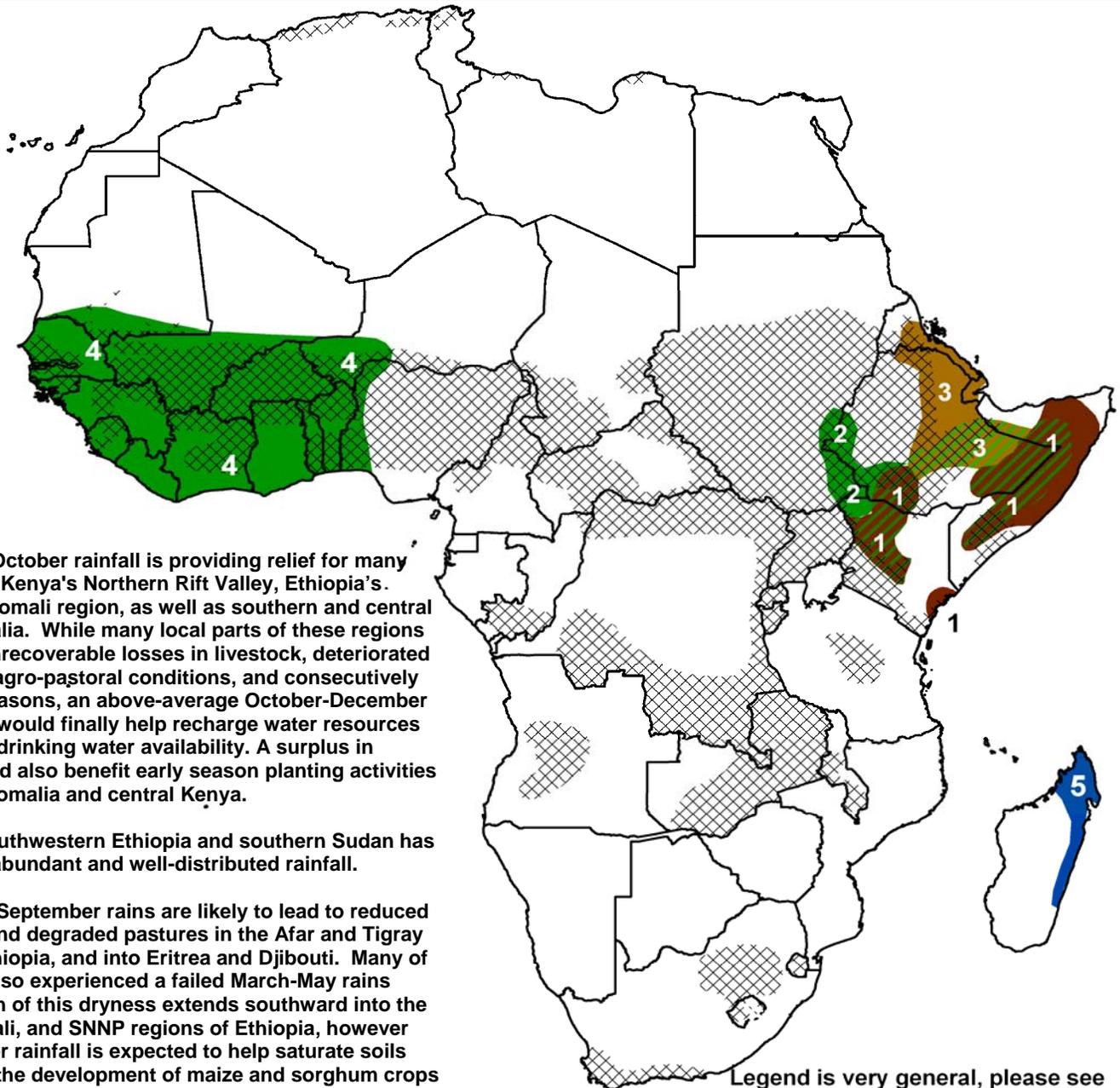


- In the last seven days, consistent rains were observed across many parts of southern and eastern Ethiopia, Somalia and northeastern Kenya. As rainfall totals remain above-average for the October-December season, anomalous moisture continues to replenish water resources, and is beginning to improve areas impacted by long-term drought.
- Tropical activity in the Indian Ocean basins is expected to bring increased moisture to parts of the Greater Horn and Southern Africa. An anomalously early-season cyclone developing in the southern Indian Ocean may result in significant amounts of rain and potential localized flooding along eastern portions of Madagascar.



