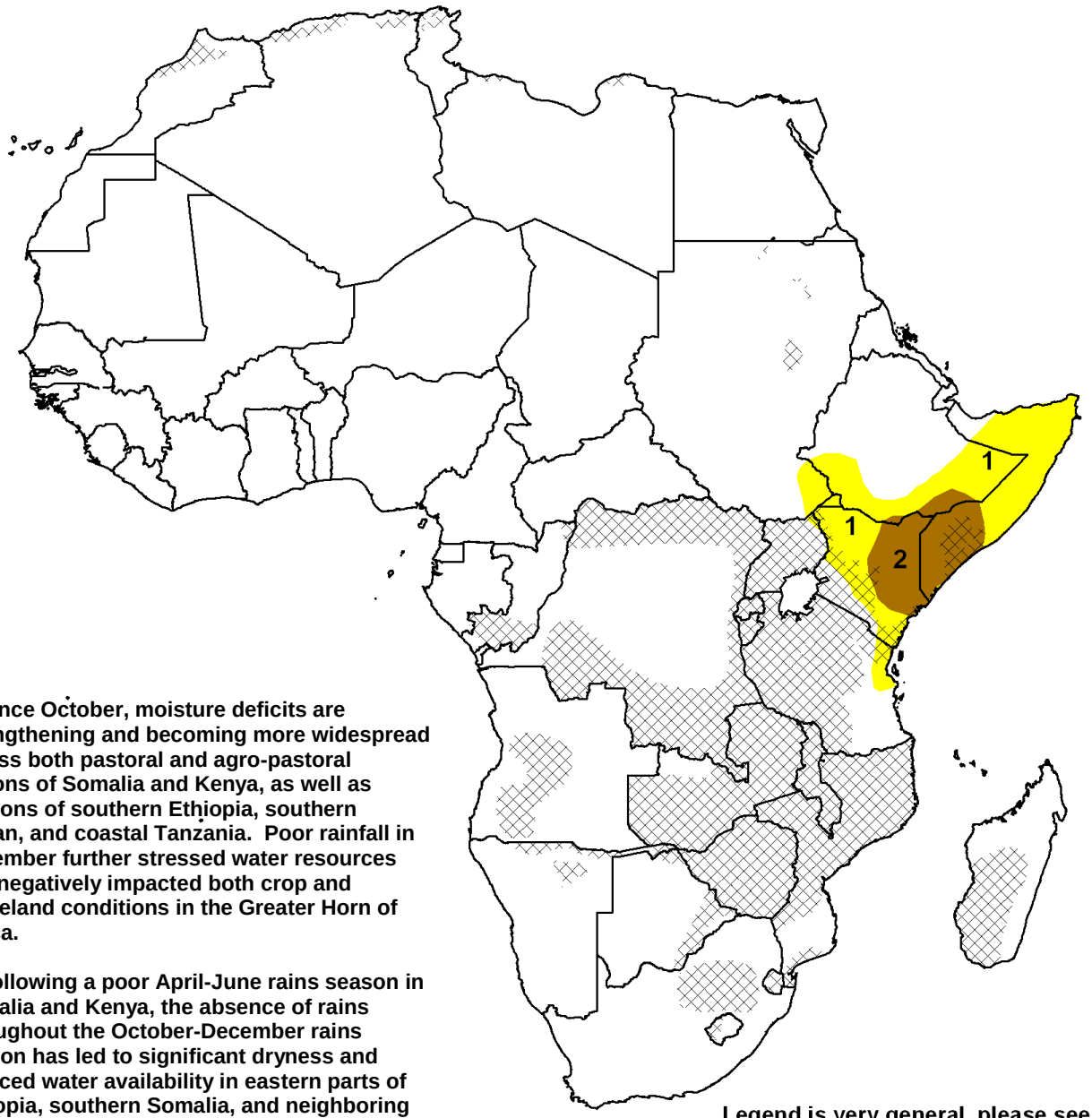
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
January 6, 2011 – January 12, 2011

- **Above-average rains continued over saturated areas in eastern Zambia and western Mozambique while heavy rains elevated river levels in the Caprivi Strip region of Namibia.**



1) Since October, moisture deficits are strengthening and becoming more widespread across both pastoral and agro-pastoral regions of Somalia and Kenya, as well as portions of southern Ethiopia, southern Sudan, and coastal Tanzania. Poor rainfall in December further stressed water resources and negatively impacted both crop and rangeland conditions in the Greater Horn of Africa.

2) Following a poor April-June rains season in Somalia and Kenya, the absence of rains throughout the October-December rains season has led to significant dryness and reduced water availability in eastern parts of Ethiopia, southern Somalia, and neighboring parts of Kenya.

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

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

Heavy rains continue over flood-prone areas in the Zambezi River Basin.

