

Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook April 16 – April 22, 2015

Increased amounts of rainfall leads to favorable moisture conditions over parts of eastern Ethiopia, southern Somalia.

Late season dryness observed over parts of Malawi and Mozambique.

1) Since late December, an unseasonable distribution of monsoonal rainfall has resulted in anomalous dryness across a broad portion of southern Africa. Low seasonal precipitation totals and untimely dry spells has negatively affected ground conditions and is likely to lead crop reductions for several local areas in southern Angola, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and South Africa.

2) Below-average rainfall since March, which have already impacted crop conditions across the bimodal region of northern Tanzania. Increased rains over northwestern Tanzania have helped to alleviate short-term moisture deficits.

3) Poorly distributed rainfall and extended dry spells since January have led to large rainfall deficits and degraded vegetation conditions in southern Angola and northern Namibia.

4) Below-average moisture conditions continue across several local areas of southwestern and east-central Ethiopia. Further delay of rainfall during April is likely to adversely affect cropping activities for several "Belg" producing areas.

5) Rapidly developing moisture deficits associated with an early cessation of the southern Africa monsoon has negatively affect cropping conditions for parts of northern Malawi and northern Mozambique.

6) Torrential rainfall since early April has triggered localized flooding, livestock losses, thousands of displaced people and fatalities in parts of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. Average to aboveaverage rains forecast may worsen ground conditions during the upcoming outlook period.



Little to no rains received in belg-producing areas of northern Ethiopia.

During the last week, a shift in the monsoonal circulation over the Greater Horn in Africa resulted in increased and heavy rainfall accumulations over parts of southeastern Ethiopia and Southern Somalia. According to satellite rainfall estimates, the highest weekly precipitation accumulations (>75mm) were observed across the Shabelle and Jubba River basins in eastern Ethiopia and southern Somalia (**Figure 1**). Further west, a more seasonable distribution of rainfall was observed for several local areas in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and northern Tanzania. However, seasonal rains were suppressed for the third consecutive week throughout northern Ethiopia.

While rainfall has generally improved to relieve early season dryness over much of eastern Africa during the last 30 days, poorly distributed rainfall over northern Ethiopia has led to strengthening moisture deficits. Rainfall percentile analysis since early/mid-March depicts unfavorably low percentiles centered over the northern Oromia, eastern Amhara, and Afar provinces of Ethiopia, suggesting one of the worst onsets of belg seasonal rains over the past 30 years (Figure 2). In eastern Amhara region, analysis of the evolution of seasonal precipitation shows only a brief period of shower activity during the second dekad of March, followed by three consecutive weeks of no rainfall. Further south in the Oromia province, rainfall has been more frequent but quite low in quantity since early April. Combined with a late onset of seasonal rainfall, the continuation of anomalously dry conditions throughout April is expected to adversely impact cropping and pastoral activities in the region.

For the upcoming outlook period, precipitation models suggest another week of suppressed rainfall for the western half of Ethiopia, with the potential for average to above-average rainfall over the pastoral regions of eastern Ethiopia. The continuation of poor midseason belg rains is expected to worsen already moisture stressed regions of the country. Further south, average to above-average rainfall remains forecast for much of southern Kenya, Uganda, northern Tanzania and southern Somalia.

Late season dryness affects crops in parts of Malawi and northern Mozambique.

In the past several weeks, rapidly developing dryness, indicative of an early cessation of the southern Africa monsoon occurred throughout many parts of Malawi and Mozambique. Satellite rainfall anomaly estimates depict several local areas experiencing less than 50 percent of their normal rainfall accumulation since the middle of March (**Figure 3**). Although much of the region experienced anomalously heavy rainfall during January and February, poorly distributed March and April rains have reportedly affected ground conditions for the development of crops, as substantial reductions in crop production are expected in the region.



Figure 1: 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.