

# The USAID FEWS-NET

## Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

For

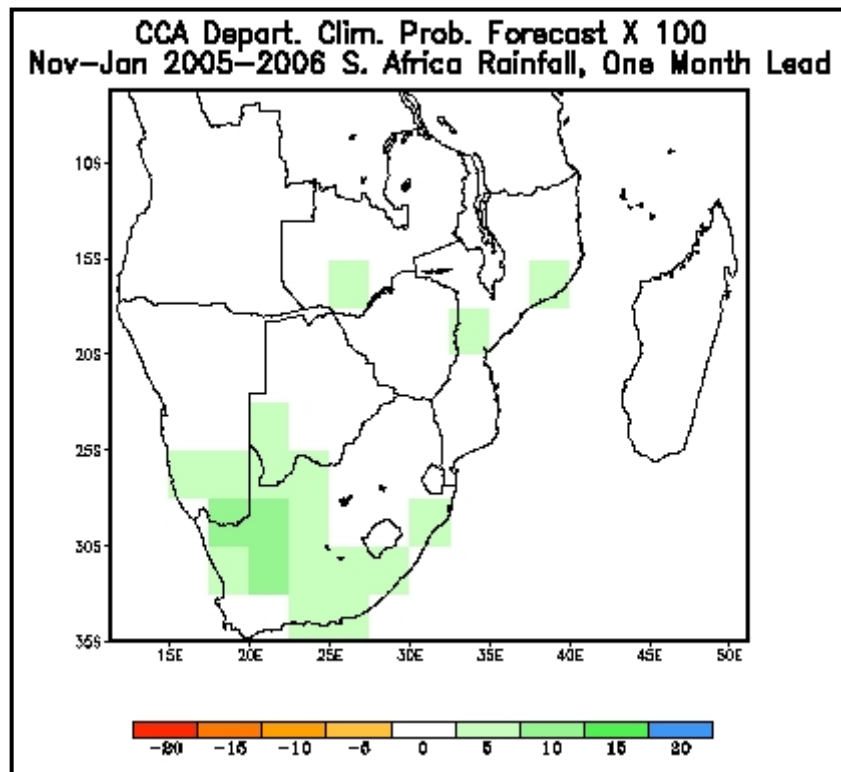
October 20 - 26, 2005

### *Weekly Introduction:*

Seasonal Outlook at One-Month Lead: November-2005 through January -2006

#### Southern Africa:

The outlook for November 2005-January 2006 southern Africa rainfall at one month lead shows a tilt in the odds favoring slightly above average rainfall over most of the Northern Cape, portions of the Free State and Eastern Cape provinces of South Africa, portions of southern Namibia, and locally over southwestern Zambia, and central Mozambique.



#### Locust Update:

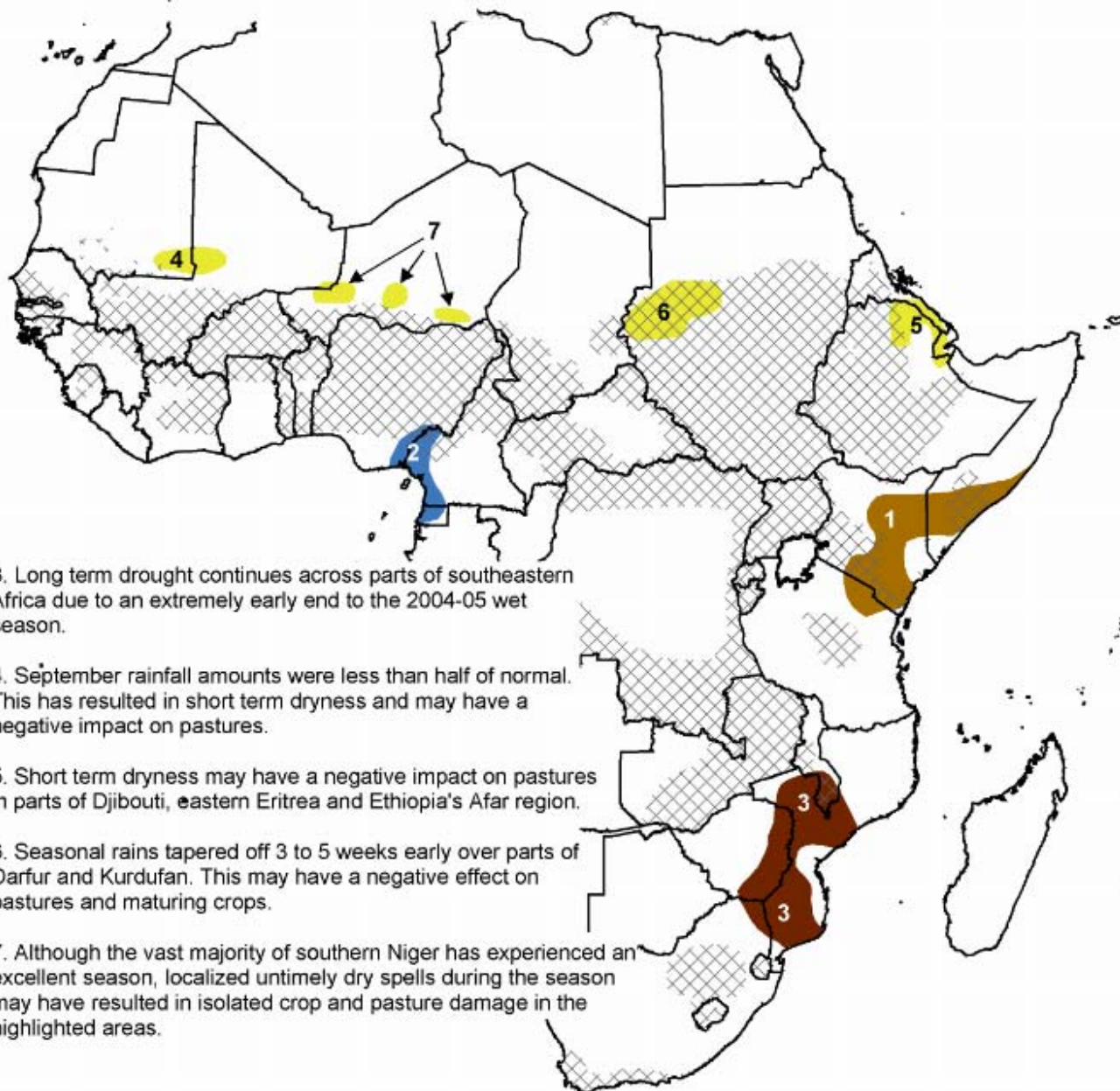
The FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html>) was last updated on September 30 indicating that the locust situation is generally calm in the summer breeding areas in the Sahel in West Africa. Nevertheless, locust numbers are increasing slightly as a result of small-scale breeding that is in progress in northwest **Mauritania** and in the western Air Mountains in **Niger**. However, the FAO states that hopper and adult numbers remain below threatening levels in both countries. Surveys will continue in order to detect any signs of increasing locust numbers.

