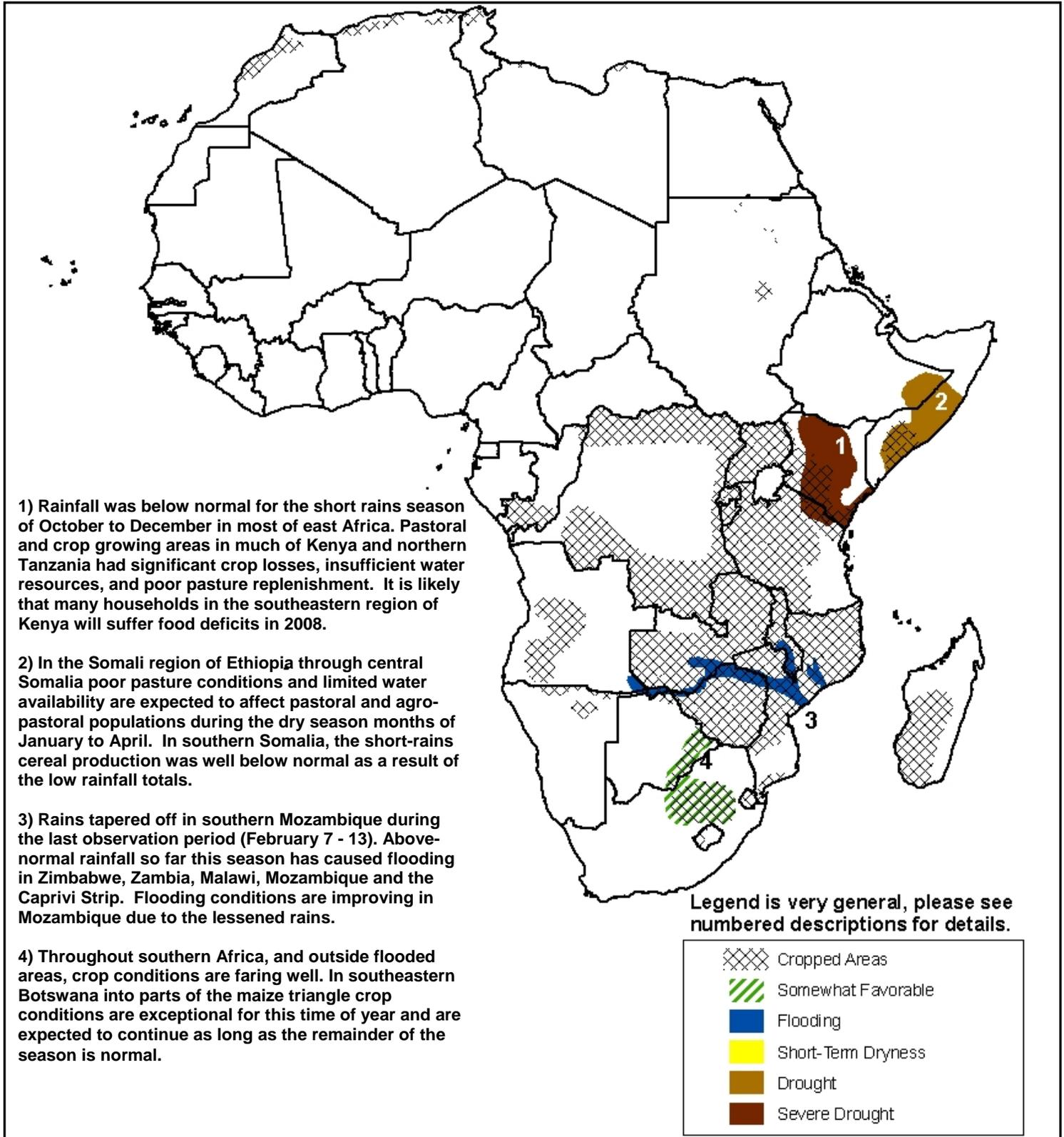


- Flooding continues in parts of southern Africa leading to displacement, casualties, and a need for humanitarian assistance. Flood conditions in southern Mozambique are improving due to recent rain reduction.
- In some parts of Zimbabwe saturated soil is delaying the planting of crops. Most agricultural areas are too wet for tillage or still contain crops that have yet to begin fruition from the main agricultural season.
- Tropical Cyclone Ivan is located several hundred kilometers east of Madagascar. The system is moving eastward and is expected to intensify in the next 24 hours. It is not expected to make landfall, but has the potential to bring heavy rains to the eastern coast of the country by February 16th or 17th.



Flourishing conditions in southern Africa, but soils are too wet in some areas

Much of southern Africa started the rainy season early, especially in South Africa and Mozambique, where start-of-season anomalies were up to three dekads early. At present, crops are doing well and are expected to have a good yield. In southeastern Botswana and into the western portions of the maize triangle in South Africa, crop monitors state that forecasted yields are expected to be above the 8-year trend as long as the remainder of the season remains normal. (See **Figure 1**)

On the other hand, there is the potential for too much rain to cause problems in southern Africa. In Zimbabwe crop yields may decrease due to excess nitrogen leaching and water logging. Leaching of soil nutrients took place in areas with sandy soils; established crops in low-lying fields with heavy clay soils were waterlogged. This is an additional factor that may lead to food insecurity. (See **Figure 2**)

Flooding conditions improve in the south

While the early start of season in parts of southern Africa has been beneficial for the region, it has also led to flooding along river basins in Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In recent weeks, thousands of people have been rescued in Mozambique as rains in surrounding countries caused flooding along its rivers. Since the start of February rainfall has tapered off significantly from central Mozambique into eastern Zimbabwe and the northern extremity of South Africa. This is providing the region with a needed break from rains. On Monday, February 11th the flood gates of the Lake Kariba Dam, located along the Zambia-Zimbabwe border, were opened due to the heavy rainfall over the Zambezi basin. This was done in order to relieve stress on the dam as water levels increased. Water contained in this dam runs down stream along the Zambezi river to the Cahora Bassa Lake in Mozambique. It was initially feared that by opening the flood gates of the Kariba Dam it could worsen flooding along the Zambezi and into Mozambique. At present, due to the lessening rains there have been no impacts in the region. According to members of the Mozambique Meteorological Service, the Cahora Bassa Dam's discharge rate has slowed to 750 cubic millimeters per second. That is much less than the thousands of meters per second observed in late January. The rainy season in Mozambique typically peaks in mid-February. This may lead to problems in the near future, but at present forecasts indicate light rains for the region. (See **Figure 3**)

