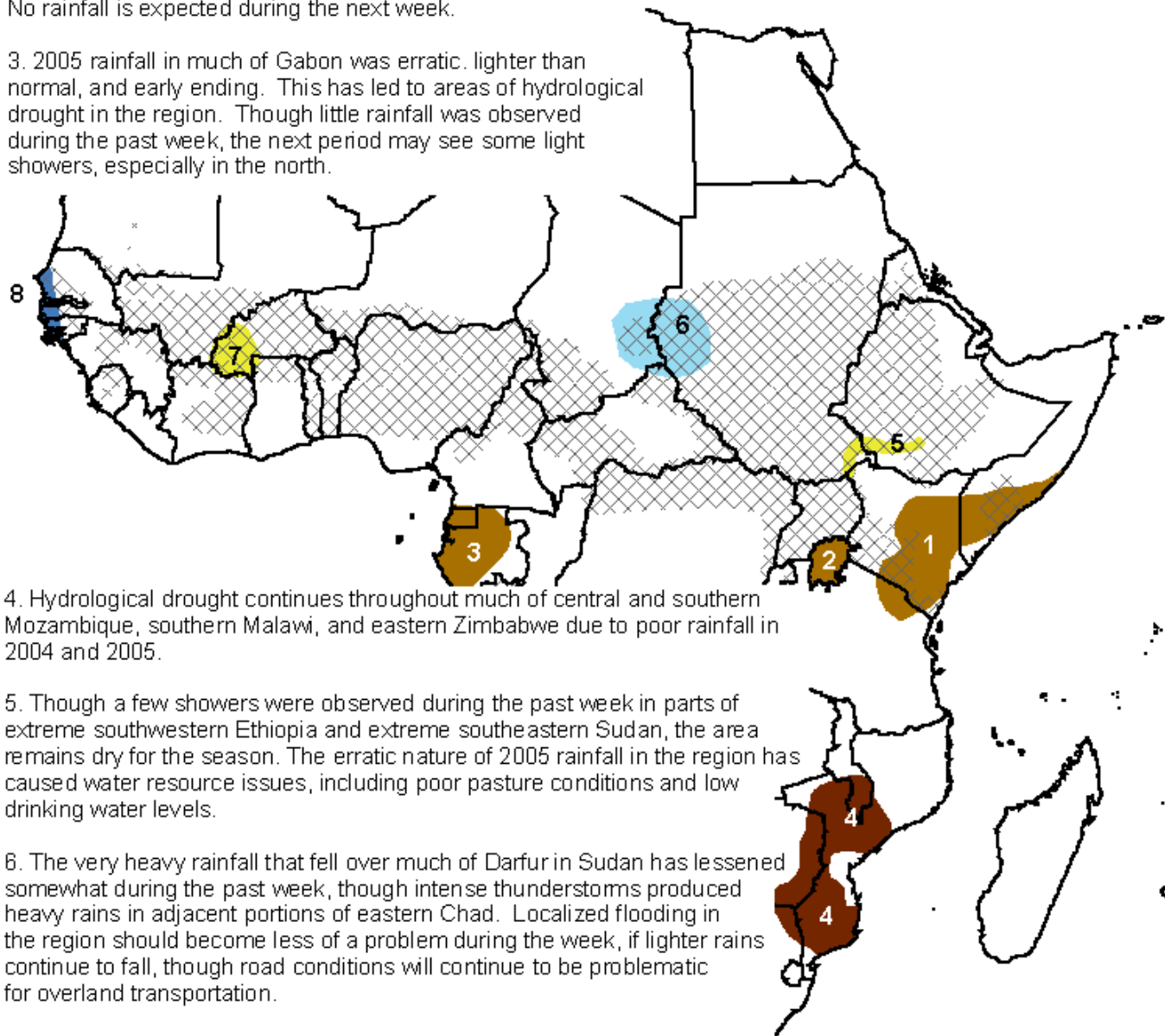
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1. 2005 long season rainfall was less than normal, leading to areas of hydrological drought in southern Somalia and eastern Kenya.

2. Lake Victoria water levels are running approximately 0.9 meters below normal due to poor 2004-05 seasonal rains. No rainfall is expected during the next week.

