The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

For

November 23 - 29, 2006

Weekly Introduction: Flooding continues in the Greater Horn

Flood Watch
Somalia
Issued: 21 November 2006

FLOOD WARNING LEVEL

	Last Week	This week	Next Week
Shabelle			
Juba			

KEY TO WARNING LEVELS

Severe Flooding Possible
Moderate Flooding (up to 5 year return period)
Minimal/No Flood Risk

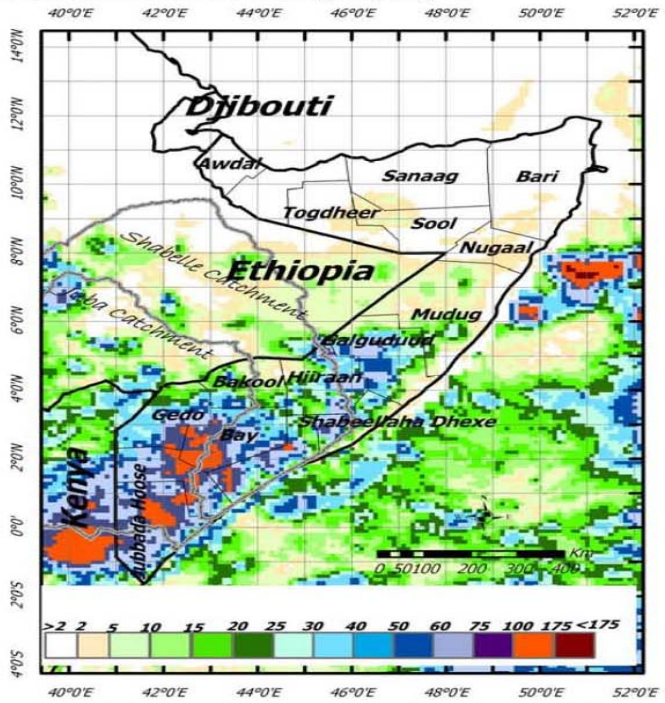
During the week ending November 20th, 2006 the Juba and Shabelle catchments in Somalia received moderate rains with an exception of Middle and Lower Juba which received heavy rains on the 15th, 16th and 17th of November.

Station	Luuq	Bardheere	Baidoa	B/Weyne	Bulo Burti	Jowhar	Genale
Total catch (mm)	15.0	40.0		43.0	28.1	28.0	

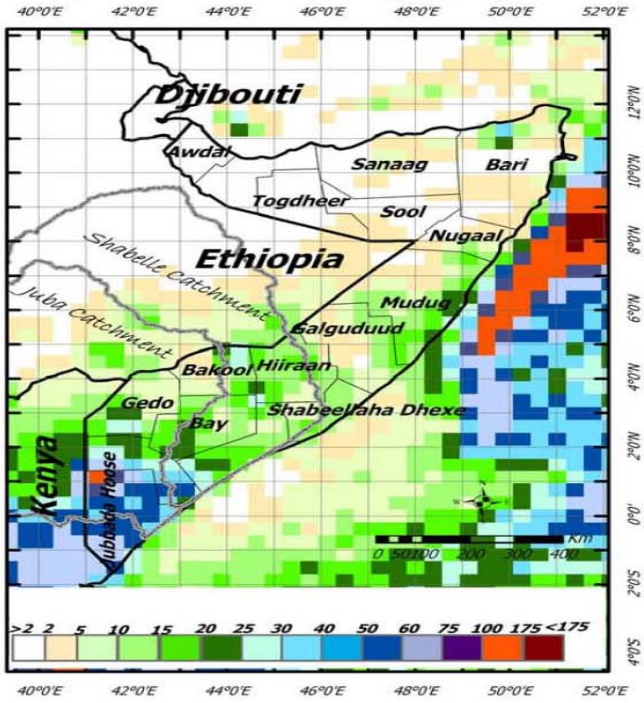
The Ethiopian highlands received little/No rains as indicated in the 7-day cumulative satellite rainfall estimate image and filed reports from the National Meteorological Services Agency in Ethiopia.

The rainfall forecast for the coming week is calling for light to no rains in the Ethiopian highlands and Shabelle catchment in Somalia, while the forecast calls for heavy rains in Lower Juba. High risk of flooding in lower Juba areas remains during the forecast period.

