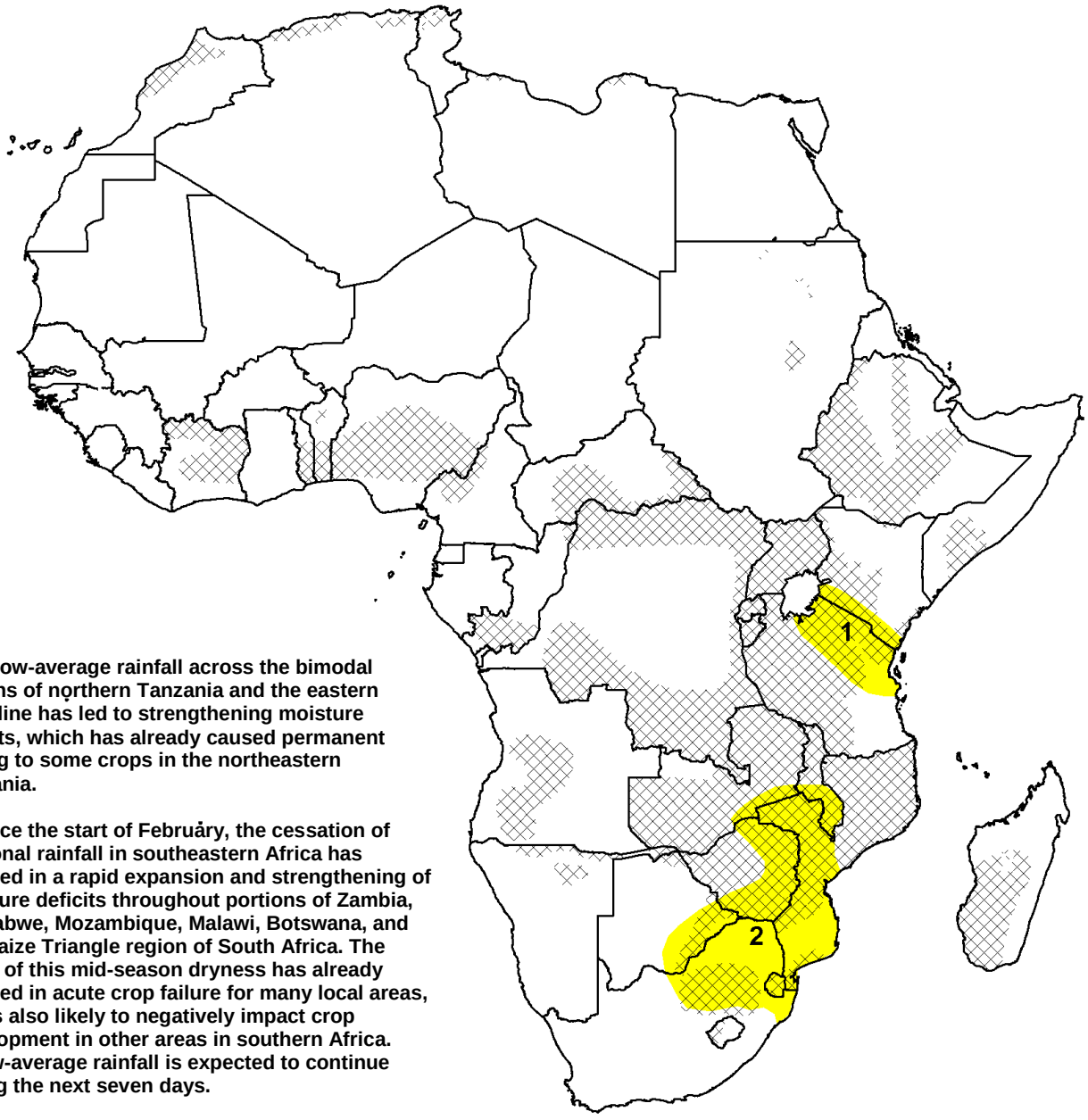
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa March 3 – March 9, 2011

- **Rainfall continued to be suppressed over portions of southeastern Africa further exacerbating mid-season dryness while areas in northern Zimbabwe and southern Zambia experienced a return to more moderate rains.**



1) Below-average rainfall across the bimodal regions of nǫrthern Tanzania and the eastern coastline has led to strengthening moisture deficits, which has already caused permanent wilting to some crops in the northeastern Tanzania.

2) Since the start of Februǎry, the cessation of seasonal rainfall in southeastern Africa has resulted in a rapid expansion and strengthening of moisture deficits throughout portions of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Botswana, and the Maize Triangle region of South Africa. The onset of this mid-season dryness has already resulted in acute crop failure for many local areas, and is also likely to negatively impact crop development in other areas in southern Africa. Below-average rainfall is expected to continue during the next seven days.

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

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

Mid-season dryness continues in southeastern Africa.

