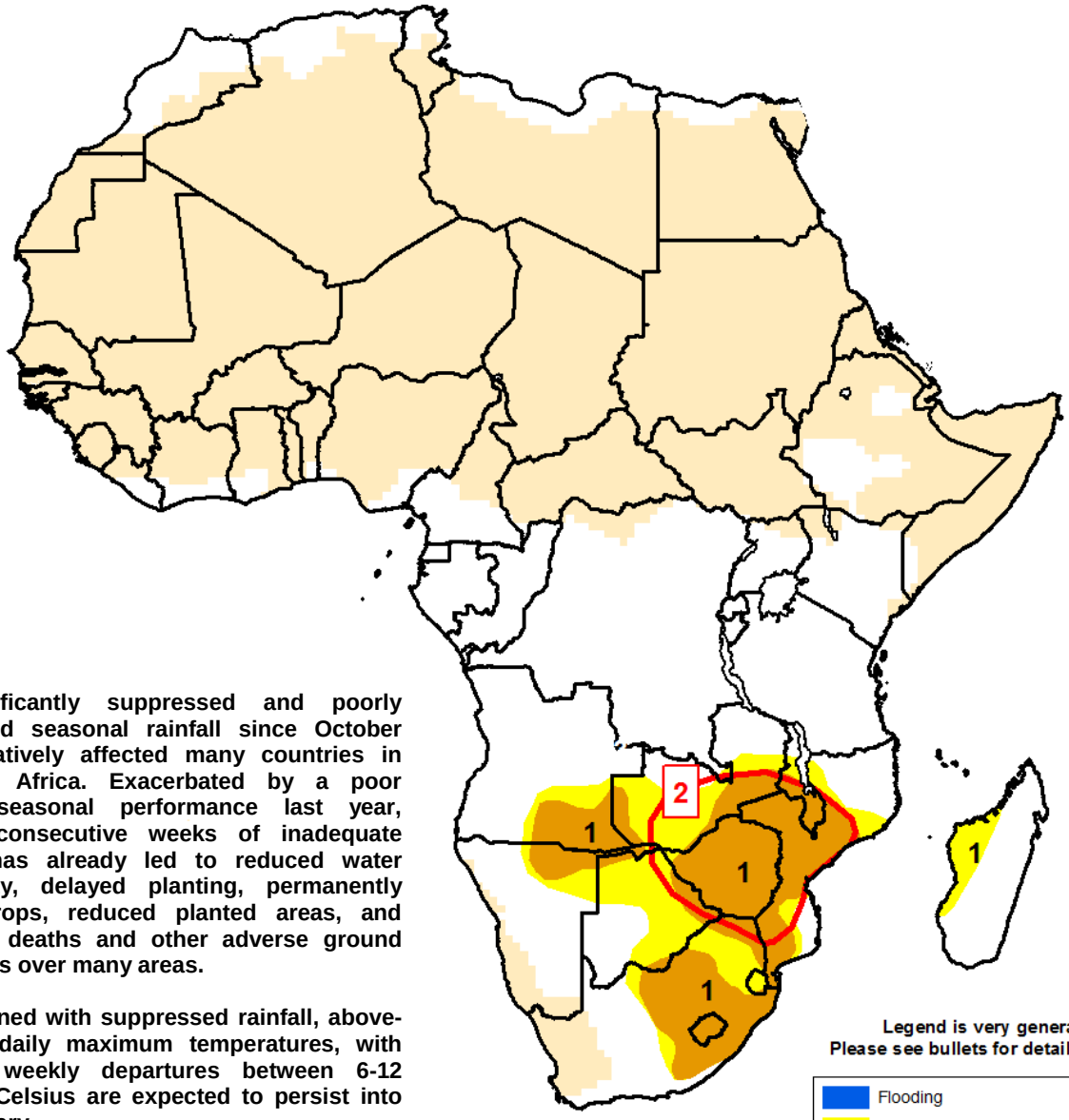
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
January 21 – January 27, 2016

- **Increased rains and more moderate temperatures during the middle of January expected to provide some relief to drought conditions for many areas in southern Africa.**



1) Significantly suppressed and poorly distributed seasonal rainfall since October has negatively affected many countries in southern Africa. Exacerbated by a poor rainfall seasonal performance last year, several consecutive weeks of inadequate rainfall has already led to reduced water availability, delayed planting, permanently wilted crops, reduced planted areas, and livestock deaths and other adverse ground conditions over many areas.

2) Combined with suppressed rainfall, above-average daily maximum temperatures, with average weekly departures between 6-12 degrees Celsius are expected to persist into late January.

Increased rains to provide some relief to dryness across southern Africa.