1) Abundant October rainfall is providing relief for many local areas in Kenya's Northern Rift Valley, Ethiopia's SNNPR and Somali region, as well as southern and central parts of Somalia. While many local parts of these regions have faced unrecoverable losses in livestock, deteriorated pastoral and agro-pastoral conditions, and consecutively failed crop seasons, an above-average October-December rains season would finally help recharge water resources and increase drinking water availability. A surplus in moisture could also benefit early season planting activities in southern Somalia and central Kenya.

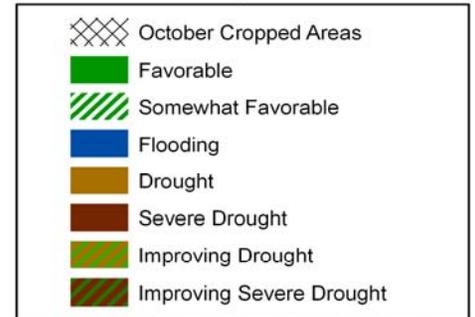
2) Much of southwestern Ethiopia and southern Sudan has experienced abundant and well-distributed rainfall.

3) Poor June-September rains are likely to lead to reduced crop yields, and degraded pastures in the Afar and Tigray regions of Ethiopia, and into Eritrea and Djibouti. Many of these areas also experienced a failed March-May rains season. Much of this dryness extends southward into the Oromia, Somali, and SNNP regions of Ethiopia, however ample October rainfall is expected to help saturate soils and promote the development of maize and sorghum crops in these regions.

4) Above-average rainfall since the beginning of July has resulted in increased water availability and favorable crop conditions across much of western Africa.

5) A tropical disturbance continues to migrate westward and may bring significant amounts of rainfall to parts of Madagascar. High rain rates associated with this disturbance may potentially lead to localized flooding along the eastern coastline, as well as landslides in the higher elevations of the island.

Legend is very general, please see numbered descriptions for details.



## Another wet week in the Greater Horn of Africa

During the last observation period, many parts of Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya saw another week of moderate rainfall totals (**Figure 1**). Rain amounts ranging between 15- 50 mm were observed across the Oromia and Somali regions of Ethiopia, as well as into the Shabelle and southern regions of Somalia. In western Ethiopia, heavier totals exceeding 75 mm were also observed in the Gambela and northern SNNP regions. In Kenya, isolated showers and consistently fair rain amounts (~ 30 mm) were seen in central and southeastern provinces. Ample rainfall in the Ethiopian highlands also resulted in a localized flooding event downstream in extreme northeastern Kenya. At present, thousands of people in the town of Manderu, Kenya have reportedly been displaced, with damages to infrastructure and losses of crops and livestock due to excess water.

Last week's rainfall in East Africa continues to sustain positive anomalies throughout Ethiopia, Somalia and Kenya (**Figure 2**). An above-average October-December rains season would help relieve many areas that have been severely impacted by lost livestock, degraded pastures and poor crop yields from long-term drought conditions. While many of these areas face substantial asset losses due to the longevity of dryness since late 2007, the currently above-average conditions will help begin to improve pastoral and agro-pastoral conditions, offset soil moisture deficits, and, provide a more promising outlook for crop harvests by the end of the year. So far, this has resulted in above-average crop conditions across many areas where inputs are available for second season production (**Figure 3**).

