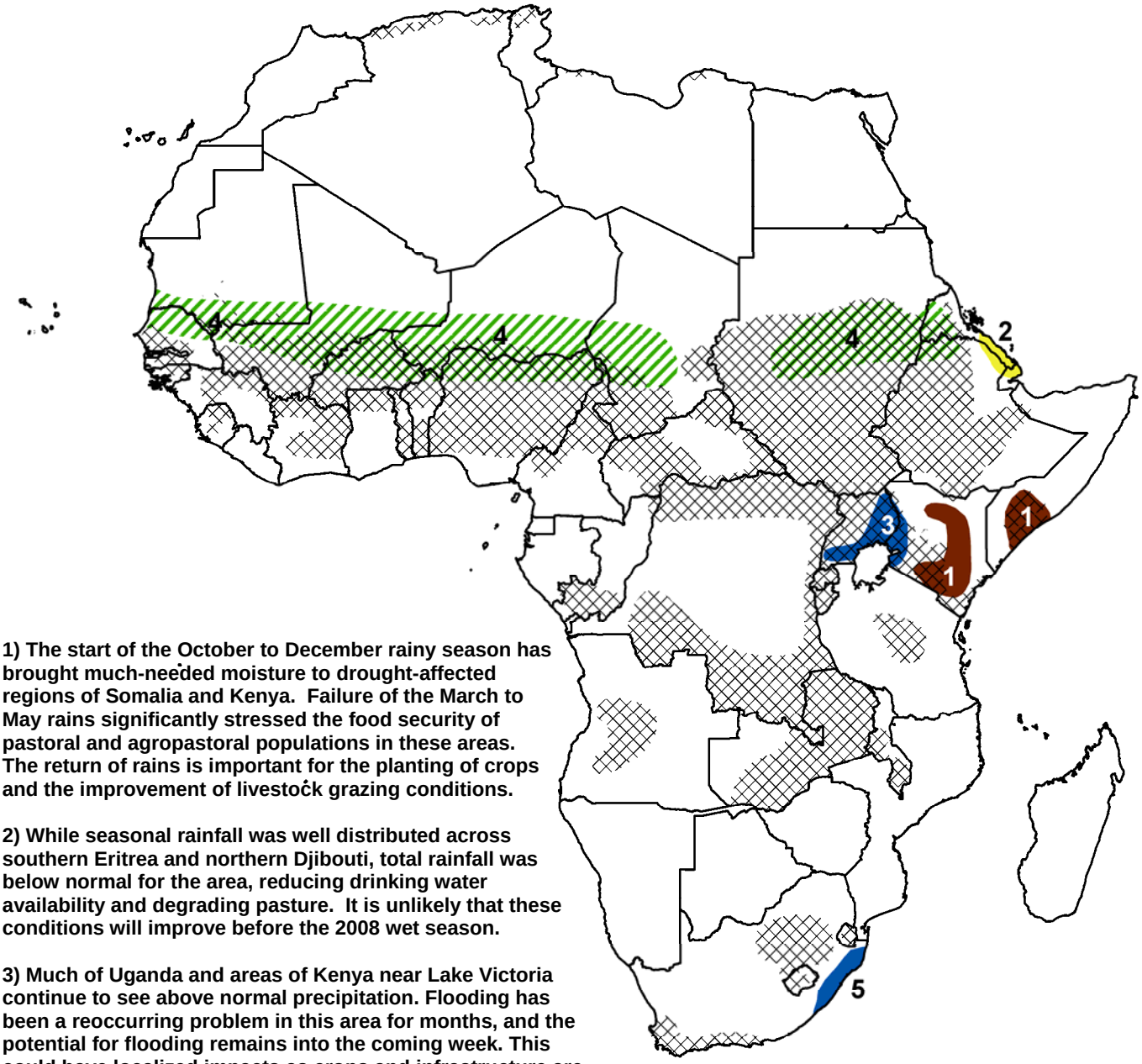
Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
October 18 - 24, 2007

- **Despite localized flooding in the Sahel and the Greater Horn, the overall season has had generally positive impacts on crop production in most regions. Flooding continues to destroy crops and infrastructure locally in Uganda, and western Kenya.**

- **Early season rains fall on southern Africa, providing unexpected improvements to pastures and drinking water supplies in extreme southern Mozambique, southern Zimbabwe and eastern Botswana.**



1) The start of the October to December rainy season has brought much-needed moisture to drought-affected regions of Somalia and Kenya. Failure of the March to May rains significantly stressed the food security of pastoral and agropastoral populations in these areas. The return of rains is important for the planting of crops and the improvement of livestock grazing conditions.

2) While seasonal rainfall was well distributed across southern Eritrea and northern Djibouti, total rainfall was below normal for the area, reducing drinking water availability and degrading pasture. It is unlikely that these conditions will improve before the 2008 wet season.

3) Much of Uganda and areas of Kenya near Lake Victoria continue to see above normal precipitation. Flooding has been a reoccurring problem in this area for months, and the potential for flooding remains into the coming week. This could have localized impacts as crops and infrastructure are damaged or destroyed.

4) Flooding has damaged crops on a local scale in portions of the Greater Horn and West Africa. These heavy rains however, have provided a good cropping year in many areas. As flood waters recede, flood recession cropping is also possible in some areas.

