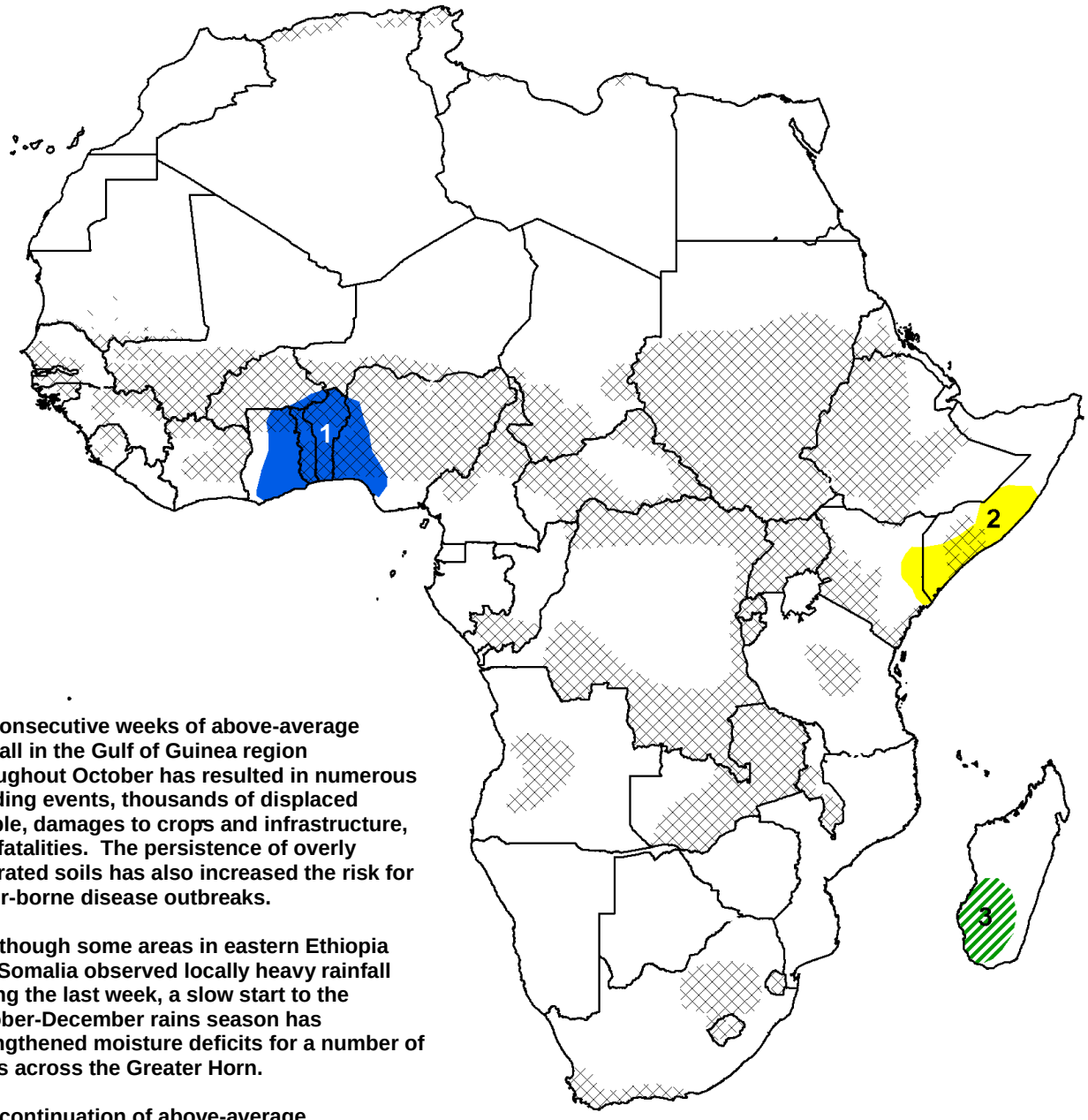
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
October 28 – November 3, 2010

- **Throughout October, significantly above-average rainfall in the Gulf of Guinea region has worsened flooding conditions across many portions of Ghana, Togo, Benin and southwestern Nigeria.**



1). Consecutive weeks of above-average rainfall in the Gulf of Guinea region throughout October has resulted in numerous flooding events, thousands of displaced people, damages to crops and infrastructure, and fatalities. The persistence of overly saturated soils has also increased the risk for water-borne disease outbreaks.

2) Although some areas in eastern Ethiopia and Somalia observed locally heavy rainfall during the last week, a slow start to the October-December rains season has strengthened moisture deficits for a number of areas across the Greater Horn.

3) A continuation of above-average precipitation across southwestern Madagascar during the last week is expected to benefit early season cropping activities.

