

## Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

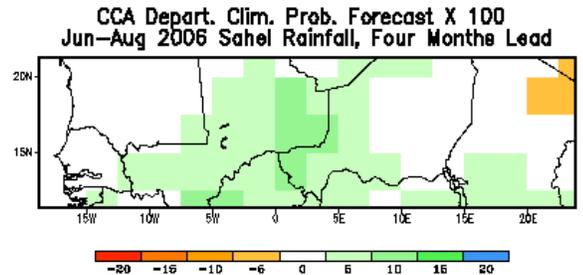
**March 2 - 8, 2006**

### *Weekly Introduction:*

### Update of Seasonal Outlooks at Four-Months Lead:

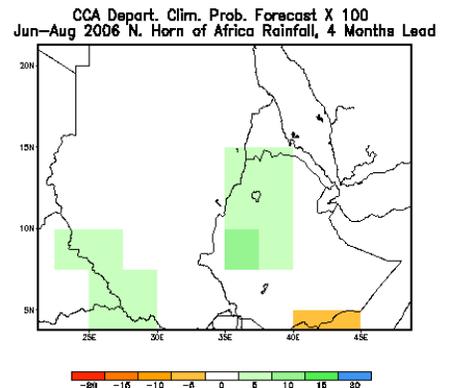
#### June - August 2006 Sahel:

There is a low to moderate tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall across the Sahel from Mali eastward into Burkina Faso, western Niger, and central Chad.



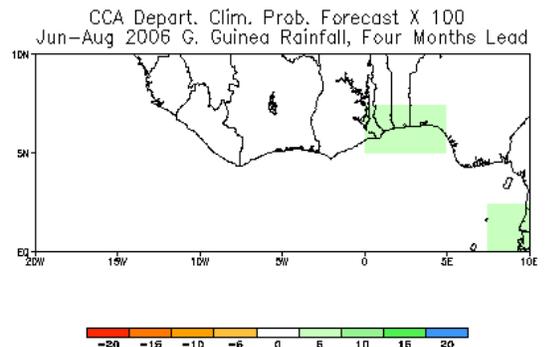
#### June - August 2006 Northern Horn of Africa:

The outlook for Jun-Aug 2006 at four months lead calls for a slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall over portions of northern and central Ethiopia, and southwestern Sudan.



#### June - August 2006 Gulf of Guinea:

The outlook for the Gulf of Guinea region rainfall at four months lead indicates a slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall along the coast from Eastern Ghana to western Nigeria.



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*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) Phenomenal drought continues to affect much of southern Ethiopia, northeastern Kenya, and southern Somalia. Some rain fell in southern Ethiopia (See #8).
- 2) A failure to near failure of seasonal rains has led to drought across much of Kenya, eastern Uganda, and northeastern Tanzania. Improvement has been observed in parts of Tanzania and southeastern Uganda (See #7).
- 3) Erratic and lighter than normal 2005 rainfall has led to areas of poor pastures and water shortages in and around Djibouti.

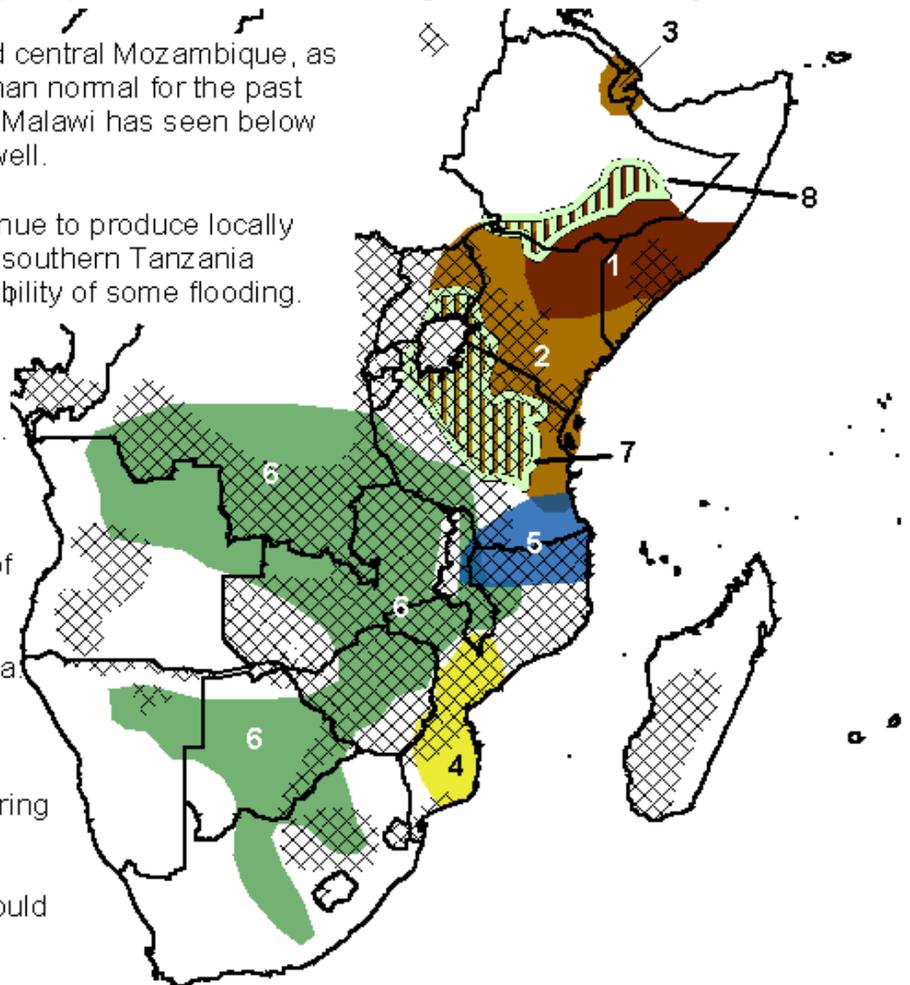
4) Dryness has continued in southern and central Mozambique, as rainfall has generally been much lighter than normal for the past month and a half in the region. Southern Malawi has seen below normal rainfall during the past weeks as well.