3. 2005 rainfall in much of Gabon was erratic, lighter than normal, and early ending. This has led to areas of hydrological drought in the region. Though little rainfall was observed during the past week, the next period may see some light showers, especially in the north.

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)



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

5. Though a few showers were observed during the past week in parts of extreme southwestern Ethiopia and extreme southeastern Sudan, the area remains dry for the season. The erratic nature of 2005 rainfall in the region has caused water resource issues, including poor pasture conditions and low drinking water levels.

6. The very heavy rainfall that fell over much of Darfur in Sudan has lessened somewhat during the past week, though intense thunderstorms produced heavy rains in adjacent portions of eastern Chad. Localized flooding in the region should become less of a problem during the week, if lighter rains continue to fall, though road conditions will continue to be problematic for overland transportation.

7. Erratic rainfall during the past two months has led to areas of dryness in western Burkina Faso, though hit and miss thunderstorms continue to bring relief to portions of the area.

8. Very heavy rainfall has fallen during the past week in areas of western Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, with 7-day totals exceeding 300 mm in some locations. Localized flooding is occurring in the area, including Dakar.

Valid: August 25 - 31, 2005

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. Little improvement has been seen during the past few weeks in portions of eastern Kenya and southern Somalia where March through May 2005 rainfall totals were significantly less than normal. The most recent 7 days saw little to no precipitation across the region. This past seasonal lack of rains has led 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. A few light showers are expected during the next week primarily along coastal regions of southern Somalia and Kenya.
2. Between 5-30 mm of rainfall was observed over much of the Lake Victoria Basin during the past week. This will again help to replenish lake levels, though according to NASA telemetry methods, the current lake level remains around 0.9 meters below the long term mean, and near the 10-year low. Precipitation models are not forecasting any rainfall during the next week, though their accuracy as of late in the region is questionable and thus some light showers are possible.
3. Parts of Gabon continue to suffer from a hydrological drought due to seasonal precipitation that ended a month to a month and a half early in 2005. Moisture continues to show signs of increasing in the region, and showers are expected in northern parts of the hazard area during the next week. Low drinking water levels and poor pasture conditions will continue to affect livelihoods, especially in the south.
4. No precipitation was observed during the past week in areas of central and southern Mozambique, eastern Zimbabwe, southern Malawi, and extreme northeastern South Africa, as hydrological drought conditions remain due to poor 2004-05 seasonal rainfall. Seasonal precipitation should resume around October.
5. Continued erratic rainfall has led to areas of short term dryness primarily in southwestern lowland Ethiopia and adjacent portions of extreme southeastern Sudan, though seasonal precipitation should begin to increase within the next few weeks as the African ITCZ begins to move toward the region. Concerns at the moment are more toward agricultural stress, however areas of dry pastures are apparent.
6. Rains decreased throughout much of the Darfur region of western Sudan during the past week, though areas to the west into east central Chad saw locally heavy precipitation. While weekly rainfall totals below 25 mm were common in Darfur, portions of Chad, including areas with established refugee camps saw greater than 75 mm for the 7-day period. The flooding that was observed in areas such as Al Fasher in Sudan should become less of a problem during the next week, though hazardous conditions will be evident locally, as associated with any heavier thunderstorms that pass through the region. Road conditions will remain poor during the next week, though improvement is on the horizon due to the fact that the ITCZ has likely reached its northward peak and has begun retrograding back to the south.
7. Erratic seasonal rainfall has led to areas of poor agricultural conditions in western Burkina Faso. Though rains have likely been adequate for the main cotton crops, secondary plantings of maize may be more problematic in a few localized western parts of the country. Forecasts indicate a chance of rainfall in the area during the next week, though some locations will probably continue to see below normal moisture.
8. Very heavy rainfall has fallen during the past two weeks in areas of western Senegal and Guinea Bassau, with past weekly totals exceeding 300 mm locally. This has led to localized flooding throughout the area, but most notably in parts of Dakar where many residents have been displaced. The weather systems that produced these heavy rains have moved off the coast and rains should generally be much lighter during the next week, with a few areas of heavier thunderstorms.

AUTHOR: Timothy B Love

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

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