

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

September 29 – October 5, 2005

Weekly Introduction:

Update of Seasonal Outlooks at Four-Months Lead: January-March 2006 Forecasts

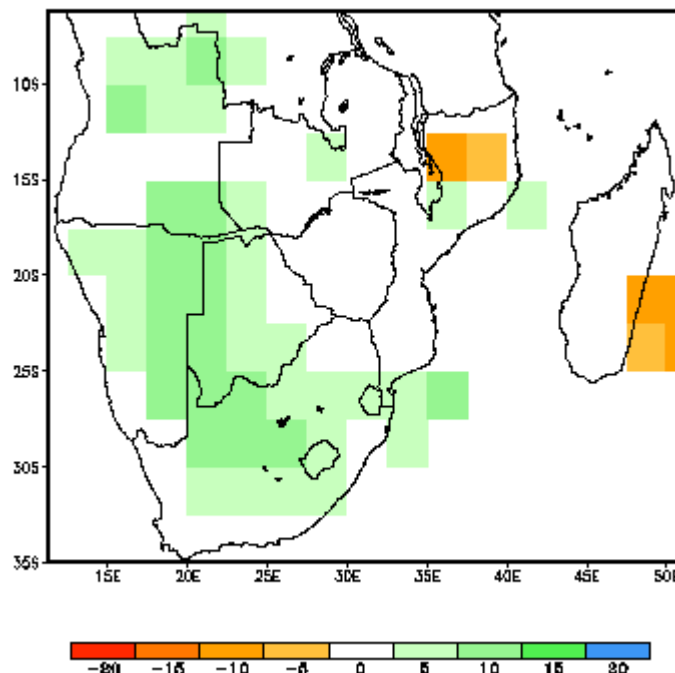
Southern Africa

The outlook at four months lead shows a tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall across central South Africa, most of Namibia, the western half of Botswana, portions of southern and northern Angola, locally over central Zambia and north central and southern Mozambique. There is a tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall locally over northern Mozambique and southeastern Madagascar.

Locust Update:

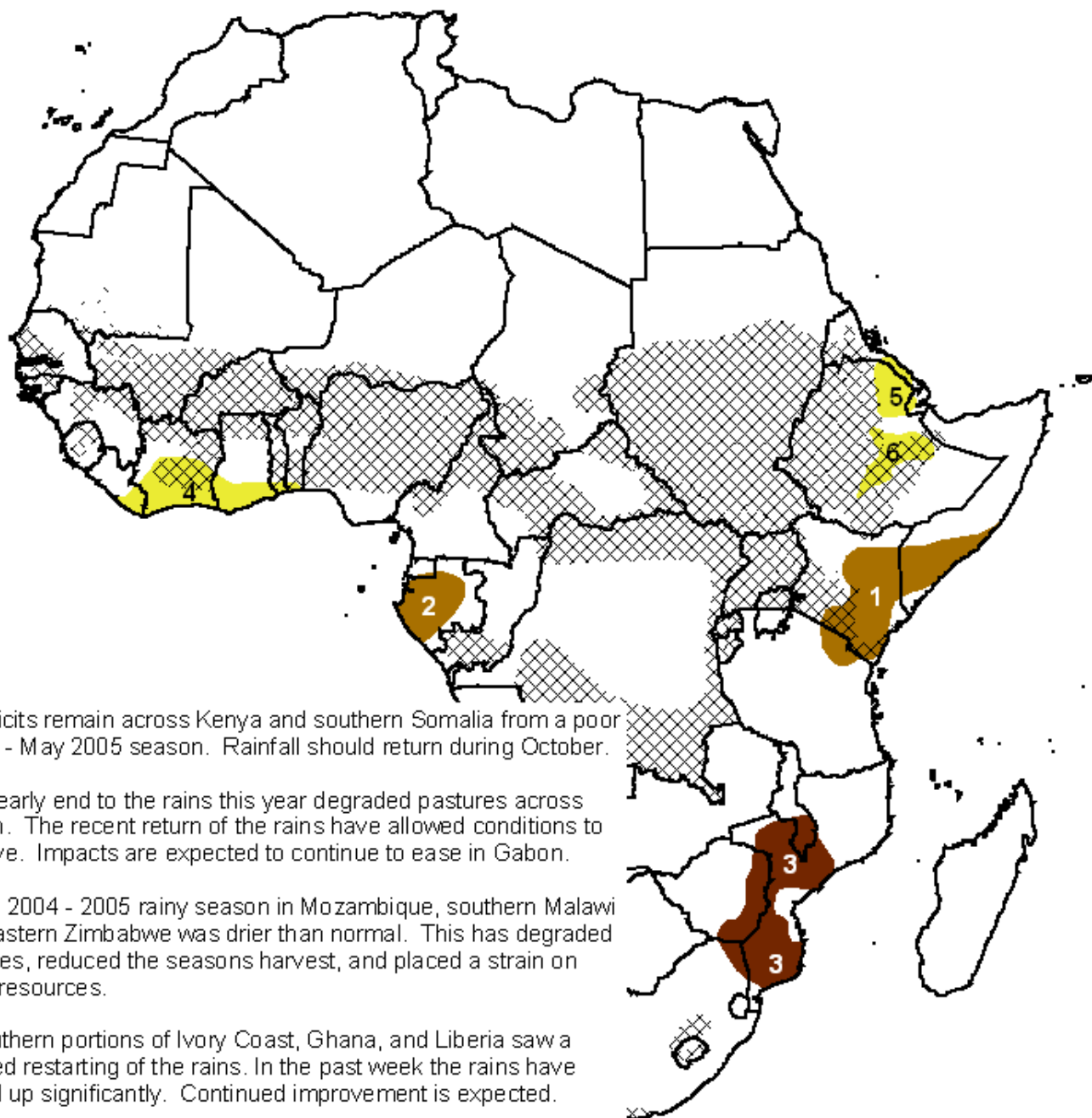
The FAO (<http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html>) on September 20 indicated that the locust situation is generally calm in the summer breeding areas in the Sahel in West Africa. Nevertheless, locust numbers are increasing slightly as a result of small-scale breeding that is in progress in northwest **Mauritania** and in the western Air Mountains in **Niger**. In both countries, scattered adults and hoppers are present and surveys will continue in order to detect any signs of increasing locust numbers.

