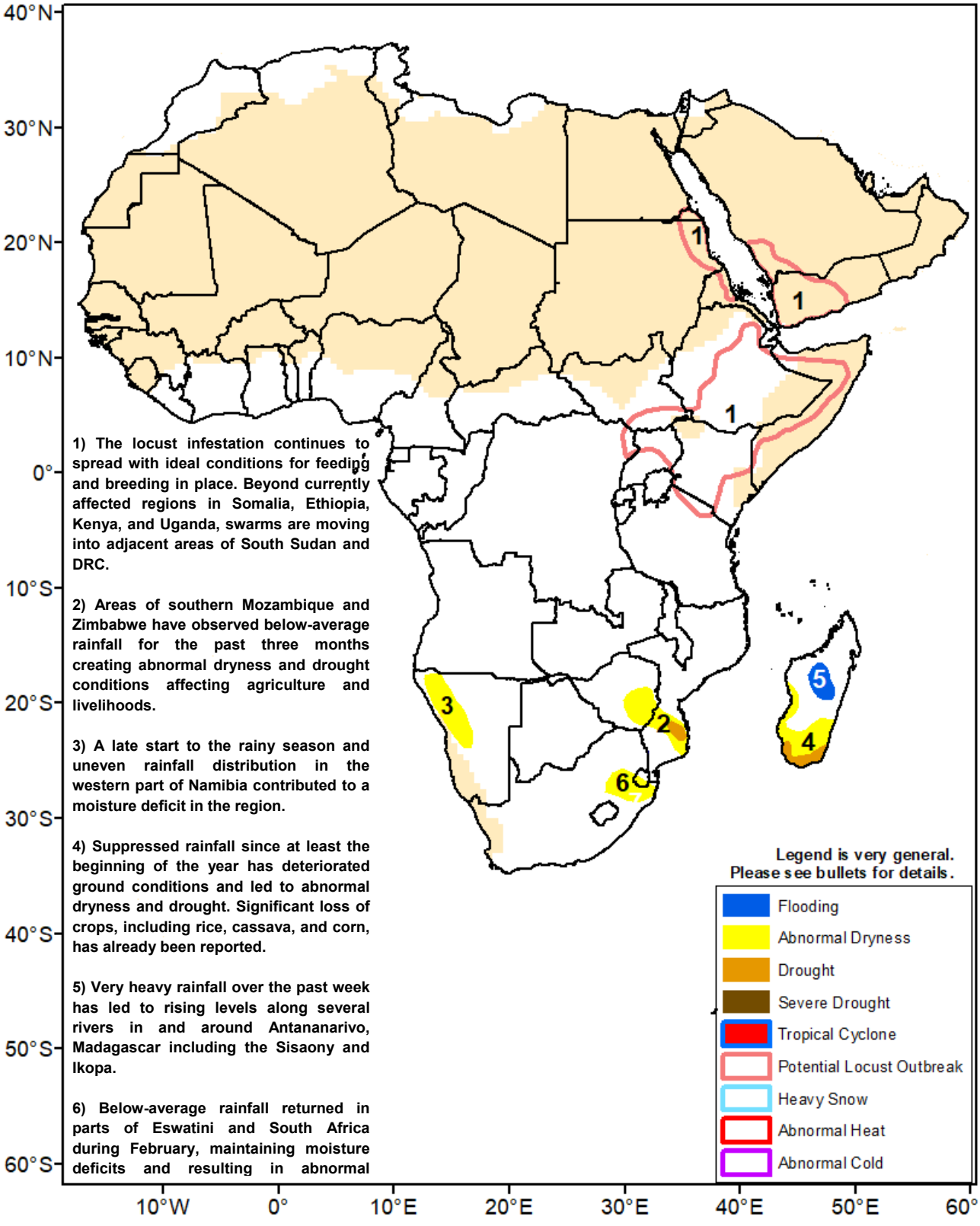
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
March 5 – 11, 2020

- **Widespread locust breeding and swarms threatens the *long rains*, March-May, season in eastern Africa.**
- **Dryness persisted in many areas of southern Africa despite recent good rains over most areas.**



1) The locust infestation continues to spread with ideal conditions for feeding and breeding in place. Beyond currently affected regions in Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda, swarms are moving into adjacent areas of South Sudan and DRC.

2) Areas of southern Mozambique and Zimbabwe have observed below-average rainfall for the past three months creating abnormal dryness and drought conditions affecting agriculture and livelihoods.

3) A late start to the rainy season and uneven rainfall distribution in the western part of Namibia contributed to a moisture deficit in the region.

4) Suppressed rainfall since at least the beginning of the year has deteriorated ground conditions and led to abnormal dryness and drought. Significant loss of crops, including rice, cassava, and corn, has already been reported.

5) Very heavy rainfall over the past week has led to rising levels along several rivers in and around Antananarivo, Madagascar including the Sisaony and Ikopa.

6) Below-average rainfall returned in parts of Eswatini and South Africa during February, maintaining moisture deficits and resulting in abnormal

This past week's near to above-average rainfall marked the onset of the March-May season in eastern Africa.

During late February, a favorable rainfall distribution was observed in the Horn of Africa. Light to locally moderate (< 50 mm) rains fell in southwestern Ethiopia, northern Uganda, southern Somalia, and the central and southern parts of Kenya (**Figure 1**). Higher (> 50 mm) precipitation amounts were registered in southern Kenya along the border with Tanzania. This past week's rainfall totals were near to above-average, particularly across the southern areas and may have marked a favorable onset to the March-May, *long rains*, season in eastern Africa. An analysis of rainfall performance over the past thirty days indicated that wetness continued over southern Kenya, Uganda, and parts of southwestern Ethiopia. However, dryness with small rainfall deficits emerged across the central and eastern portions of Ethiopia. As a result, positive vegetation conditions continued to be observed across the Horn of Africa. However, the widespread ongoing locust breeding and swarm outbreaks pose a threat to cropping activities for the March-May season over many areas.

