

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

October 21 - 27, 2004

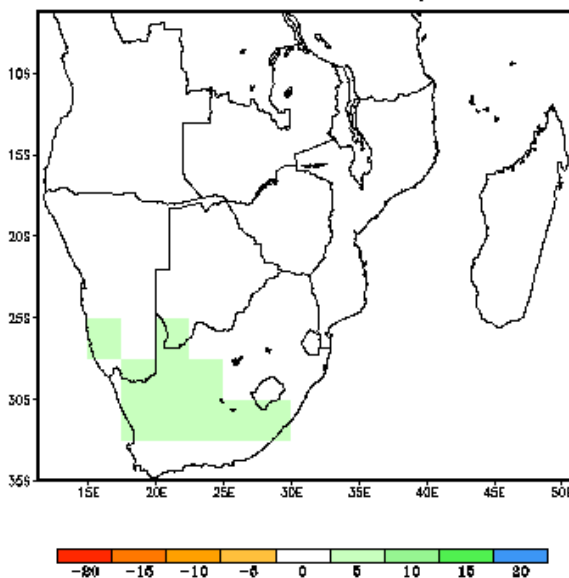
Weekly Introduction:

CCA Outlooks for November-January at One Month Lead

Southern Africa

The outlook for Nov-Jan 2004-2005 southern Africa rainfall at one month lead shows a tilt in the odds favoring slightly above average rainfall over most of the Northern Cape, portions of the Free State and Eastern Cape provinces of South Africa, and portions of southern Namibia. Climatology is expected elsewhere.

CCA Depart. Clim. Prob. Forecast X 100
 Nov-Jan 2004-05 S. Africa Rainfall, One Month Lead



Locust Update

The report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations on the locust situation in western Africa was last updated on October 15. Desert Locust swarms continue to leave West Africa and move towards the north and northwest. So far this month, swarms have arrived in northwest Mauritania and southern Western Sahara. Some of these swarms continued north and have reached the Draa Valley in Morocco. Swarms have also formed south of the Atlas Mountains in Algeria and probably in Morocco. Additional details can be found at the USAID web site for Assistance for Emergency Locust/Grasshopper Abatement (AELGA) at <http://www.aelga.net> and the Agrhymet site at <http://www.agrhymet.ne>.

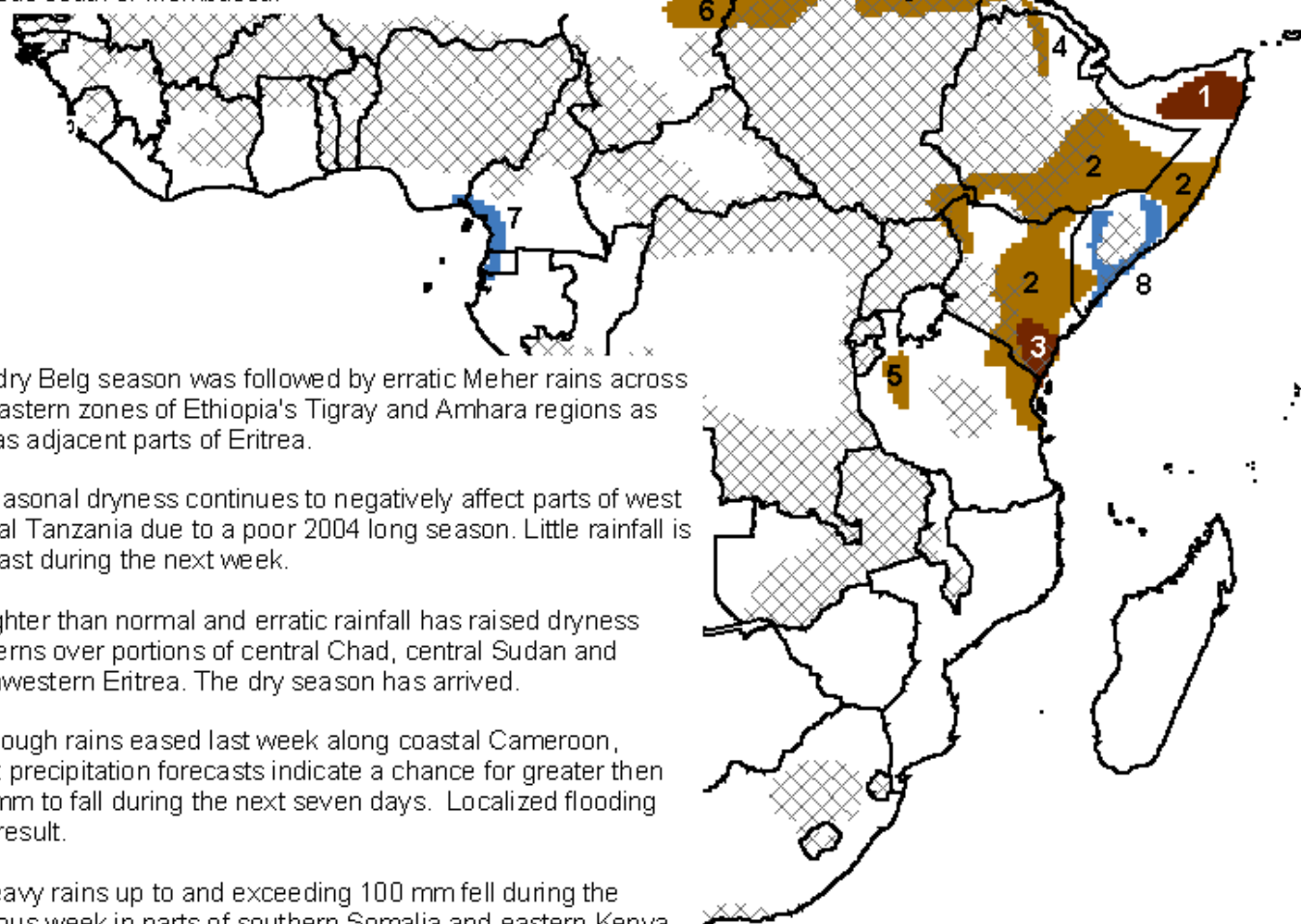
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1) Early October rainfall in parts of northern Somalia have helped to increase moisture in the area. However, at least 4 years of drought have decimated livelihoods in the region and many continuous seasons of substantial rainfall are needed to reverse the situation.

