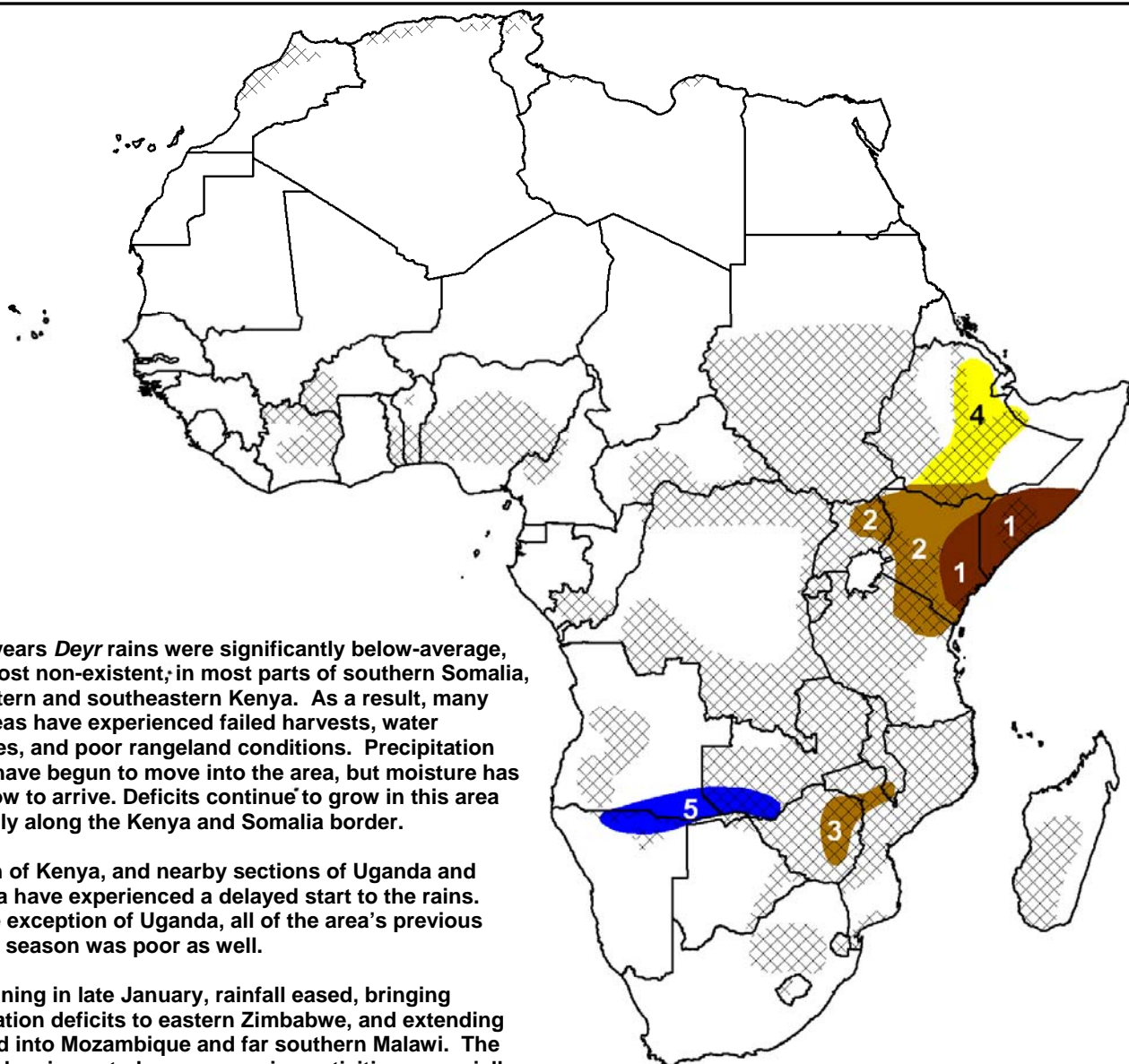


- Precipitation has improved across most of Ethiopia during the past week in Belg-producing areas of Ethiopia. Shorter cycle crops may experience a good season in the southern portions of the country.
- Preseason, and early season dryness has continued across most of Kenya, and nearby portions of Uganda, Somalia and Tanzania.
- Cyclone Jade makes landfall in northeastern Madagascar causing localized flooding along the east coast of the country.



1) Last years *Deyr* rains were significantly below-average, and almost non-existent; in most parts of southern Somalia, and eastern and southeastern Kenya. As a result, many local areas have experienced failed harvests, water shortages, and poor rangeland conditions. Precipitation should have begun to move into the area, but moisture has been slow to arrive. Deficits continue to grow in this area especially along the Kenya and Somalia border.

2) Much of Kenya, and nearby sections of Uganda and Tanzania have experienced a delayed start to the rains. With the exception of Uganda, all of the area's previous growing season was poor as well.

3) Beginning in late January, rainfall eased, bringing precipitation deficits to eastern Zimbabwe, and extending eastward into Mozambique and far southern Malawi. The dryness has impacted some cropping activities, especially late planted crops. Rainfall did pick up near the end of the wet season, but this was not enough to revive crops that had already wilted.

4) An area comprising some of the Belg-producing areas of Ethiopia experienced a poor start to the rains. During the last week rainfall improved across the region. This may allow for shorter cycle crops to be planted for the Belg season.

5) Flooding continues in Namibia, Angola and Zambia as heavy rain from previous weeks continues to make its way downstream.

Legend is very general, please see numbered descriptions for details.

