

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

for

January 11 – 17, 2007

Weekly Introduction:

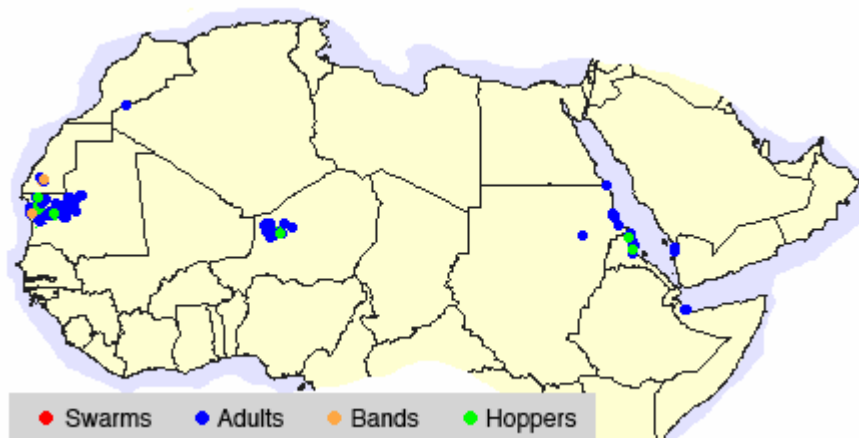
Locust update from the FAO:

Desert Locust outbreak continues on Eritrean Red Sea coast

A local outbreak is in progress on the central Red Sea coast in **Eritrea** where it developed as a result of good rainfall and green vegetation in November and December 2006. The infestations are limited to a small area near Shieb and Shelshela agricultural areas where groups of hoppers and adults are present. Hoppers are fledging and adults are laying eggs. A second area, Meleet, is infested further north on the coast near the **Sudanese** border where similar populations have been reported. Solitarious adults are scattered elsewhere along the coast to Tio, and egg-laying and hatching are likely to occur this month. Seven survey and control teams are in the field, and more than 11,000 ha were treated from 9 to 27 December.

In other countries, no significant developments have occurred in the past two weeks. Ground control operations continue in the central Tamesna Plains of **Niger** against hoppers and adults. Locust infestations have declined in northwest **Mauritania** and in **Western Sahara** where only small residual populations remain. Small-scale breeding will occur during January on the Red Sea coast in **Sudan**, **Saudi Arabia** and **Yemen**, and along the coast of northwest **Somalia**.

OTHER LOCUSTS. Control operations are in progress against Brown Locust infestations in southwest Lesotho and Karoo, South Africa - the worst in many years. Control is also underway in southeast Zimbabwe against African Migratory Locust.



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1) Flooding is likely to occur along many of the rivers in central Mozambique, and is also possible in the surrounding areas. Precipitation totals in the area exceeded 300 mm in less than 72 hours in early January and soils have not yet dried out.

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)

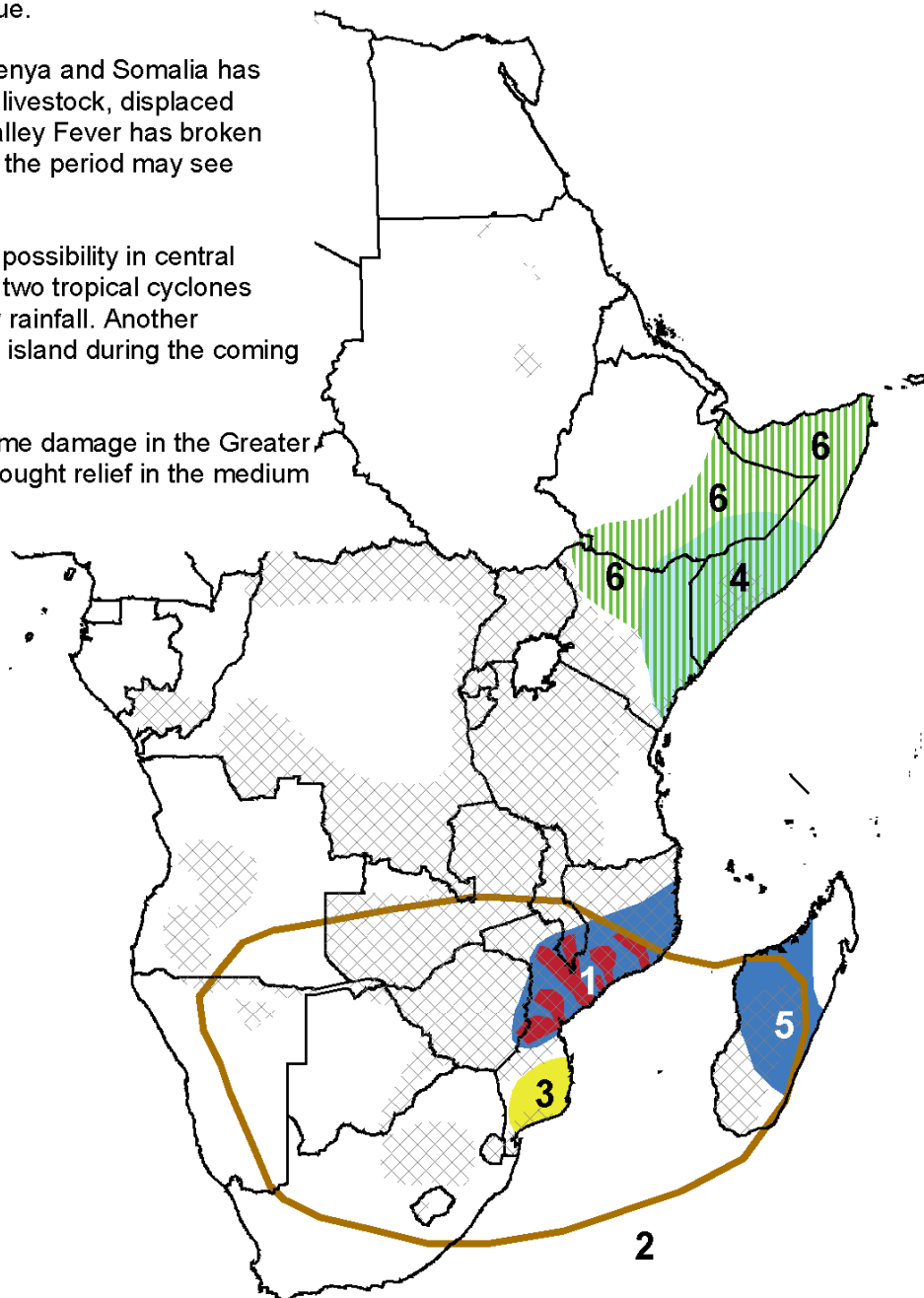
2) ENSO-positive (El Nino) conditions may lead to drier than normal conditions early this year across southern Africa.

