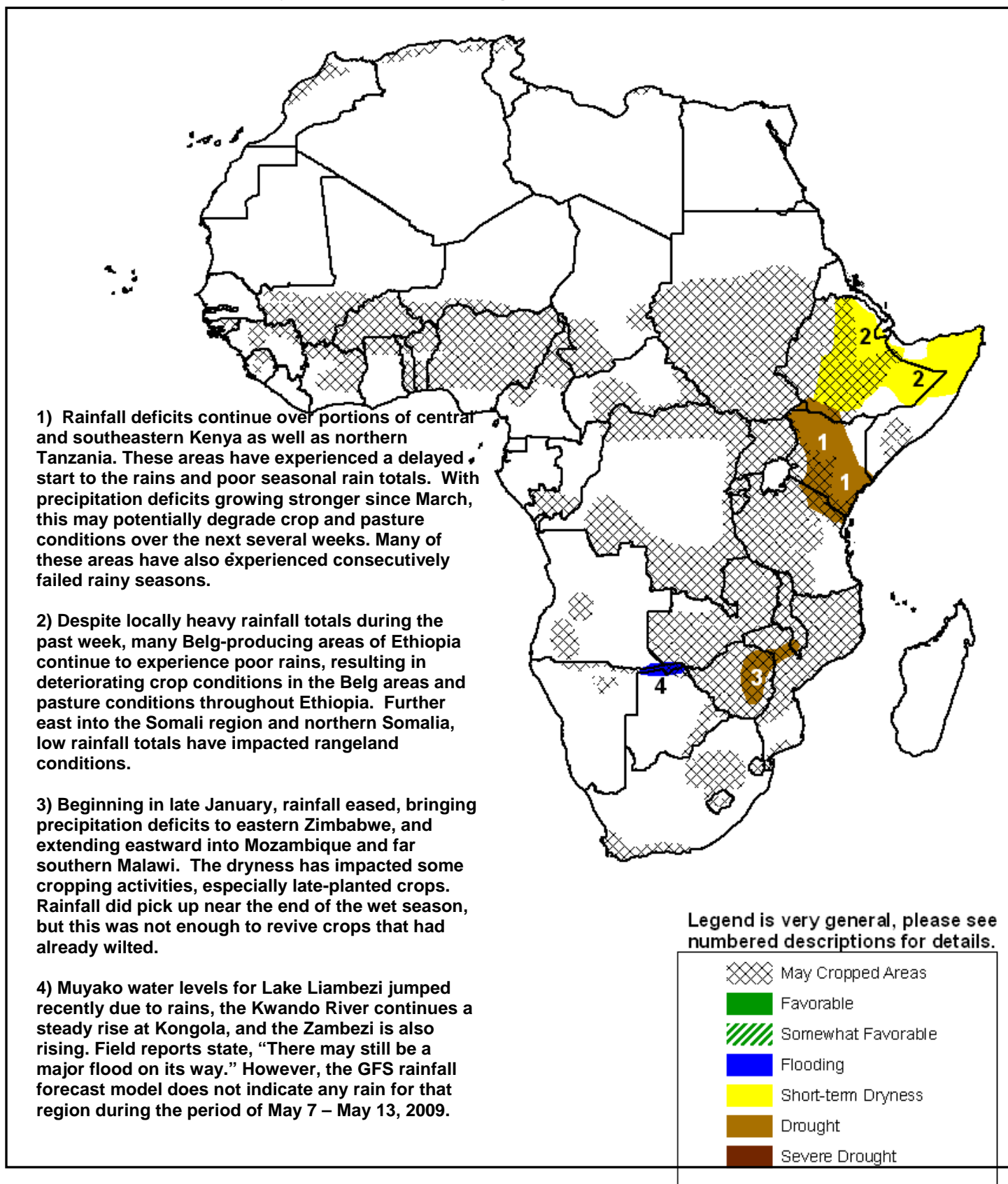


- Rainfall deficits continue over the *Belg* regions of Ethiopia. Compounded with a delayed start of season, a reduction of *Belg* harvests is expected across parts of Ethiopia.
- Water levels continue to slowly rise in the Caprivi Strip region.



West African rainy season outlook

With the start of the West African rainy season in the near future, the African Desk of NOAA's Climate Prediction has released its Canonical Correlation Analysis of the June – August rainfall outlook. In the Sahel, "There is a modest increased chance for below average precipitation over much of the (region) from western Mali to northern Burkina Faso, Niger, and central Chad. Climatology is expected elsewhere." In the Gulf of Guinea, "There is a modest increased chance for above average rainfall along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea from Cote d'Ivoire to Benin. Climatology is expected elsewhere." For the past month, preseason rainfall totals along the Gulf of Guinea have been above average, with positive anomalies ranging from 25 – 50 mm. Further north into the Sahel countries, rainfall anomalies have been below average in southern Mali and much of Burkina Faso. Totals have been near average elsewhere. (See Figure 1)

Inter-Tropical Front Position

During the third dekad of April the Inter-tropical Front made a minor retreat in its annual advancement. During the second dekad of April it was situated around 11.7 degrees north latitude. This position is significantly south of the same dekad of 2008, when the ITF was around 13.4N. Further east, the ITF position is near normal but overall its average positioning is approximately .5 degree south of normal. (See Figure 2) The slow advancement of the ITF could be attributed to the current warmth in the Gulf of Guinea, causing an increase in rains there, but also preventing the advancement of the ITF, leading to dryness in the Sahel.

