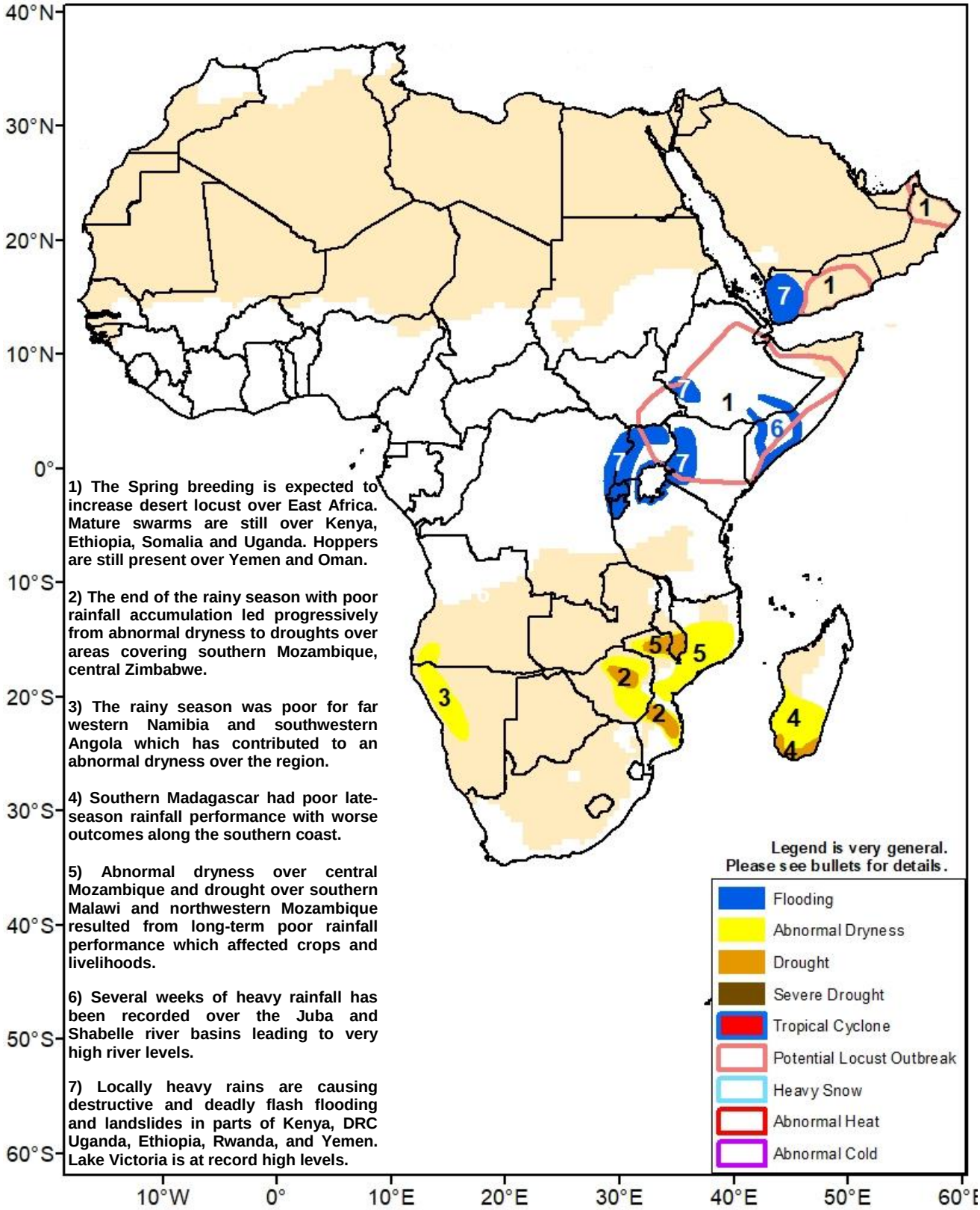
Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook
May 14 – May 20, 2020

- **Ongoing heavy rains in East Africa continue to cause deadly flash flooding and river flooding in many areas.**
- **Locusts remain a serious threat in the east and could spread into the Sahel over the coming months.**



1) The Spring breeding is expected to increase desert locust over East Africa. Mature swarms are still over Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Uganda. Hoppers are still present over Yemen and Oman.

