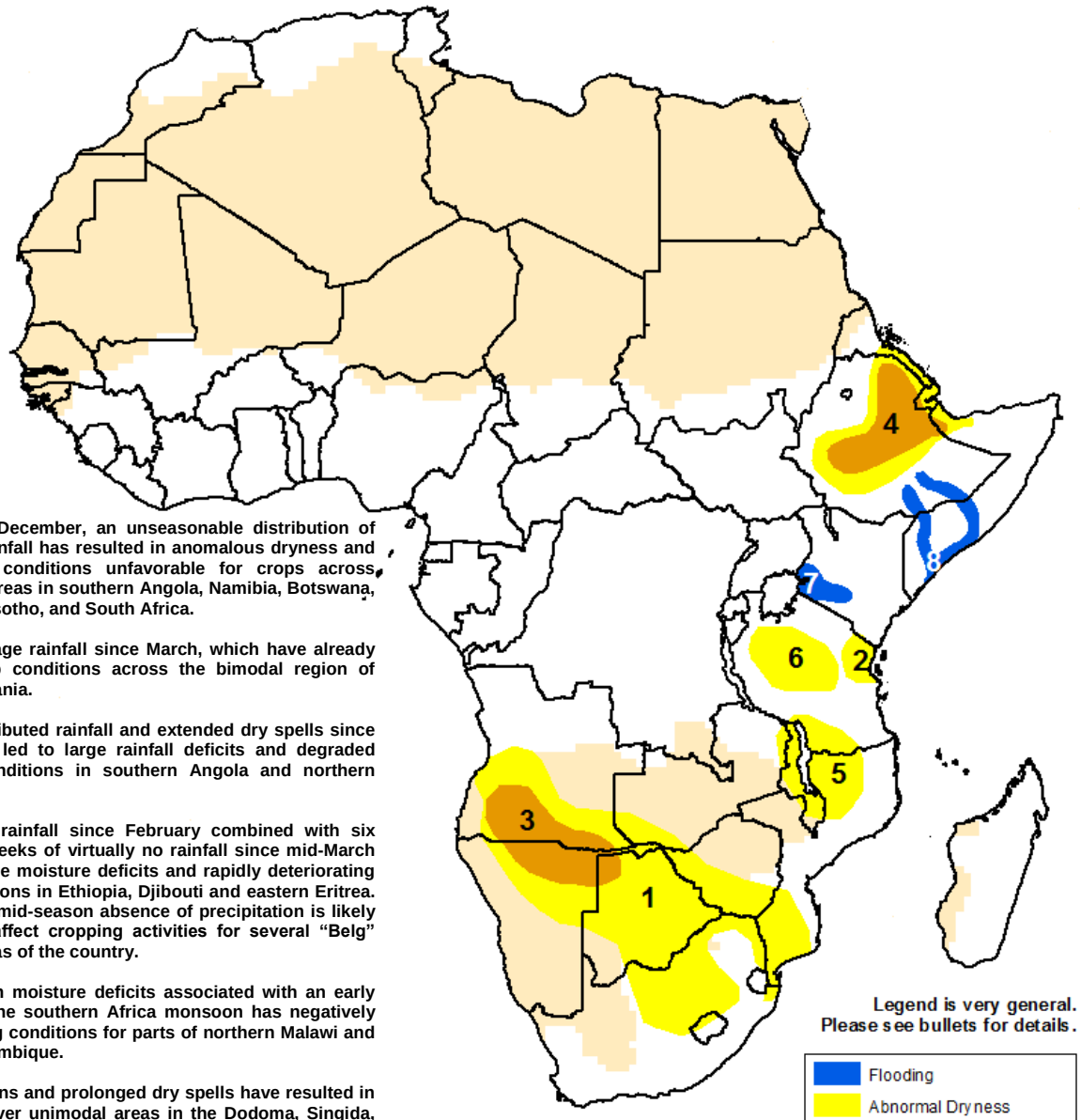
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
May 7 – May 13, 2015

- **A continued absence of rainfall across northern Ethiopia expected to adversely affect crop and pastoral conditions.**
- **Delay in onset of early monsoon rainfall continued through the 3rd dekad of April across a large portion of western 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 six 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 extended 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, Narok, 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 has elevated the risk for localized flooding along the Shabelle River basin, with a lower potential remaining along the Jubba River basin in Somalia.

Parts of northern Ethiopia have observed no rainfall for more than 6 weeks.

