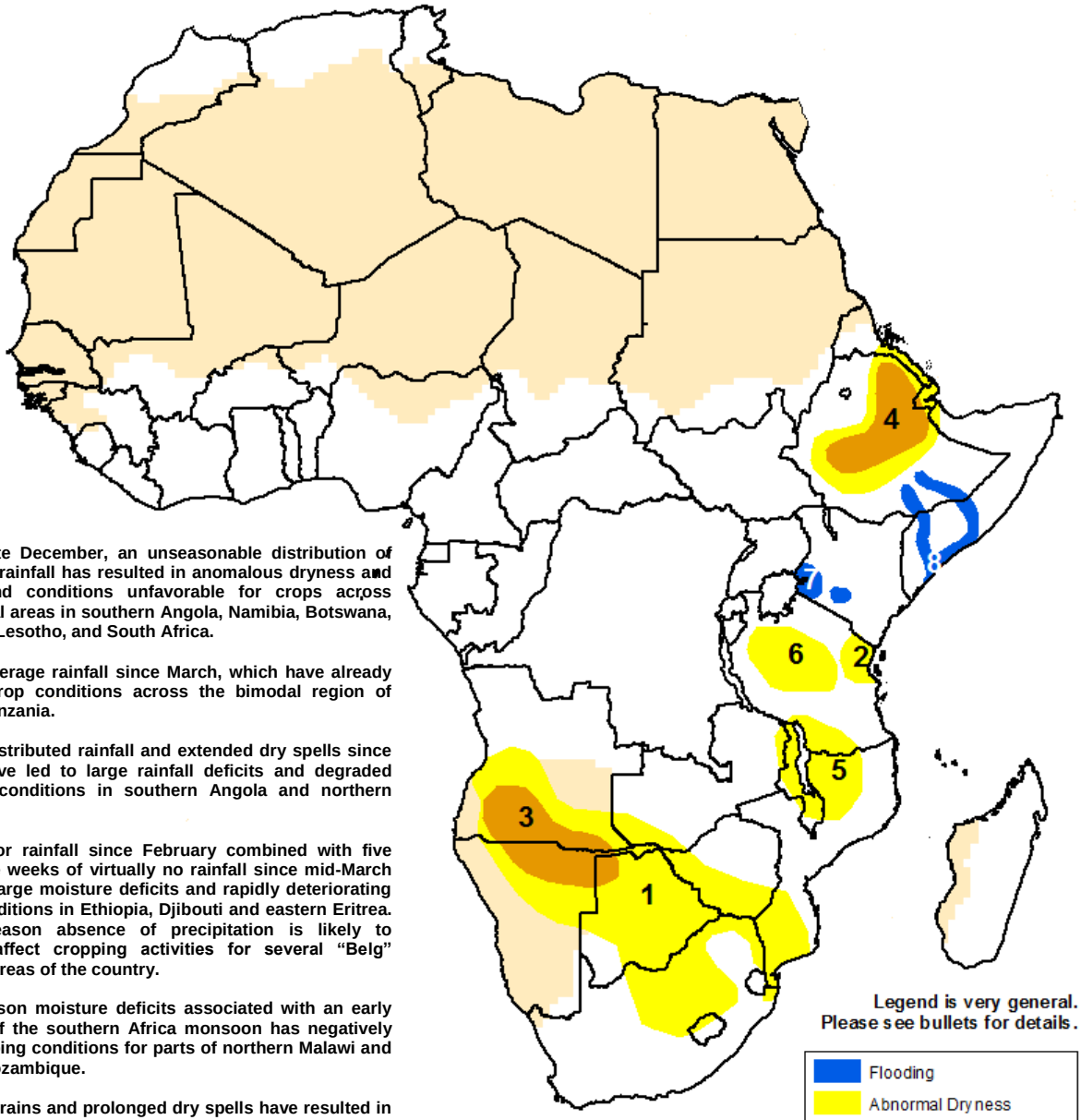
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
April 30 – May 6, 2015

- **A continued absence of rainfall across northern Ethiopia expected to adversely affect crop and pastoral conditions.**
- **Largely suppressed early season rains observed during the 2nd dekad of April over much of West Africa.**



1) Since late December, an unseasonable distribution of monsoonal rainfall has resulted in anomalous dryness and poor ground conditions unfavorable for crops across 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.

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) Very poor rainfall since February combined with five consecutive weeks of virtually no rainfall since mid-March has led to large moisture deficits and rapidly deteriorating ground conditions in Ethiopia, Djibouti and eastern Eritrea. The mid-season absence of precipitation is likely to adversely affect cropping activities for several "Belg" producing areas of the country.

5) Late season 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) Untimely rains and prolonged dry spells have resulted in failed crops over unimodal areas in the Dodoma, Singida, Shinyanga, Tabora, and Kigoma provinces of central Tanzania.

7) Torrential amounts of rainfall triggered flooding across the Nyanza and Nairobi regions of southern Kenya during the last week. Enhanced rainfall is forecast in the region during the next seven days.

8) Seasonally above-average moisture conditions combined with the potential for heavy rainfall forecast across eastern Ethiopia and Somalia is expected to elevate the risk for localized flooding and inundation along the Jubba and Shabelle River basins in Somalia.

Over a month of little to no rainfall has been observed in northern Ethiopia.