2) The end of the rainy season with poor rainfall accumulation led progressively from abnormal dryness to droughts over areas covering southern Mozambique, central Zimbabwe.

3) The rainy season was poor for far western Namibia and southwestern Angola which has contributed to an abnormal dryness over the region.

4) Southern Madagascar had poor late-season rainfall performance with worse outcomes along the southern coast.

5) Abnormal dryness over central Mozambique and drought over southern Malawi and northwestern Mozambique resulted from long-term poor rainfall performance which affected crops and livelihoods.

6) Several weeks of heavy rainfall has been recorded over the Juba and Shabelle river basins leading to very high river levels.

7) Locally heavy rains are causing destructive and deadly flash flooding and landslides in parts of Kenya, DRC Uganda, Ethiopia, Rwanda, and Yemen. Lake Victoria is at record high levels.

Heavy, flood inducing rain continued in many parts of the East Africa region last week.

Several parts of the region continued to receive heavy rain this week. According to satellite estimates, large 7-day rainfall totals of greater than 75mm were observed in local parts of central Somalia, southwestern Ethiopia, western and coastal Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and northeastern DRC (Figure 1). This resulted in flash flooding and landslides in many of these areas, notably in Uganda, Rwanda, western Kenya, and SNNPR in Ethiopia. Moderate rain was also widespread across other parts of western Ethiopia last week. Meanwhile, rains remained light in many parts of Kenya and Tanzania. Almost no rain was observed in those areas. The pattern led to small 7-day rainfall deficits scattered throughout the region.

The MAM rainfall season to date has brought copious rainfall all across the East Africa region. Many areas recorded twice their average rainfall over the period. Despite diminishing last week, parts of northern Somalia and Yemen have seen abnormal rainfall registering more than 4 times the average. This persistent pattern has saturated many of the region's basins and will keep flood risks high in coming weeks. Flooding along the Juba and Shabelle rivers is a serious hazard. Outside of flooding concerns, the rainy pattern has led to excellent regional vegetation health. Additionally, urgent mitigation measures are ongoing to stop the rapid spread of locusts throughout the region. Wet conditions and ample vegetation are helping to drive reproduction and subsequent spread of locust populations that are impacting the MAM crop season.

During the outlook period, heavy rains (>75mm) are forecast for parts of eastern DRC, Uganda, and western Kenya. A suppression of rain is likely in Somalia and Eastern Ethiopia and would bring a welcome reprieve to those areas.

