The USAID FEWS-NET

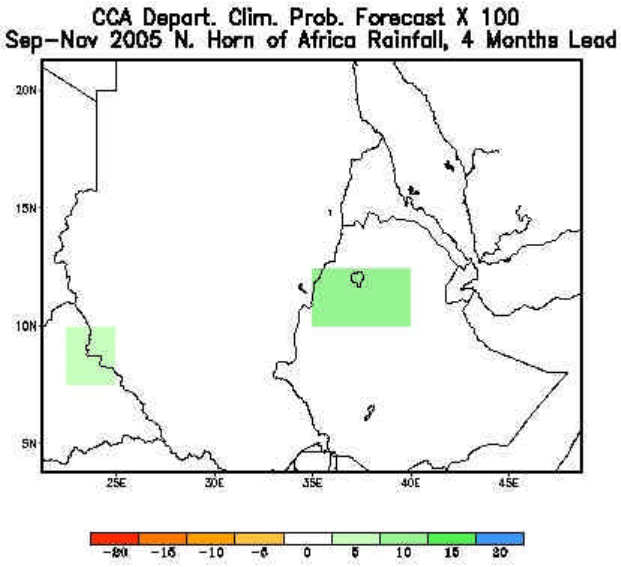
Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

May 26 – June 1, 2005

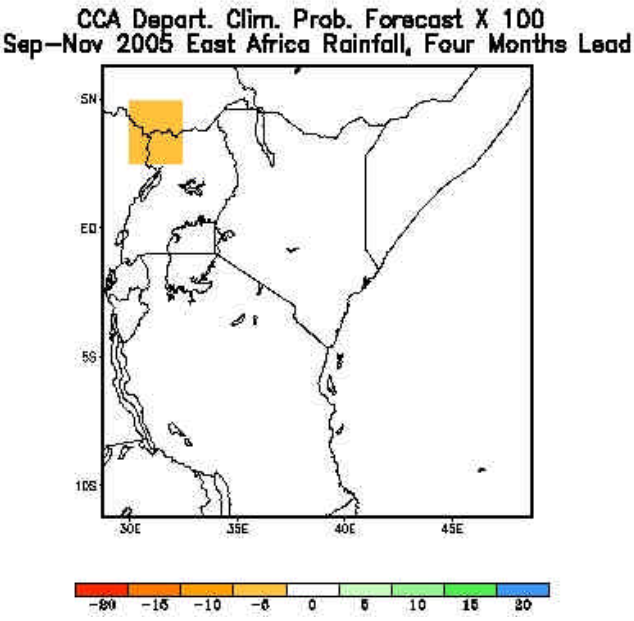
Weekly Introduction:

Update of Seasonal Outlooks at Four Month Lead: Sept - Nov 2005 Forecasts:



Northern Horn of Africa:

Climatology is expected, except locally over portions of northwestern Ethiopia, where there is a slight tilt in the odds favoring above average rainfall.



