



## The USAID FEWS-NET

# Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

for

**August 17 - 23, 2006**

### ***Weekly Introduction:***

#### **Update of El Niño:**

**Synopsis:** ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to continue for the next one to three months, with a 50% chance that weak El Niño conditions will develop by the end of 2006.

Equatorial surface and subsurface temperature anomalies increased during July 2006, with SST anomalies greater than +0.5C observed in most of the equatorial Pacific between 130°E and 140°W. As a result, positive SST anomalies were observed in all of the Niño regions.

The statistical and coupled model forecasts range from ENSO-neutral to weak warm (El Niño) episode conditions for the remainder of 2006 and into early 2007. The forecasts are consistent with recent observations, indicating a trend toward warm-episode conditions. In the absence of any strong counter-forcing, a continued slow trend toward warm-episode conditions is expected. Therefore, ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to continue for the next one to three months, with a 50% chance that weak El Niño conditions will develop by the end of 2006.

This discussion is a consolidated effort of NOAA and its funded institutions.

The seasonal precipitation outlooks for Africa will be presented during the forthcoming weeks.

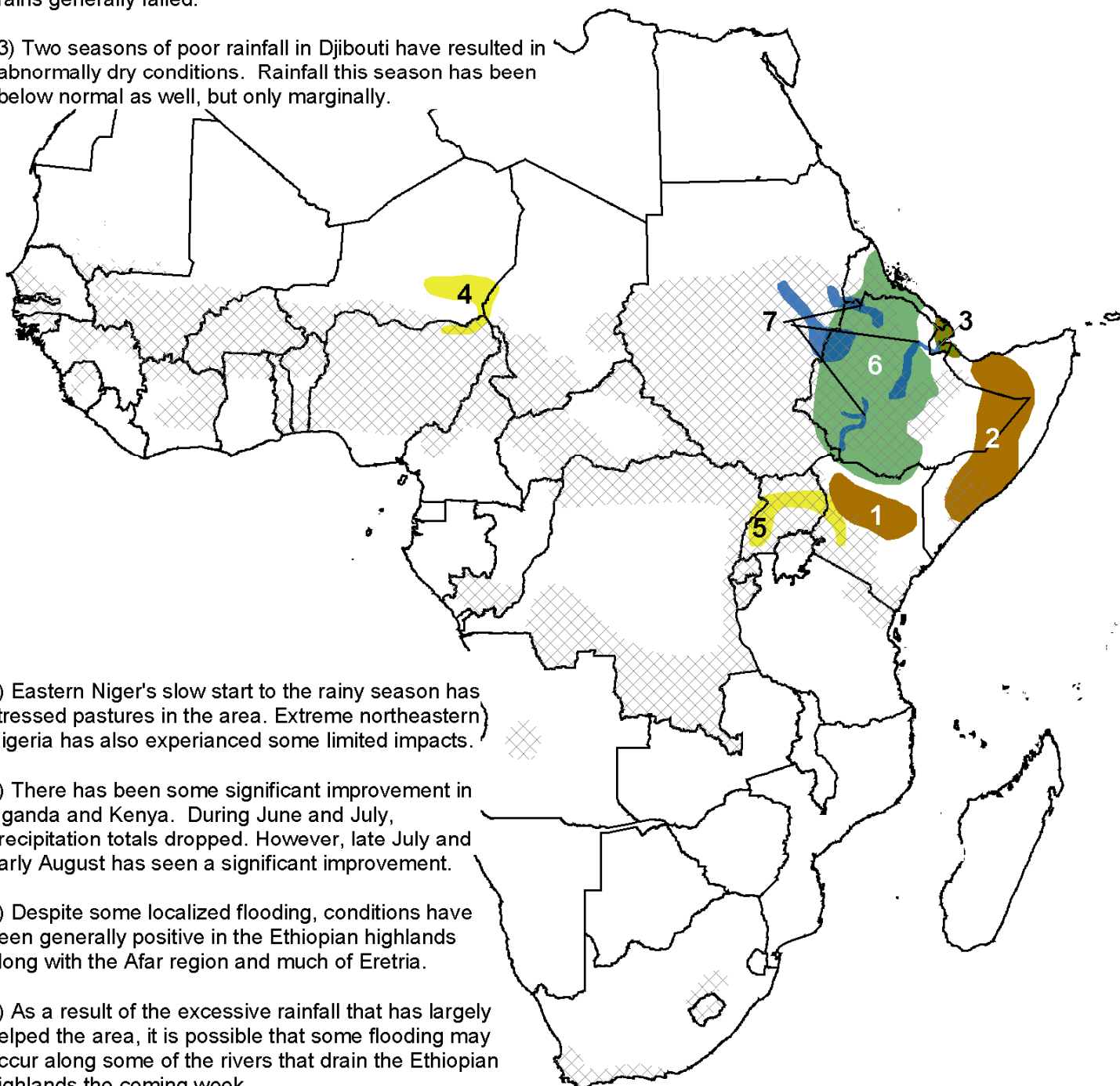
# Africa Weather Hazards/Benefits Assessment

1) Seasonably dry conditions persist in Kenya, where several consecutive poor dry seasons have resulted in drought. Rainfall typically returns to the area in October.