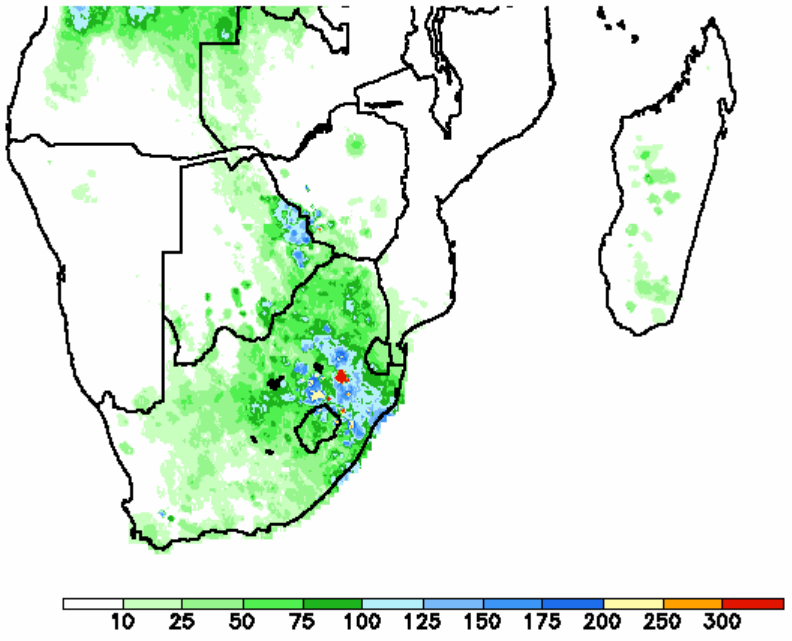
5) Two early season fronts caused localized flooding along coastal areas of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa. Additional moisture is expected this week and has the potential to trigger another round of local flooding.

Early Rainfall moves across southern Africa, more to come

The last few weeks have brought heavy rainfall to portions of southern Africa. The heavy rains have caused localized flooding, mainly in South Africa. The unusually early precipitation has made its way into portions of Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana. The unusually heavy precipitation is the result of several strong low-pressure systems moving through the region. This is much earlier than normal in most areas, and the strong fronts are expected to continue to move through the area.

The early season rains will help to regenerate pastures and break up the soil for field work for the more northern areas. This will be especially beneficial in areas that experienced a poor season last year as a result of the El Nino. This season there is the potential for excessive rainfall associated with the La Nina pattern currently in place.

Precipitation Rainfall Totals
October 1 – 15, 2007



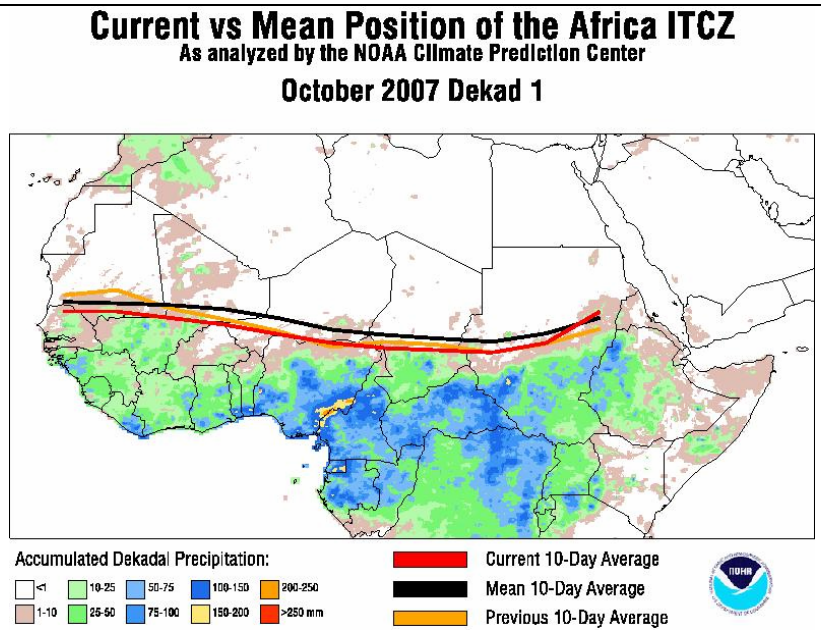
Source: NOAA/FEWS-NET

After an excessively wet 2007 rainy season, moisture pulls out of west Africa early

Rainfall has been pulling out of western Africa earlier than normal. Precipitation subsided in much of the Sahel one to two weeks before it typically does. This is not anticipated to be a problem due to the excessive moisture that has been in the region throughout the season.

The early withdrawal may actually benefit some of the areas that have been severely affected by the flooding. Generally it is expected that the region has benefited as a whole.

Intertropical Convergence Zone
As of the 1st Dekad of October 2007



Source: NOAA/FEWS-NET

La Nina is firmly in place, but impacts on Africa remain in doubt

Colder than normal sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean have impacted the atmosphere. The normal impacts on Africa are increased precipitation in southern Africa, and an increase in the frequency and strength of tropical cyclones.

Several models are showing these common impacts having an affect on the southern Africa wet season. However, not all models agree on the impacts that the La Nina will have. A major example is the COF which is calling for neutral conditions as well as several statistical models which are not providing a clear picture at this time.

Of note is a warm pool of water in the Mozambique Channel, and south of Madagascar which would be conducive to tropical cyclone activity later in the season.