During the last observation period, an increase in the quantity and spatial extent of seasonal rainfall was observed across many anomalously dry areas in southern Africa. The highest weekly rainfall accumulations (>75mm) were received across portions of southern Tanzania, northern Mozambique, northern Madagascar eastern Angola, and in the Caprivi Strip region (**Figure 1**). More moderate, but well distributed rainfall amounts were received further south into parts of Botswana, Zimbabwe, and western Mozambique. For these countries, this week marked the first occurrence of considerable seasonal rainfall for many local areas, which is expected to help reduce rainfall deficits stemming from very poor rainfall since mid-December.

Over the past 30 days, a largely suppressed precipitation pattern can be seen across much of southeastern Africa according to satellite rainfall estimates (**Figure 2**). The largest precipitation and moisture deficits (>100mm) are now concentrated over western Madagascar, southern Zambia, central and western Mozambique, and neighboring portions of Zimbabwe. It is this region where monsoonal rainfall is climatologically higher and most frequent compared to other regions in southern Africa during mid to late January. As a result, the continuation of low rainfall accumulations and less than average rain days before the end of January is likely to rapidly strengthen dryness and lead to many adverse ground conditions, impeding the development of crops.

In other countries throughout southern Africa, a shift towards more average to above-average rainfall has been observed during the last 30 days. Since late December, many regions in Angola, Tanzania, and northern Mozambique have become anomalously wet due to more frequent, heavy January rainfall, which has helped to alleviate dryness associated with poor rains earlier in the season. However, the heavy rains have reportedly triggered flooding, damages to infrastructure and the displaced populations in local parts of Angola and northern Malawi earlier this month. In South Africa, increased rains in recent weeks have helped to mitigate moisture deficits in some parts of the Maize Triangle region, however, many areas outside of the Maize Triangle region have not experienced much of a recovery, sustaining the anomalous dryness and drought conditions that began earlier in the season.

During the next outlook period, another week of suppressed rainfall is forecast over many areas in southern Africa, with the potential for the lowest rainfall totals over southeastern Africa in the Zambezi River basin and Madagascar (**Figure 3**). As a result, seasonal moisture deficits over southern Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique are expected to significantly strengthen during late January. Temperature forecasts also show the continuation of abnormally high temperatures during the next week, with maximum daily temperatures exceeding 40 degrees across some parts of Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Satellite-Estimated Rainfall (mm)
Valid: January 12, 2015 – January 18, 2016

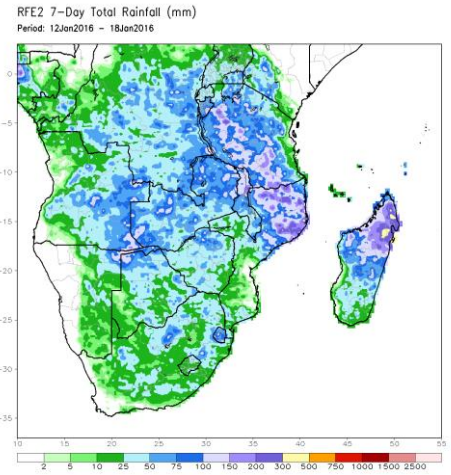


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Satellite Estimated Rainfall Anomaly (%)
Valid: December 20, 2015 – January 18, 2016

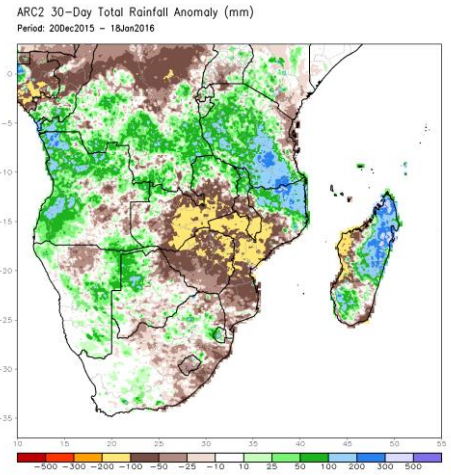


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Southern Africa Precipitation Forecast (mm)
Valid: January 19 – January 26, 2015

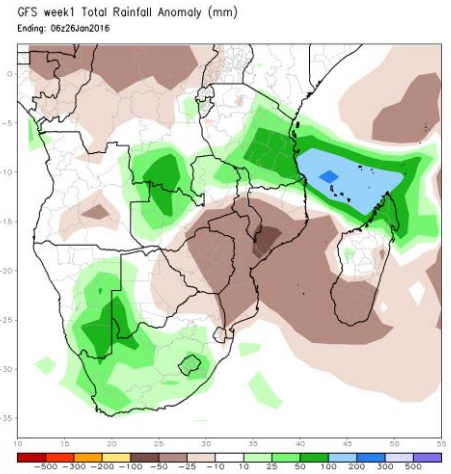


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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.

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-683-3424.