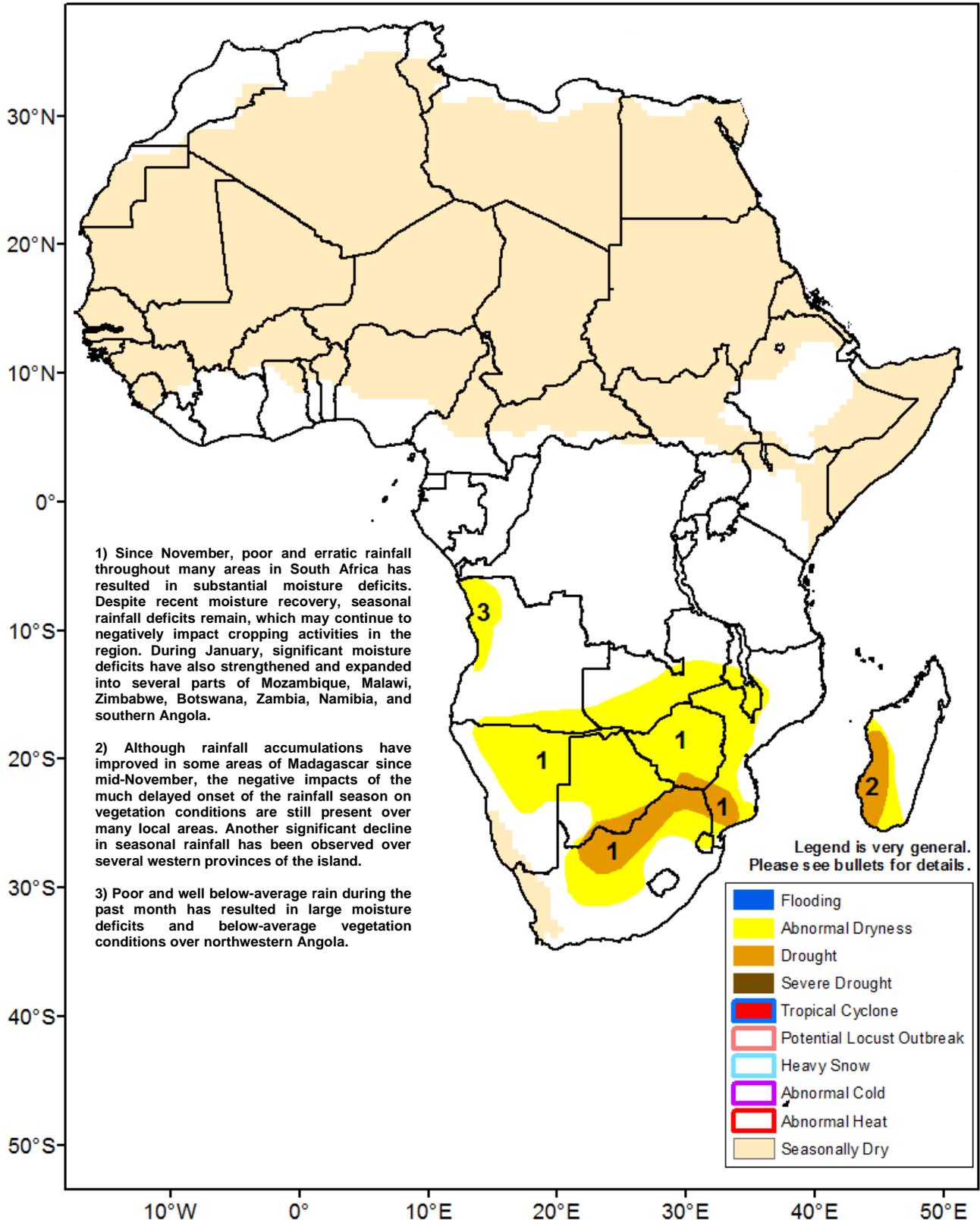




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook February 15 – February 21, 2018

- Increased rains continued to decrease deficits throughout many portions of southern Africa, but have led to some localized flooding issues.



While many other regions receive beneficial rains, dry conditions are worsening in western Angola

During the last 7 days, the zone of enhanced rains expanded over eastern Angola, Zambia, northern Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Mozambique. The scope and location of the band of enhanced rainfall was extremely beneficial for many areas that had experienced an extremely dry January. The highest 7-day rainfall totals exceeded 150mm in local parts of Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique (**Figure 1**). As a result, localized flooding has been reported. Totals of at least 100mm were widespread and encompass areas of Zimbabwe, Malawi, and other parts of Mozambique. An area receiving only very light rains stretched from Botswana, across northern South Africa/southern Zimbabwe, into southern Mozambique. Rains remained very light in northwestern Angola, where moisture deficits are growing. In southern and western parts of Madagascar, the last few days brought the first significant rainfall in many weeks.

A pattern switch has become apparent since the start of February. During January, many rainfall anomaly analyses suggested that the monsoon performance was one of the poorest on record in terms of extent and distribution. Much of southern Africa had been under the influence of a suppressed convective pattern, which resulted in a period with significantly low totals and an anomalously low rainfall frequency. Over the past 2 weeks, widespread soaking rains have been present in many of these same areas. Consequently, significant changes are observed in short term anomalies. The areas of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, and Mozambique which exhibit 30-day rainfall deficits greater than 100mm have shrunk dramatically in spatial extent (**Figure 2**). Impacts from this past January are still felt on the long-term moisture anomalies, as regions in Zambia, Mozambique, southern Malawi, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa are still experiencing less than 80 percent of their normal rainfall accumulation since the beginning of December. Southwestern Madagascar has been extremely dry since the beginning of the monsoon season, receiving consistently below-average rainfall. Recent heavy rain is slowly lessening moisture deficits.

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, Mozambique and Malawi. Deteriorating crop conditions were 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 likely recovering with the increase in rainfall during late January and February. Analysis of trends in VHI supports the rebounding of vegetation health.

During the outlook period, models suggest that areas expected to receive enhanced rainfall include western Angola, DRC, Congo, and Gabon, as well as, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. Total amounts reaching 100mm are possible. Tanzania is likely to receive suppressed rains and a welcome reprieve to abnormally wet conditions.

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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