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

- October Cropped Areas
- Favorable
- Somewhat Favorable
- Flooding
- Short-term Dryness
- Drought
- Improving Drought

Heavy rains exacerbates flooding, increase risks of water-borne diseases in West Africa

In the last seven days, widespread rainfall continued throughout many portions of West Africa, with the heaviest accumulations centered on the Gulf of Guinea region and in extreme portions of the western Sahel. In the Gulf of Guinea region, the distribution of precipitation was robust, as many parts in the lower Gulf of Guinea region received 40-75mm of rainfall during the last week. This marks the 3rd consecutive week where enhanced rains were observed over areas already impacted by flooding. In the Sahel, unseasonably intense rainfall was also observed in the west due to an anomalous inter-tropical front position. Although precipitation remained mostly isolated, high rain accumulations ranging between 50-100mm were observed across parts of northwestern Senegal and southwestern Mauritania (**Figure 1**).

Since the start of October, anomalous precipitation and widespread flooding has continued to negatively impact many countries in the Gulf of Guinea region. Benin and southwestern Nigeria has been the most affected by the heavy rains, as many local areas have experienced approximately 3-4 times their normal amount of rainfall in the last 30 days (**Figure 2**). The anomalously wet conditions have led to damages to crops, livestock and infrastructure, as well as the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, and fatalities from flooding and water-borne diseases. The continuation of late seasonal rainfall is expected to worsen ground conditions, damage cash crops and pastures, as well as increase the risk for water-borne diseases outbreaks in other unaffected areas in the Gulf of Guinea region over the next several weeks.

Precipitation forecasts suggest a lower probability of heavy rainfall in the Gulf of Guinea region, and more seasonable drier condition across the Sahel. However, a continuation of moderate shower activity may worsen flooding in the lower Gulf of Guinea region during the next week.

Slow start to short-rains across parts of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya.

Despite the onset of locally heavy rainfall across parts of the Greater Horn during the past week, many local areas are beginning to experience a late start to the October-December rains season in portions of Ethiopia, Somalia and eastern Kenya. During the last several weeks, little to no rainfall observed in the Shabelle and Jubba river basins of Somalia have strengthened moisture deficits, as insufficient ground moisture is likely to impede early cropping activities (**Figure 3**). Precipitation forecasts show a slight increase in rainfall over this region, however little to no rains are expected to prolong the late start of the short-rains season for many parts of southern Somalia and coastal Kenya during the next week.

Satellite Estimated Precipitation (mm)
Valid: October 17th – October 23rd, 2010

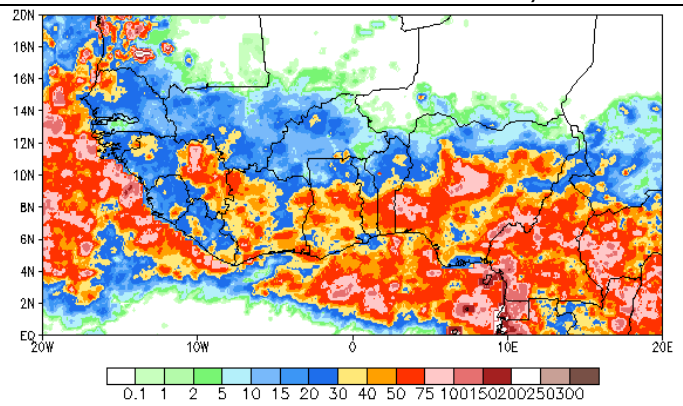


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Satellite Estimated Precipitation Anomaly (mm)
Valid: September 24th – October 23rd, 2010

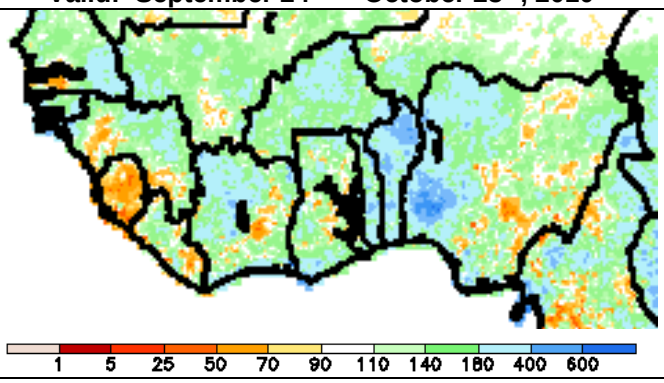


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI)
Valid: As of 2nd Dekad of October, 2010

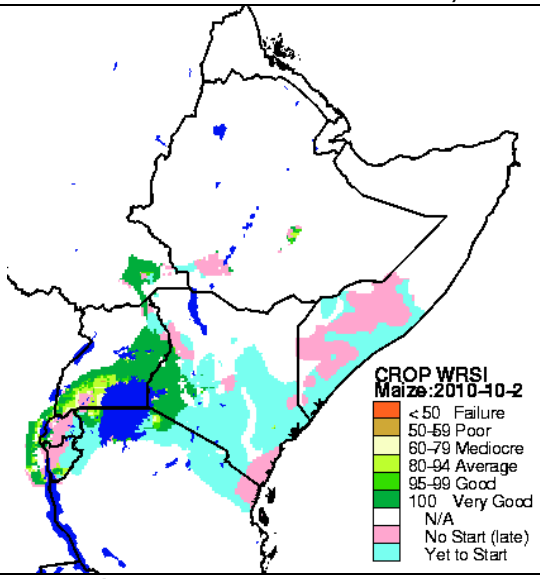


Figure 3: USGS/EROS

Note: The hazards assessment map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.

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