Satellite Estimated Total Rainfall (mm)
Valid: May 6 – May 12, 2020

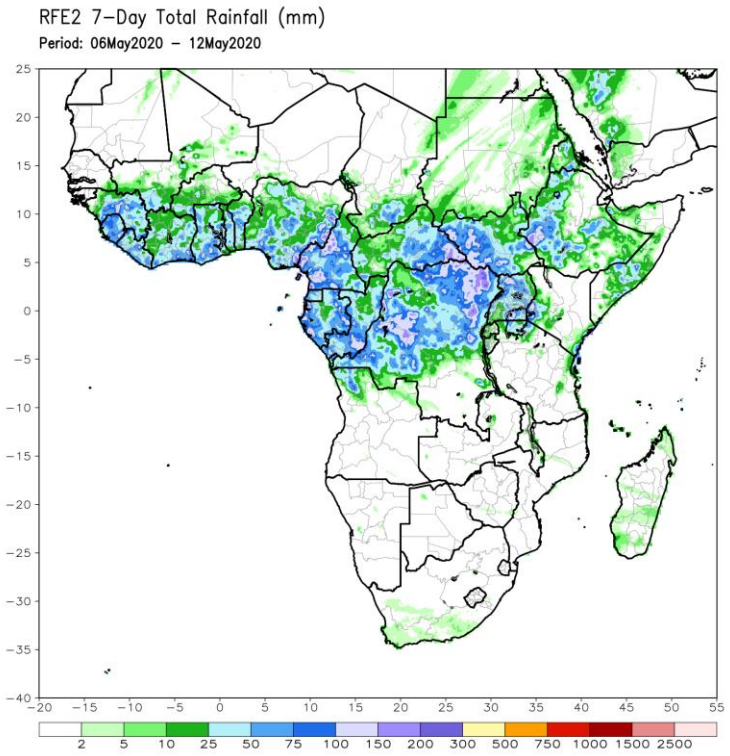


Figure 1: NOAA/CPC

Rainfall performance has been positive early in the season for West Africa.

Light to moderate rains were observed across much of the climatologically active area of West Africa, with larger amounts in the south, according to satellite estimates. The largest totals of more than 100mm were observed in Guinea, Sierra Leone, southern Cote D'Ivoire, southern Ghana, eastern Nigeria, and Cameroon (Figure 1). Parts of Burkina Faso, and northern Nigeria received very little rain (<10mm). These totals resulted in deficits of 10-50mm for many areas. Surpluses were observed along much of the Gulf of Guinea coast. As a result of the favorable regional rainfall pattern, vegetation looks healthy according to satellite derived products.

During the past 30 days, mostly sufficient rainfall has been observed over West Africa, but a delay in onset is observed over the northern part of Nigeria (Figure 2). Some early-season deficits are visible there. Analysis of the African ITF reveals a small lag in northward progression over West Africa but hints at ongoing improvement for northern Nigeria. Many other parts of the region exhibit surpluses during the period. Western parts of the region, especially including Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, have received abnormal rains of as much as 4 times their normal.

During the outlook period, suppression of rainfall is expected across many of the Gulf of Guinea countries. Lighter rains of less than 25mm will likely be the norm. However, spatial coverage of rain is expected to be normal. More than 25mm is forecast in western Gulf of Guinea countries.

Satellite Estimated Total Rainfall Anomaly (mm)
Valid: April 13 – May 12, 2020

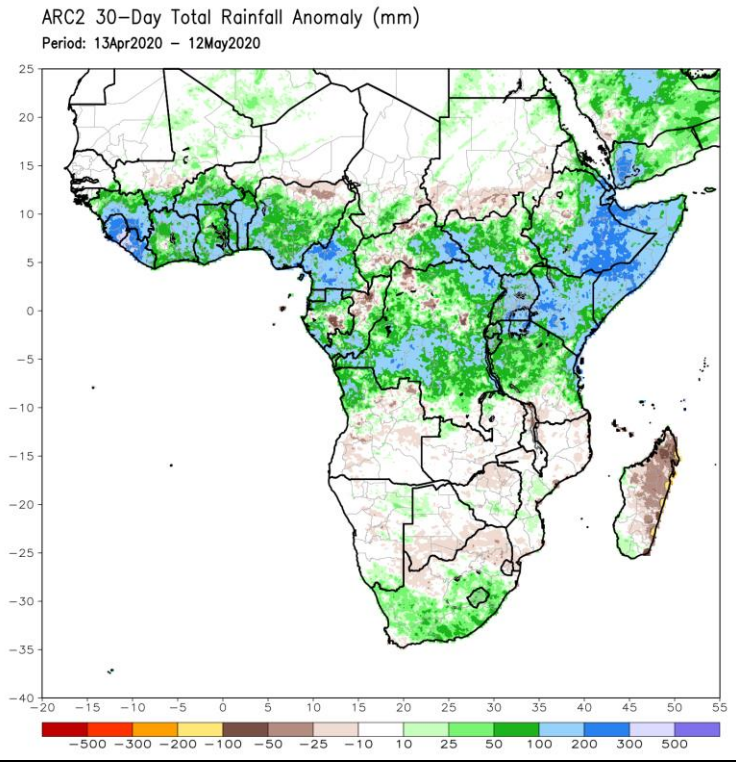


Figure 2: NOAA/CPC

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.