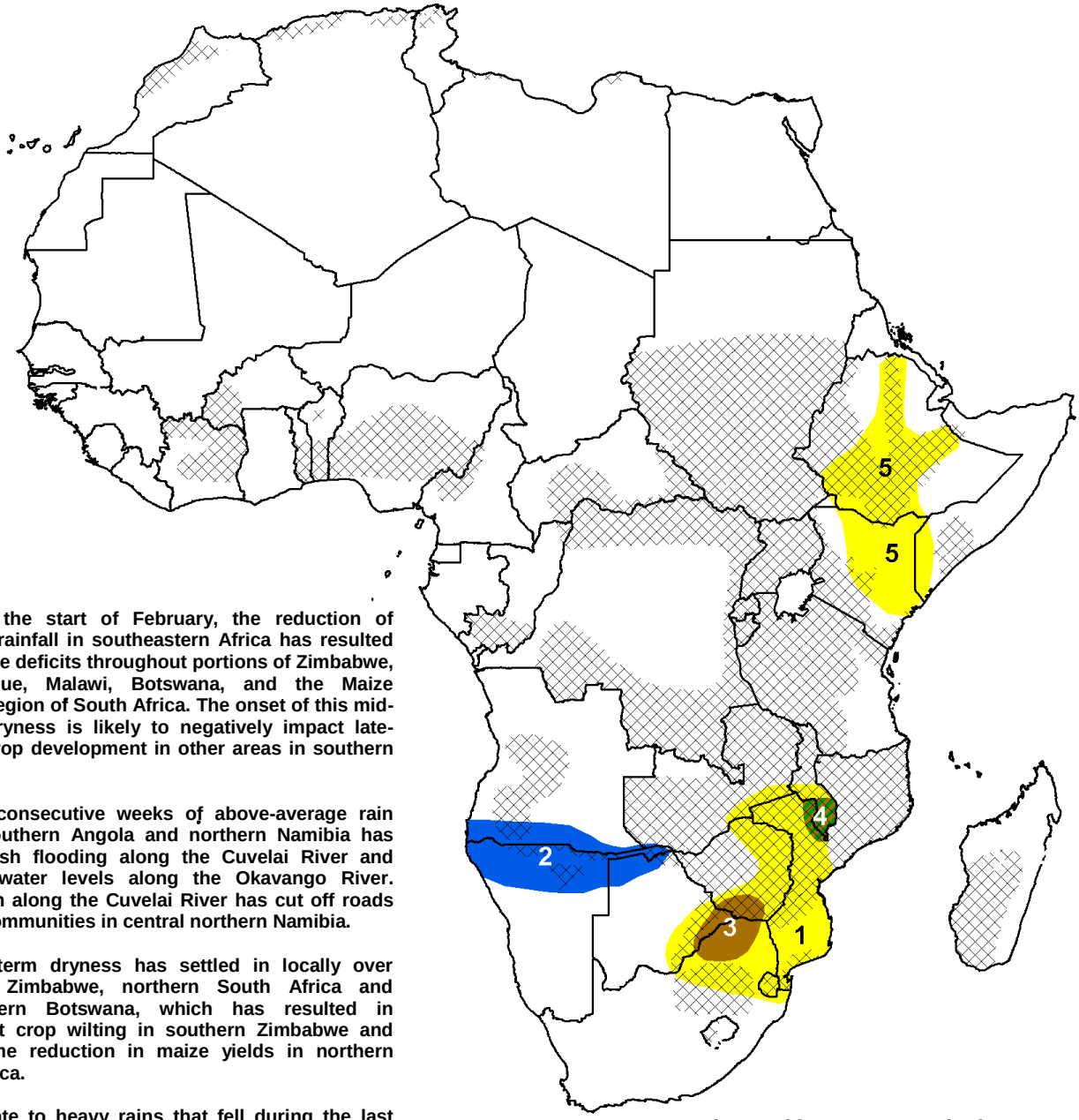
The USAID FEWS NET Weather Hazards Impacts Assessment for Africa
April 7 – April 13, 2011

- **Flooding worsens in western continental southern Africa as moderate to heavy rains persist along the Angola-Namibia border.**
- **Moisture deficits continue across cropping areas in Ethiopia due to the late onset of the March-May rains season.**



1) Since the start of February, the reduction of seasonal rainfall in southeastern Africa has resulted in moisture deficits throughout portions of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Botswana, and the Maize Triangle region of South Africa. The onset of this mid-season dryness is likely to negatively impact late-planted crop development in other areas in southern Africa.

2) Eight consecutive weeks of above-average rain across southern Angola and northern Namibia has led to flash flooding along the Cuvelai River and elevated water levels along the Okavango River. Inundation along the Cuvelai River has cut off roads to local communities in central northern Namibia.

3) Long term dryness has settled in locally over southern Zimbabwe, northern South Africa and southeastern Botswana, which has resulted in permanent crop wilting in southern Zimbabwe and likely some reduction in maize yields in northern South Africa.

4) Moderate to heavy rains that fell during the last three weeks have gradually helped to neutralize rainfall deficits over southern Malawi and western Mozambique since the last 30 days. Although this has led to improving drought, the acute mid-season moisture deficits have already adversely impacted crops.

5) A slow start to the March-May rains season in Ethiopia has already negatively affected crops and led to the development of moderate early season rainfall deficits over cropping areas in Ethiopia. The early-season dryness has extended further south to pastoral and agro-pastoral areas in northern Kenya.