Total rainfall week ending 20/11/06



7-Day Rainfall Forecast ending 27/11/06

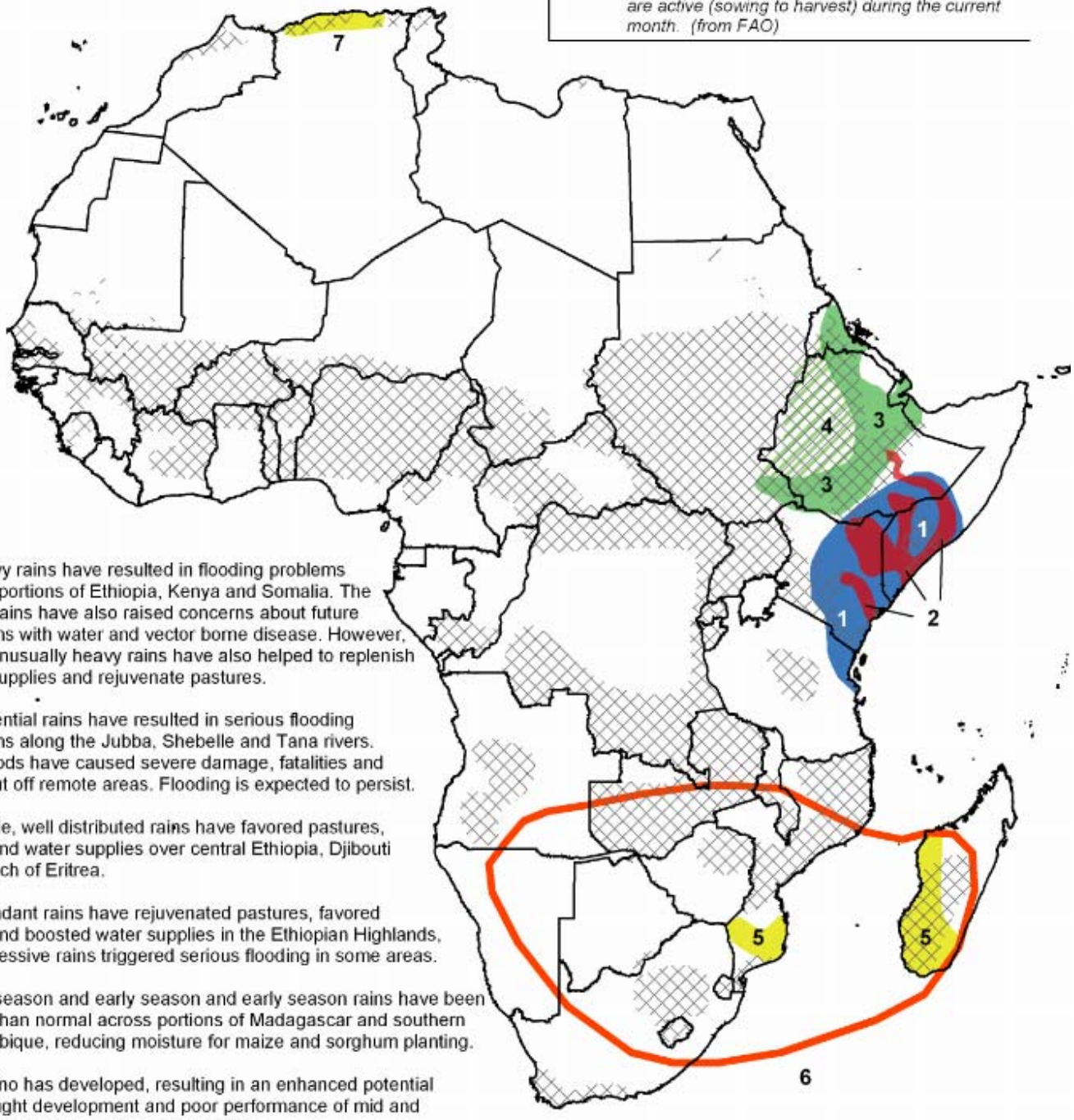


This bulletin is produced by FAO Somalia Water and Land Information Management (SWALIM) Project, USGS & FEWS NET Somalia.

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. Heavy rains have resulted in flooding problems across portions of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The heavy rains have also raised concerns about future problems with water and vector borne disease. However, these unusually heavy rains have also helped to replenish water supplies and rejuvenate pastures.

2. Torrential rains have resulted in serious flooding problems along the Jubba, Shebelle and Tana rivers. The floods have caused severe damage, fatalities and have cut off remote areas. Flooding is expected to persist.