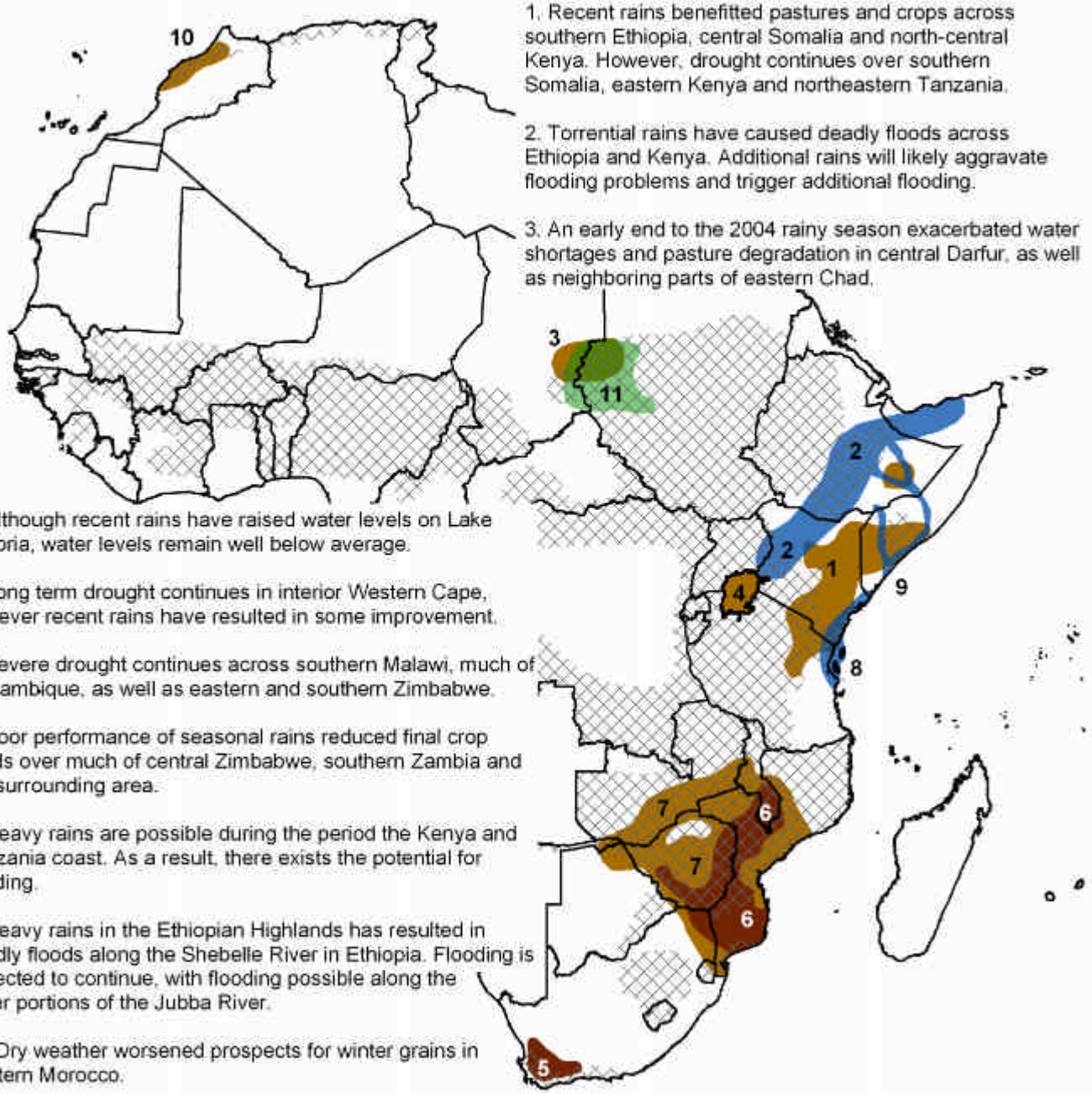
East Africa:

Climatology is expected, except locally over northwestern Uganda and southern Sudan, where there is a slight tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall.

Weather Hazards Assessment Graphic:

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

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)



1. Recent rains benefitted pastures and crops across southern Ethiopia, central Somalia and north-central Kenya. However, drought continues over southern Somalia, eastern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania.

2. Torrential rains have caused deadly floods across Ethiopia and Kenya. Additional rains will likely aggravate flooding problems and trigger additional flooding.

3. An early end to the 2004 rainy season exacerbated water shortages and pasture degradation in central Darfur, as well as neighboring parts of eastern Chad.

4. Although recent rains have raised water levels on Lake Victoria, water levels remain well below average.

5. Long term drought continues in interior Western Cape, however recent rains have resulted in some improvement.

6. Severe drought continues across southern Malawi, much of Mozambique, as well as eastern and southern Zimbabwe.

7. Poor performance of seasonal rains reduced final crop yields over much of central Zimbabwe, southern Zambia and the surrounding area.

8. Heavy rains are possible during the period the Kenya and Tanzania coast. As a result, there exists the potential for flooding.

9. Heavy rains in the Ethiopian Highlands has resulted in deadly floods along the Shebelle River in Ethiopia. Flooding is expected to continue, with flooding possible along the lower portions of the Jubba River.

10. Dry weather worsened prospects for winter grains in western Morocco.

11. Heavy pre-season rains may hamper humanitarian relief efforts in Darfur.

Valid: May 26 - June 1, 2005

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. Recent rains have benefited pastures, crops and water supplies across much of southern Ethiopia, northern Kenya and central Somalia. However, the March through May rains for this year remains well below normal across much of southern Somalia, eastern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania. Rainfall totals are 25 to 60 percent of normal, with deficits ranging from 50 to greater than 200 mm. The largest deficits exist over central Kenya. In may of these areas, these deficits are on top of deficits from past seasons. Beneficial rains are expected during the period, with the best chances for significant precipitation over southern Somalia, central and northeastern Kenya. Lighter showers are possible across interior southeastern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania.

