The USAID FEWS-NET

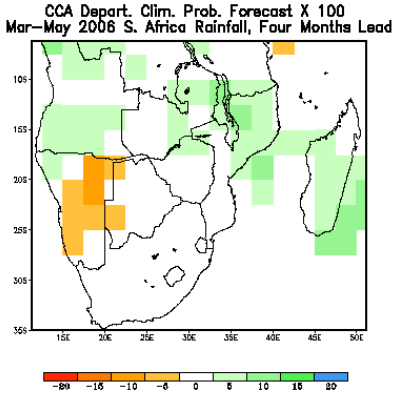
Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

December 1 - 7, 2005

Weekly Introduction:

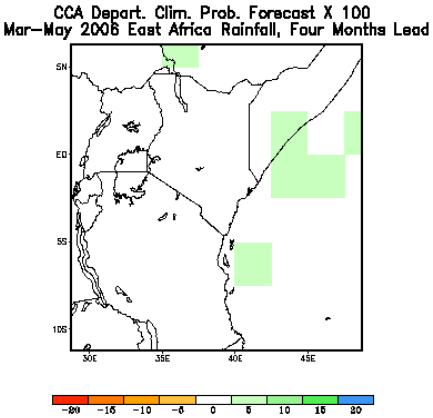
Update of Seasonal Outlooks at Four Months Lead:



March – May 2006

Southern Africa

The outlook for March-May 2006 southern Africa rainfall at four months lead shows a tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall across Namibia and locally over western Botswana. There is a tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall over southern and northern Angola, portions of central and northeastern Zambia, northern Mozambique, Malawi, and portions of southern Tanzania.



East Africa

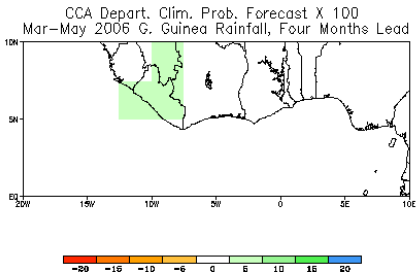
Climatology is expected, except locally over southern Somalia, where there is a slight tilt in the odds favoring above average rainfall.

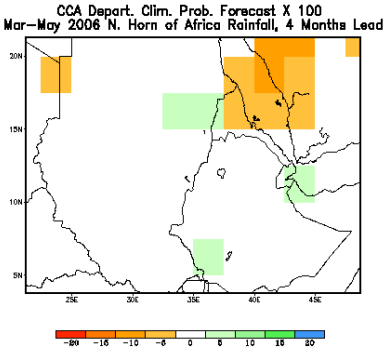
Northern Horn of Africa

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

Gulf of Guinea

There is a slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall over Liberia and eastern Guinea.





Locust Update:

The FAO (http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html) was last updated on November 16 indicating that the Desert Locust situation remains calm in the summer breeding areas in the Sahel in West Africa.

