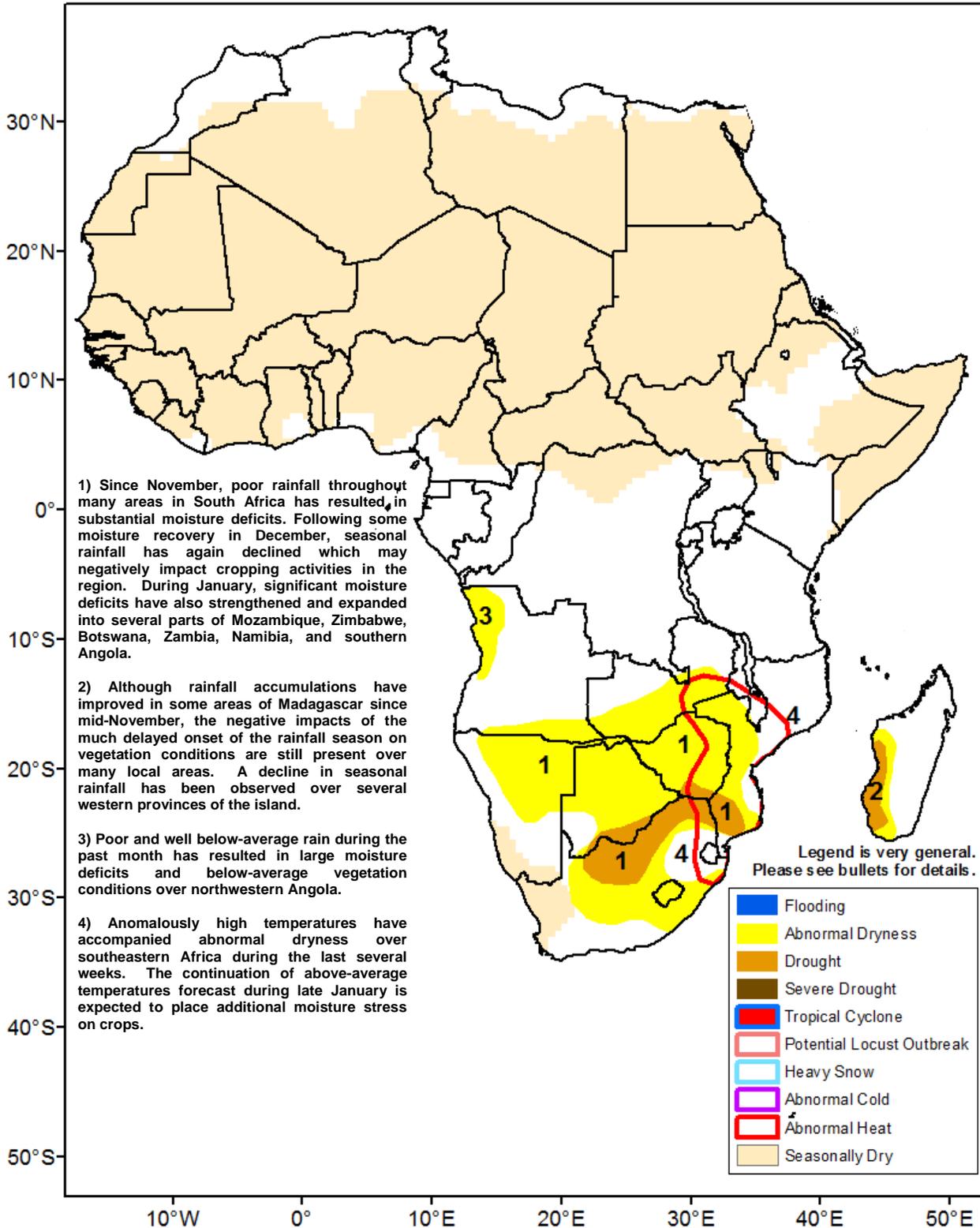




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook February 1 – February 7, 2018

- Improved rainfall was received over portions of South Africa, as increased rainfall is forecast for many anomalously dry regions of Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Mozambique during early February.