NOTE: Black hatched regions depict combined wheat, maize, sorghum, and millet crop zones which are active (sowing to harvest) during the current month. (from FAO)

2) Though long term drought continues over much of the GHA region, recent precipitation has led to somewhat improved conditions. Widespread weekly rains of up to and exceeding 100 mm fell in parts of southern Ethiopia, southern Somalia, eastern Kenya, and northeastern Tanzania. Flooding was reported in Dar es Salaam, though regional drought continues.

3) Within area 2, two year rainfall is running around half of normal in southeastern Kenya. Heavy rains during the past week have led to localized flooding along coastal areas south of Mombassa.



4) A dry Belg season was followed by erratic Meher rains across the eastern zones of Ethiopia's Tigray and Amhara regions as well as adjacent parts of Eritrea.

5) Seasonal dryness continues to negatively affect parts of west central Tanzania due to a poor 2004 long season. Little rainfall is forecast during the next week.

6) Lighter than normal and erratic rainfall has raised dryness concerns over portions of central Chad, central Sudan and southwestern Eritrea. The dry season has arrived.

7) Though rains eased last week along coastal Cameroon, latest precipitation forecasts indicate a chance for greater than 150 mm to fall during the next seven days. Localized flooding may result.

8) Heavy rains up to and exceeding 100 mm fell during the previous week in parts of southern Somalia and eastern Kenya. Over the next week, additional heavy rains are forecast which may lead to localized flooding in the Jubba and Shebelle River Basins.

Valid: October 21 - 27, 2004

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. A four-year drought continues to devastate the Sanaag, Sool, Togdheer, Bari, and Nugal Provinces of northern Somalia. More recently the long and short rains for the 2004 season were about average, and while no significant rain fell during the previous week, some light showers are expected during the forecast period. It will take several seasons of normal rainfall to ease the effects of the long-term drought.
2. Long-term drought remains across northwestern Tanzania, central and eastern Kenya, the Somalia region of Ethiopia, southern portions of Ethiopia's SNNPR and Oromiya regions down through the Galguduud and Mudug regions of central Somalia. Unusually light rains fell during the months of March and May creating a season that began late and ended early. Seasonal deficits were in the range of 100 to 150 mm and exceeded 250 mm in the higher elevations. However; in the past week heavy rains fell in most areas, with totals reaching over 100 mm in some locations. These rains did not reach central Somalia and adjacent parts of Ethiopia, though more significant rain is expected during the next week in much of the area. During the past week, dry conditions persisted along the Sudan – Kenya border and adjacent parts of Uganda and little to no rain expected this week.
3. Southeastern Kenya continues to experience a multi-year drought and the 2004 March-May season continues to degrade pasture conditions and water supplies. During the previous week, however, a day of very heavy rains fell on the area and caused localized flooding near Mombasa. Lighter rains are expected this week.
4. Rainfall during both the Belg and Meher seasons was much lighter than normal across South Tigray, North Wello and South Wello in the Ahmara region of Ethiopia and adjacent parts of Eritrea. The Belg season experienced half of the normal rainfall while the Meher season rains were erratic and lighter than normal. Rainfall will continue to slowly decrease as the dry season begins to set in.
5. Rainfall during the 2003-04 season was slightly below average in parts of western Tanzania, with totals running about 70% of normal. With satellite imagery continuing to show vegetation stress, the lack of rains in the near term forecast does not bode well. The approaching rainy season usually begins in late October or early November and lasts until April.
6. Across Biltine in Chad, Darfur and Kurdufan in Sudan, and Gash Barka in Eritrea, lighter than normal and erratic rainfall occurred during July and August. Some rainfall in September and early October moderated dry conditions, though areas are experiencing poor pasture conditions, low drinking water levels, and poor irrigation. The dry season has arrived in Darfur and Biltine, though Kurdufan may see some light shower activity this week.
7. Along the Cameroon and adjacent country coasts, heavy rain this week may produce some localized flooding. While heavier than normal rains did not fall during the previous week, the potential still exists as a result of already saturated soils from earlier rainfall.
8. In southern portions of Somalia, heavy rains fell along the Jubba and Shebelle River Basins possibly causing some localized flooding. Rainfall totals of over 100mm fell in some areas, and latest weekly forecasts indicate a chance for additional heavy precipitation.

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