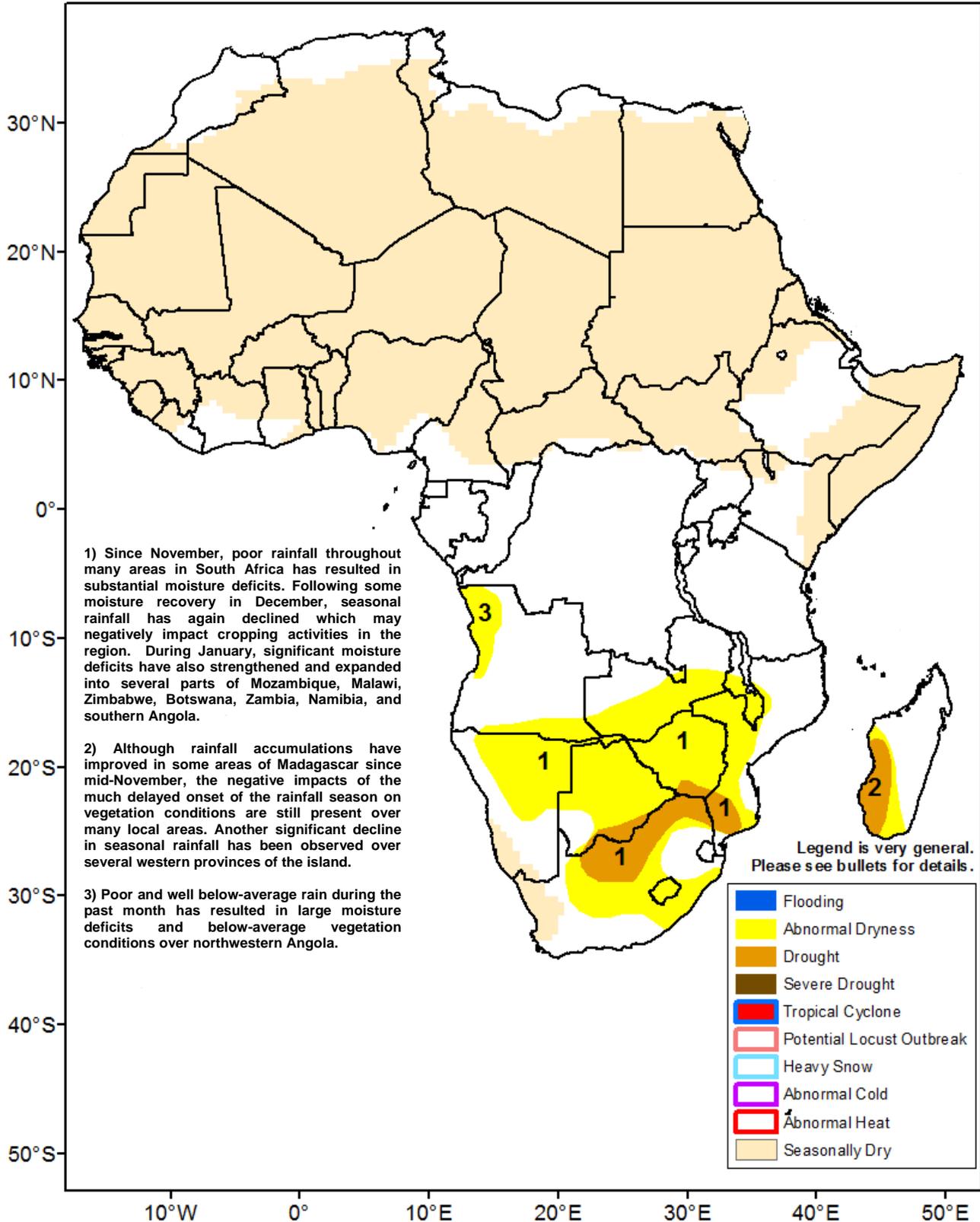




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook February 8 – February 14, 2018

- Beneficial rains moved into parts of Zimbabwe and Mozambique for the first time in many weeks. Continued relief for some areas is in the forecast during the next 7 days.



Increased rainfall helps to alleviate some dryness concerns in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

During the last seven days, a large increase in rain was observed throughout many regions in Zimbabwe and central Mozambique, marking the first time in many weeks when these areas have experienced average to above-average rainfall accumulations. Precipitation amounts ranged between 75 and 150mm according to satellite estimates (Figure 1) and gauges. Towards the west, an increase in seasonal rainfall was also registered over the Caprivi Strip region of northern Botswana, eastern Angola, and southern Zambia. Flooding was reported in the Karonga District in northern Malawi. For a second week, rainfall was ample (>25mm) and well distributed across much of South Africa. Rains were very light in northwestern Angola, where moisture deficits are growing. In southern and western parts of Madagascar, rainfall was largely nonexistent as it has been for most of the season.

During the first week of February, 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 experiencing less than 80 percent of their normal rainfall accumulation since the beginning of December (Figure 2). Some local areas within these countries depict pockets where rainfall since December has registered less than half of what they typically receive. Southwestern Madagascar has been extremely dry since the beginning of the monsoon season, receiving consistently below-average rainfall. As a result, total rainfall less than 50% of normal has led to one of the poorest seasons on record.

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, Angola, Zambia, western Mozambique and Malawi. Deteriorating crop conditions are already observed in parts of South Africa, and wilting has 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. Analysis of trends in VHI already supports rebounding vegetation health. 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 that monsoon convergence will shift back to the north. Heavy precipitation is expected from northern Mozambique through Malawi and into Zambia. According to the GEFS, 100-150mm with locally higher amounts is possible. Elsewhere, suppressed rainfall should persist across already dry areas of western Angola, and return to southern Zimbabwe, Botswana, and northern South Africa. 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.

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