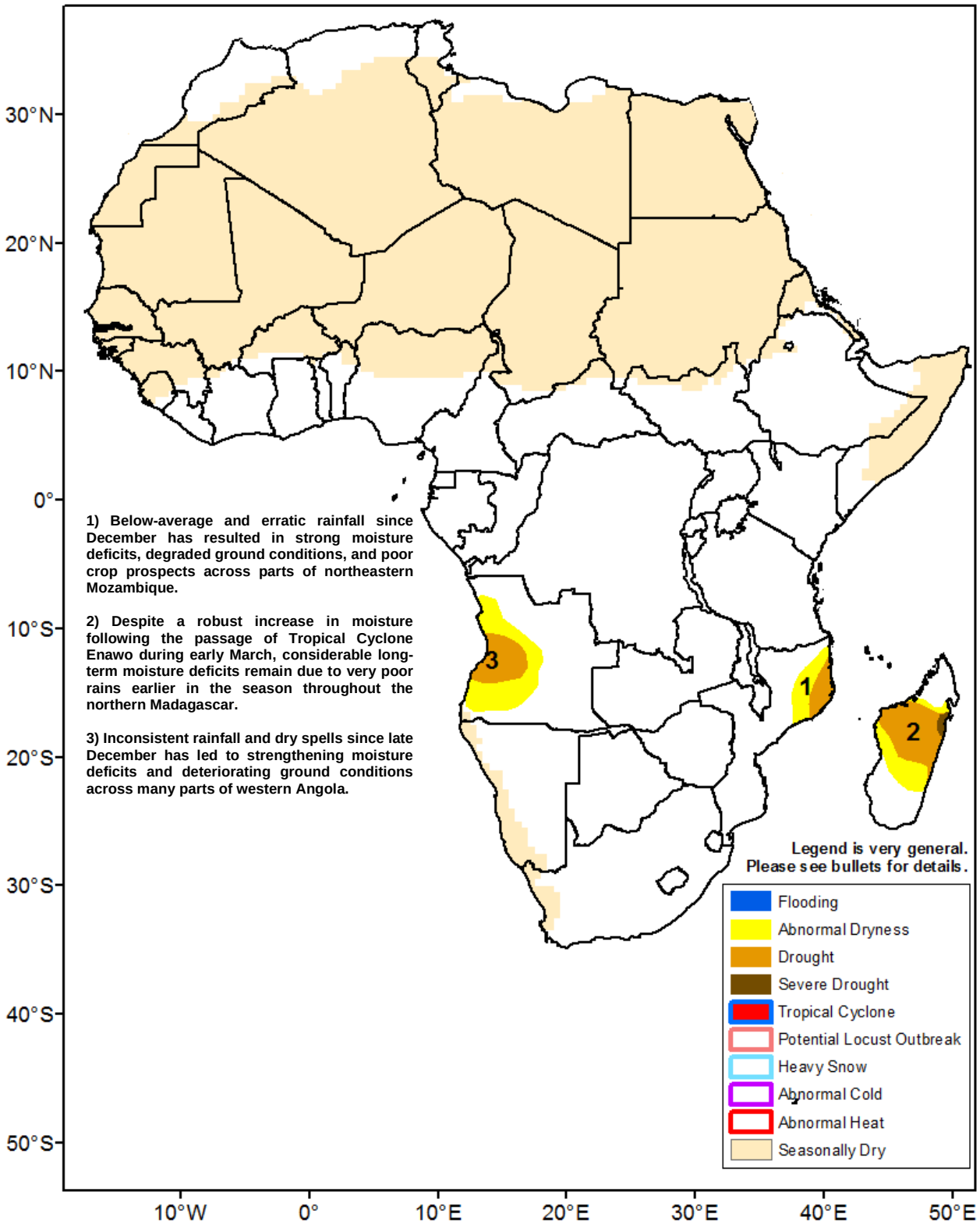
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
March 23 – March 29, 2017

- **Seasonal rainfall significantly weakens across southern Africa.**
- **Light to moderate rainfall amounts received across east Africa.**



1) Below-average and erratic rainfall since December has resulted in strong moisture deficits, degraded ground conditions, and poor crop prospects across parts of northeastern Mozambique.

2) Despite a robust increase in moisture following the passage of Tropical Cyclone Enawo during early March, considerable long-term moisture deficits remain due to very poor rains earlier in the season throughout the northern Madagascar.

3) Inconsistent rainfall and dry spells since late December has led to strengthening moisture deficits and deteriorating ground conditions across many parts of western Angola.

Reduced rains expected to provide relief to seasonally saturated conditions in southern Africa

During the last week, a reduction to the spatial extent and quantity of seasonal precipitation was observed throughout many saturated regions of southern Africa. According to satellite rainfall estimates, the highest weekly accumulations (>100mm) were received across northern Madagascar the second consecutive week following the passage of tropical cyclone Enawo over the island during early March (**Figure 1**). Over on the continent, moderate to locally heavy rainfall amounts were received in southwestern Angola, central Mozambique and southern Tanzania, with significantly lesser amounts (<10mm) over much of Zambia, the Caprivi Strip region, Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. This past week's rainfall distribution marked the first time seasonal rainfall was predominately below-average since December throughout the domain.

