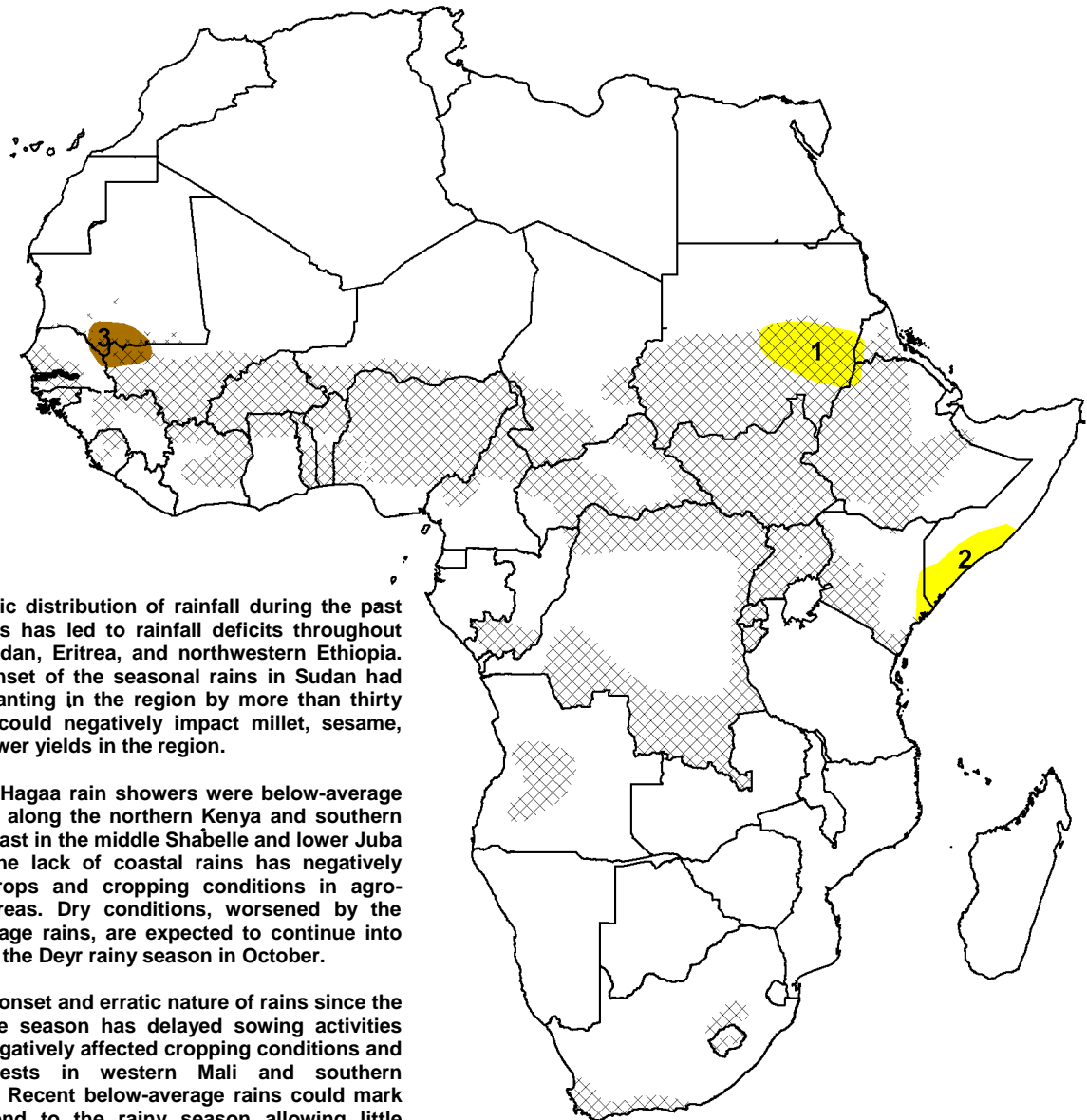


Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET September 22 – September 28, 2011

- Moderate to heavy rain was recorded across much of central West Africa during the past week.
- Locally heavy rains were observed in dry portions of northeastern Sudan.