During the next outlook period, seasonable, moderate to heavy rains are forecast over the *Belg*-receiving region of southern and central Ethiopia. Farther south, heavy rains are expected in southern Kenya, particularly the Lake Victoria region of the country.

7-Day Satellite-Estimated Total Rainfall (mm)
Valid: February 26 – March 03, 2020

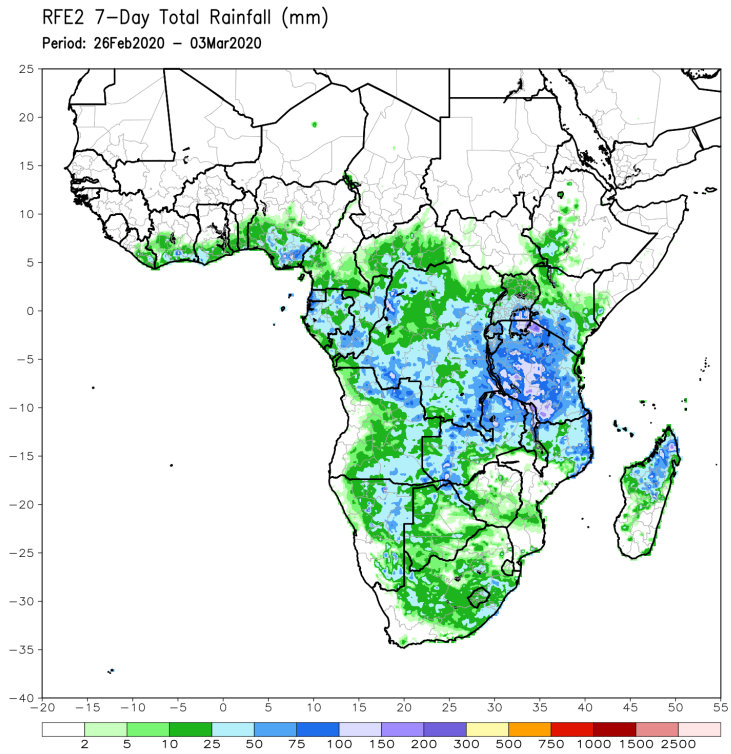


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Many areas of southern Africa still experienced dryness since the beginning of the year.

Since the beginning of the year, many areas of southern Africa received insufficient rainfall despite a widespread and favorable rainfall distribution over the remainders of the sub-region. These dry areas included western Namibia, the KwaZulu-Natal Province of eastern South Africa, Eswatini, localized areas of Botswana and Zimbabwe, areas of northern and southern Mozambique, and southern Madagascar (**Figure 2**). The largest (> 100 mm) negative rainfall anomalies were observed in southern Madagascar, where droughts have already negatively impacted the livelihoods of people, based on reports. A recent southern African bulletin also indicated that the poor spatial and temporal distribution of rainfall during the mid-season (mid-December of the past year to January) has resulted in acute dryness and poor grazing conditions and crop losses in parts of Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. In contrast, increased rains over the recent weeks amplified moisture surpluses over most areas such as parts of Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Madagascar. The largest (> 300 mm) surpluses were recorded in Tanzania.

During the outlook period, another wet week, with heavy and abundant rains, is forecast across eastern Angola, southern DRC, northern Zambia, northern Malawi, and southern Tanzania. The forecast copious amounts of rainfall may trigger localized flooding in the region. Heavy rains are also expected over northern Madagascar. In contrast, limited with little to light rains are forecast in northern Namibia, northern Botswana, Zimbabwe, eastern South Africa, and Mozambique. Suppressed rainfall is forecast elsewhere.

3-Month Satellite-Estimated Total Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: January 01 – March 03, 2020

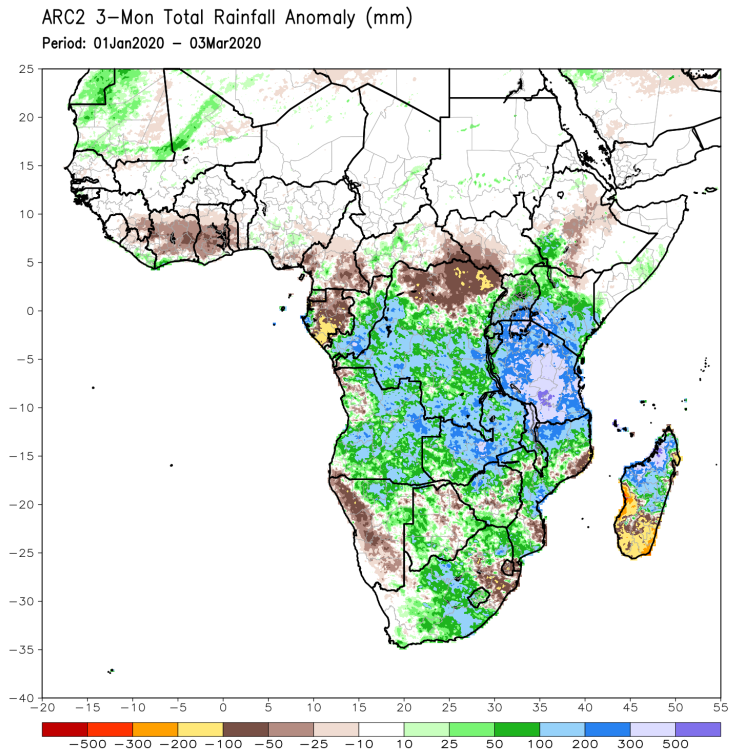


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

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.