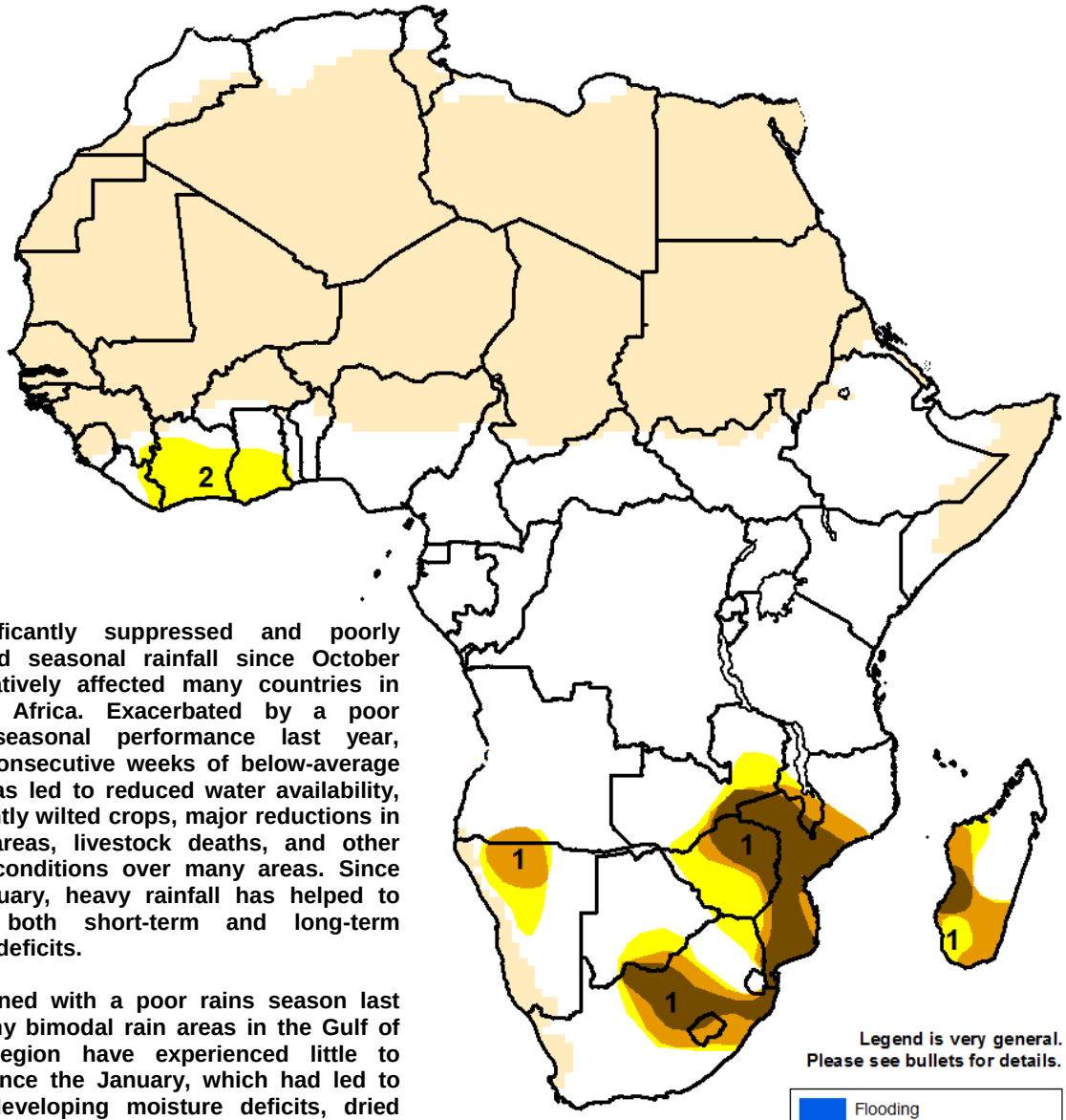
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
March 24 – March 30, 2016

- **Significantly heavy, late-season rains continue over many drought affected areas of southeastern Africa.**
- **Dry weather prevailed across much of the Greater Horn during the last week.**



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. Since late February, heavy rainfall has helped to mitigate both short-term and long-term moisture deficits.

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.

Dry conditions return over Ethiopia during the middle of March.