In the Greater Horn, little change to the spatial distribution of precipitation has occurred compared to previous weeks. In the last seven days, moderate to locally heavy weekly rainfall accumulations were received across portions of southwestern Ethiopia, Uganda, southwestern Kenya, with lesser, but well distributed rains across parts of eastern Ethiopia and southern Somalia (**Figure 1**). With the exception of some isolated shower activity in parts of the western Oromia, and central Amhara provinces, little to no rains were received in northern Ethiopia. This marks the fifth consecutive week of virtually no rainfall observed, exacerbating moisture deficits for several "belg" producing areas of Ethiopia and pastoral regions further north in the Afar and adjacent Djibouti and Eritrea.

Analysis of satellite rainfall percentiles since late March underscores both the extent and magnitude of seasonal dryness in northern Ethiopia. Several local areas in the Oromia, Amhara and Tigray provinces have experienced rainfall accumulations in the 10th percentile or less (**Figure 2**). Lower rainfall percentiles are also depicted in areas further north and east into parts of Eritrea, Djibouti, and northern Somalia, suggesting a strengthening of prevailing seasonal dryness into the pastoral regions of the Greater Horn. Historically, the unusual absence of mid-season rainfall in the region is significant, as these low percentiles suggest one of the worst "belg" season performances to date over the last 30 years. Undoubtedly, the continuation of anomalous dryness in April leaves even less opportunity for moisture recovery during May.

For the upcoming outlook period, precipitation models indicate, yet again, another week of suppressed rainfall for many areas affected by the anomalous dryness in northern Ethiopia. The continuation of poor rains is expected to worsen already moisture stressed crop and pastoral regions of the Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti. However, the potential for average to above-average rainfall remains forecast over eastern Ethiopia and Somalia. These rains may help alleviate the developing dryness conditions in the western Somaliland region of northern Somalia. Further south, above-average rainfall remains forecast for much of southern Kenya, Uganda, northern Tanzania and southern Somalia.

Well below-average ITF observed across West Africa.

During the 2nd dekad of April, a large scale suppression of rains was observed across much of West Africa, as early season precipitation remain confined across the lower coastal Gulf of Guinea region. Analysis of the seasonal progression of the Inter-Tropical Front (ITCZ/ITF) during mid-April also depicts a well below average position, as much as at least 2 degrees in latitude, on average, over both western (10W - 10E) and eastern (20E - 35E) regions (**Figure 3**). The anomalous equatorward placement of the ITF was associated with strong, dry northerly flow from the Sahara which had greatly suppressed seasonal convection. The continuation of dryness into late April and early May, may adversely affect early season cropping activities for several Gulf of Guinea countries.

Satellite Estimated Weekly Rainfall (mm)
Valid: April 13 – April 19, 2015

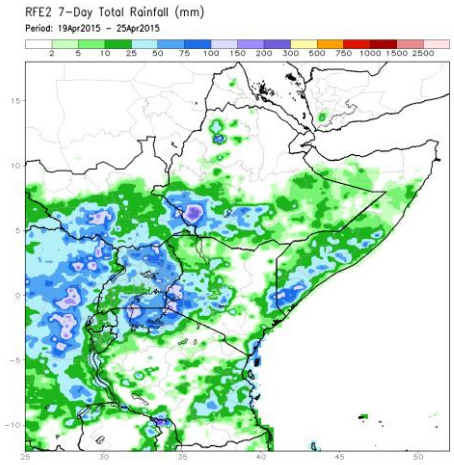


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

30-Day Satellite Estimates Rainfall Percentile
Valid: March 27 – April 25, 2015

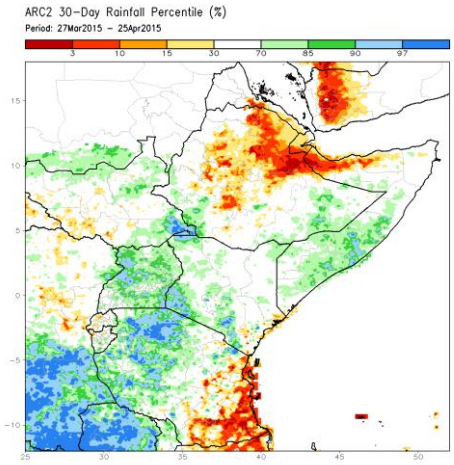


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

ITCZ/ITF Position
Valid: 2nd Dekad of April, 2015

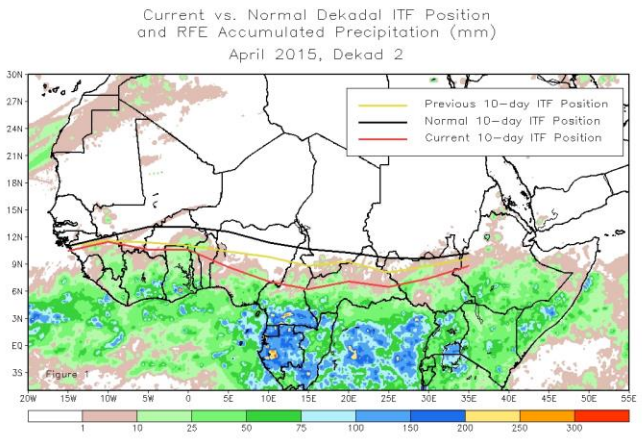


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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.

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