

The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

For

July 13 – 19, 2006

Weekly Introduction:

Update of El Niño

Synopsis: ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to prevail during the next 3 months.

The current patterns of anomalous ocean temperatures and atmospheric circulation are consistent with ENSO-neutral conditions in the tropical Pacific. Positive SST anomalies expanded eastward during June 2006, with SST anomalies greater than +0.5C observed in most of the equatorial Pacific between 130°E and 140°W. As a result, positive SST anomalies were observed in both the Niño 4 and Niño 3.4 regions, while anomalies remained near zero in the eastern equatorial Pacific (Niño 3 and Niño 1+2 regions).

Most of the statistical and coupled models predict slightly positive SST anomalies (ENSO-neutral to weak El Niño) in the Niño 3.4 region through the end of 2006. Based on the current information, it seems likely that ENSO-neutral conditions will continue at least for the next three months. However, the spread of the forecasts (ENSO-neutral to El Niño) indicates considerable uncertainty in the outlook for late 2006 and early 2007.

This discussion is a consolidated effort of NOAA and its funded institutions

The seasonal precipitation outlooks for Africa will be presented during the forthcoming weeks.

Locust Update:

The FAO site (<http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html>) was last updated on July 3. Their report indicates that rains have started in a few places in the Sahel where small-scale breeding is expected to occur this summer in **Mauritania, Mali, Niger** and **Sudan**. So far, only isolated adults have been reported in **Niger** but similar numbers are likely to be present in southern **Mauritania** and northern **Mali**.

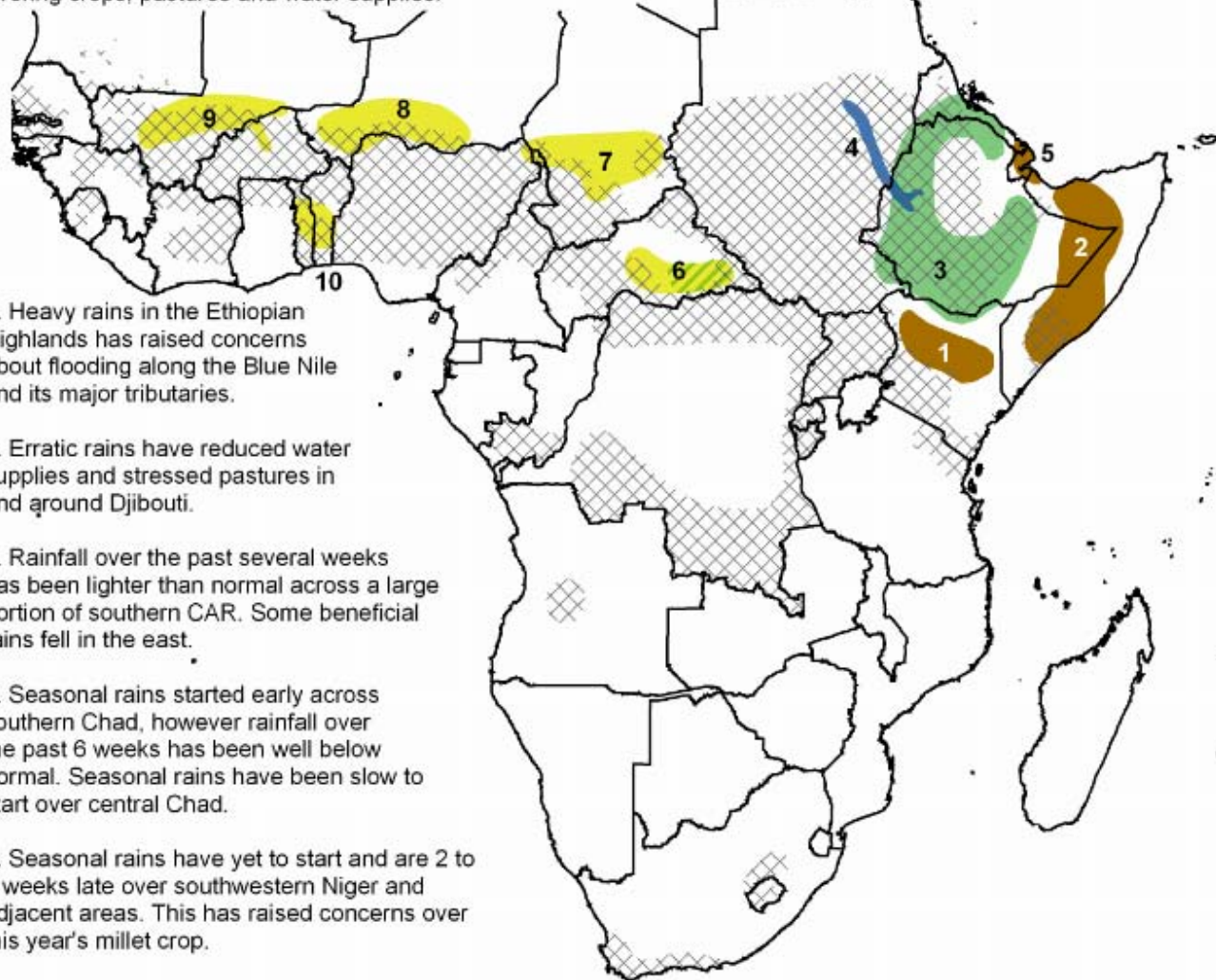
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1. Multiple poor rainy seasons have resulted in drought across portions of northern and central Kenya. Agriculture, pastures and water supplies have suffered as a result.

