

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

for

August 31 – September 6, 2006

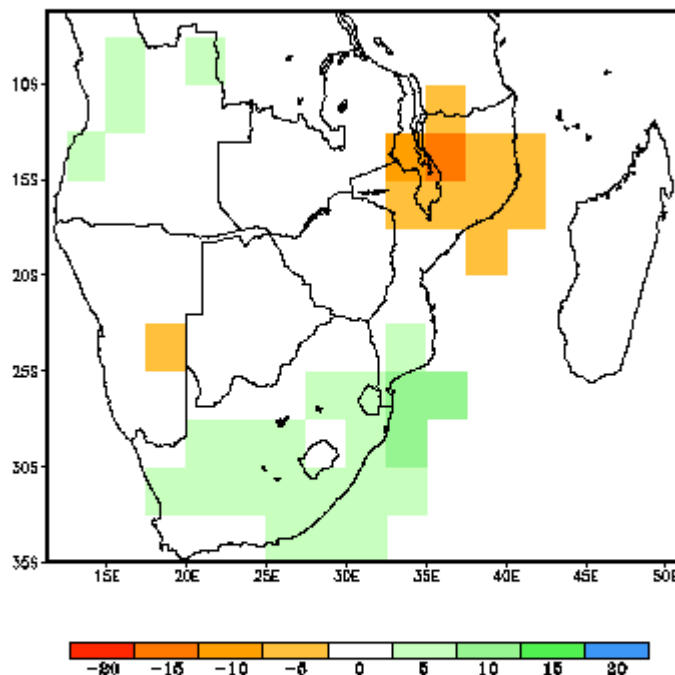
Weekly Introduction:

**Update of CPC Seasonal Outlooks at Four-Months Lead:
 December 2006 – February 2007 Forecasts**

Southern Africa

There is a slight tilt in the odds favoring above normal rainfall over portions of eastern and central South Africa, and, locally, over northern and southwestern Angola. There is a low to moderate tilt in the odds favoring below normal rainfall across northern Mozambique, and the southern half of Malawi.

**CCA Depart. Clim. Prob. Forecast X 100
 Dec-Feb 2006-07 S. Africa Rainfall, Four Months Lead**



Location for Shapefiles:

African hazard area shapefiles are available on the CPC anonymous FTP server:
ftp://ftp.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/fews/weather_hazards/africa/.

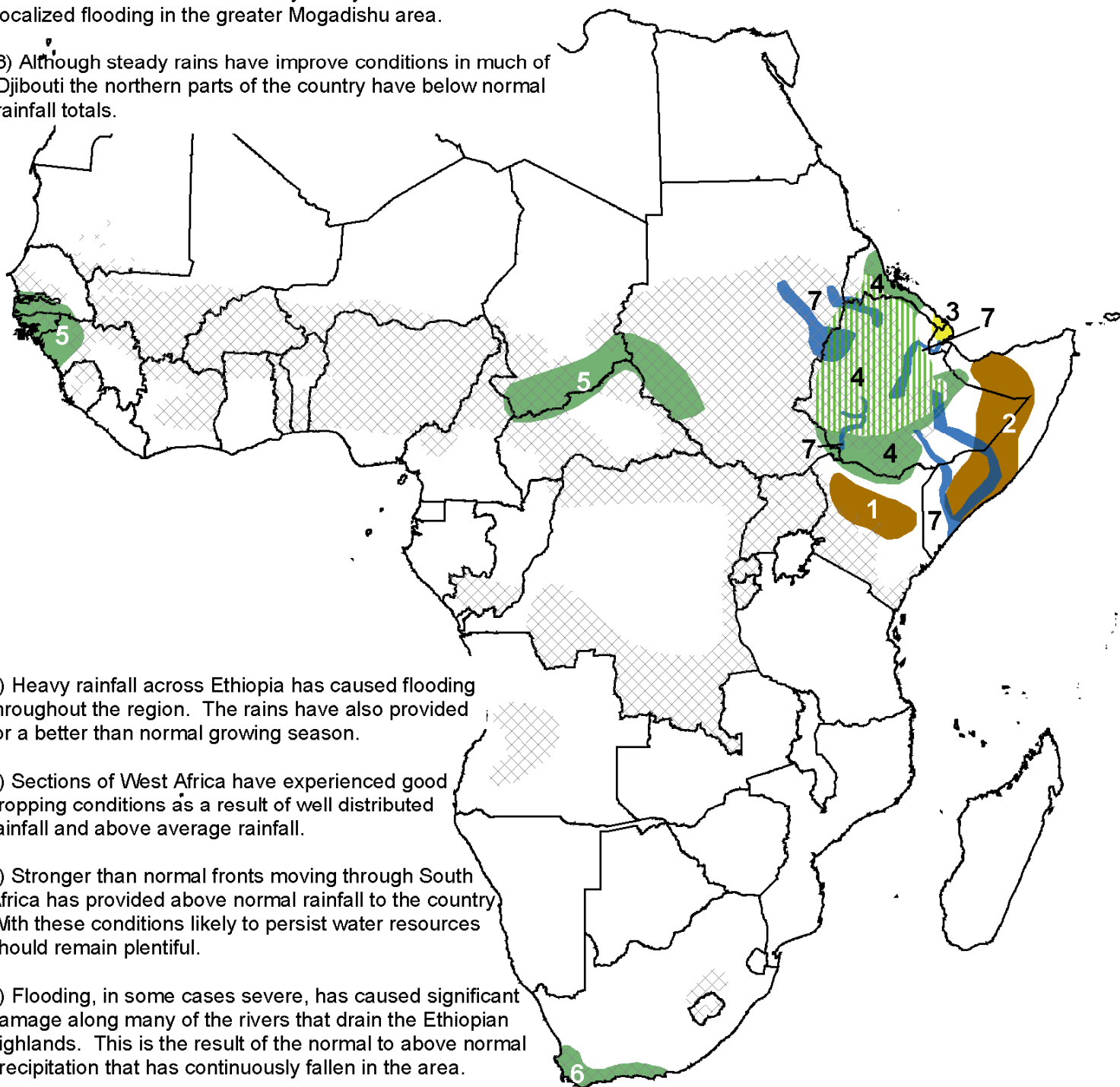
Africa Weather Hazards/Benefits Assessment

