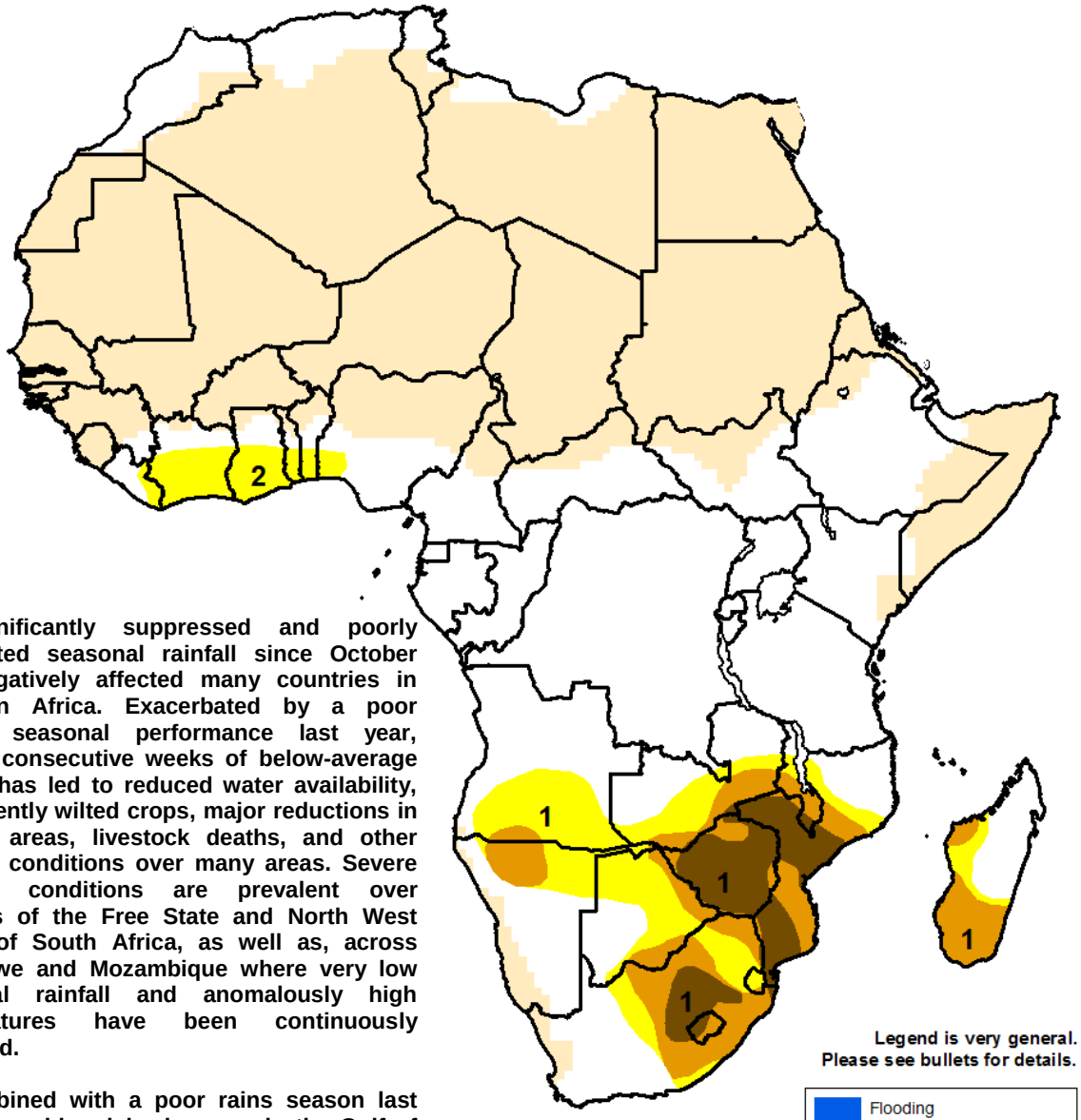
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
March 10 – March 16, 2016

- **Enhanced late season rainfall continued throughout portions of southern Africa during early March.**
- **Seasonable rains were received across Ethiopia.**



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 below-average rainfall has led to reduced water availability, permanently wilted crops, major reductions in planted areas, livestock deaths, and other adverse conditions over many areas. Severe drought conditions are prevalent over portions of the Free State and North West States of South Africa, as well as, across Zimbabwe and Mozambique where very low seasonal rainfall and anomalously high temperatures have been continuously observed.

2) Combined with a poor rains season last year, many bimodal rain areas in the Gulf of Guinea region have experienced little to rainfall since the January, which had led to quickly developing moisture deficits, dried rivers, and crop losses.

Above-average rainfall helps to relieve late season moisture deficits across portions of southern Africa.

