

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

December 30, 2004 – January 5, 2005

Weekly Introduction:

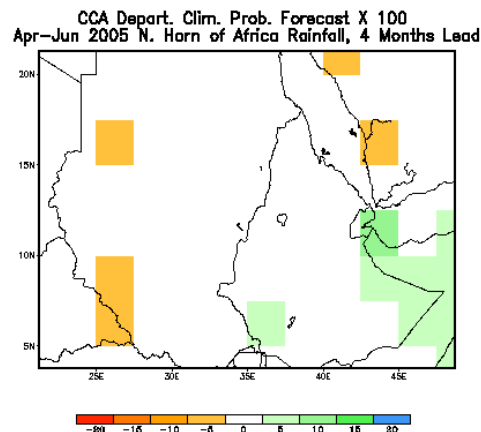
Tsunami Impacts on Africa

The earthquake that occurred in the eastern Indian Ocean Basin on December 26th created a series of Tsunamis that reached parts of the eastern coast of Africa. Areas affected include coastal Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and eastern Madagascar, though little damage was reported from Mozambique or South Africa. In Somalia, most of the victims were fishermen from Gara'g and Hafun villages in the northeastern Puntland region, as well as Marka and Baraawe towns of Lower Shabelle region in the south. Other information also indicated that many coastal villages and towns were destroyed or submerged by the waves in central and northeastern coastal regions of Somalia. Numerous deaths were also reported along the beaches of Kenya and Tanzania, and many homes were destroyed in Madagascar. On a positive note, little precipitation is expected throughout coastal Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania during the next week. Heavy rains are, however, forecast in much of eastern coastal Madagascar.

CCA Outlook Updates: Apr-Jun 2005 Forecasts

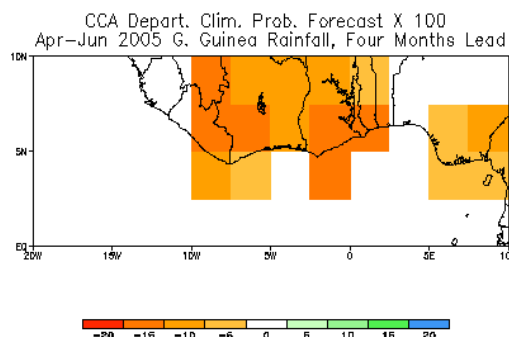
Northern Horn of Africa

Climatology is expected across most of the region, except locally over northwestern and southwestern Sudan, where there is a slight tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall. There is a slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall locally over southwestern and eastern Ethiopia, and portions of northern Somalia.



