



The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

December 8 – 14, 2005

Weekly Introduction:

Locust Update:

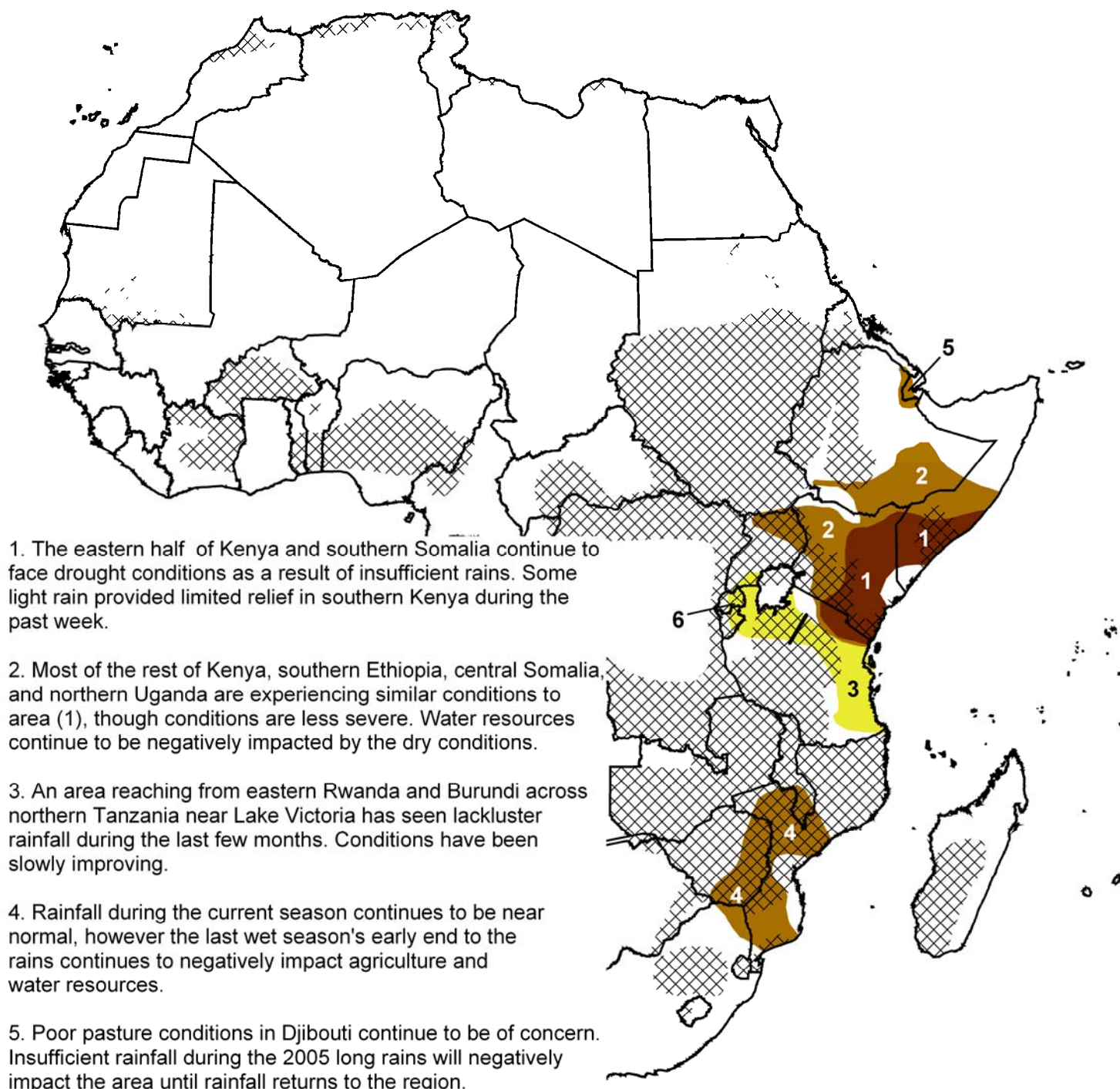
The FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html>) was last updated on November 29 indicating that the Desert Locust situation remains calm in the summer breeding areas in the Sahel in West Africa. Small-scale breeding is occurring in Mauritania and Algeria.

Lake Tanganyika Earthquake:

Aid attempting to reach survivors of the east African earthquake may be hampered by seasonally heavy rains in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Rainfall is expected to be lighter in other areas affected by the earthquake.

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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. The eastern half of Kenya and southern Somalia continue to face drought conditions as a result of insufficient rains. Some light rain provided limited relief in southern Kenya during the past week.

2. Most of the rest of Kenya, southern Ethiopia, central Somalia, and northern Uganda are experiencing similar conditions to area (1), though conditions are less severe. Water resources continue to be negatively impacted by the dry conditions.

3. An area reaching from eastern Rwanda and Burundi across northern Tanzania near Lake Victoria has seen lackluster rainfall during the last few months. Conditions have been slowly improving.

4. Rainfall during the current season continues to be near normal, however the last wet season's early end to the rains continues to negatively impact agriculture and water resources.

5. Poor pasture conditions in Djibouti continue to be of concern. Insufficient rainfall during the 2005 long rains will negatively impact the area until rainfall returns to the region.

6. Along the Tanzanian coast, a delayed start of season continues to reduce water resources.

Valid: December 8 - 14, 2005

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. Drought conditions continue to impact eastern Kenya and southern Somalia. Several consecutive poor rainy seasons have left the area with widespread hydrological and agricultural drought. Erratic rainfall during Somalia's Gu rains and during Kenya's March – May wet season has been compounded by the lack of rainfall during the current season. With this season more than half over the current conditions are not likely to improve. The past week brought light showers to the Kenya coast, with totals reaching 20 mm around Mombasa. The coming week will likely bring similar conditions, offering little or no relief to much of the area.
2. Western Kenya, northern Uganda southern Ethiopia and portions of southern Somalia have experienced a general lack of precipitation. As a result, deficits continue to climb from a poor March – June season, earlier this year. Conditions are poor with strained water resources, poor pasture conditions and stressed crops. Light rainfall in western Kenya and Uganda over the past week has likely done little to relieve the dry conditions. Isolated thunderstorms in Ethiopia, however did bring some relief to a limited area. Little or no relief is expected over the next week.
3. Along coastal portions of Tanzania the wet season has been late to start with erratic rainfall. In November, moisture deficits in the area exceeded 50 mm in some locations along the coast. However the region saw light scattered showers with a few isolated areas receiving as much as 30 mm of rain. This has not been enough to increase moisture in the area. The coming week is not expected to bring significant relief to the area.
4. Conditions continue to improve this season in central and southern Mozambique and nearby areas in Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe. After last seasons early end to the rains, this season has produced near normal conditions in much of the region. Last week brought more than 100 mm of precipitation to a vast area of Zimbabwe with local totals reaching the 100 mm mark in Mozambique and southern Malawi. The coming week will likely bring similar conditions to much of the region, possibly triggering some very localized flooding.
5. Pastoral conditions remain poor in portions of Djibouti and localized portions of Ethiopia. This area is of particular concern because the dry season has only recently set in. With many months before any significant precipitation is expected, pasture conditions will continue to degrade. These problems appear to be impacting the Afar region of Ethiopia only in small and isolated pockets.
6. Precipitation has been unimpressive south and west of Lake Victoria in Tanzania and adjacent parts of Rwanda and Burundi. The past week has seen improvement around Lake Victoria with rainfall totals exceeding 75 mm in some locations. The coming period will not bring significant relief to the area as rainfall is expected to be light.

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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