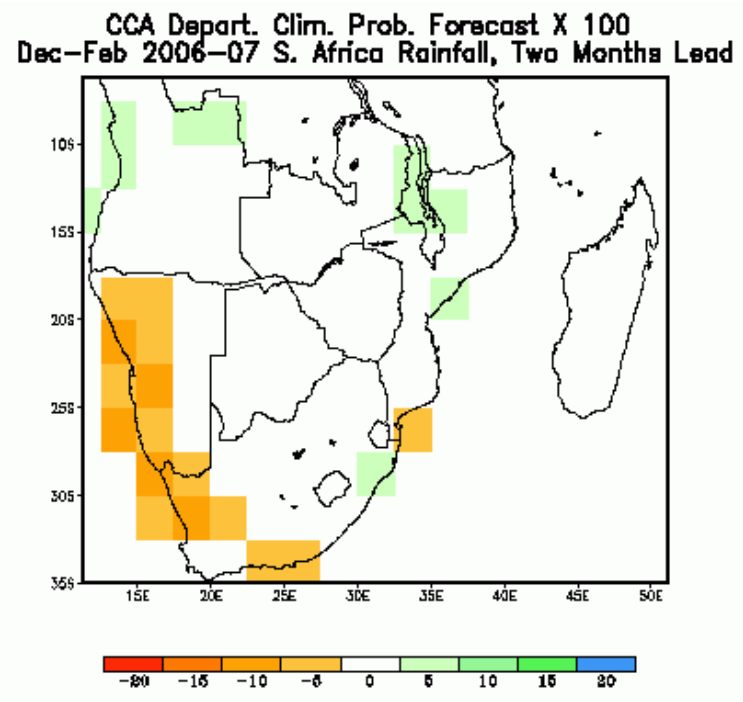
The USAID FEWS-NET

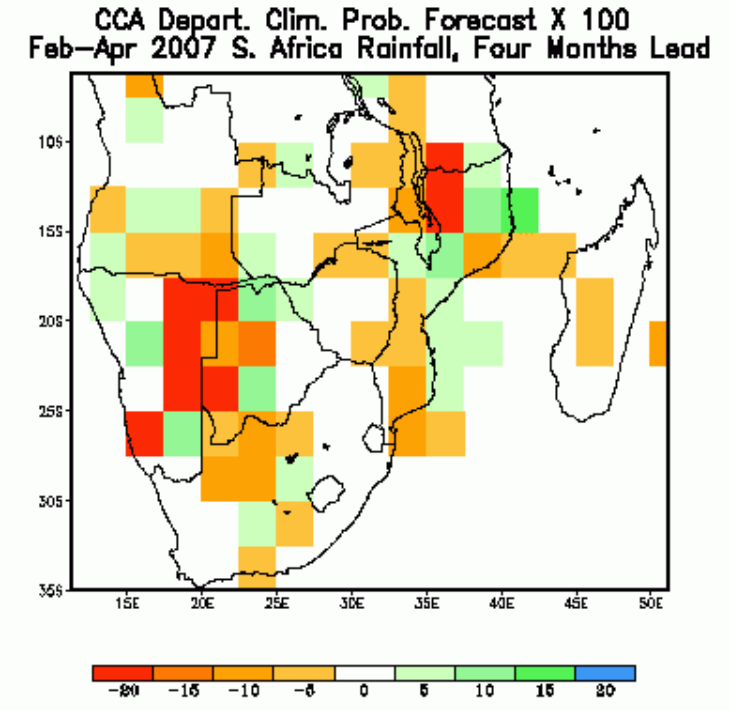
Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

For

October 12 - 18, 2006

Weekly Introduction:





Update of CPC Seasonal Outlooks:

Southern Africa: December 2006-February 2007 Forecasts

The outlook for December 2006 –January 2007 southern Africa rainfall at two months lead shows a slight tilt in the odds favoring below average rainfall along the west coast of South Africa, the western half of Namibia, and locally over southern Mozambique. There is a tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall in local areas in the Kwazulu-Natal Province of South Africa, central and northern Mozambique, coastal and northeastern Angola, and most of Malawi.