5) Showers and thunderstorms may continue to produce locally heavy rains in northern Mozambique and southern Tanzania during the next week, leading to the possibility of some flooding.

6) The shaded region in southern Africa has generally seen favorable moisture conditions for much of the current season. Crop prospects and water resources should be optimistic in this area.

7) Healthy rains were observed in much of central Tanzania and adjacent regions during the past week. This has helped to partially diminish some dryness in the area. Additional rainfall is expected through the next week.

8) Rains continued in parts of Ethiopia during the recent period, as locally greater than 50 mm fell in southern areas affected by severe long term drought. Conditions should be drier during the next week.



## ***Weather Hazards Text Explanation:***

1. Substantial rainfall was observed in parts of southern Ethiopia during the past week, with totals exceeding 50 mm in some locations (See area #8). Rainfall should diminish during the next week. Several poor consecutive rainy seasons have resulted in the development of severe drought across much of eastern Kenya, southeastern Ethiopia and southern Somalia. The poor performance of this year's March-May season and the failure of the October- December season have resulted in rainfall totals for the year 2005 that are only 20 to 50 percent of the long term mean, and annual rainfall deficits of 250 to 500 mm. This severe drought has resulted in crop failures, pasture degradation, water shortages and has threatened the overall food security situation in the region.
2. Continued rains have fallen in much of western, central, and southern Tanzania during the past few weeks. This has led to improvement in moisture conditions in this region (See #7). Substantial rainfall may again be possible in southern Tanzania during the next week, and some showers are possible in areas of southern Kenya. Drier than normal conditions since October have resulted in drought across western Kenya, much of Tanzania and the Lake Victoria Basin. In the bimodal areas of southern Kenya, northwestern Kenya and northeastern Tanzania, the short rains have failed for the 2005 season. In the southern and eastern parts of the Lake Victoria Basin, rainfall since October 1 has totaled only 200 to 400 mm, causing pastoral and agricultural stress. On Lake Victoria, passenger ships failed to find docking stations in some areas due to the shallow water levels in recent weeks. Although the dry conditions in and around the basin have contributed to the low water levels, other factors such as downstream dam releases, are playing a substantial role.
3. Seasonal rains across Djibouti and the surrounding area have been erratic and lighter than normal, though some recent coastal moisture has greened up conditions in extreme northern parts of the country. The dryness has resulted in pasture degradation and possible water shortages, with rainfall totals for 2005 are around half of the long term mean. The next chance for relief will be when the March-May rains set in.
4. Dryness continues in much of southern and central Mozambique, including adjacent portions of eastern Zimbabwe and southern Malawi. Erratic and lighter than normal rains have been evident for a month and a half, though sporadic relief has occurred with local thunderstorm activity. Reports of crops stressed past the point of no return have been noted in southern Malawi, and given the similar conditions, this can also be expected in the dry Mozambican areas. Showers are expected throughout much of the area during the next week.
5. Though rainfall was generally moderate in parts of northern Mozambique and southern Tanzania during the past week, heavy rains are likely during the forecast period, and localized flooding may result.
6. Noting the current progress of seasonal rains in southern Africa, this area represents regions that have generally received the most beneficial rainfall during the past 2-3 months. Agricultural and pastoral conditions within this area are very healthy for the most part, and short term weather trends are optimistic. Latest market prices for primary food staples are encouraging, and at the moment there are very few areas of weather-related food shortages in this region. Rainfall has improved during the past week over the Maize Triangle region.
7. Another round of beneficial rains was observed in much of Tanzania during the past week, with totals between 20-30 mm common in much of the dryness-affected central region of the country. This has helped to reduce seasonal dryness in the region, though the very late start to the monsoon has likely caused irrevocable damage to crops. Moderate to heavy rains will be possible in southern parts of the country during the next week.
8. Thunderstorms produced widespread areas of 10-30 mm of rainfall during the past week in areas of southern Ethiopia, with localized accumulations exceeding 50 mm. This should positively impact pastoral conditions in the region, though the area remains gripped with a long term, extreme drought. Little rainfall will fall during the next week.

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Questions or comments about this product may be directed to [Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov](mailto:Alvin.Miller@noaa.gov) or 1-301-763-8000 x7552

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