The suppressed rainfall over much of Zambia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe during the past week is expected to provide relief to saturated conditions and flooding concerns that have persisted for the last two months. In Madagascar, relief is also being experienced across where abnormal dryness and drought condition have negatively impacted much of the country. The enhancement of rainfall over the past two weeks has resulted in average to above-average conditions since the middle of February, with the largest positive moisture anomalies (>200mm) concentrated in the northern provinces of Madagascar (**Figure 2**). While the much improved rains have helped to alleviate short-term and long-term dryness and replenish water resources, the erratic temporal distribution of rainfall has not been favorable for ground conditions and cropping activities in Madagascar.

7-Day Satellite-Estimated Rainfall (mm)
Valid: March 13 - 19, 2017

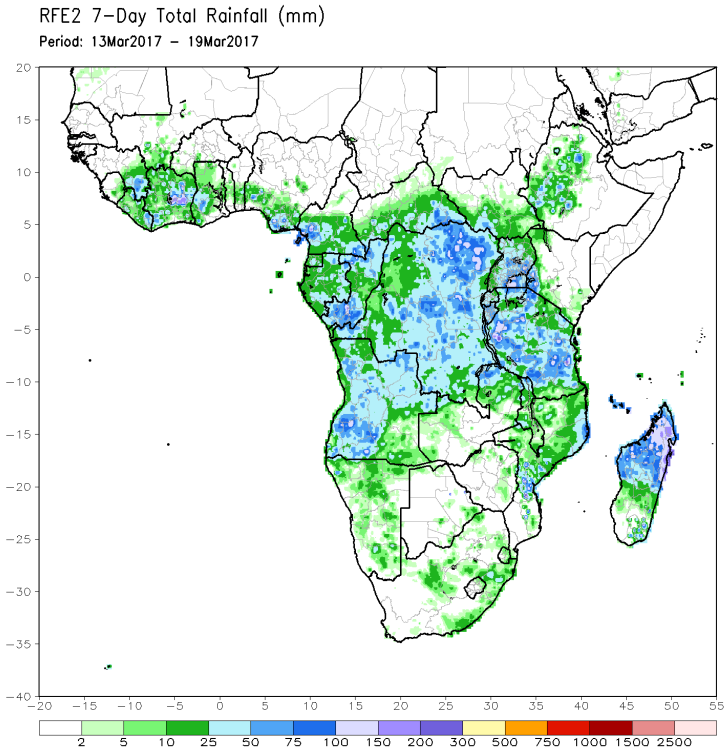


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

30-Day Satellite Estimated Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: February 18 – March 19, 2017

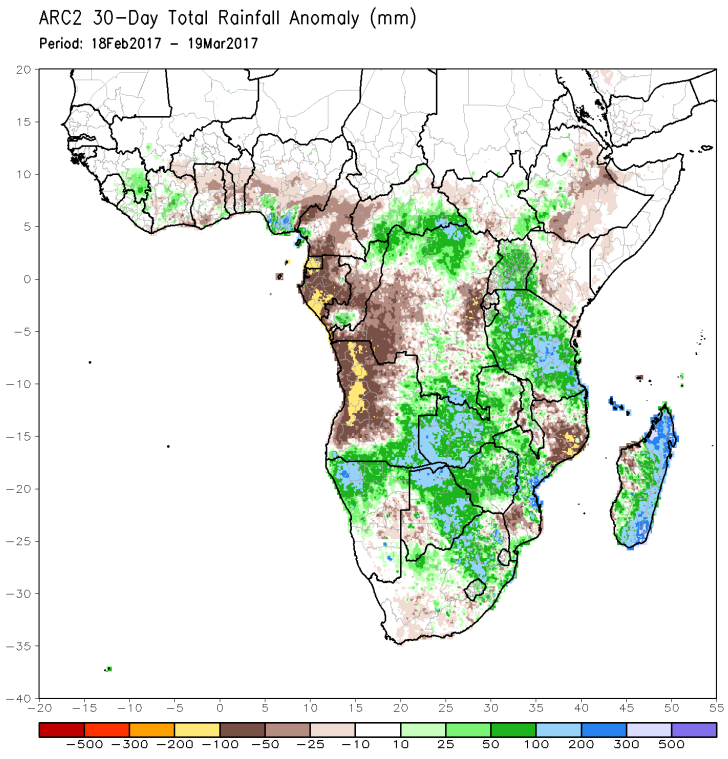


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

Continued early season suppressed rainfall in parts of East and West Africa.

In many parts of Ethiopia, average to below-average rainfall was received during the last week, marking the third consecutive week of suppressed rains suggesting a delayed start to the belg rains season. While rainfall was average to above-average during February, the recent absence of rainfall has resulted in a strengthening of moisture deficits, where negative anomalies between 25-50mm are emerging throughout parts of SNNP, and higher elevations of the Oromia, eastern Amhara, and Afar regions of the country (**Figure 2**). Similarly, many parts of southern Kenya have experienced a delay in seasonal rainfall, as moisture deficits continue to rise.

In the Gulf of Guinea region of West Africa, a slow start to early seasonal rainfall is also being experienced. Moisture deficits have shown some strengthening across the central and northern provinces of Ghana, Togo, Benin and Nigeria, suggesting that the ITF/ITCZ has been anomalously placed to the south of its typical position during March. During the upcoming outlook period, seasonable rainfall is expected of much of West Africa, with the potential for enhanced rainfall over parts of Cote d'Ivoire. Additionally, enhanced rainfall is also forecast for Ethiopia to help offset early season dryness.

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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