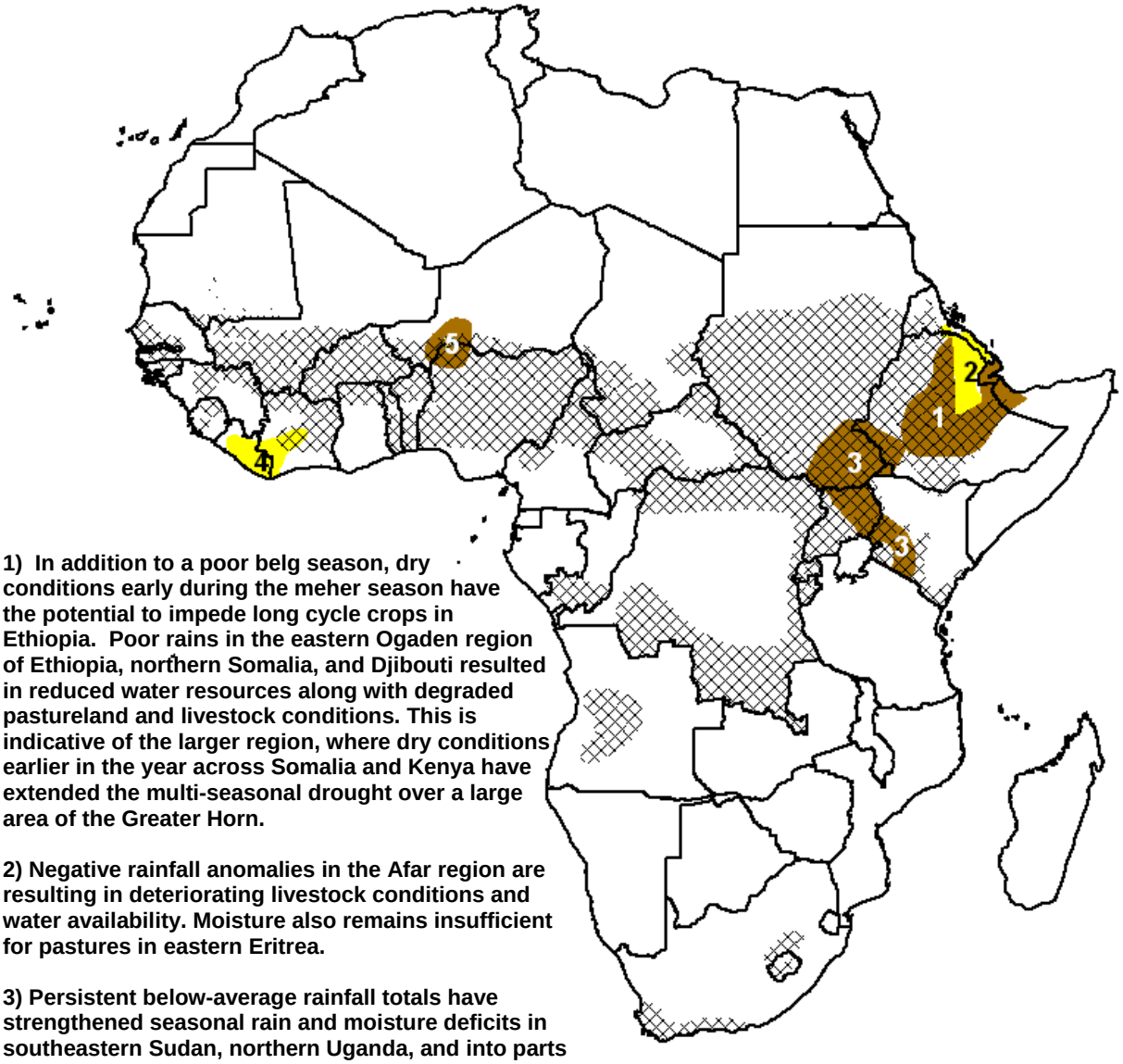
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
October 1 - 7, 2009

- **Conditions remain wet across much of West Africa, even as the rains begin to pull out of the region.**
- **Although light rainfall remains across much of the Ethiopian Highlands, precipitation has become lighter over the last three weeks.**



1) In addition to a poor belg season, dry conditions early during the meher season have the potential to impede long cycle crops in Ethiopia. Poor rains in the eastern Ogaden region of Ethiopia, northern Somalia, and Djibouti resulted in reduced water resources along with degraded pastureland and livestock conditions. This is indicative of the larger region, where dry conditions earlier in the year across Somalia and Kenya have extended the multi-seasonal drought over a large area of the Greater Horn.

2) Negative rainfall anomalies in the Afar region are resulting in deteriorating livestock conditions and water availability. Moisture also remains insufficient for pastures in eastern Eritrea.

3) Persistent below-average rainfall totals have strengthened seasonal rain and moisture deficits in southeastern Sudan, northern Uganda, and into parts of Ethiopia and southwestern Kenya.

4) The climatologically wet region in Liberia and central Côte d'Ivoire, has been unusually dry.

5) Dry conditions have caused serious damage to crops, possibly reducing cropped area in the region by 50%.

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

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

Rainfall shifts across Ethiopia as rains begin to move south in East Africa

Precipitation has begun to reduce in intensity, as is climatologically normal, across much of northern and western Ethiopia (**Figure 1**). At the same time light rains have moved into the Somali region of Ethiopia, northern Somalia.