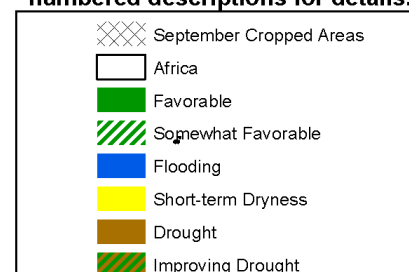


1) An erratic distribution of rainfall during the past two months has led to rainfall deficits throughout eastern Sudan, Eritrea, and northwestern Ethiopia. The late onset of the seasonal rains in Sudan had delayed planting in the region by more than thirty days and could negatively impact millet, sesame, and sunflower yields in the region.

2) Coastal Hagaa rain showers were below-average and erratic along the northern Kenya and southern Somalia coast in the middle Shabelle and lower Juba regions. The lack of coastal rains has negatively affected crops and cropping conditions in agro-pastoral areas. Dry conditions, worsened by the below-average rains, are expected to continue into the start of the Deyr rainy season in October.

3) The late onset and erratic nature of rains since the start of the season has delayed sowing activities and has negatively affected cropping conditions and crop harvests in western Mali and southern Mauritania. Recent below-average rains could mark an early end to the rainy season allowing little chance for crop recovery.

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



Above-average rain is observed in central West Africa.

During the past seven days, moderate to heavy rainfall (> 30 mm) was observed across central West Africa. The heaviest rain (> 50 mm) was recorded in central/southern Mali, northern Burkina Faso, northern Togo, northern Benin, and Guinea. In general, the abundant rain was 10-50 mm above-average across southern Senegal, northern Guinea, central/southern Mali, Burkina Faso, southern Niger and northern Nigeria. The above-average rain across western Niger and western Mali has helped erode thirty-day rainfall deficits and has helped replenish ground moisture across Mali where past dry conditions have negatively affected cropping activities. In contrast, rainfall was below-average (10-50 mm below-average) across northern West Africa, including northern Senegal and southern Mauritania, and along the Gulf of Guinea including southern Nigeria, Cote D'Ivoire, and Ghana (**Figure 1**). As the Intertropical front moves south of Mauritania, expected rainfall will decrease providing little help to areas still dry due to below-average seasonal rainfall.

Vegetative conditions continued to improve during September across portions of southern Mauritania, and northwestern Mali due to an increase in rainfall at the end of August and beginning of September. However, ground conditions are still poor in northwestern Mali and localized areas in southern Mauritania according to an analysis of vegetation conditions in West Africa (**Figure 2**). Due to the erratic nature of the seasonal rains in the region, cropping conditions have been negatively affected during the past couple of months.

Forecasts for the next week indicate a continued decrease in rainfall across the Sahel as light to locally moderate rain (5-20 mm) is expected. Further south, moderate to heavy rainfall (> 30 mm) is forecast across the Gulf of Guinea.

Heavy rain falls over eastern Sudan.

During the past week, rains were above-average and heavy (> 40 mm) across dry portions of eastern Sudan and northwestern Ethiopia. Though thirty-day rainfall deficits are still moderate to strong, additional moisture could help improve ground conditions. In addition, moderate to heavy rains (> 30 mm) continued for a fifth week over the Republic of South Sudan and localized areas in Uganda. Thirty-day rainfall surpluses exceed 100 mm in Uganda and localized flooding has been reported for several weeks. In southwestern Kenya, moderate rains provided relief from flooding that occurred in past weeks. Elsewhere, rainfall was limited (< 10 mm) across the Northern Darfur region of Sudan and the Afar, eastern Tigray, eastern Amhara and central/southern Oromiya regions of Ethiopia (**Figure 3**). However, improved rains since July have allowed for good crop performance and a normal harvest of cash crops like sesame in northern/central Ethiopia. Only the production of sorghum in the lowlands of the western Tigray and northwestern Amhara regions is likely to be below-average. For the next week, light, below-average rain (< 20 mm) is forecast across northeast Ethiopia, Sudan, Republic of South Sudan and Uganda. The light rains will continue dryness concerns in eastern Sudan and northwestern Ethiopia while providing relief for saturated areas in Kenya and Uganda.

Note: The hazards outlook 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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