In the past seven days, abundant rainfall was observed across a large portion of southern Africa. The highest precipitation totals (> 50mm) were located across the Caprivi Strip, Zambia, northern Zimbabwe and central South Africa with higher amounts (> 75mm) in Lesotho, western Mozambique, northern Namibia and Angola. Several weeks of abundant rainfall in Lesotho have saturated crop fields and halted field operations. Rainfall was more limited (30-50mm) over central portions of southern Africa including Botswana, northern South Africa, southern Zimbabwe and southern Mozambique. The lightest precipitation (< 20mm) fell over northern Mozambique, Tanzania and Madagascar (**Figure 1**). Rainfall deficits over northern Madagascar have strengthened to around 100 mm in the past 30 days.

During the past month in southern Africa, above-average rainfall has been focused along the Zambezi River Basin, central Mozambique and central Angola. Across these areas, rainfall has been significantly wetter than normal, greater than three standard deviations above normal according to the Standardized Precipitation Index (**Figure 2**). The anomalously high rainfall totals while benefitting current cropping activities in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique have also increased discharges from local dams during past weeks and highly saturated the soils. Due to the ground conditions and increased discharge rate, flooding along the Zambezi and Pungwe rivers in Mozambique had occurred during December. During the past week, though, discharges from the Cahora Bassa Dam in western Mozambique have been decreased, reducing flooding risks downstream. However, the situation could become worse potentially causing flooding again if heavy rains continue. Further west, heavy rains around the Caprivi Strip of Namibia have elevated river levels and increased flood risks.

For the next week, models forecast a continuation of moderate to heavy rainfall across southern Africa. The highest rainfall totals (> 50mm) are expected in Angola, eastern Zambia, and western Mozambique heightening flooding concerns as well as northern Mozambique and Tanzania which received limited rainfall during the past week.

Short rains season ends with another week of little rainfall.

The short rains season over the Greater Horn of Africa has come to an end with another week of little to no rainfall. Overall, the season saw a very poor distribution and amount of precipitation over a large portion of the Greater Horn of Africa with seasonal rainfall deficits larger than 100mm in agro-pastoral and pastoral regions (**Figure 3**). The failure of the short rains season coupled with seasonally dry conditions expected in the future has depleted and will continue to deplete water availability until the next rains season begins in March.

Satellite Estimated Precipitation (mm)
Valid: December 27th, 2010– January 2nd, 2011

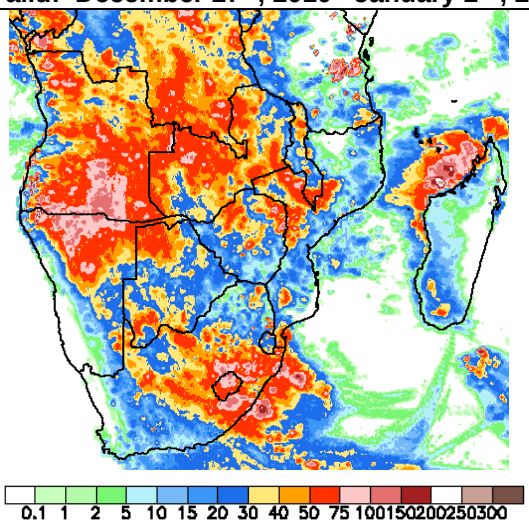


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI)
Valid: As of 3rd Dekad of December, 2010

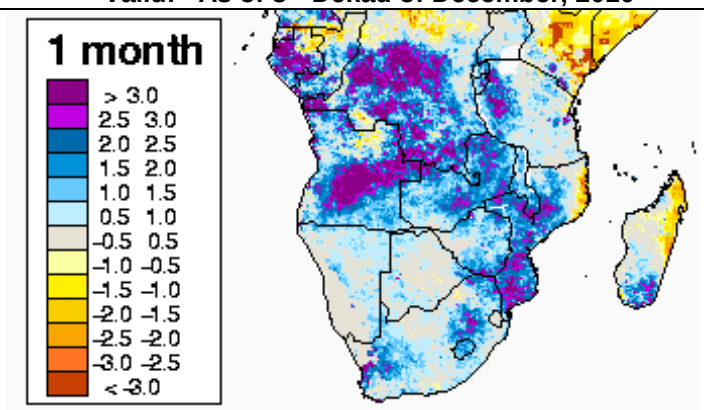


Figure 2: USGS/EROS

Satellite Estimated Precipitation Anomaly (mm)
Valid: October 1st, 2010– January 1st, 2011

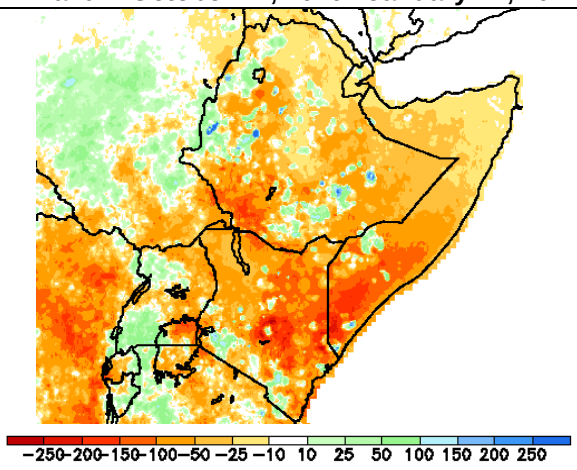


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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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