The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

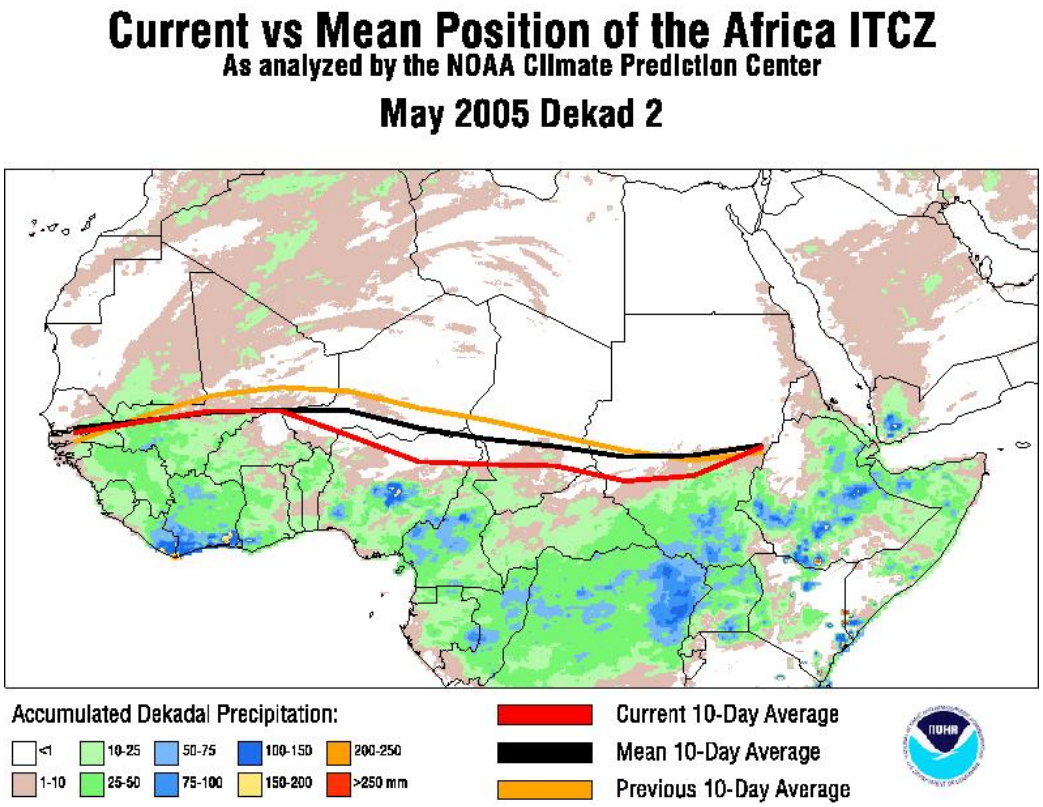
June 2 – 8, 2005

Weekly Introduction:

Update of Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) Position:

From May 11-20, 2005, the African portion of the Intertropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) was located near 12.4 degrees north latitude, compared to the climatological mean of 13.4 north and the previous dekadal position of 14.1N. This latest position represents a significant southward dip in the location of the convergence zone, and corresponds well with the lack of rains near the Sahel. In the west (10W-10E), the latest position of the ITCZ was near 13.7N, compared to the climatological mean of 14.6N and that during May 1-10 of 15.8N. In the east (20E-35E), the current position is near 10.9N, compared to 12.1N and 12.2N for the long term mean and previous dekad, respectively.

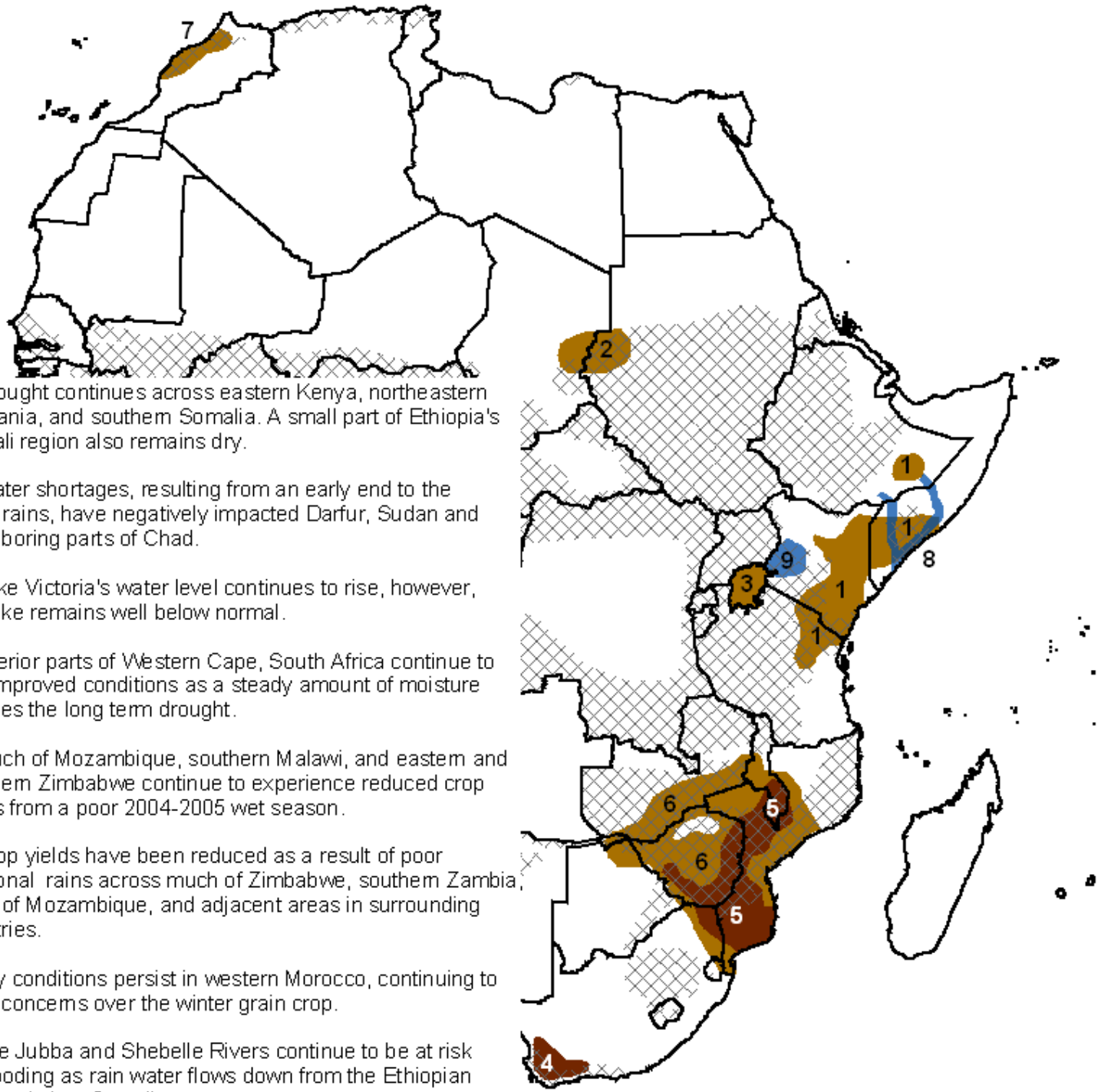
The updated information is available at: (http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/fews/ITCZ/itcz.html).