3) A delayed start to the season has not yet been rectified in Gaza and Inhambane, Mozambique.

4) Excessive rainfall in portions of Kenya and Somalia has destroyed property and crops, killed livestock, displaced people and caused fatalities. Rift Valley Fever has broken out in sections of Kenya. The end of the period may see more rainfall in Somalia.

5) Flooding and landslides remain a possibility in central Madagascar after a strong front and two tropical cyclones brought more than a month of heavy rainfall. Another front is expected to move across the island during the coming week.

6) Although heavy rain did cause some damage in the Greater Horn, the soaking rains have also brought relief in the medium term.



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Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

- 1) Excessive rainfall across central and northern Mozambique, as well as adjacent portions of Malawi and Zimbabwe will likely cause flooding. The worst of the flooding is expected to be concentrated around the major rivers in the region, including the Pungue, Lucite, Licungo, Mutumba, Shire and Zambezi. After a delayed start of season, precipitation suddenly picked up in early January, totaling as much as 500 mm in parts of central Mozambique during the course of about 2 weeks. Rainfall is expected to drop off in central Mozambique during the coming period, however additional rainfall upstream as well as in northern parts of the country will allow rivers to continue to rise.
- 2) Positive ENSO conditions are occurring and are expected to continue through early 2007. Sea surface temperatures in the main index area of the Pacific Ocean are running 1.5 degrees Celsius above normal. Other areas are seeing anomalies as high as 2 degrees Celsius above normal. Therefore moderate El Nino conditions are currently being experienced. Based on climatological patterns in southern Africa during El Nino seasons, there is a link between positive ENSO conditions and dryness in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique and Madagascar during the January to March portion of the wet season. Additionally positive rainfall anomalies during October to December are common during ENSO events. Usually the entire region is not impacted. There is no guarantee that dry conditions will materialize anywhere as it is not known what impacts the sea surface temperatures in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans will have in Southern Africa.
- 3) The beneficial moisture that has reached central and northern Mozambique has been substantially less prevalent in the south. Although conditions did improve in early January it was not enough to erase all of the deficits in the region. Despite replanting efforts in northern Inhambane province, there still has not been enough moisture for the maize crops. Relief is not likely during the coming week.
- 4) The excessive moisture in the Somali region of Ethiopia, central and southern Somalia and eastern Kenya has caused extensive damage to infrastructure. The rainfall has also allowed an outbreak of Rift Valley Fever in Kenya, and threatens to spread in southern Somalia as well. The outbreak in Kenya, which has taken place in the Garissa, Wajir and Kilifi districts, has already cause fatalities. The precipitation has displaced people both locally and internationally with Somali refugees arriving in rain soaked portions of Kenya. Rainfall over the region has been so excessive this season that two to four times normal since October is common throughout the region. Although most precipitation tapered off, additional light showers are still possible. (See #6)
- 5) Madagascar, which still has saturated soils from tropical cyclones Bondo and Clovis making land fall during the last three weeks got another round of excessive moisture last week as a strong front moved through. Additional heavy rains are possible during the coming period as another strong cold front taps into tropical moisture in the Congo basin. Heavy rainfall from the system will continue to cause localized flooding and possibly landslides. Rainfall totals over the far western portions of the country significantly exceeded 300 mm last week. This week rainfall totals will be lower than that, but heavy precipitation will still inundate much of the island.
- 6) Although the heavy rainfall across much of the Greater Horn of Africa caused flooding damage in the short term, there will be long term benefits. As the rains have ended there is now the opportunity to replant in cropped areas and to use the recharged pastures and drinking water reserves. These much improved conditions come on the heels of what in most areas was a poor 2006 long rains, and in some areas was several consecutive seasons of failed rains. (See #4)

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