2. Heavy rains have fallen across northern Somalia, the southern portions of the Ethiopian Highlands, northern Kenya and western Kenya. These heavy rains led to flooding in many of these areas. Additional heavy rains are expected to continue across these areas which will likely aggravate existing flooding problems and trigger new ones. Heavy rains are also possible over southwestern Kenya, which may trigger flooding. Although not depicted on the map, heavy rains and localized flooding problems are possible across southwestern Ethiopia and southern Sudan during the period.

3. The 2004 wet season was drier than normal and ended early across much of central Darfur, as well as the Biltine and Ouaddai Prefectures in eastern Chad. This led to moisture shortfalls which in turn reduced viable pasture and water supplies in the area. Although the poor rains of 2004 were not unusual for this arid region, the dryness will exacerbate the ongoing humanitarian crisis. Pre-seasonal rains are expected across Darfur and the surrounding area, which should favor pasture and increase water supplies. However, these rains will likely hamper humanitarian relief efforts and transport in the area. Please see “11” for mor information.

4. Recent rains have helped to raise Lake Victoria’s water levels. However, lake levels well below normal. The low water level has reduced flow into the Nile River and has resulted in reduced hydroelectric power generation and caused energy shortages in parts of Uganda.

5. In interior Western Cape, South Africa, only 25% to 60% of normal rainfall occurred from April to September of 2004. In many areas, the poor performance of the 2004 rains was in addition to lighter than normal rains in 2003. The extended drought has caused major drinking and irrigation water shortages, stressed pastures and has had a negative effect on dry land farming across interior parts of the province. Recent rains have resulted in some improvement.

6. Rainfall totals are well below normal for the 2004-05 season in central and southern Mozambique, eastern and southern Zimbabwe, southern Malawi and the northeastern-most corner of South Africa. Rainfall totals are between 30 and 60 percent of normal across the region, with deficits of 200 to 600 mm. The driest areas are in Gaza and Inhambane provinces in Mozambique, as well as Manicaland and Masvingo provinces in Zimbabwe. Across these areas, rainfall was much lighter than normal during February and early March. As a result, there is a likelihood of crop failures in these areas. In addition, the drought will likely result in a reduction of viable pasture, water shortages and low river levels. The dry season has begun, therefore the chance for any relief during the next several months is nil.

7. A lack of rainfall during February and March has resulted in an untimely dry spell across much of Zimbabwe, central Mozambique, southern Malawi, southern Zambia and northeastern Namibia. The dry spell, which resulted in 4 to 8 weeks of little to no rainfall, came during a critical stage of crop development. In many areas, the dryness was accompanied by hot temperatures. As a result, reductions in crop yield and crop quality are likely in these areas. Many parts of this area have received 60 to 75% of the normal January-March rainfall total. The effects of this dry spell may be enhanced by a late start of the rainy season in some locations. Portions of northern Zimbabwe are not experiencing moisture stress and problems with dryness. Timely rains during late February into March have resulted in good cropping conditions in orographically favored portions of Midlands and Mashonaland in Zimbabwe. Dry conditions are expected across the region, as the dry season has set in and ended the 2004-05 growing season.

8. Winds from off of the Indian Ocean may produce heavy rains along the coast of Kenya and northeastern Tanzania, including the Tanzanian islands of Zanzibar and Pemba. These heavy rains may cause flash flooding.

9. Deadly flooding along the Shebelle has claimed more lives that the 2003 floods in Ethiopia’s Somali Region. Continued rainfall over the Ethiopian Highlands and across the Somali Region will continue flooding along the Shebelle during the period. Flooding is likely downstream in Somalia as well. Flooding is expected along the Jubba River in Somalia as well during the period.

10. Little rainfall across western Morocco over the past two months has reduced yield prospects for maturing winter grains. Dry weather is expected across the region, with mainly seasonable temperatures.

11. The potential exists for locally heavy rains early in the assessment period across central portions of Darfur and adjacent parts of Chad. These rains would fall some 2 to 6 weeks before the typical start of the rainy season over northern portions of West Darfur and southern portions of North Darfur. These rains may hamper humanitarian relief efforts and transport in the area. These rains should subside by the end of the assessment period.

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