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. Drought continues across eastern Kenya, northeastern Tanzania, and southern Somalia. A small part of Ethiopia's Somali region also remains dry.

2. Water shortages, resulting from an early end to the 2004 rains, have negatively impacted Darfur, Sudan and neighboring parts of Chad.

3. Lake Victoria's water level continues to rise, however, the lake remains well below normal.

4. Interior parts of Western Cape, South Africa continue to see improved conditions as a steady amount of moisture relieves the long term drought.

5. Much of Mozambique, southern Malawi, and eastern and southern Zimbabwe continue to experience reduced crop yeilds from a poor 2004-2005 wet season.

6. Crop yields have been reduced as a result of poor seasonal rains across much of Zimbabwe, southern Zambia, parts of Mozambique, and adjacent areas in surrounding countries.

7. Dry conditions persist in western Morocco, continuing to raise concerns over the winter grain crop.

8. The Jubba and Shebelle Rivers continue to be at risk for flooding as rain water flows down from the Ethiopian Highlands into Somalia.

9. Heavy rains in western Kenya could cause additional flooding.

Valid: June 2 - June 8, 2005

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. The March through May rains this year have been significantly below normal in eastern Kenya, southern Somalia, and northeastern Tanzania. The worst of the dryness is in Kenya. This seasons deficit ranges from 50 mm to 250 mm, and in many locations this is adding onto previous years deficits. However, recent rainfall along the Kenya-Somalia coastline and in central Kenya has eased the dry conditions. A few showers are expected during the coming week.

2. A shortened wet season across Darfur and adjacent parts of Chad has reduced water resources and stressed pastures. This has also aggravated the on going humanitarian crisis currently occurring in the area. Early season rain may have hampered humanitarian aid trying to get to the Darfur region. The coming week should bring much lighter rains to the area.

3. Lake Victoria's water level continues to rise as seasonal rains fall in its basin. The low water levels have lowered the water flowing into the Nile River, reducing the amount of hydroelectric power being generated in Uganda. Light rainfall is expected over the next week.

4. Interior portions of Western Cape, South Africa continue to face reduced water resources, as the April to September 2004 rainfall was only 60% to 25% of normal. The below normal rains have reduced available drinking and irrigation water and degraded pastures. Recent rains, however, have improved conditions. The current period will likely see a continued improvement as additional rainfall is expected.

5. Deficits between 200 mm and 600 mm have dried out portions of Mozambique, eastern and southern Zimbabwe, southern Malawi, and extreme northeastern South Africa. With only 30% to 60% of normal rainfall across the area the drought has caused crop failure, lower river levels, and degraded pasture. The worst affected areas are Gaza and Inhamambane provinces in Mozambique and Manicaland and Masvingo provinces in Zimbabwe.

6. A four to eight week long dry spell in portions of Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe has greatly reduced crop yields. The untimely dry spell occurred in February and March and was aggravated by above normal temperatures. Orographically favored parts of northern Zimbabwe in Mashonaland and Midlands escaped the dry spell. However, most areas received only 60% to 75% of normal rainfall from January to March. No significant rain is expected during the coming week as we have entered the dry season.

7. A dry April and May will reduce crop yields in western Morocco. Occasionally warm temperatures made the dry conditions worse. Some moderate showers are possible during the coming week, with moderate temperatures.

8. The Jubba and Shebelle rivers continue to have above normal flow as rainwater flowing out of the Ethiopian Highlands over-burdens both rivers. Rain totals in the highlands during the previous period were lighter than what they had been, and with the coming weeks rainfall also expected to be lighter, the threat for more flooding is not as great as it has been. However, continued rainfall into an already saturated basin will aggravate the situation.

9. Flooding in western Kenya is a continued threat. Heavy rains continue to fall in the area. After several weeks of heavy rainfall and with more heavy rains expected during the coming week, additional flooding is likely in the area.

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