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

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

Continuous flooding and persistent dryness in western and eastern southern Africa, respectively

Southwestern Angola and western Namibia continued to receive abundant (> 50mm) rains during the past week (**Figure 1**). Heavy rains during the past eight consecutive weeks have aggravated the already flood inflicted regions of southern Angola and northern Namibia. Specifically, these regions include the Kunene, Cuvelai Basin, Kavango, and Caprivi regions, where damage to infrastructure, displacement of thousands of people, and fatalities have already been reported recently. In southeastern Africa, heavy rainfall was also observed over northern/central Mozambique, Tanzania, and Madagascar, with the heaviest rains exceeding 75mm in southern Tanzania and in central Madagascar. Moderate to heavy (20-50mm) rainfall was recorded in many local areas of southern Africa as well as eastern South Africa and central Botswana. In contrast, little to no rain fell over southeastern Mozambique, central/southern Zimbabwe, western Zambia, and portions of northern Botswana during the past seven days. With the southern Africa rains season coming to an end, moisture deficits are likely to continue across these regions of southern Africa.

Basin excess rainfall map during the 3rd dekad of March depicts excessive wetness in southern Angola and northern Namibia, with a high-very high basin excess rainfall throughout northwestern Namibia (**Figure 2**). Major basin excess rainfall has extended from the upstream Cuvelai catchment in southern Angola to downstream Okavango Delta in Botswana. This has been the result of eight consecutive weeks of heavy rains over the regions, yielding rainfall surpluses far exceeding 200mm or 600% of normal precipitation over northwestern and central northern Namibia during the last 30 days.

For the next seven days, heavy (>50mm) rains are expected to continue over western Angola and northwestern Namibia, coastal Mozambique, and Tanzania. This is likely to help worsen the already-flooded regions along the Angola-Namibia border during the last sixty days. Elsewhere, light to moderate (10-20mm) rains are expected.

Late start to the March-May rains in Ethiopia

In the Great Horn of Africa, little to no rain that fell during the past week has further strengthened rainfall deficits observed over Ethiopia since the beginning of March (**Figure 3**). The growing rainfall deficits have led to a short-term dryness, which has not only negatively impacted early-planted crops, but also affected land preparation and planting of the March-May crops. The dryness has also affected the transitional crops in southern Ethiopia and depleted water availability in many pastoral and agro-pastoral areas. This short-term dryness has extended further south to pastoral and agro-pastoral areas in northern/central Kenya. Forecast models suggest the return of moderate to heavy rains over central Ethiopia for the next seven days. This is expected to help mitigate early-season moisture deficits.

Satellite Estimated Precipitation (mm)
Valid: March 29th – April 4th, 2011

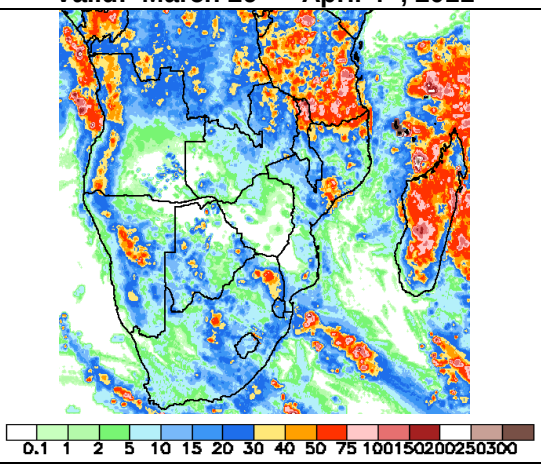


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Basin Excess Rainfall Map - Catchment
Valid: As of the 3rd Dekad of March 2011

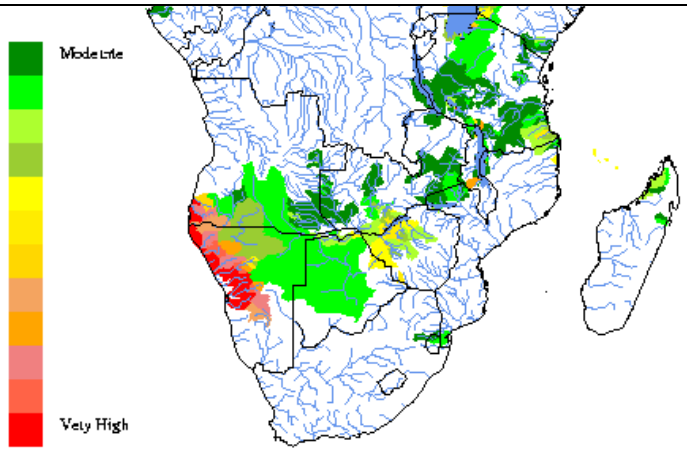


Figure 2: USGS/EROS

Satellite Estimated Precipitation Anomaly (mm)
Valid: March 1st – April 4th, 2011

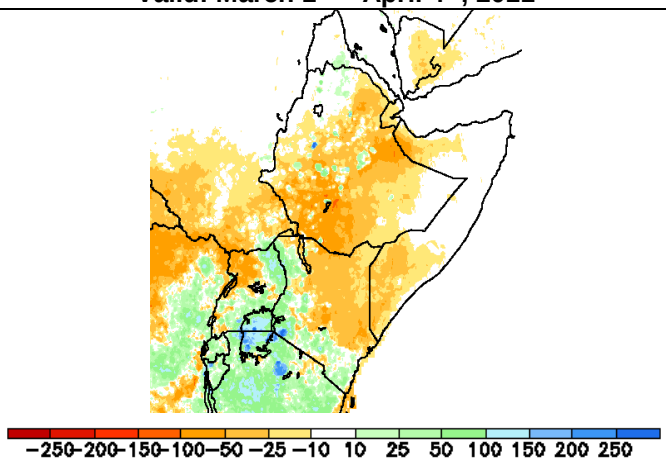


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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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