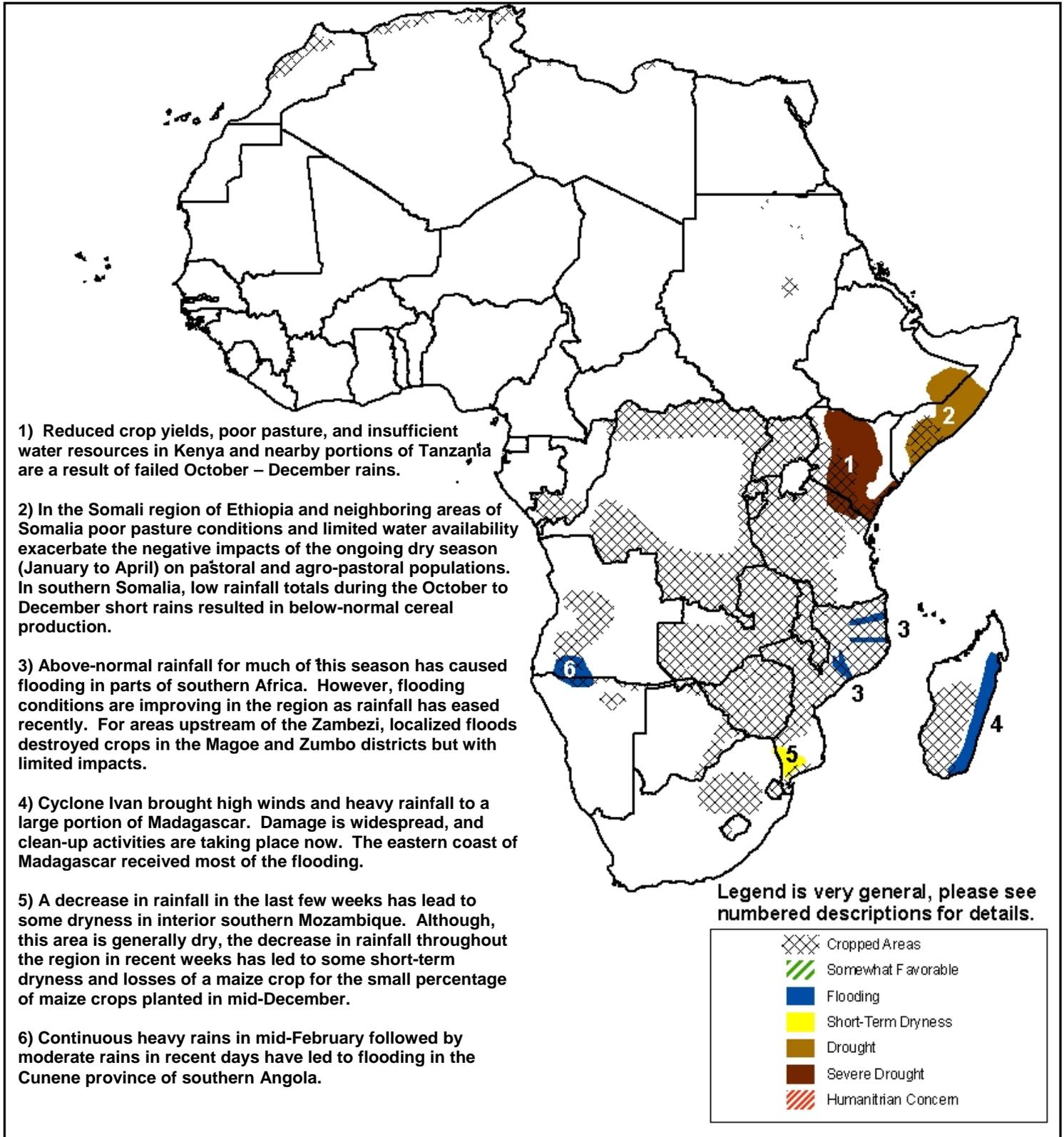


- Rains have eased in recent weeks in southern Africa providing some relief to flooded areas in the Zambezi-Shire River Basins, as well as in nearby portions of Mozambique. Flood affected countries included: Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique. While decreased precipitation has allowed for some flood relief, it has led to short-term dryness in southern Mozambique and southern Malawi.
- Tropical Cyclone Ivan made landfall in Madagascar during the last week. Rainfall totals in some locations along the central east coast and in mountainous regions exceeded 250 mm. There have been nearly 30 deaths reported, and damage is widespread.



Cyclone Ivan leaves path of destruction in Madagascar

Cyclone Ivan made landfall in northeastern Madagascar, bringing with it high winds, and heavy rain, damage to infrastructure and crops, and human fatalities. The storm reached category 4 strength with maximum sustained winds of 115 mph. The system also had gusts of up to 140 mph associated with it. Precipitation totals exceeding 250 mm were reported along the northeast coast of the island. Damage to infrastructure, damage to crops and fatalities are spread over an area of 361,600 square km, according to the Dartmouth Flood Observatory. The strongest impacts were felt near where the cyclone made landfall, in Toamasina. Damage has also been reported in Mahajanga, Antsiranana, and the capital city of Antananarivo. Flooded river basins include Ipoka, Sisaony and Mamba. It is estimated that 300,000 people were affected in some respect along the eastern coast of the island country. Approximately 145,000 people are left homeless with 45,000 acres of crops damaged.

(See Figure 1)

Short term dryness moves into southern Mozambique and threatens portions of Malawi

Since the start of February rainfall has been decreasing significantly in southern Africa. This has provided some relief to flood affected areas, but has also triggered dryness in others.

Flooding in Mozambique along the Zambezi, Shire, Messalo and other nearby rivers and tributaries has wrecked havoc across the region. Flooding has destroyed buildings and other assets, damaged infrastructure, resulted in human fatalities and washed away seeds and crops. Problems with soil leaching and crop pests have also been reported and have the potential to reduce crop yields in isolated locations in Zimbabwe. Other flood-affected areas stretch from Angola near the Caprivi Strip to Zambia and Malawi, especially along the Zambezi River and down to the Cahora Bassa Dam.

The decrease in rainfall has allowed for stabilization and some recovery in flood-affected areas. The percent of normal for the October to May season rains went from more than 200% of normal 3 weeks ago to a range of 80% to 160% of normal. Although, there are many benefits to this stabilization regionally, it has brought about some concerns of short-term dryness locally, specifically in southern Mozambique and southern Malawi. Southern Mozambique was not affected by floods, but did benefit from the abundant rains. This is because this area is generally dry. It grows more drought-resistant crops and provides only a small portion of the countries food supply. However, southern Malawi is not a generally dry area. It has gone from floods to almost two consecutive weeks of little to no rain. There are reports of wilting late-planted crops in localized areas. This short-term dryness does not pose an immediate threat to food security, though a prolonged dry spell would impact crop production.

(See Figure 2)

Increased flooding in southern Angola

Heavy rains in Angola have led to increased flooding in the cropped province of Cunene. According to UNICEF more than 52,000 people have been affected and of that over 16,000 people have been displaced. Officials are concerned with the impacts of heavy rains in the region because rainfall typically does not peak until mid-March into April. This region will be monitored for future developments.

