

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

For

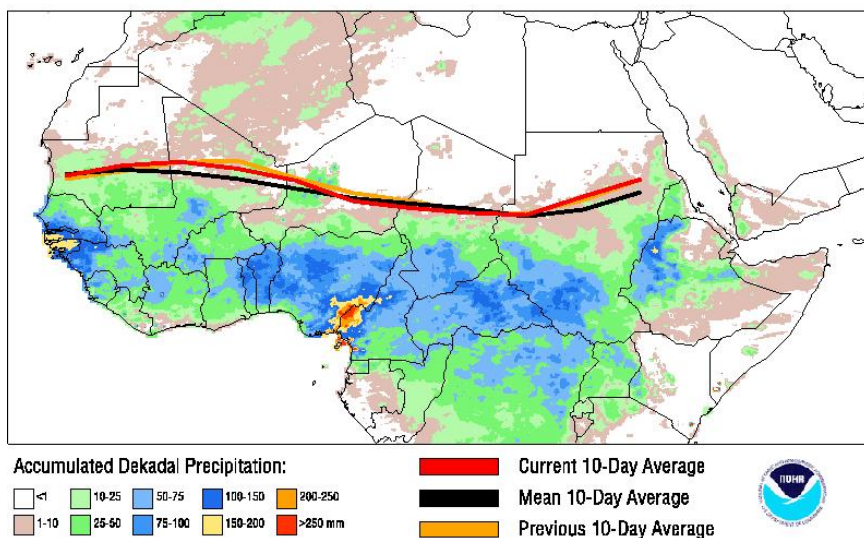
September 28 – October 4, 2006

Weekly Introduction:

Current vs Mean Position of the Africa ITCZ

As analyzed by the NOAA Climate Prediction Center

September 2006 Dekad 2



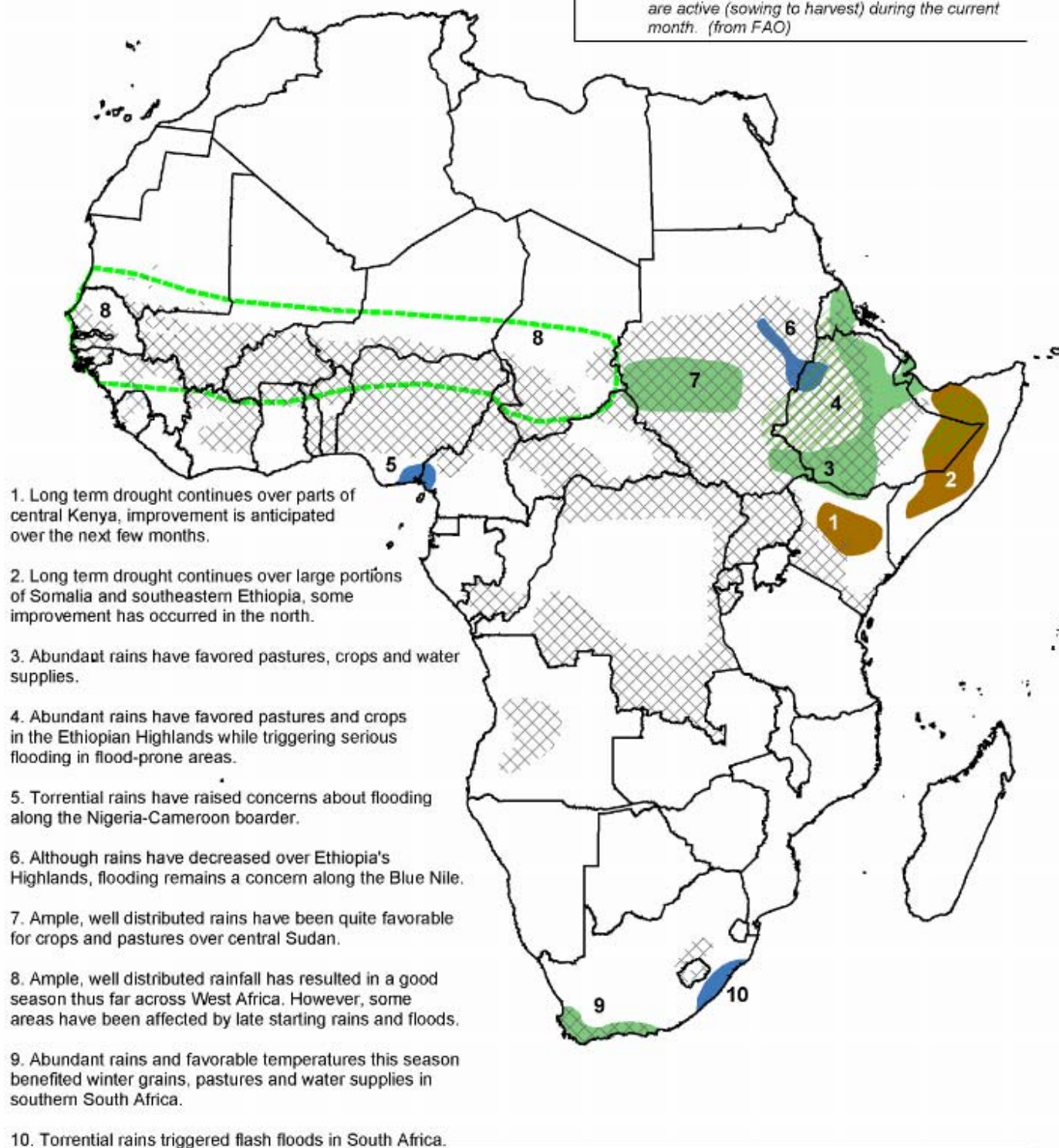
ITCZ Update:

