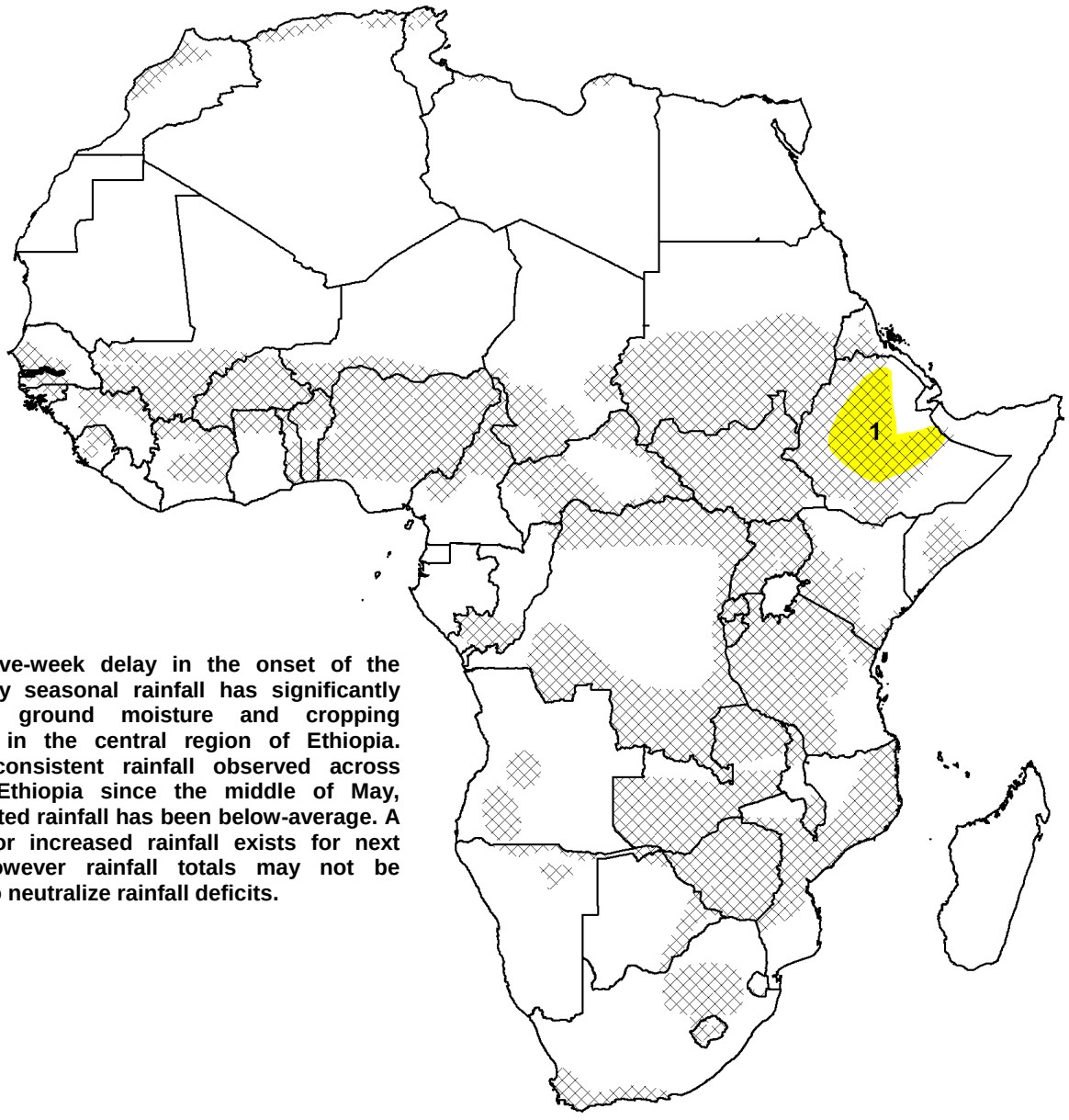
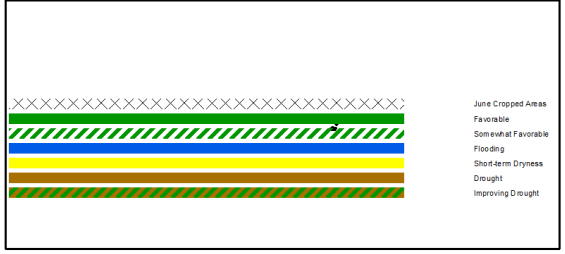
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
For USAID / FEWS-NET
June 21 – June 27, 2012

- **Increased rainfall was observed across West Africa, while poor rainfall distribution has worsened dryness in western and central Ethiopia during the past seven days.**



1) The five-week delay in the onset of the March-May seasonal rainfall has significantly impacted ground moisture and cropping activities in the central region of Ethiopia. Despite consistent rainfall observed across western Ethiopia since the middle of May, accumulated rainfall has been below-average. A chance for increased rainfall exists for next week; however rainfall totals may not be enough to neutralize rainfall deficits.

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



Seasonal rainfall continues in West Africa.

The seasonal northward migration of the Inter-tropical front (ITF) combined with an active phase of the Madden-Julian oscillation (MJO) has enhanced rainfall in West Africa during the past seven days. While moderate to locally heavy (30 – 50 mm) rains were observed throughout Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria, the heaviest (> 75 mm) rainfall was recorded over the southern parts of the Gulf of Guinea. This has resulted in above-average rainfall in many areas of West Africa except parts of Mali, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Nigeria, where negative seven-day rainfall anomalies have been recorded. The rainfall during the past week has helped to offset deficits in many local areas, while it has contributed to amplify dry conditions in northern Senegal, Liberia, and central Nigeria over the past thirty days. Since the start of the current season, many countries of West Africa have experienced above-average rainfall except portions of Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger. The delay in the onset of rainfall during early May followed by peak rainfall over the next several months could lead to favorable climatic conditions for locust breeding.