Throughout the Greater Horn of Africa, a break in seasonal rainfall was observed for many areas in Ethiopia received continuous rains since the beginning of the month. Compared to the last two weeks, the past weeks rainfall distribution was mainly concentrated throughout western and southwestern Ethiopia, with little to no precipitation amounts recorded in "belg" producing regions located in the higher elevations, and across the east half of the country (**Figure 1**). Further south, rainfall was also much lesser in amount (2-25mm) compared to the heavier amounts received recent weeks across many areas in Kenya, Tanzania and Somalia.

Since the middle of February, satellite rainfall estimates depict favorably above-average rainfall conditions some central and eastern regions of Ethiopia. However, low rainfall accumulations observed during this past week has led to a strengthening of seasonal dryness throughout many parts of Oromia, eastern Amhara, Tigray, Afar, and SNNP provinces of Ethiopia. Although the 30-day rainfall deficits appear to be marginal (10-25mm) for many of these areas during the middle of March (**Figure 2**), the continuation of suppressed rainfall into April is likely to negatively impact ground conditions and ongoing cropping activities in Ethiopia following two consecutively failed rainfall seasons in the region.

During the late March, precipitation forecasts suggest a continuation of average to below-average rainfall over the Greater Horn of Africa. As a result, anomalous dryness and moisture deficits are expected to strengthen before the end of the month.

Heavy March rainfall continues to mitigate many anomalously dry southern Africa countries.

Since the middle of February, many regions of southern Africa continue to experience a significant improvement in moisture conditions following one the driest monsoons on record during the (Oct-Feb) timeframe. After several consecutive weeks of enhanced rainfall, analysis of the 30-day rainfall anomalies now depict large moisture surpluses centered across central southern Africa, with many local areas in southern Zambia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and northern South Africa receiving over twice as much as their normal, climatologically expected rainfall since late February (**Figure 3**). Increased rains and improved moisture conditions are also noted across western Mozambique. A continuation of enhanced rainfall before the end of March over many drought affected areas is likely to provide relief in replenishing water availability and benefiting pastoral areas, however, significant crop reductions are still expected after a consistently poor rainfall performance in previous months. Precipitation forecasts suggest a high potential for heavy rainfall over eastern Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique during the next outlook period.

Satellite-Estimated Rainfall (mm)
Valid: March 16 – March 22, 2016

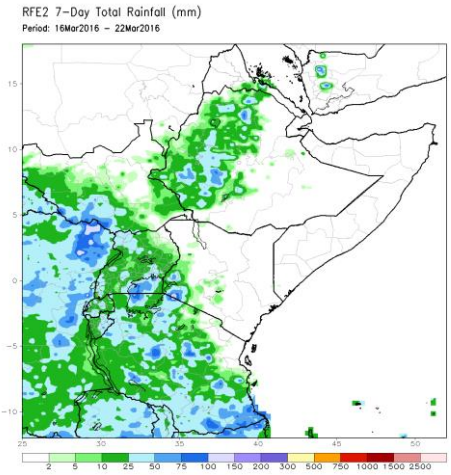


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

East Africa 30-day Satellite-Estimated Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: February 22 - March 22, 2016

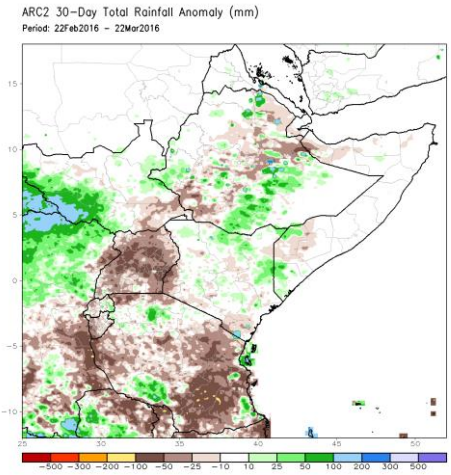


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Southern Africa 30-day Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
As of: March 22, 2016

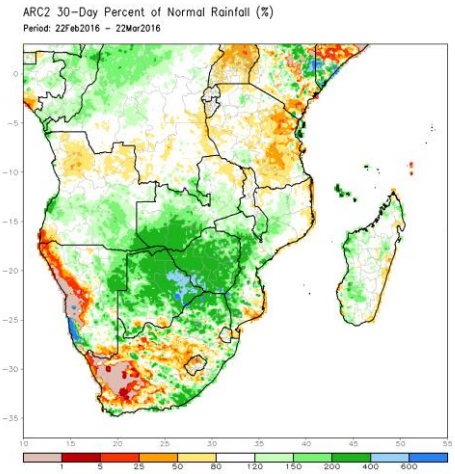


Figure 3: NOAA/CPC

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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