During the period from September 11 - 20, 2006, the African portion of the ITCZ was located near 17.2 degrees north latitude when averaged from 15 degrees west to 35 degrees east longitude and over the ten day period. This compares to the normal position of around 16.8 degrees north, and a position last year near 15.7 north. The ITCZ was nearly stationary during the previous ten days, when averaged over the entire Sahel. See Figure 1 for the current, past, and mean ITCZ with ten day accumulated precipitation. Examining the western region, from 10W-10E, latest ITCZ position was around 18.2N, compared to a normal position of 17.7N. In this region, the ITCZ moved around 0.2 degrees south from the previous period. See Figure 2. In the east, from 20E-35E, the ITCZ was located near 16.0N, compared with a 1988-2005 mean position of 15.5N. When averaged over this eastern region, the ITCZ did not move substantially compared to the first dekad of September.

Additional information can be found at the web site: <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/fews/ITCZ/itcz.shtml>.

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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)



Valid: September 28 - October 4, 2006

Weather Hazards Benefits Text Explanation:

- 1) After very poor rains during the 2005 short season, the 2006 long rains were abundant across much of Africa's Greater Horn. However, over much of northern and central Kenya, the March through May rains were lighter than average. This, in addition to the 2005 moisture deficits, resulted in the development of severe drought. The drought has resulted in a reduction of water supplies, crop failures, degradation of pastures and livestock losses across the region. Improvement is expected in the next few months as the short rains begin. These rains typically begin in October and are most intense during November.
- 2) The 2005 short rains failed across much of Somalia. The 2006 long rains were also lighter than normal in many areas. This has resulted in the development of a severe drought which has stressed pastures, reduced water supplies and resulted in livestock losses across the region. Some beneficial post-season rains fell across central Somalia, resulting in some improvement. On September 19, rain has begun to fall across northern Somalia and adjacent parts of southeastern Ethiopia, indicating a possible early start to the short rains. Continued seasonal rains should result in improvement over the next couple of months. There are some indications that the short rains will be abundant this season.
- 3) Seasonal rains have been abundant and well distributed across the highlands of Eritrea, eastern portions of Ahmara and Tigray. Abundant rains have also fallen across much of Afar, Djibouti and the Rift Valley, as well as southern Oromiya and SNNPR. This has favored Meher crops and pastures across the area while boosting water supplies.
- 4) Rainfall has been quite abundant this season across the Ethiopian Highlands. This has generally resulted in good crop conditions, favorable conditions for pulse crop seedbed preparations, good pasture conditions and abundant water supplies. However, periodic torrential rains have resulted in serious flooding problems in flood-prone areas, such as along riverbanks and low-lying locations. Heavy rains have resulted in some crop damage and water logging of some fields while raising concerns about crop pests. Abundant cloud cover and low sunshine hours has slowed the development of some crops as well. Seasonal rains have tapered off in most areas, easing the risk for flooding. However, locally heavy rains continue across the western highlands.
- 5) Torrential rains have fallen across southeastern Nigeria and southwestern Cameroon on and off over the past several weeks. Recently, another round of torrential rain has produced upwards of 200 mm in some areas. As a result, flooding problems are a concern in this area. Additional rains may trigger flash floods in flood prone locations.
- 6) The heavy rains over the Ethiopian Highlands and the associated downstream flood risk have eased over the past week or so. However, heavy rains have continued to fall over Beneshangul Gumuz and western portions of Ahmara. This has continued the risk for downstream flooding along the Blue Nile. Rainfall should begin to ease in this area over the next week or so.
- 7) Ample, well distributed rains have fallen across southern portions of Sudan's Darfur and Kurdufan regions during July, August and September. This has favored crops, pastures and water supplies in and around the region, while resulting in a seasonal rainfall surplus of 50 to 150 mm.
- 8) Ample, well distributed rains have fallen across most of the Sahel and adjacent areas this season, resulting in favorable conditions for crops and pastures while boosting water supplies. Rainfall has been particularly abundant in western Senegal, southern Mauritania and southern Chad. Seasonal rains started 2 to 4 weeks late across Niger, but were abundant after the onset. Some flooding problems have been observed, raising concerns about disease. A few pockets of dryness have been observed in the Sahel, such as in southeastern Senegal.
- 9) Rainfall and temperatures across southern South Africa have been favorable for the development of winter grains this season. These conditions have also favored pastures and water supplies in the area.
- 10) Torrential rains fell across coastal portions of KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape in South Africa on Tuesday, September 26. 100+ mm fell over the course of a few hours, triggering flash floods and washing out roads, including major sections of the N2 highway. Mostly dry weather is expected during much of the period, however the potential exists for locally heavy rainfall towards the end of the period.

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