The southward movement of the rains has brought precipitation into parch portions of southern Ethiopia, including Gambela and SSNP. These rains have improved pasture and increased water availability, but are not likely to improve the poor crop conditions in the region.

Moisture has also moved into southeastern Sudan and nearby portions of Uganda that also in need of more moisture. The increase in precipitation has slightly eased deficits in some of this area.

Satellite Estimated Rainfall Anomaly in Nazret, Ethiopia
28 July - 26 September 2009

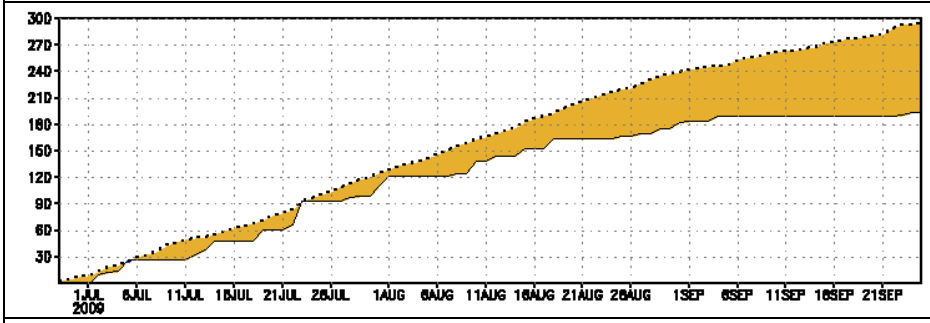


Figure 1: Precipitation deficits have persisted across much of Ethiopia since May. During the month of September precipitation began to reduce further, as is common for this time of year. The above graph is reprehensive of Central Ethiopia, further to the west anomalies are smaller, and to the east they are, generally, higher.
Source: NOAA/CPC

Far West Africa remains wet, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire dry

Heavy rainfall across Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Mali, and Burkina Faso triggered flooding in urban and low lying areas. The excess water caused destruction to infrastructure, crops and caused several fatalities. Most of the heavy rainfall has come to a close across the region, however last week moderate to heavy rainfall did move into many of these same areas. Isolated flooding reports have also come out of Mauritania, Algeria, and Niger. The heavy rainfall, however, has had a positive impact on soil moisture (**Figure 2**).

At approximately the same time as these unusually wet conditions move into the western Sahel, dryness moved into Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. Deficits, while not yet large, have reduced the amount of moisture in the region.

Soil Water Index for Millet
26 September 2009

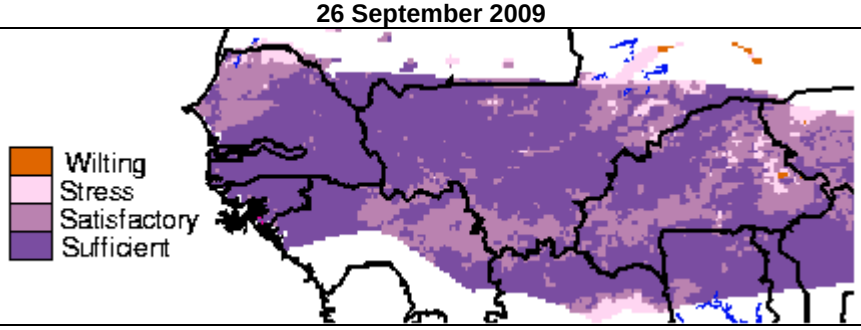


Figure 2: Excessive rainfall has boosted soil moisture levels across much of far western Africa.
Source: USGS

Slight tilt in the odds favoring wet conditions in parts of East Africa, odds favor continued dryness in southern Sudan

The latest CCA outlook (**Figure 3**) for East Africa shows a slight tilt in the odds favoring wetter than climatology conditions across most of Kenya, central Uganda, and southern Somalia. Southern Sudan also faces a slight tilt in the odds favoring below climatology precipitation.

CCA Departure from Climatology Probability Forecast
One Month Lead for October- December

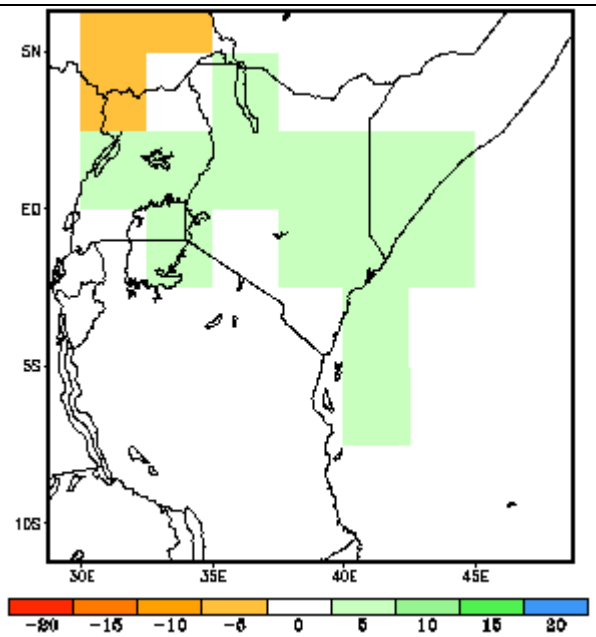


Figure 3: Odds favoring an increase in precipitation in much of East Africa, but the odds favor dryness in southern Sudan.
Source: NOAA/CPC