Northern Ethiopia still remains extremely dry, but a favorable spatial distribution of rains has been observed across the rest of the Greater Horn during the past week. Over the last seven days, locally heavy rainfall accumulations were received across portions of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, with lesser, but well distributed rains across parts of southern Ethiopia and much of Somalia (**Figure 1**). Northern Ethiopia received almost no rain for the 6th consecutive week. Only some western portions of the Amhara province received any shower activity. Moisture deficits continue to increase for many "belg" producing areas of Ethiopia and pastoral regions located to the north in the Afar and bordering Djibouti and Eritrea. Any significant reduction of deficits appears increasingly unlikely as seasonal rainfall should begin to wane climatologically during May.

Analysis of satellite rainfall anomalies since the beginning of February paints a picture of how extreme the seasonal dryness is becoming across northern Ethiopia. Large portions of the Afar, northeastern Oromia, and northern Somali provinces show deficits in excess of 100mm over the past 90 days (**Figure 2**). Deficits of this magnitude also now extend into the Somaliland region of Somalia. Favorable rainfall in recent weeks has improved the situation across parts of the SNNPR and Oromia provinces indicating large deficits on longer timescales. Historically, the unusual absence of mid-season rainfall in the region is significant, as data suggest one of the worst "belg" season performances to date over the last 30 years.

For the upcoming outlook period, precipitation models indicate a welcome change to the pattern that has persisted throughout the season. Moderate to heavy rainfall is expected across all of Ethiopia, even into regions that have not received rain for many weeks. Favorable rainfall is also likely in bordering Djibouti, Eritrea and northern Somalia. Any relief to parched ground is probably too late to benefit cropping activities. Locally heavy rains are expected to persist for areas of southwestern Kenya that have reported flooding during recent weeks. Much needed rainfall is also expected for bimodal Tanzania during the next 7 days.

Another week of suppressed rainfall observed across West Africa.

A large scale suppression of rains was observed across much of West Africa yet again, as early season precipitation still remains confined across the lower coastal Gulf of Guinea region. Slower-than-normal progression of the ITF across western Africa, due to anomalous northerly flow from the Sahara, can be blamed for the delayed onset of rains. Dryness caused by the delayed onset of rainfall is already negatively affecting conditions on the ground, which shows up clearly in the strip of low VHI values stretching across western Africa (**Figure 3**). This situation bears monitoring for potential adverse effects on early season cropping activities during the next couple of weeks.

Satellite Estimated Weekly Rainfall (mm)
Valid: April 26 – May 2, 2015

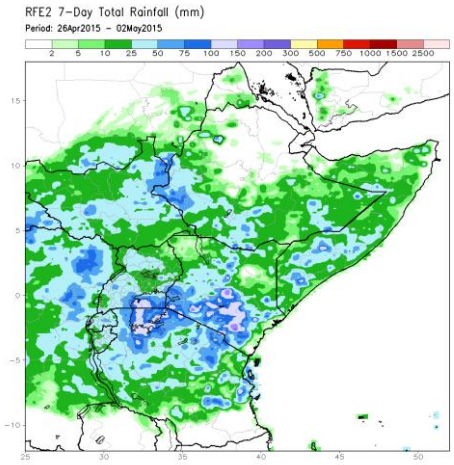


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

90-Day Satellite Estimates Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: February 2 – May 2, 2015

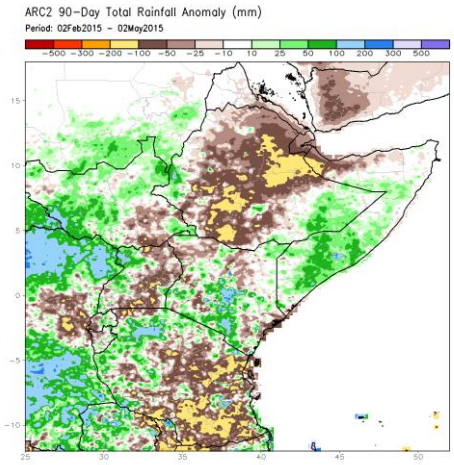


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Vegetation Health Index (VHI)
Valid: April 22 – May 2, 2015

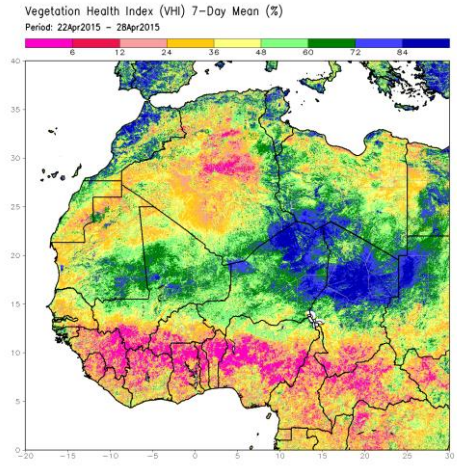


Figure 3: NESDIS/STAR

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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