*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)*

2) Slow improvement continues in portions of Somalia and the Somali region of Ethiopia. Some rains in the northern areas have brought relief to an area where last year's long rains generally failed.

3) Two seasons of poor rainfall in Djibouti have resulted in abnormally dry conditions. Rainfall this season has been below normal as well, but only marginally.



4) Eastern Niger's slow start to the rainy season has stressed pastures in the area. Extreme northeastern Nigeria has also experienced some limited impacts.

5) There has been some significant improvement in Uganda and Kenya. During June and July, precipitation totals dropped. However, late July and early August has seen a significant improvement.

6) Despite some localized flooding, conditions have been generally positive in the Ethiopian highlands along with the Afar region and much of Eritrea.

7) As a result of the excessive rainfall that has largely helped the area, it is possible that some flooding may occur along some of the rivers that drain the Ethiopian highlands the coming week.

**Valid: August 17 - 23, 2006**

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

1. The failure of the 2005 short rains and less than 50 percent of normal precipitation during the March to May rains, have left central Kenya devastated. The majority of the precipitation that fell during the March to May rains was in April when widespread heavy rains caused localized flooding. The poorly distributed rainfall, and accompanying drought has devastated crops, reduced available pasture and lowered drinking water supplies throughout the area. A few light showers may have slightly improved localized conditions in Kenya during the past week, but have offered no long term relief. The next hope for significant relief will be in October when the rains return to the area.
2. The very light, but consistent rainfall in northern Somalia has continued to moisten parched soils. The March to May rains were poor in central Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. This poor season follows, in many areas, a poor long rainy season in 2005. From March to May 2006 much of the area received half of normal rainfall. Water available for drinking, pastures and crops have all suffered as a result of these successive poor wet seasons. The slow trickle of light rainfall and occasional thunderstorm has moderated conditions a little in northern Somalia during the past month.
3. Slow, but steady, improvement continues in Djibouti, where conditions had been very poor as a result of a wet season that ended early last year and was late to start this year. The past month some isolated locations have received in excess of 100 mm of rainfall, with most areas receiving more than 50 mm of precipitation. The south has benefited the most, with rainfall totals approaching normal. The northern areas continue to face larger deficits, which are generally around 50 mm. Continued precipitation during the next week will result in significant changes in the next assessment.
4. Pastures continue to be slightly stressed in the southeastern corner of Niger. Minor rainfall deficits are also affecting northeastern Nigeria. A slow start to the season has caused minor problems in the region. These areas have been slowly improving during the last several weeks. This is currently the wettest time of year in the area, and a full recovery is likely.
5. Beginning in June rainfall in sections of Uganda and Kenya began to slow down. This was poorly timed with some crops not yet mature. The easing of the rainfall allowed some minor deficits to accrue in the area, but in early to mid July rainfall became substantially lighter. Towards the end of July rainfall began to pick up again, mainly in Uganda. It should be noted that this is only an impact on the maize and sorghum crops that were not yet mature. The Uganda area is still running about 80 percent of normal precipitation, while on the Kenya side of the border conditions are slightly worse with most areas around 70 percent of normal precipitation. Conditions are not uniform throughout the area, and some locations have continuously experienced normal precipitation during the course of the season.
6. Ethiopia's Meher producing regions have experienced a good cropping season, with sufficient pasture and drinking water. Afar, Tigray, Ahmara, Beneshangul Gumuz, SSNPR, Gambella, and western areas of Oromiya have all received above normal precipitation favoring a good harvest. Many areas of Eritrea have also benefited from the plentiful rains in the area. Despite the overall good conditions, there have been isolated events that have caused deaths, as well as damaged crops in the area. Hail, localized flash flooding, urban flooding, as well as rivers overflowing their banks due to excessive rainfall have negatively impacted some locations scattered around Ethiopia. Rainfall is expected to continue throughout the area, potentially causing flooding locally, but generally benefiting the region.
7. As a result of excessive rainfall that has greatly helped Ethiopia and Eritrea, some localized flooding is a possibility during the coming period. Rivers such as the Blue Nile, the Omo and other rivers whose basins are largely in the Ethiopian highlands are the most at risk. With rainfall unlikely to relent during the coming week rivers throughout the region will continue to rise, potentially bursting their banks in isolated locations.

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