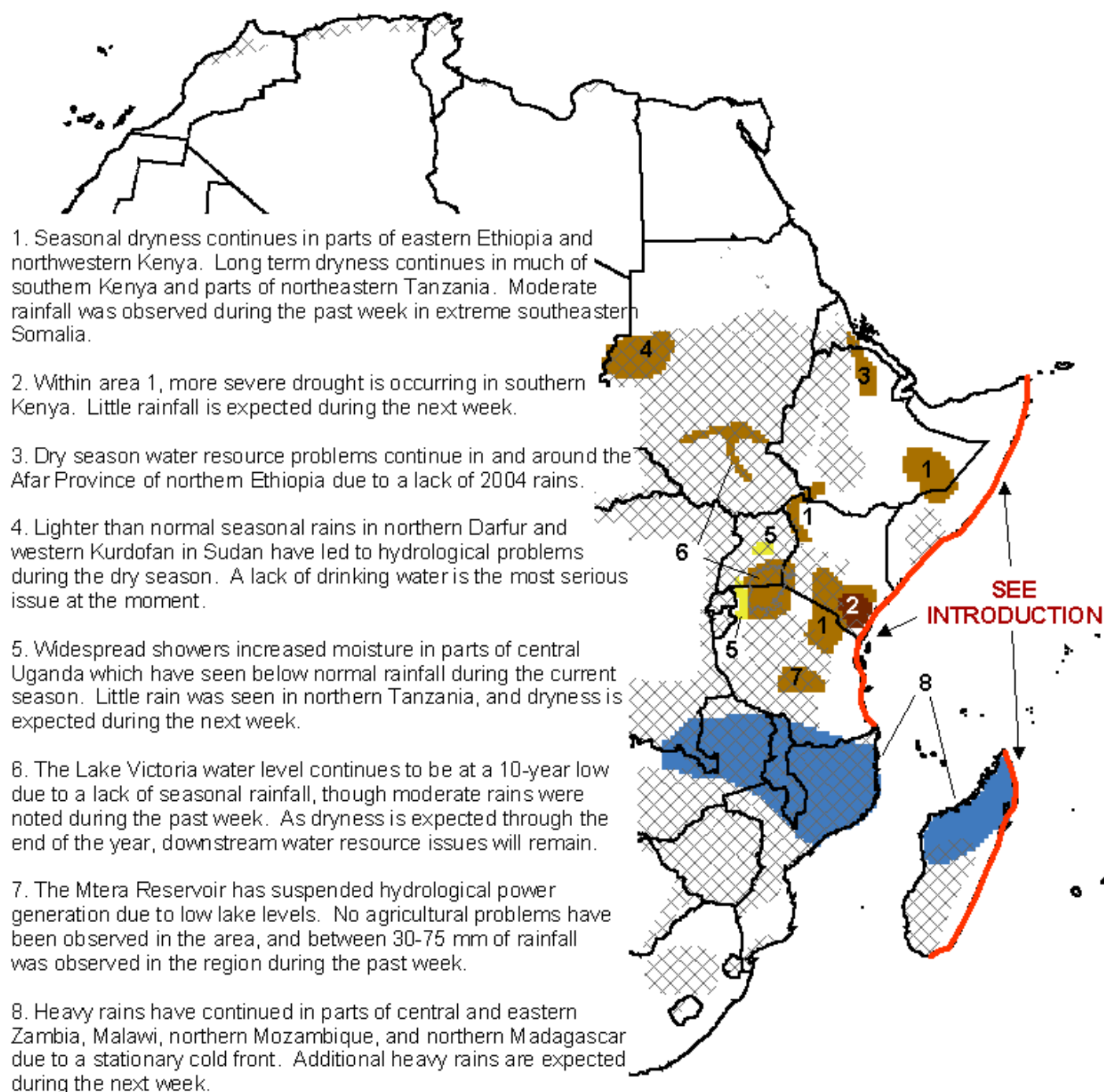
Gulf of Guinea Region

The outlook for Apr-Jun 2005 Gulf of Guinea region rainfall at four months lead indicates a moderate to strong tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall across Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, the eastern halves of Liberia and Guinea, and southeastern Nigeria. Climatology is expected elsewhere.



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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)



Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. In southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, one to two years of below normal rainfall have significantly reduced water resources. During the previous period little to no rain fell in the affected parts of Kenya, however heavier rains fell in Tanzania. East central Ethiopia and west central Somalia have recorded below normal rainfall totals for the past one and two years, respectively. Dryness near the Sudan/Ethiopia/Kenya border intersection is the result of lighter than normal rainfall during 2004. Some thunderstorms in the area provided unseasonable relief, however this area is currently in the dry season and widespread rains will not return until March or April 2005.
2. Inland parts of southeastern Kenya, inside of area (1) a multi-year drought continues to reduce water resources. While conditions improved in early December, during the previous period little to no rain fell aggravating the significant precipitation deficits already impacting the area. This trend is expected to continue as little or no rain is expected during the coming week.
3. The Afar region in north central Ethiopia received below normal precipitation during 2004. This has lowered drinking water levels and caused pasture degradation in the area. As the rainy season has come to a close, moisture deficits will remain until the next season, which begins in April 2005.
4. Central Darfur and northeastern Kurdoan in Sudan, which are already dealing with a humanitarian crisis, had a short 2004 wet season. The abbreviated season had precipitation that was erratic, stressing irrigated agriculture, lowering water supplies, drying out wells, and producing unfavorable pasture conditions. The next wet season is expected to begin July 2005.
5. Short-term dryness continues to affect Central Uganda and northwestern Tanzania. 20 to 30 mm of rain fell on the area during the past week keeping deficits from rising. The coming week will likely bring needed rain to affected parts of Tanzania, with little to no rain expected in Uganda.
6. Ten-year low water levels continue to impact the area down stream from Lake Victoria as a result of below normal rainfall in the lake's catchment basin. The poor flow of water downstream from the lake has affected the White Nile and the associated Sobat and Jur tributaries in southern Sudan. Fish and wild food normally made available by the annual river flooding in these areas has been negatively impacted in northern Bahr Al Gazal, Unity, Jongli, and Lakes States. The Lake Victoria Basin has been receiving moderate rainfall during the past month, and lighter rains are expected during the next week.
7. In central and southwestern Tanzania lighter than normal precipitation has reduced water levels in the Mtera Reservoir. This has not impacted local agriculture but has resulted in hydroelectric power being suspended. The below normal rainfall during 2004 has resulted in slight deficits over the Rufiji River Basin. The past month has seen significant rainfall and in the coming week additional precipitation is expected.
8. Across northern Madagascar, northern Mozambique, Malawi, and northern and central Zambia, localized flooding has occurred as a result of heavy rains. During the last month rainfall totals in parts of north central Madagascar have exceeded 400 mm, with an excess of 300 mm having fallen on parts of the mainland. The rains are the result of a cold front that stalled out in the area more than a week ago. The front is expected to remain in the area and will continue to produce heavy rains during the coming week.

AUTHOR: Timothy B Love and Eric Wolvovsky

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7552

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