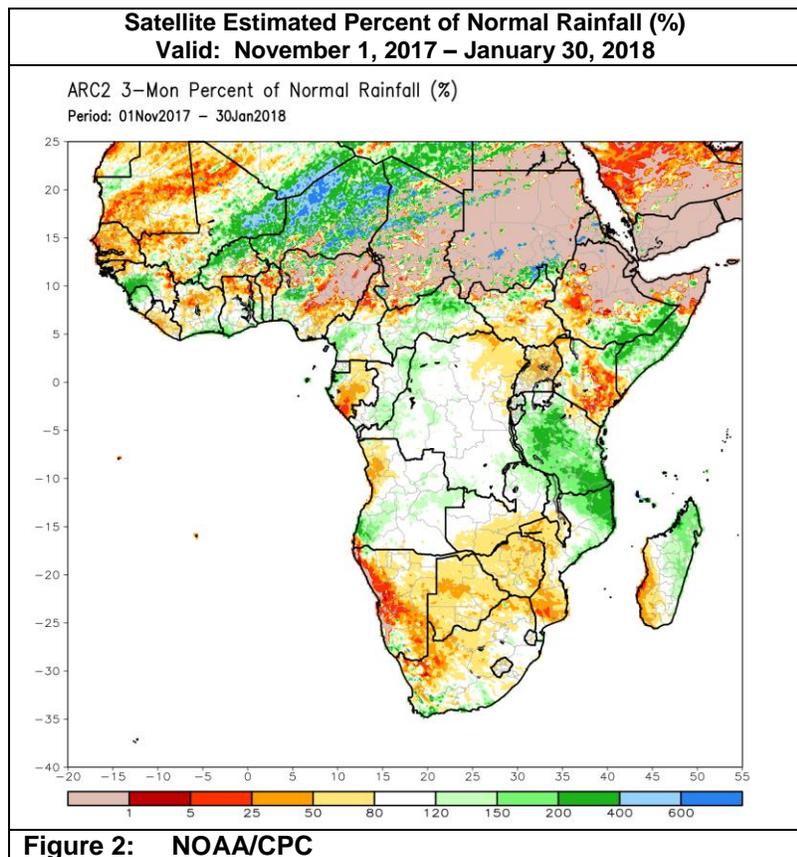
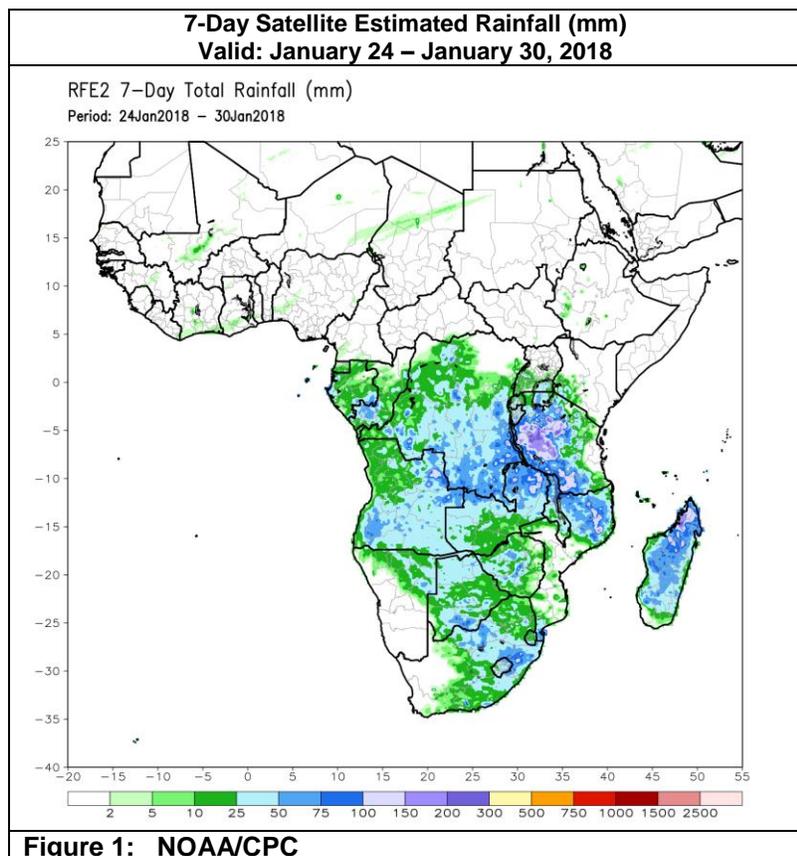
Increased rainfall helps to alleviate some dryness concerns in South Africa.

During the last seven days, a seasonable rainfall distribution was observed throughout many regions in South Africa, Lesotho, and Botswana, marking the first time in several weeks when these areas have experienced average to above-average rainfall accumulations. Precipitation amounts ranged between 5 to 50mm according to satellite estimates and gauges, where the highest moisture accumulations were received across the Free State and Kwa-Zulu Natal regions of the country. Towards the north, an increase in seasonal rainfall was also registered over the Caprivi Strip region of northern Botswana and northern Namibia, however, seasonal rainfall remained very limited towards the west in eastern Zimbabwe, and central and southern Mozambique (Figure 1). Consistent with the past several weeks, the bulk of the heaviest monsoon rains (>75mm) were concentrated in the northeast region of southern Africa, with many local areas registering weekly totals in excess of 100mm in southwestern Tanzania, northern Mozambique, and northern Madagascar.

At the conclusion of January, many rainfall anomaly analyses suggest that the monsoon performance was one of the poorest on record in terms of extent and distribution. Much of southern Africa has been under the influence of a suppressed convective pattern, which resulted in a mid-season period with significantly low monthly totals and an anomalously low frequency of rainfall. The impacts of this past January can be felt on the long-term moisture anomalies, as many regions in Zambia, Mozambique, southern Malawi, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa are now experiencing less than 80 percent of their normal rainfall accumulation since the beginning of November (Figure 2). Many local areas within these countries depict pockets where seasonal to date rainfall has registered less than half and/or a quarter of what they typically receive.

The dearth of seasonal rainfall throughout many regions in southern Africa has led to increased concerns for drought, water availability and impacts on cropping activities. Analysis of remotely sensed vegetation health indices suggests a degradation of ground conditions in parts of Namibia, Botswana, Angola, Zambia and western Mozambique. Deteriorating crop conditions have already been observed in some parts of South Africa, with wilting already taken place in Zimbabwe. However, ground reports suggest that late-planted crops in the Maize Triangle region of South Africa are more likely to recover with the latest increase in rainfall during late January. Consequently, the continuation of seasonal rainfall during February will be critical to crop development and production in the region.

During the outlook period, models suggest a weakening of the suppressed convective weather pattern and a return towards a more seasonable rainfall distribution throughout much of southern Africa in early February. Widespread moderate to locally heavy precipitation is forecast over several anomalous dry regions. However, anomalously high daytime maximum temperatures are again forecast over parts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. No tropical activity is expected during the next seven days.



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.