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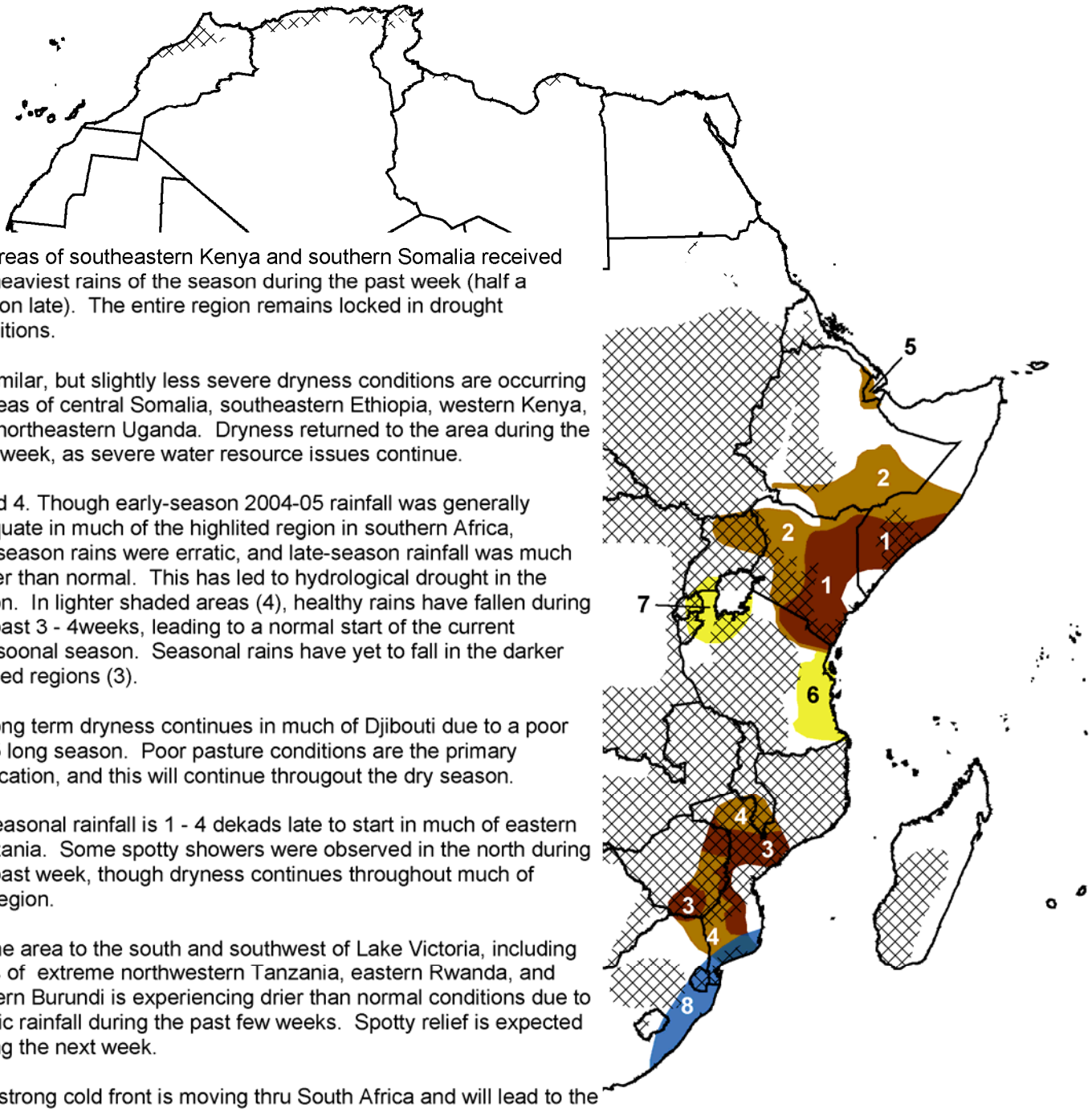
NOTE: Black hatched regions depict combined wheat, maize, sorghum, and millet crop zones which are active (sowing to harvest) during the current month. (from FAO)



1. Areas of southeastern Kenya and southern Somalia received the heaviest rains of the season during the past week (half a season late). The entire region remains locked in drought conditions.

2. Similar, but slightly less severe dryness conditions are occurring in areas of central Somalia, southeastern Ethiopia, western Kenya, and northeastern Uganda. Dryness returned to the area during the past week, as severe water resource issues continue.

3 and 4. Though early-season 2004-05 rainfall was generally adequate in much of the highlited region in southern Africa, mid-season rains were erratic, and late-season rainfall was much lighter than normal. This has led to hydrological drought in the region. In lighter shaded areas (4), healthy rains have fallen during the past 3 - 4weeks, leading to a normal start of the current monsoonal season. Seasonal rains have yet to fall in the darker shaded regions (3).

5. Long term dryness continues in much of Djibouti due to a poor 2005 long season. Poor pasture conditions are the primary implication, and this will continue througout the dry season.

6. Seasonal rainfall is 1 - 4 dekads late to start in much of eastern Tanzania. Some spotty showers were observed in the north during the past week, though dryness continues throughout much of the region.

7. The area to the south and southwest of Lake Victoria, including parts of extreme northwestern Tanzania, eastern Rwanda, and eastern Burundi is experiencing drier than normal conditions due to erratic rainfall during the past few weeks. Spotty relief is expected during the next week.