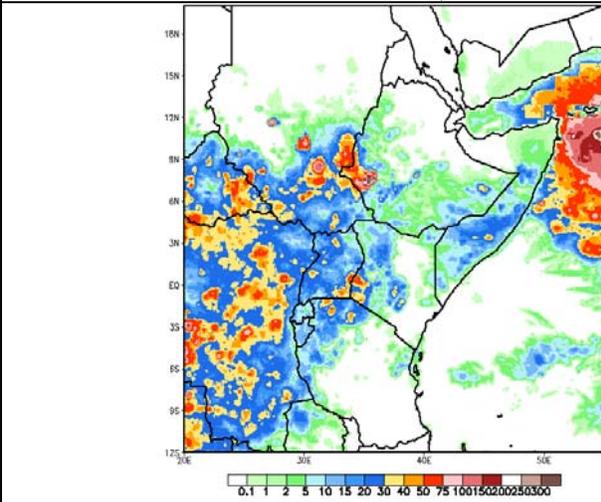
Similar to last week, precipitation forecasts over the next seven days do not suggest much change in the current rainfall pattern. High probabilities for excessive rains are concentrated in southwestern Ethiopia and parts of northern Somalia due to an active tropical circulation. In southeastern Ethiopia, and parts of southern Somalia and Kenya, considerable rain amounts between 25 – 40 mm are expected.

## Anomalously early start to the South Indian cyclone season

The development of Tropical Storm "Asma" not only marks the first tropical system for the 2008/2009 South Indian season, but also one of the earliest on record (average South Indian start of season is November 15). Currently, Asma is moving westward towards southern Africa, as it may pass over Madagascar. If this system maintains its track and intensity, significant amounts of rain may be expected along the eastern coastline, with the possibility of localized flooding in the next seven days.

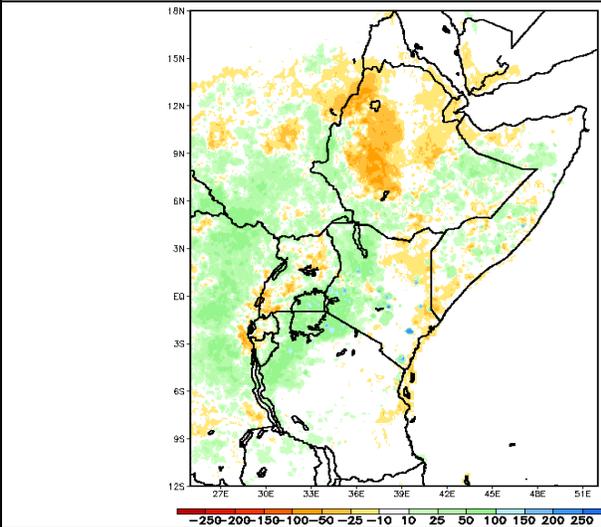
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**Figure 1: Satellite Derived Rainfall Estimates (mm) From October 14<sup>th</sup> to October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008**



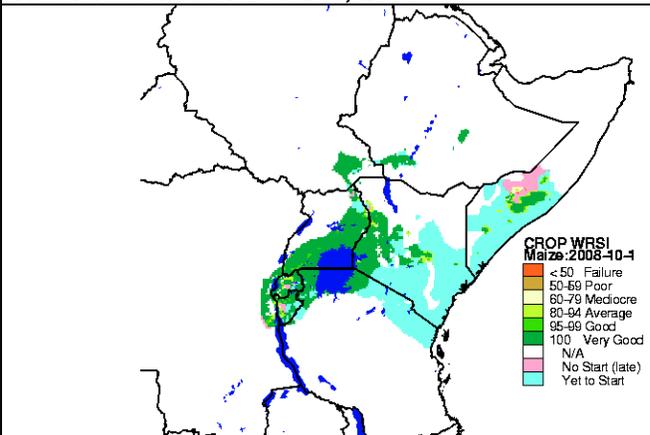
Source: FEWS/NOAA

**Figure 2: Rainfall Anomalies (mm) October 1<sup>st</sup> – October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008**



Source: FEWS/NOAA

**Figure 3: Crop WRSI for Maize As of 1<sup>st</sup> dekad of October, 2008**



Source: FEWS/USGS