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)

2. Below normal rainfall during 2005 and 2006 have resulted in drought development across much of Somalia and adjacent portions of Ethiopia.

3. Rainfall has been abundant over the past several months across western and southern Ethiopia as well as central Eritrea, favoring crops, pastures and water supplies.



9. Seasonal rains started on time over most of southern Mali. However, rainfall during the past 45 days has been below normal in some locations.

10. Rainfall over the past 40 days has been about half of normal across portions of Togo and Benin.

Valid: July 13 - 19, 2006

Weather Hazards Benefits Text Explanation:

- 1) After the failure of the 2005 short rains across much of Africa's Greater Horn, the 2006 long rains were above average across many areas. However, across much of northern Kenya, the March through May rains were lighter than average. Rainfall amounts were only 50 to 75 percent of normal. These shortfalls, combined with the very poor 2005 rains, have resulted in the development of a severe drought. Rainfall deficits of 250 to 500+ mm since January 1, 2005 have resulted in a reduction of water supplies, crop failures, degradation of pastures and livestock losses across the region. The next chance for significant rains will not be until October with the arrival of the 2006 short rains.
- 2) The 2005 short rains all but completely failed across much of Somalia. The 2006 long rains were also lighter than normal in many areas. From March 1 through May 31, rainfall amounts were only 40 to 70 percent of normal, resulting in deficits of 50 to 150 mm. This has resulted in the development and continuation of a severe drought which has stressed pastures, reduced water supplies and resulted in livestock losses across the region. The next chance for significant rains will not be until October with the arrival of the 2006 short rains.
- 3) Recent rains have been fairly abundant across western Ethiopia and central Eritrea. Since February 1, rainfall totals are 100 to 200+ percent of normal, resulting in moisture surpluses of 50 to over 200 mm. In the western Highlands of Ethiopia, these rains have increased moisture for the Meher crops. Over the northern portions of the Afar region and eastern Eritrea, the abundant moisture has favored pastures and increased water supplies. Abundant rains have also benefited pastures over the pasture lands of SNNPR and southern-most Oromiya. Additional rains are expected across the Highlands, with showers expected over much of the Afar region during the period.
- 4) Heavy rains fell over the western portions of the Ethiopian Highlands last week. Rainfall amounts of 100 to 200+ mm have been observed, with much of the rain falling over a relatively short period of time. This has resulted in high amounts of runoff into the Blue Nile and its tributaries. In the mountains, where the river valleys are narrow gorges, the flooding is less of a concern. However, in Beneshangul Gumuz in Ethiopia and west into Sudan where the river valley widens, flooding is more of a concern. Due to the recent heavy rains, and the potential for additional heavy rainfall early in the period, there is the risk for flooding along the Blue Nile and its major tributaries.
- 5) Rainfall has been light and spotty across much of Djibouti and adjacent portions of Somalia and Ethiopia. Since January 1, rainfall totals are less than 50 percent of normal. This has resulted in rainfall deficits of 40 to 80 mm. Dry conditions have degraded pastures and reduced water supplies in the area. Although showers are possible south and west of the area, hot and dry conditions are expected during the period.
- 6) Rainfall has been lighter than normal over the past few months across portions of southern CAR. Rainfall amounts since June 1 are about half of normal, resulting in rainfall deficits of about 100 mm. This may result in some stress to local agriculture. However, recent rains have resulted in some improvement, especially in southeastern CAR where 50 to 100 mm has fallen over the past week. Additional rains are possible, resulting in some improvement during the period.
- 7) Seasonal rains started 2 to 5 weeks early across much of southern Chad, giving the growing season a head start. However, in and around Guera, seasonal rains have slackened in recent weeks. Since June 1, rainfall totals are only about half of normal. This may result in stress to developing crops. To the north, seasonal rains have failed to start across northern Ouaddai, Batha, southern portions of Kanem and adjacent areas. The rains are now 2 to 3 weeks late. Scattered showers are possible over central Chad, with more substantial rains possible further south. However, consistent rains are needed across the region.
- 8) Seasonal rains are 2 to 4 weeks late over large portions of southern Niger, and have yet to start. The delayed start to the season has raised concerns over this year's crop, especially millet. However, there are indications that seasonal rains may be about to start. Last week, scattered showers resulted in 5 to 20 mm of rainfall. While more rain is needed, this trend is favorable. Moisture is forecast to increase across the region during the period. Therefore, improvement is possible across the region. However, even if rains do begin in earnest, areas of southwestern Niger will experience a shortened rainy season this year.
- 9) Seasonal rains started on time or even early over southwestern Mali. However, over the Koulikoro, Segou and Mopti regions of Mali, as well as adjacent parts of Burkina Faso, recent rains have been light and scattered. Rainfall totals since June 1 are only 40 to 70 percent of normal, resulting in rainfall deficits of up to 100 mm. Conditions are expected to be favorable for rainfall during the period. Therefore, some improvement is possible.
- 10) After abundant rains during early and mid May, seasonal rains tapered off across portions of Togo and Benin. Rainfall totals since June 1 are only about half of normal across the area, resulting in short term dryness. This dryness has reduced moisture for agriculture, and may result in crop stress and yield reduction in some areas. Showers are expected to result in some improvement during the period.

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