3. Ample, well distributed rains have favored pastures, crops and water supplies over central Ethiopia, Djibouti and much of Eritrea.

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. Pre-season and early season and early season rains have been lighter than normal across portions of Madagascar and southern Mozambique, reducing moisture for maize and sorghum planting.

6. El Nino has developed, resulting in an enhanced potential for drought development and poor performance of mid and late season rains over southern Africa.

7. Short term dryness has developed over Algeria's winter grain areas, reducing moisture for winter crop planting.

Valid: November 23 - 29, 2006

Weather Hazards Benefits Text Explanation:

1) Second season rainfall totals so far this season have been well above normal across the pastoral areas of the Greater Horn. Abundant to excessive rainfall since October 1 has resulted in seasonal totals that are 2 to 6 times the average. Moisture surpluses of 100 to 300+ mm have been observed across the region. These heavy rains have caused flooding problems across the region. Short and long term forecasts indicate that these rains will continue. As a result, additional flooding problems are expected, as well as possible crop damage. The excessive rains, along with additional rains expected during December, has raised concerns about water and vector borne disease such as malaria, cholera and Rift Valley fever. However, these abundant rains are expected to also have positive impacts on the region. Water supplies have been replenished and pasture rejuvenation is expected to be robust. Abundant moisture will also be favorable for crops. Therefore, while local serious problems with flooding and excessive moisture can be expected, the region as a whole should benefit from the abundant rainfall.

2) Torrential rains over the Greater Horn during the past few months has triggered severe flooding along the Jubba and Shebelle rivers, and their major tributaries, in Ethiopia and Somalia. The Shebelle at Belet Weyne, Somalia (near the Somalia-Ethiopia boarder) was at the 50 year flood level last week. Other gauges in Somalia were completely submerged by the floods. The upper reaches of the Jubba and Shebelle Rivers have begun to stabilize. However, recent rains have raised concerns that the levels may begin to rise once again. Severe downstream flooding is expected to continue for at least the next few weeks. Heavy rains have led to deadly flooding along the Tana River in eastern Kenya as well. Torrential rains have resulted in serious flooding problems in Wajir and Garissa in northeastern Kenya. The floods have also affected the Dadaab Refugee camps in these areas. Over the next week, moderate to heavy rains are expected to continue across southern Somalia, Kenya and extreme southern Ethiopia. As a result, flooding problems are expected to persist. Ocean water temperature patterns in the Indian Ocean are conducive to continued heavy rain beyond the period, raising concerns for prolonged flooding problems.

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 southern Afar, Djibouti and the Rift Valley, as well as SNNPR. This has favored Meher crops and pastures across the area while boosting water supplies. In some areas, such as parts of Borena zone in southern Oromiya, areas of dryness were observed as the long season rains were erratic. A round of late season rains increased moisture for maturing crops and late season pasture growth.

4) Rainfall was quite abundant this season across the Ethiopian Highlands. This has 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. Seasonal rains tapered off during mid-October; however another round of moderate to heavy rain fell across the region during the last week of October. Regionally, conditions have been quite favorable for crops and pastures. However, flooding has resulted in losses at the local level.

5) Early and pre-season rains have been lighter than normal across portions of southern Mozambique and western Madagascar. Rainfall has been less than half of normal since the first of October. Temperatures have been above normal as well. The dry conditions have reduced moisture for planting. Some limited improvement is expected during the period. Scattered showers are expected, along with moderating temperatures.

6) El Nino conditions have developed in the tropical Pacific. The past 9 El Ninos have resulted in drought development somewhere in southern Africa, but no El Nino has resulted in drought across the entire region. While El Nino increases the risk for drought development all across southern Africa, the greatest risk is across Zimbabwe and adjacent parts of Mozambique, Botswana, southern Zambia and South Africa. However, El Nino is not a guarantee for drought development and poor production. Early season rains tend to be good during El Nino years. However, rainfall often becomes light and erratic during January and February in affected areas. Therefore, although October and November rains have been adequate to abundant across much of the region, mid and late season rains need to be monitored very closely this year.

7) Rainfall has been light and temperatures warm across Algeria's winter grain producing areas over the past 45 to 60 days. This has reduced moisture for winter wheat and barley planting. Although cooler temperatures and some light rain is expected during the period, more substantial rains are needed to increase moisture for winter crop planting and emergence.

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