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1. Portions of southern Somalia, eastern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania experienced poor long rains in 2005.

2. Heavy rains may trigger flooding across southwestern Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea.

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)



3. Long term drought continues across parts of southeastern Africa due to an extremely early end to the 2004-05 wet season.

4. September rainfall amounts were less than half of normal. This has resulted in short term dryness and may have a negative impact on pastures.

5. Short term dryness may have a negative impact on pastures in parts of Djibouti, eastern Eritrea and Ethiopia's Afar region.

6. Seasonal rains tapered off 3 to 5 weeks early over parts of Darfur and Kurdufan. This may have a negative effect on pastures and maturing crops.

7. Although the vast majority of southern Niger has experienced an excellent season, localized untimely dry spells during the season may have resulted in isolated crop and pasture damage in the highlighted areas.

**Valid: October 20 - 26, 2005**

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

1. Rainfall during the March – May 2005 rainy season was well below normal across southern Somalia, eastern Kenya and some parts of interior northeastern Tanzania. Rainfall totals for the period were only 40 to 70 percent of the long term average. This has resulted in deficits that range from 50 mm in some of the arid lowlands to over 400 mm in the mountains of southern Kenya. The lack of rainfall has likely reduced water supplies, degraded pastures, reduced crop production and resulted in crop failures for the March through May 2005 season. Some improvement is possible during the period as rainfall is expected to increase over southern Somalia and portions of central Kenya.
2. Torrential rains that triggered deadly flooding across southeastern Nigeria and southwestern Cameroon during middle and late September have tapered off over the past week or so. However, heavy rains may resume over parts of this area during the period, as well as across Equatorial Guinea. As a result, the potential for flooding exists in and around these areas.
3. A very early end to the 2004-05 rainy season and hot temperatures during the first several months of 2005 have resulted in the development of severe drought across southern Malawi, eastern Zimbabwe, a large portion of Mozambique and the northeastern corner of South Africa. The season typically runs from November through April. However, the season ended in mid-January this past year. Rainfall amounts for the season were only 40 to 70 percent of normal. The rainfall deficits of 200 to 600+ mm caused massive crop losses, crop failures, degraded pastures and reduced water supplies. An early spring frontal system triggered widespread showers across Mozambique and adjacent parts of Zimbabwe and Malawi in late September. Portions of southeastern Mozambique received 100+ mm of rainfall. These early rains were not nearly enough to ease the hydrologic drought, but did result in some superficial relief. Showers are possible across eastern parts of the region during the period. However, major improvement is not expected until at least November with the onset of the rainy season.
4. Most of the Sahel received normal to much above normal rainfall this season, and experienced an overall excellent growing season. However, short term dryness has developed in a small part of southeastern Mauritania and adjacent western Mali. After a more or less average July and August, rainfall during the month of September was much below normal as rainfall by-passed the area to the east and west. September rainfall totals were only 10 to 50 percent of normal in this dry pocket. This may have resulted in some stress to pasture lands and reduced local water supplies. A round of showers before the end of the season could ease pasture stress and concerns about an early end of season in the area.
5. Rainfall during much of September was scattered and lighter than normal across parts of northern Afar, Eritrea's Red Sea Zone and portions of Djibouti. This has resulted in degradation of pasture lands in and around the area. In adjacent parts of Tigray and Ahmara, dryness has also been observed in the South Tigray and North Wello Zones. This dryness may have stressed seasonal crops. Isolated showers are possible in the region, however the time of year favorable for rainfall has ended.
6. After abundant rainfall during June, July, August into the first week of September, the seasonal rains have come to a somewhat early end across portions of West Darfur and western portions of nearby Kurdufan in western Sudan. The season seems to have ended 3 to 5 weeks early this year. This may result in some stress to pastures and crops that are still maturing. Overall, however, the seasonal rainfall totals were average to above average in the region. In addition, the early end to the season may have increased accessibility to the IDP camps in the area.
7. Overall, the rainy season has been quite good across southern Niger, despite a dry spell during late July into the first few days of August. Rainfall has generally been well distributed throughout the season and amounts have been near to above normal. However, in some locations the late July – early August dry spell was more severe. This has resulted in isolated reports of degraded pastures and crop stress in some agro-pastoral areas. Again, it should be noted that the majority of the region experienced a very good season despite the localized, small scale trouble spots. Seasonal rains have generally ended on time across the Niger.

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Questions or comments about this product may be directed to [Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov](mailto:Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov) or 1-301-763-8000 x7552

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