For the second consecutive week, moderate to locally heavy rains continued across many anomalously dry parts of Angola, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Madagascar. According to satellite rainfall estimates, the heaviest weekly precipitation accumulations (>75mm) were received over southern Angola, southern Zambia, and northeastern Botswana. Further south and towards the east, late season rains were lesser in amount, but well distributed with weekly totals ranging between 10-25mm across many parts of South Africa and central Mozambique (**Figure 1**). Portions of central and southern Madagascar received moderate to locally high rainfall amounts.

Analysis of recent precipitation trends support a late-season improvement of rainfall and ground moisture since late-February over many anomalously dry areas in southern Africa. Positive changes (differences) in the running 30-day anomalies are depicted mainly across southern Angola, southern and central Zambia, Zimbabwe, central and western Mozambique, and southern Madagascar (**Figure 2**). Many of these regions experienced between 50-80 percent of their normal rainfall accumulation during the December-February timeframe. Despite the recently favorable increase in rainfall for these regions, a historically poor southern Africa monsoon has already led to many negative ground impacts, including major reductions expected in crop production.

During the middle of March, precipitation forecasts suggest a continuation of average to above-average rainfall during across several drought stricken countries. These late seasonal rains are likely help alleviate short-term moisture deficits, but are likely too late to overcome the long-term drought related damages already done from possibly the poorest southern Africa monsoon in decades.

Anomalous dryness and poor ground conditions reported in the Gulf of Guinea region.

Following a poor second season over many bi-modal areas in the Gulf of Guinea region, suppressed rainfall since the beginning of February has resulted in a rapid strengthening of early season moisture deficits across southern Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin and southwestern Nigeria. Although the first considerable increase in rainfall was observed during the last seven days, many local areas in these countries are experiencing rainfall deficits ranging between 50 and 100mm (**Figure 3**). Near the Lake Volta region of Ghana, the persistence of anomalously dry conditions since last year has reportedly of crop failure and low water levels in the Ayensu and Densu Rivers. Precipitation forecasts suggest a seasonable distribution of rainfall for the upcoming outlook period. While light to moderate rainfall will be favorable in the region, more rainfall is needed to mitigate dryness and to help replenish water resources in the region during the next several weeks.

Satellite-Estimated Rainfall (mm)
Valid: March 2 – March 8, 2016

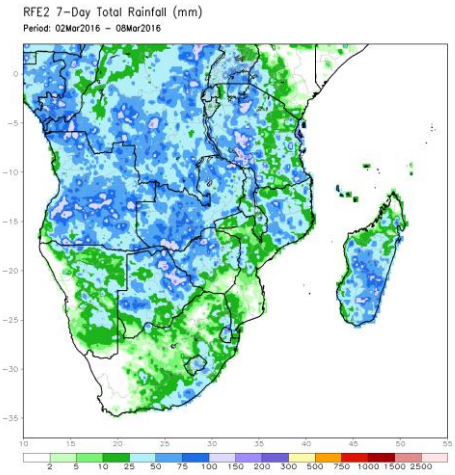


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Satellite-Estimated 30-day Rainfall Anomaly Difference (mm)
As of: March 8, 2016

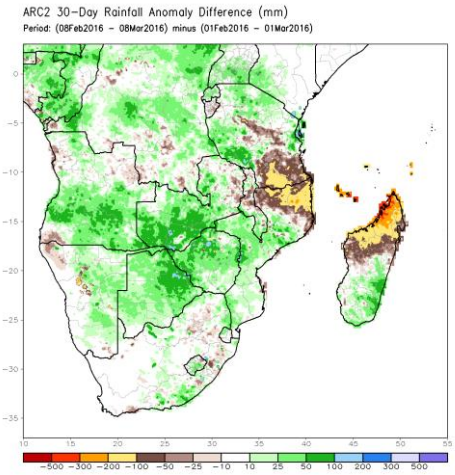


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

East Africa 30-day Precipitation Anomaly (mm)
Valid: February 8 – March 8, 2016

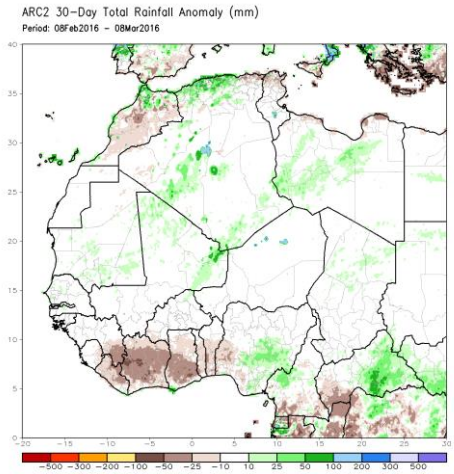


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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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