-  April Cropped Areas
-  Favorable
-  Somewhat Favorable
-  Flooding
-  Short-term Dryness
-  Drought
-  Severe Drought

Short-term relief arrives in Ethiopia

Improved precipitation during the last week in Ethiopia contrasts with season long dryness that has negatively impacted many of the Belg-producing areas of the country.

Since the time when the rains typically begin in Ethiopia, only the southwestern portion of the country has progressed with well distributed and sufficient precipitation. Much of the rest of the country has been near, or below, average rainfall. This includes much of the Belg-producing areas in the south and the east of the country.

During the last week, rainfall has significantly improved, spreading across much of the country. The rainfall has begun replenishing drinking water supplies, and may benefit crops and pastures. The arrival of moisture in the region may change the course of the Belg-season thus far.

As a result the maize crop is expected to be significantly reduced. There is the possibility of replanting maize fields with haricot, a shorter cycle crop, in central and southern portions of the country. Planting of haricot would delay Meher planting in the same fields as haricot will require additional time to mature.

Dryness in Kenya, northeastern Uganda and northern Tanzania deepens and spreads

Contrasting sharply with the improvement to the north, only light rainfall was estimate during the past week in Kenya, northeastern Uganda and northern Tanzania. Precipitation deficits also spread eastward into parts of southern Somalia and northwestward into southern Sudan.

Deficits, as estimated by satellite, are the highest along the Tanzania and Kenya border, where some locations are 100 mm below average. To the east deficits are somewhat smaller because the season starts later. Along the Kenya and Somalia border deficits have reached 50 mm. Many of these areas have experienced multiple consecutive failed cropping seasons.

Uganda and southern Sudan, in contrast have not experienced poor cropping seasons recently. However precipitation deficits have been in place since the season began, and they also continue to grow. Northeastern Uganda has nearly a 100 mm rainfall deficit while places in southern Sudan are estimated to have exceeded 50 mm.

Cyclone Jade makes landfall in Madagascar

Cyclone Jade, with winds of about 65 mph, made landfall along the Presqu'île de Masoala. Winds associated with the storm rapidly weakened after landfall. The main impact of the storm was heavy rainfall, which caused localized flooding along the east coast of the island.

Water Requirements Satisfaction Index for Belg Crops As of March 31, 2009

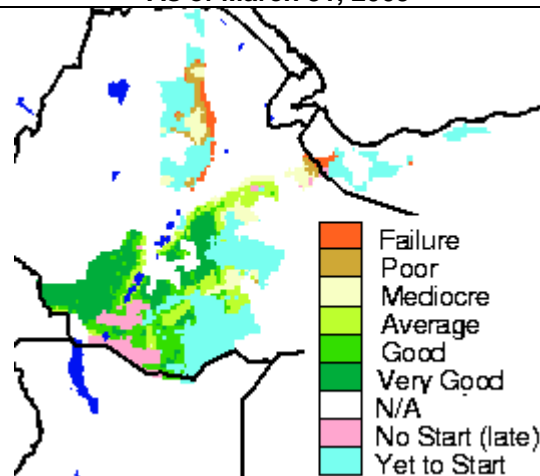


Figure 1: Rainfall has improved recently across many of the Belg-producing areas of Ethiopia. Crop stress, and negative precipitation totals remain in many areas.
Source: FEWS-NET / USGS

Satellite Estimated Precipitation Anomaly February 1st – April 4th, 2009

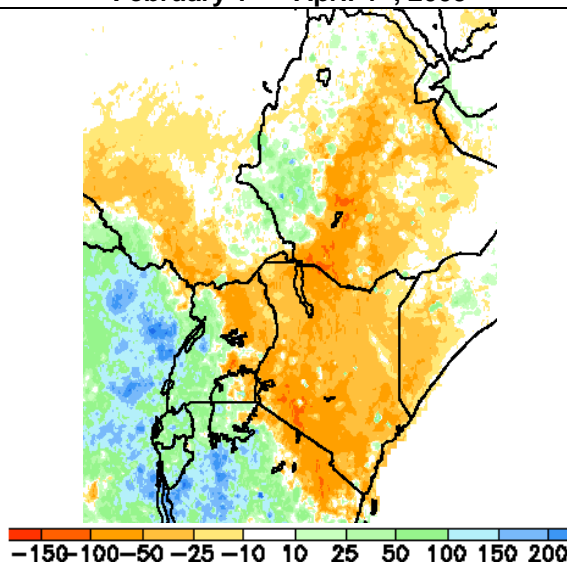


Figure 2: Unseasonably dry conditions extend from Djibouti through Ethiopia and Kenya and into nearby portions of Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Somalia.
Source: FEWS-NET / NOAA

Water Requirements Satisfaction Index for Maize As of March 31, 2009

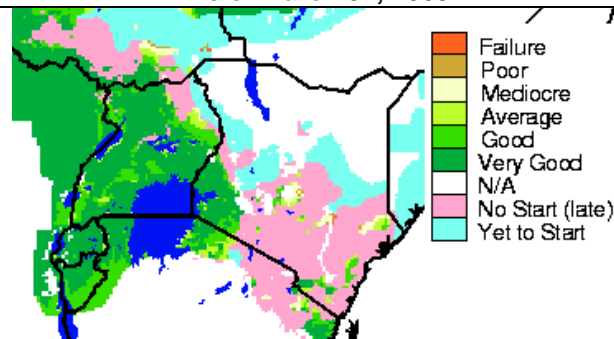


Figure 3: Poor rainfall in many areas has lead to a delayed start of the season over a wide area of Kenya, along with nearby areas of Tanzania, Uganda and Sudan.
Source: FEWS-NET/USGS