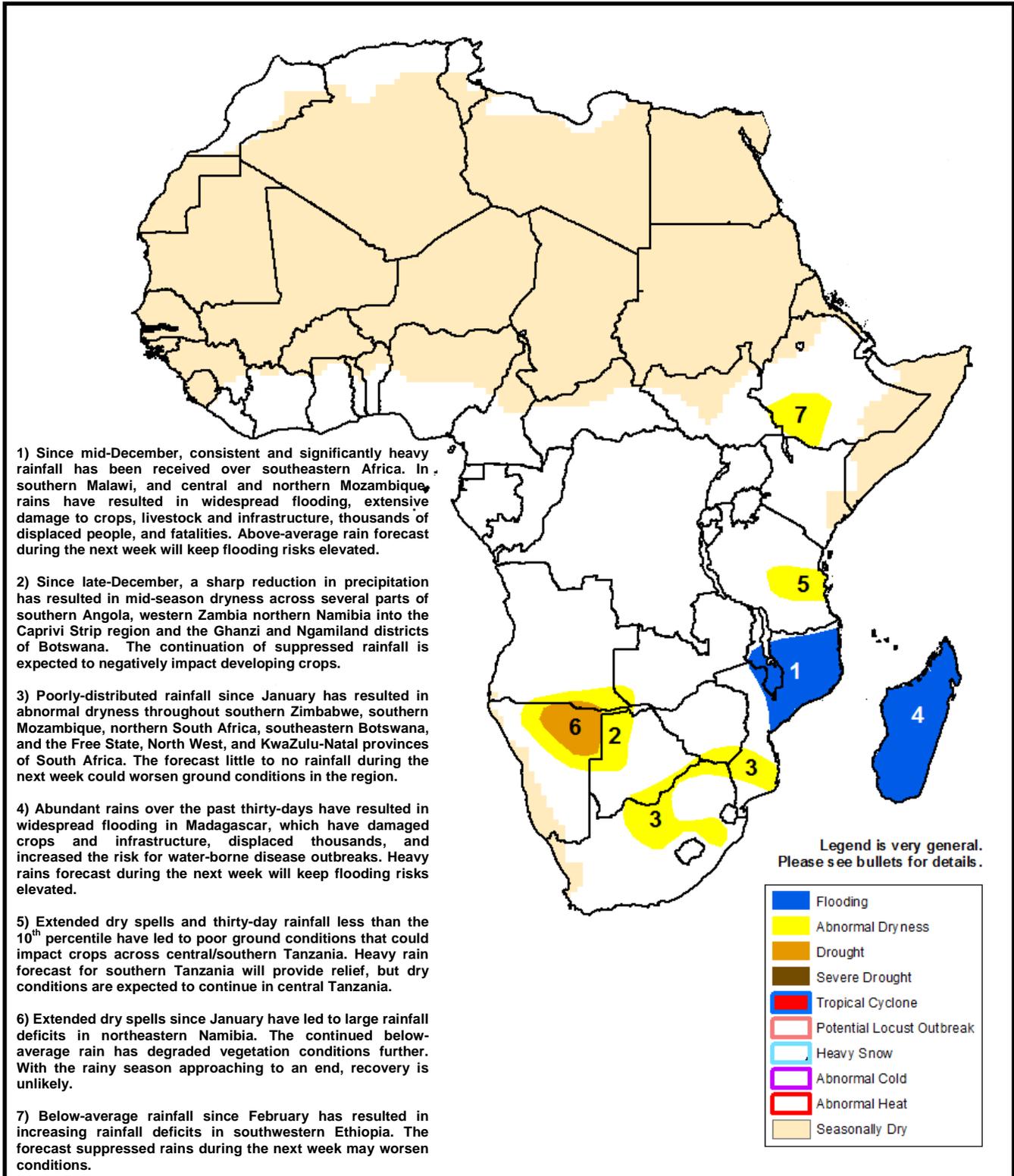




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook March 5 – March 11, 2015

- Consistent heavy rains caused fatalities, flooding, and landslides in Madagascar.
- A slow start to the rainy season observed in southwestern Ethiopia.



Conditions worsen in Malawi and Madagascar.

The consistent heavy rains during the past several weeks have aggravated ground conditions over already-saturated areas of eastern Southern Africa, including Malawi, northern Mozambique, and the northern half of Madagascar. During the past week, torrential rains with amounts in excess of 100 mm fell in southern Malawi, northern Mozambique, and the central and northeastern parts of Madagascar (**Figure 1**). In Malawi, due to excessive wetness, outbreak of water-borne diseases such as cholera has been reported. In Madagascar, this past week's heavy downpours resulted in the overflowing of several rivers, flooding, landslides, fatalities, and displaced people in Antananarivo. To the south, light to moderate rains were observed over South Africa, helping to reduce moisture deficits associated with an erratic rainfall distribution since the past few months. To the west, light to locally moderate rains were recorded across central Angola, Namibia, and Botswana. However, this week's rainfall totals remained slightly below-average, helping to increasing seasonal deficits in the region since the beginning of the southern African monsoon.

An analysis of rainfall percentile over the past two months revealed a wide swath with very low values equal or below the 10th percentile ranking extending from southern Angola to northern Namibia and western Botswana. Furthermore, a portion of northeastern Namibia has recorded values below the 3rd percentile, which indicate an acute dryness in the region. In addition, recent vegetation indices from remote sensing data have indicated further deterioration across east-central Namibia, Botswana, and central South Africa. With the rainbelt already withdrawing to the north, the chance for recovery for already-stressed vegetation in the region is slim. During the next week, heavy rains are expected to persist in the eastern portions of Southern Africa, with torrential rains over southern Tanzania, Malawi, northern Mozambique, and Madagascar (**Figure 2**). This, therefore, maintains high risks for flooding and landslides and is also likely to exacerbate ground conditions over many local areas. Locally heavy rains are also forecast, further north, in northern Angola and southern DRC. In contrast, little to no rainfall is expected throughout the south, including eastern Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and northern South Africa.

Eastern Africa: Rainy season off to a slow start.

Since the beginning of February, insufficient rainfall has been observed over the southwestern portions of Ethiopia. Rainfall anomalies over the past thirty days indicated increasing deficits, with negative anomalies ranging between 10-50 mm across the SNNPR and parts of the central Ethiopia (**Figure 3**). The lack of rainfall over the past four weeks could mean delayed land preparation and sluggish start to the March-May season. During the past week, suppressed rains were mostly observed across Ethiopia, except localized areas of the west. The arrival of seasonal rains is needed to ensure favorable cropping activities in the region. During the next week, however, little to no rainfall is forecast across much of equatorial eastern Africa. This could negatively affect the beginning of the current cropping season in the region.

Note: The hazards outlook 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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