The anomalous northward position of the ITF relative to its mean position during the first dekad (10-day period) of June has brought above-average rainfall across portions of the Sahel. An analysis of the soil water anomaly during the same period shows above-average values across western Mali, northern Burkina Faso, and localized areas of Niger, indicating favorable soil moisture (**Figure 2**). The southern half of West Africa, however, experienced average to below-average conditions, reflecting uneven rainfall distribution.

For next week, the projected phase of the MJO is expected to enhance rainfall in the Gulf of Guinea and Sahel regions. The heaviest (> 100 mm) rainfall is forecast along the coastal areas; however, localized heavy showers could fall as far north as northern Mali and central Niger during the next seven days.

Rainfall deficits strengthen in Ethiopia.

For the third consecutive week, rainfall has been below-average over Ethiopia during the past seven days. Despite the continuation of seasonal rainfall in the west, the rainfall amounts were insufficient to neutralize the long-lasting impacts of the dryness during the March-May season. As a result, negative anomalies have expanded across western and central Ethiopia, with thirty-day rainfall deficits ranging between 50 and 100 mm (**Figure 3**). Weak (-50 to -25 mm) thirty-day rainfall deficits have also started to settle in across the Blue Nile and Upper Nile regions of Sudan and South Sudan, respectively. For the next outlook period, increased rainfall is forecast in western Ethiopia. However, due to the localized nature of the rainfall, it may not be sufficient to overcome the accumulated negative anomalies, potentially increasing deficits in the region.

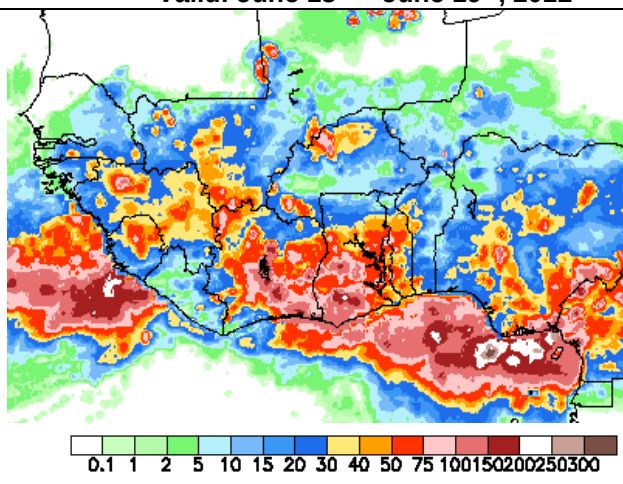


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

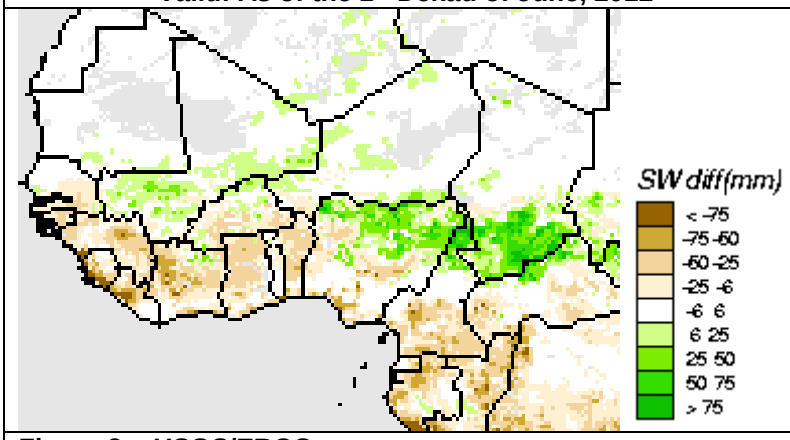


Figure 2: USGS/EROS

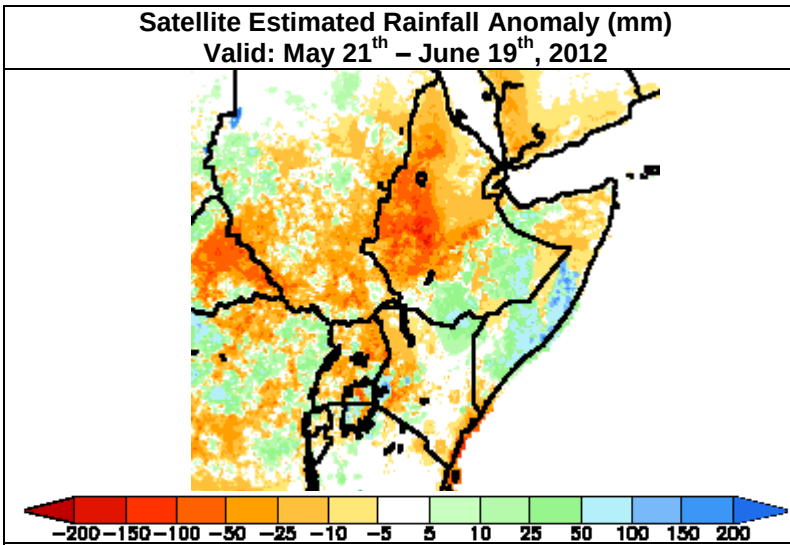


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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.