8. A strong cold front is moving thru South Africa and will lead to the possibility of heavy rainfall and localized severe weather during the first half of the forecast period in an area extending northward toward Maputo, Mozambique.

Valid: December 1 - 7, 2005

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1 Gu rains in southern Somalia, as well as March – June rains in adjacent Kenya were erratic and early to end during the previous season. This led to widespread areas of hydrological and agricultural drought including poor crop production, dry pasture conditions, and low drinking water levels. As a result, groups of people and their livestock have been relocating to areas of permanent water sources. Current seasonal rains throughout much of the area have been erratic, much lighter than normal, and very late to start. While the past week brought the start of seasonal rains to parts of southern and eastern Kenya, these rains are more than half a season late to start and did not extend into areas of southern Somalia, northern, or western Kenya. Dryness has been observed for the past four days in the entire region, and though additional precipitation is expected during the next week, the entire region highlighted is experiencing drought conditions that will likely persist until at least the next rainy season.

2. Associated with area #1, regions of southern and southeastern Ethiopia, southern Somalia, portions of northeastern Uganda, and much of Kenya are plagued by a similar current-season lack of rainfall. Though much of this area did not experience the severe 2 year drought that was observed to the southeast, the past March – June rains were much lighter than normal. Current seasonal dryness is negatively affecting pastures and agriculture in the region. Little to no precipitation was recorded during the past week, and little is expected during the next period, as dryness becomes more severe throughout the area.

3. Long term drought due to erratic and early ending 2004-05 seasonal rains occurred throughout the hazard regions labeled (3) and (4). Seasonal rainfall totals were between 25-75 percent of normal in parts of southern Malawi, central and southern Mozambique, eastern Zimbabwe and extreme northeastern South Africa. In hazard region (3), current seasonal rains have been slow to start and pockets of short term dryness coexist with areas of longer term drought. Some beneficial rain was observed in the region during the past week, and another cold front will push thru the region during the next period, with a good chance to bring substantial rainfall to much of the region.

4. Long term drought due to erratic and early ending 2004-05 seasonal rains occurred throughout the hazard regions labeled (3) and (4). Seasonal rainfall totals were between 25-75 percent of normal in parts of southern Malawi, central and southern Mozambique, eastern Zimbabwe and extreme northeastern South Africa. In hazard region (4), the current rainy season is off to a near normal start, with rains falling during the past four weeks and moisture continuing to increase. Rains are being observed at this time over much of the region and seven day precipitation forecasts continue to be optimistic. If rains are indeed healthy again during this next week, parts of this hazard region will likely be removed in the near future.

5. Seasonal rains in parts of north central Ethiopia and Djibouti were much less than normal, leading to areas localized pastoral dryness in the area. The situation is particularly worrisome, since moderate dryness at the current time will evolve into severe pastoral and water resource issues during later portions of the dry season. Pasture conditions in and around the Afar region do not show signs of extreme dryness, though some localized problems exist eastward into much of Djibouti. Seasonal rainfall has likely ended in the region and dryness should dominate the next week, with no rain expected throughout the region.

6. Abnormal dryness continues in much of eastern Tanzania due to seasonal rainfall delays of 1 – 4 dekads in the area. October rainfall totals were generally near zero for 2005, though long term monthly averages are closer to 25-40 mm. Little to no rainfall was observed during the past week, as this short term dryness is likely negatively affecting agriculture and pasture conditions, especially in the northern area west of Dar. Latest rainfall forecasts are not optimistic for the next week, with light showers possible in the area.

7. Localized short term dryness is observed in areas south and west of Lake Victoria, including eastern parts of Rwanda and Burundi. Though some moderate precipitation was seen during the past week, seasonal rains in the region have been erratic and lighter than normal, with likely repercussions including degraded crops. Rainfall since the first of October is running between 20-80% of normal in the area, with negative anomalies up to 150 mm locally. Light showers are possible during the next week.

8. A cold front currently moving thru South Africa has the potential to produce locally heavy rains during the first part of the forecast period in a region extending from Lesotho to Swaziland to north of Maputo in Mozambique. Daily rainfall amounts exceeding 100 mm are possible, and localized flooding may result.

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