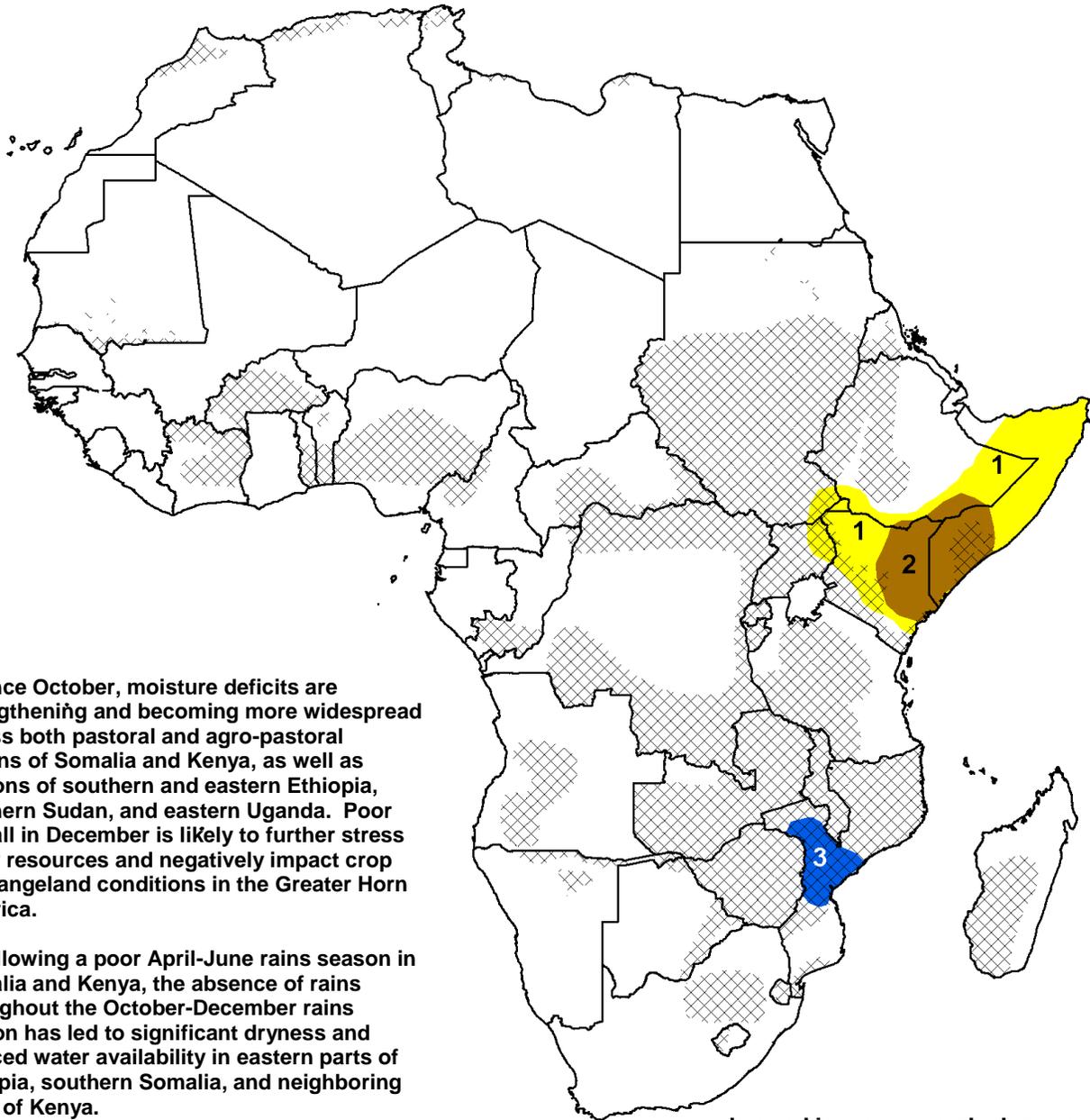


- Another week of abundant rainfall expected to benefit early season cropping activities, as well as alleviate many local areas that experienced a below-average start to the seasonal rains in southern Africa.

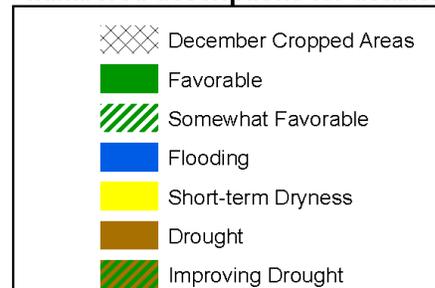


1) Since October, moisture deficits are strengthening and becoming more widespread across both pastoral and agro-pastoral regions of Somalia and Kenya, as well as portions of southern and eastern Ethiopia, southern Sudan, and eastern Uganda. Poor rainfall in December is likely to further stress water resources and negatively impact crop and rangeland conditions in the Greater Horn of Africa.

2) Following a poor April-June rains season in Somalia and Kenya, the absence of rains throughout the October-December rains season has led to significant dryness and reduced water availability in eastern parts of Ethiopia, southern Somalia, and neighboring parts of Kenya.

3) Combined with increased discharges from the Cahora Bassa dam, above-average rainfall across many portions of Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique has elevated the risk for downstream flooding in the Zambezi and Pungwe River basins in parts of western and central Mozambique.

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



Plentiful rains sustain moisture surpluses throughout much of southern Africa.

During the last observation period, moderate to high amounts of precipitation were observed throughout many countries in southern Africa. The highest seven day totals ranging between 50-100mm, with locally heavier amounts (>125mm) were received in portions of southwestern Angola and in southern Maize Triangle region of South Africa. Compared to the previous week, the distribution of precipitation in the last seven days exhibited a marked shift towards the south, with decreased amounts of rainfall observed over many areas in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. Further north, many areas saw a suppression of weekly rains, with fair amounts of rainfall (15-30mm) along the western provinces of Tanzania, and northern Mozambique (Figure 1).

In the last 30 days, precipitation has continued to remain above-average throughout southern Africa, which has sustained high moisture surpluses across a broad portion of southern Africa in December. As of the second dekad of December, significantly high precipitation anomalies ranging between 100-200mm above average have been observed from central Zambia to central Mozambique (Figure 2). In South Africa, last week's pronounced increase in rains helped to neutralize both seasonal and 30-day moisture deficits throughout parts of the southern Maize Triangle. However, the onset of heavy rainfall following a period of dryness resulted in flooding during the last week, which led to the displacement of thousands of people in the Johannesburg and Pretoria regions of the Gauteng province of South Africa.

Precipitation forecasts suggest a return of significantly high rains over areas already experiencing a surplus of moisture. Rainfall amounts ranging between 50-100mm, with locally heavier amounts (>125mm) are expected over parts of central Angola, Zambia, Malawi, northern Zimbabwe and Mozambique. These excessive rains are likely to increase the potential for basin flooding, particularly along the Zambezi and Pungwe River basins in southern Zambia, eastern Zimbabwe, and western Mozambique during the next seven days.

A continued absence of rainfall exacerbates drought conditions throughout the Greater Horn.

The poor October-December rains season in the Greater Horn has been characterized by both poorly distributed and infrequent rainfall since October. In the last several weeks, rainfall has been considerably absent in East Africa. While precipitation normally decreases during this time of year, many local areas in southern Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia have not observed any measurable rainfall for more than a month, which has been an anomalous feature in East Africa (Figure 3). This dryness is not only expected to negatively impact pastoral and agro-pastoral areas, but also continue to deplete water availability until the next rains season returns in March.

Note: The hazards assessment map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.

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