1) Central Kenya has experienced several successive poor or failed dry seasons. The next hope for relief will be in October when the rains typically return.

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) A poor short rainy season has reduced available water in much of Somalia and Ethiopia's Somali region. Light rainfall continues to fall on parched soils in the northern and central areas. In the south unseasonably heavy rainfall has caused localized flooding in the greater Mogadishu area.

3) Although steady rains have improve conditions in much of Djibouti the northern parts of the country have below normal rainfall totals.



4) Heavy rainfall across Ethiopia has caused flooding throughout the region. The rains have also provided for a better than normal growing season.

5) Sections of West Africa have experienced good cropping conditions as a result of well distributed rainfall and above average rainfall.

6) Stronger than normal fronts moving through South Africa has provided above normal rainfall to the country. With these conditions likely to persist water resources should remain plentiful.

7) Flooding, in some cases severe, has caused significant damage along many of the rivers that drain the Ethiopian highlands. This is the result of the normal to above normal precipitation that has continuously fallen in the area.

Valid: August 31 - September 6, 2006

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. Central Kenya continues to suffer an ongoing drought. Several consecutive seasons of poor rains, including last year's failed long rains, and only one month of good rainfall during the 2006 short wet season, have devastated the regions croplands and pasturelands. Light showers have benefited the area during the last few weeks, but it will take a full season with normal rainfall to improve conditions. The long rains should move into Kenya during the month of October.
2. Central and northern Somalia as well as Ethiopia's Somali region, experienced a poor short rainy season. In some areas this is the most recent of several consecutive poor wet seasons. Dry conditions have impacted crops, pastures and general water availability throughout the area. Conditions have recently been made worse by heavy rain that inundated central Somalia. The rainfall, which is unprecedented this time of year, caused flash flooding in many areas, including Mogadishu. Additionally heavy rains in the Ethiopian highlands have drained into the Shabelle and Juba rivers, causing them to flood villages along their banks. Neither of these events are improving the conditions, and instead are causing damage that will make the next crop growing season more difficult.
3. Northern and northwestern Djibouti has seen a gradual improvement during the current wet season. Unfortunately the season started late and the area has yet to completely erase those early moisture deficits. If the seasonal rains the area is currently receiving remain in the area past the normal end of season, conditions will return to normal. Light rainfall did move through the area during the past week, and similar conditions are expected during the coming period.
4. The above normal precipitation across Ethiopia and portions of Eritrea have been above normal all season long. These rains have been beneficial to crops, but have also caused widespread flash flooding, hail, and wind damage. The excessive rainfall has also caused problems along many of the rivers that drain the Ethiopian highlands, these include, but are not limited to, the Blue Nile, the Omo, and the Shabelle Rivers. The heavy rainfall is expected to continue into the coming period and in some locations it will be more precipitation than the ground can handle, likely leading to continued storm related damage, and possibly fatalities. The moisture, however will continue to benefit those not impacted by flooding, aid crops and pastures throughout the area.
5. Rainfall has been plentiful across portions of Senegal, Guinea and Guinea Bissau. Conditions are also good in southern Chad and southwestern Sudan. Precipitation in these areas has been well distributed and sufficient to support a good cropping season in the area. Pastures and drinking water have also benefited greatly from these conditions.
6. Western Cape Province in South Africa has been experiencing a good season. Many strong fronts have pushed through the area consistently bringing moisture to the region. A strong cold front moved through the area last week bringing up to 50 mm of rainfall to the area. Conditions are likely to be quieter this week, with smaller rainfall totals expected.
7. As a result of the heavy rainfall in the Ethiopian highlands, the rivers that drain the mountainous area have been running higher than normal. With additional thunderstorms expected during the coming week, more flooding is likely along all rivers that drain the region. Flooding has been reported along the Blue Nile, the Omo and the Shabelle rivers, among others. Rivers that have not yet seen flooding, such as the Juba River, also have the potential to flood areas along their banks. Flash flooding is also a possibility in the Ethiopian highlands away from rivers.

AUTHOR: Eric J. Wolvovsky

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Chet.Schmitt@noaa.gov or 1-301-763-8000 x7519

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.