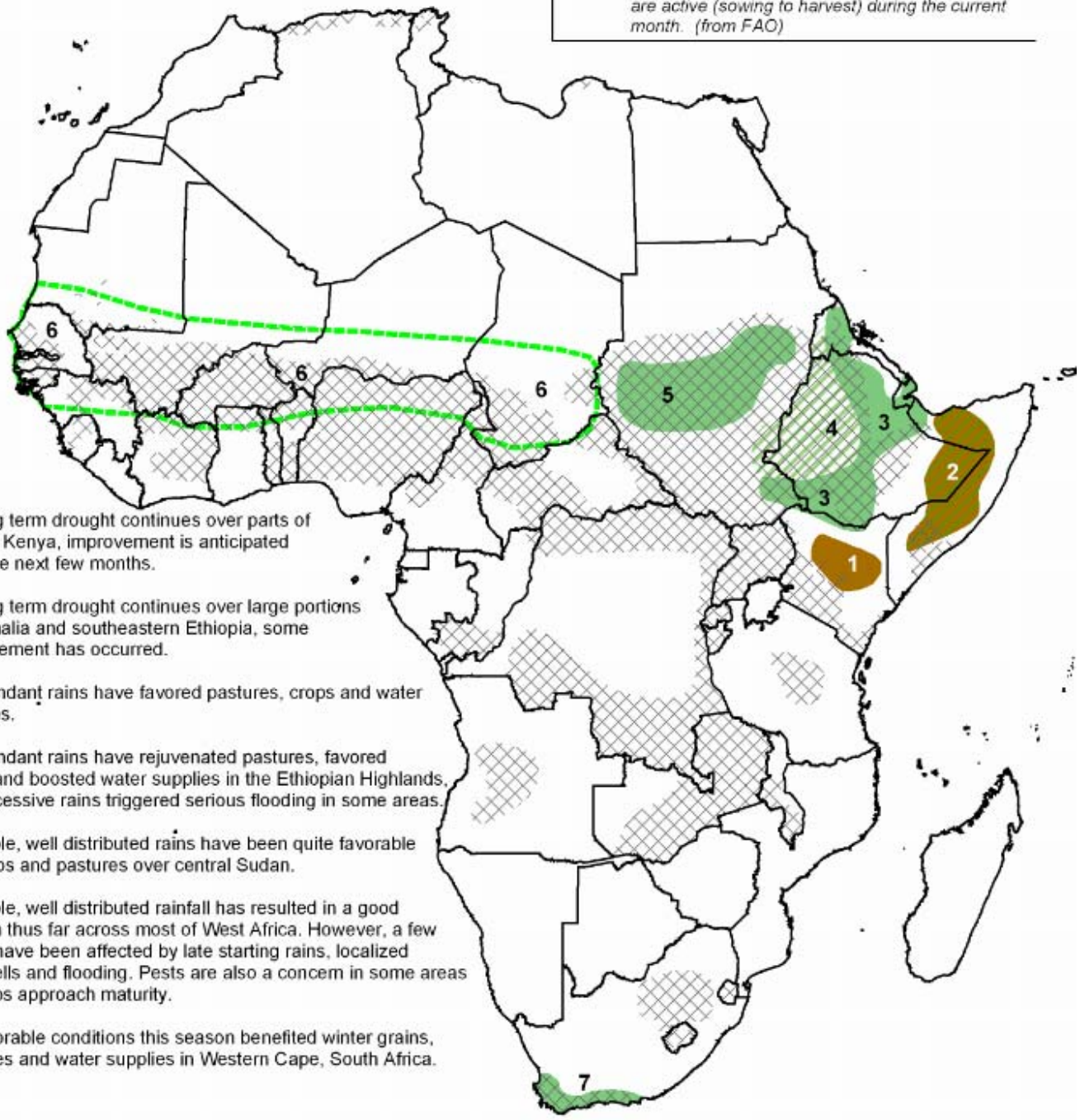
Southern Africa: February-April 2007 Forecasts

The outlook for Feb-Apr 2007 southern Africa rainfall at four months lead shows a strong tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall across north central South Africa, western Botswana, eastern Namibia as well as local areas in southwestern Namibia and northwestern Mozambique. There is low to moderate tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall over southern and central Mozambique, most of Malawi, central Madagascar, as well as local areas in northwestern Zambia, northern and southern Zimbabwe, and central and southern South Africa. There is slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall over central and northeastern Mozambique, and in local areas over northern Botswana, central Angola, northern and central Namibia.

Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment Graphic:

Africa Weather Hazards/Benefits 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. Long term drought continues over parts of central Kenya, improvement is anticipated over the next few months.

2. Long term drought continues over large portions of Somalia and southeastern Ethiopia, some improvement has occurred.

3. Abundant rains have favored pastures, crops and water supplies.

4. Abundant rains have rejuvenated pastures, favored crops and boosted water supplies in the Ethiopian Highlands, but excessive rains triggered serious flooding in some areas.

5. Ample, well distributed rains have been quite favorable for crops and pastures over central Sudan.

6. Ample, well distributed rainfall has resulted in a good season thus far across most of West Africa. However, a few areas have been affected by late starting rains, localized dry spells and flooding. Pests are also a concern in some areas as crops approach maturity.

7. Favorable conditions this season benefited winter grains, pastures and water supplies in Western Cape, South Africa.

Valid: October 12 - 18, 2006

Weather Hazards Benefits Text Explanation:

1) After very poor rains during the 2005 short season, the 2006 long rains were abundant across much of Africa's Greater Horn. However, over much of northern and central Kenya, the March through May rains were lighter than average. This, in addition to the 2005 moisture deficits, resulted in the development of severe drought. The drought has resulted in a reduction of water supplies, crop failures, degradation of pastures and livestock losses across the region. Scattered showers are possible towards the end of the period.

2) The 2005 short rains failed across much of Somalia. The 2006 long rains were also lighter than normal in many areas. This has resulted in the development of a severe drought which has stressed pastures, reduced water supplies and resulted in livestock losses across the region. Some beneficial post-season rains fell across central Somalia, resulting in some improvement. On September 19, rain has begun to fall across northern Somalia and adjacent parts of southeastern Ethiopia, indicating a possible early start to the short rains. Recent rains, combined with post-seasonal rains earlier this year have resulted in some improved range and pasture conditions. Continued seasonal rains should result in further improvement over the next couple of months. There are some indications that the short rains will be abundant this season.

3) Seasonal rains have been abundant and well distributed across the highlands of Eritrea, eastern portions of Ahmara and Tigray. Abundant rains have also fallen across much of Afar, Djibouti and the Rift Valley, as well as southern Oromiya and SNNPR. This has favored Meher crops and pastures across the area while boosting water supplies.

4) Rainfall has been quite abundant this season across the Ethiopian Highlands. This has generally resulted in good crop conditions, favorable conditions for pulse crop seedbed preparations, good pasture conditions and abundant water supplies. However, periodic torrential rains have resulted in serious flooding problems in flood-prone areas, such as along riverbanks and low-lying locations. Heavy rains have resulted in some crop damage and water logging of some fields while raising concerns about crop pests. Abundant cloud cover and low sunshine hours has slowed the development of some crops as well. Seasonal rains have tapered off in most areas, easing the risk for flooding.

5) Ample, well distributed rains have fallen across much of central Sudan during July, August and September. This has favored crops, pastures and water supplies in and around the region, while resulting in a seasonal rainfall surplus of 50 to 150 mm across Darfur and Kurdufan. Rainfall has begun to decrease as the 2006 wet season comes to a close. The drying trend will continue this week, with scattered showers over mainly the southern areas.

6) Ample, well distributed rains have fallen across most of the Sahel and adjacent areas this season, resulting in favorable conditions for crops and pastures while boosting water supplies. Rainfall has been particularly abundant in western Senegal, southern Mauritania and southern Chad. Seasonal rains started 2 to 4 weeks late across Niger, but were abundant after the onset. Some localized flooding problems have been observed, raising concerns about disease. Some flooding problems have been reported in northern Nigeria as well. In central Chad, many areas saw a slow start to the season in June. A delay in crop growing and pasture was observed in some location. However, rains were abundant during late July, August and September. A few pockets of dryness have been observed in the Sahel, such as in southeastern Senegal and in Niger's Tillaberi Department west of Niamey. Despite these localized problems, much of West Africa is on track for a good 2006 season. Seasonal rains are expected to continue over southern parts of the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea area.

7) Rainfall and temperatures across southern South Africa have been favorable for the development of winter grains this season. These conditions have also favored pastures and water supplies in the area.

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Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Chet.Schmitt@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7519