**CCA Depart. Clim. Prob. Forecast X 100
 Jan-Mar 2006 S. Africa Rainfall, Four Months Lead**



Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

NOTE: Black hatched regions depict combined wheat, maize, sorghum, and millet crop zones which are active (sowing to harvest) during the current month. (from FAO)



1. Deficits remain across Kenya and southern Somalia from a poor March - May 2005 season. Rainfall should return during October.

2. An early end to the rains this year degraded pastures across Gabon. The recent return of the rains have allowed conditions to improve. Impacts are expected to continue to ease in Gabon.

3. The 2004 - 2005 rainy season in Mozambique, southern Malawi and eastern Zimbabwe was drier than normal. This has degraded pastures, reduced the seasons harvest, and placed a strain on water resources.

4. Southern portions of Ivory Coast, Ghana, and Liberia saw a delayed restarting of the rains. In the past week the rains have picked up significantly. Continued improvement is expected.

5. Portions of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti have seen slightly below normal rainfall totals for the past few dekads.

6. In southeastern Ethiopia, moisture deficits may be causing some problems for pastoralists.

Valid: September 29 - October 5, 2005

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. Kenya and southern Somalia saw a poor March – May rainy season this year. The drier than normal conditions have led to strained water resources and degraded pastures. A few light sprinkles fell along the Kenya coast during the past week. Similar conditions are likely during the coming period. Significant rains are expected to return to the area by late October.
2. Heavy rainfall has returned to Gabon, dumping up to and exceeding 75 mm of rain in the north during the past week, with lighter totals further to the south. This has not been enough to regenerate pastures that suffered during last seasons early end to the rains. Deficits, which topped 200 mm in certain locations, still remain and will need continued rainfall to bring conditions back to normal. The current rains are expected to continue into next week, with heavier totals possible in the southern areas.
3. The 2004-2005 wet season in much of Mozambique, eastern Zimbabwe, southern Malawi and extreme northeastern South Africa was very poor, providing much of the area with only about half normal rainfall, with some locations receiving less than 40% of normal precipitation. The dry conditions have placed a significant strain on water resources, degraded pasture and reduced harvest that came out of the last growing season. Recent pre-season rains have provided some relief. However, more rain is necessary to recover from last season's deficits. Seasonal rains are expected to begin late October into early November.
4. Ivory Coast and Ghana have seen significant improvement over the last week. Precipitation totals have exceeded 75 mm in many locations. These rains have begun replenishing the soil moisture in the region. The return of significant precipitation has started reduced rainfall deficits that had been growing as a result to a late ending of the short dry season. Further improvement is expected as the heavy rains are expected to continue into next week.
5. Northeastern Ethiopia and nearby portions of Djibouti and Eritrea have received slightly below normal rainfall during the last several weeks. Deficits remain small in the region and the dryness is likely having some minor impacts on pasture in the area.
6. Dry conditions in some of the lowland regions of Ethiopia's Somali and Oromiya regions are the result of erratic rainfall in the region. Reduced soil moisture is having a negative impact on pasture. A few light rains moved through the area last week. Slightly heavier rains are expected next week, as the ITCZ continues to slip southward.

AUTHOR: Eric J Wolvovsky

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7552

FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity whose purpose is to provide objective information about food security conditions. Its views are not necessarily reflective of those of USAID. The FEWS NET weather hazards assessment process and products include participation by FEWS NET field and home offices, [NOAA-CPC](#), [USGS](#), [NASA](#), and a number of other national and regional organizations in the countries concerned.