During the past week, rainfall continued to be suppressed across southeastern Africa. However, moderate to heavy rains (>40 mm) returned to northern Zimbabwe and southern Zambia after being absent for most of February. Over the past seven days, little precipitation was observed over southern Zimbabwe and central/southern Mozambique while light rainfall (<10mm) was mostly observed over South Africa except for localized areas which received moderate rain showers. Further west, ample rain (>50 mm) continued for a fourth week over Angola and northern Namibia while moderate rain (30-50 mm) was observed in Botswana. The highest precipitation totals (>100 mm) during the past week were recorded in southern Angola. Abundant rain (>50 mm) also continued for a fourth week over northern and eastern Madagascar, northern Mozambique, and southern Tanzania while areas further north in Tanzania experienced a return to drier conditions as little to no precipitation was recorded (**Figure 1**).

Over the past thirty days, the suppression of rainfall across central and southeastern portions of southern Africa has led to strengthening rainfall deficits in the region. This has been in stark contrast to the large rainfall surpluses in January when abundant rains caused river and flash flooding. The lack of rainfall during the past week has increased deficits to over 100 mm in central and southern Mozambique, northeastern South Africa and southern Zimbabwe. Even across northern Zimbabwe and southern Zambia, which observed a return of heavy rains, rainfall deficits over the past thirty days continue to be greater than 50 mm (**Figure 2**). The development of mid-season dryness over a large area in southern Africa, as indicated by low values of the Soil Water Index (**Figure 3**), has caused the wilting of crops in Malawi and southern Zambia and is expected to negatively impact crops during their developmental phase elsewhere should the dryness persist.

Model forecasts indicate another week of light rain across southeastern Africa which would continue to negatively affect crops in the area. Meanwhile, moderate to heavy rainfall is forecast over northern Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, Angola, Namibia and northern Zimbabwe.

Little rainfall observed across northern Tanzania.

After observing heavy rain two weeks ago, rainfall was limited across dry portions of northern Tanzania (**Figure 1**). Due to the abundant recent rains, though, rainfall deficits have been reduced or eliminated over localized areas in the region. Dryness still persists in coastal regions, around Lake Victoria and along the border of Tanzania and Kenya as indicated by low values of the Soil Water Index (**Figure 3**). Beneficial rains are not expected during the next week as models forecast light precipitation across northern Tanzania.

Satellite Estimated Precipitation (mm)
Valid: February 22nd – February 28th, 2011

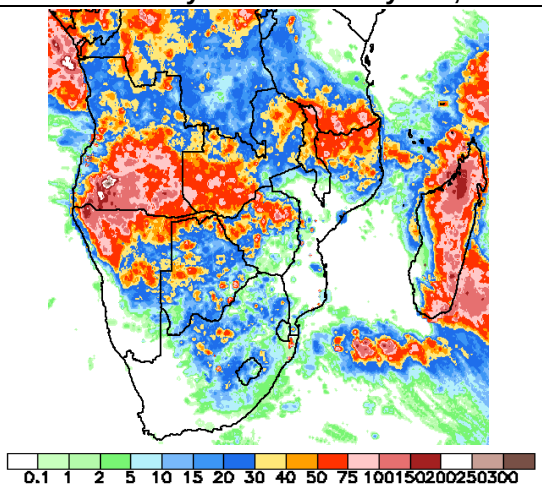


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Satellite Estimated Precipitation Anomaly (mm)
Valid: January 30th – February 28th, 2011

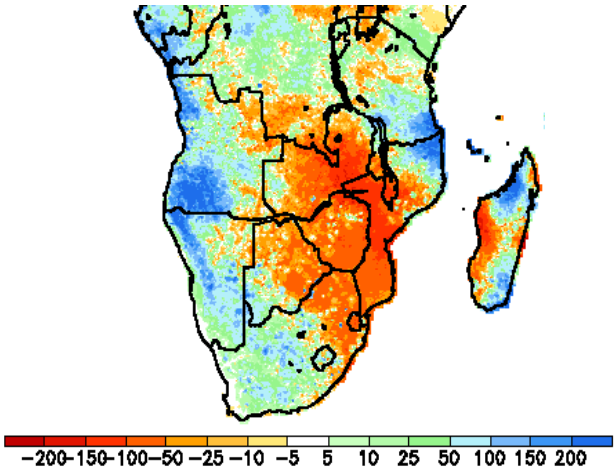


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Daily Soil Water Index
Valid: As of the 3rd Dekad of February, 2011

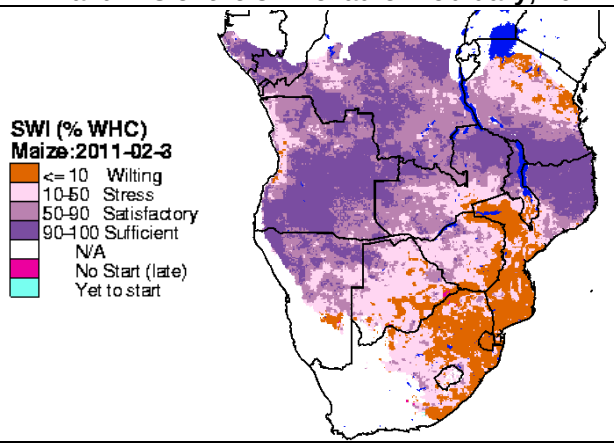


Figure 3: USGS/EROS

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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