

Africa Weather Hazards Benefits Assessment

For

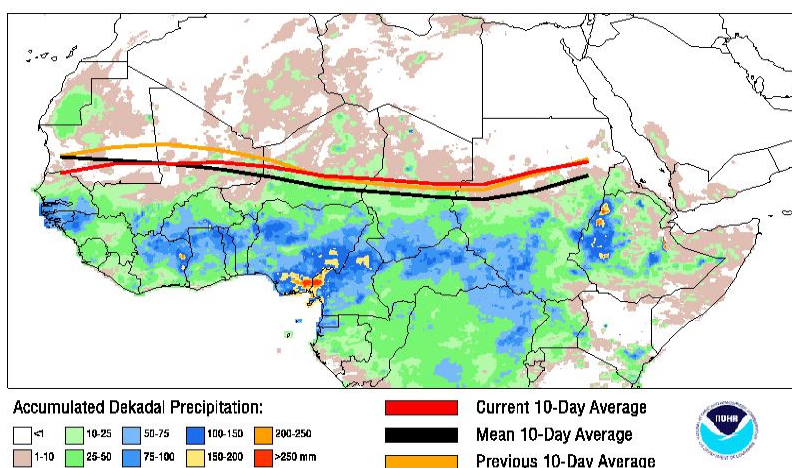
October 5 - 11, 2006

Weekly Introduction:

Current vs Mean Position of the Africa ITCZ

As analyzed by the NOAA Climate Prediction Center

September 2006 Dekad 3



ITCZ Update:

During the period from September 21 - 30, 2006, the African portion of the Intertropical Convergence Zone was located near 16.7 degrees north latitude, compared to the climatological mean of around 15.9N. See Figure 1. It is apparent from the figure that the ITCZ exhibited much of its movement during the past dekad in the western region of the continent, as rainfall trends followed accordingly. In the west, averaged from 10W-10E, the ITCZ was located near 17.1N, compared with a normal position of 16.7N and a position last year of around 17.0N. In the east, averaged from 20E-35E, the ITCZ was near 16.3N, compared with a normal position of 14.7N and a position last year of around 15.1N. During the past dekad, the ITCZ in this region actually moved slightly to the north, to the tune of around half of a degree.

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

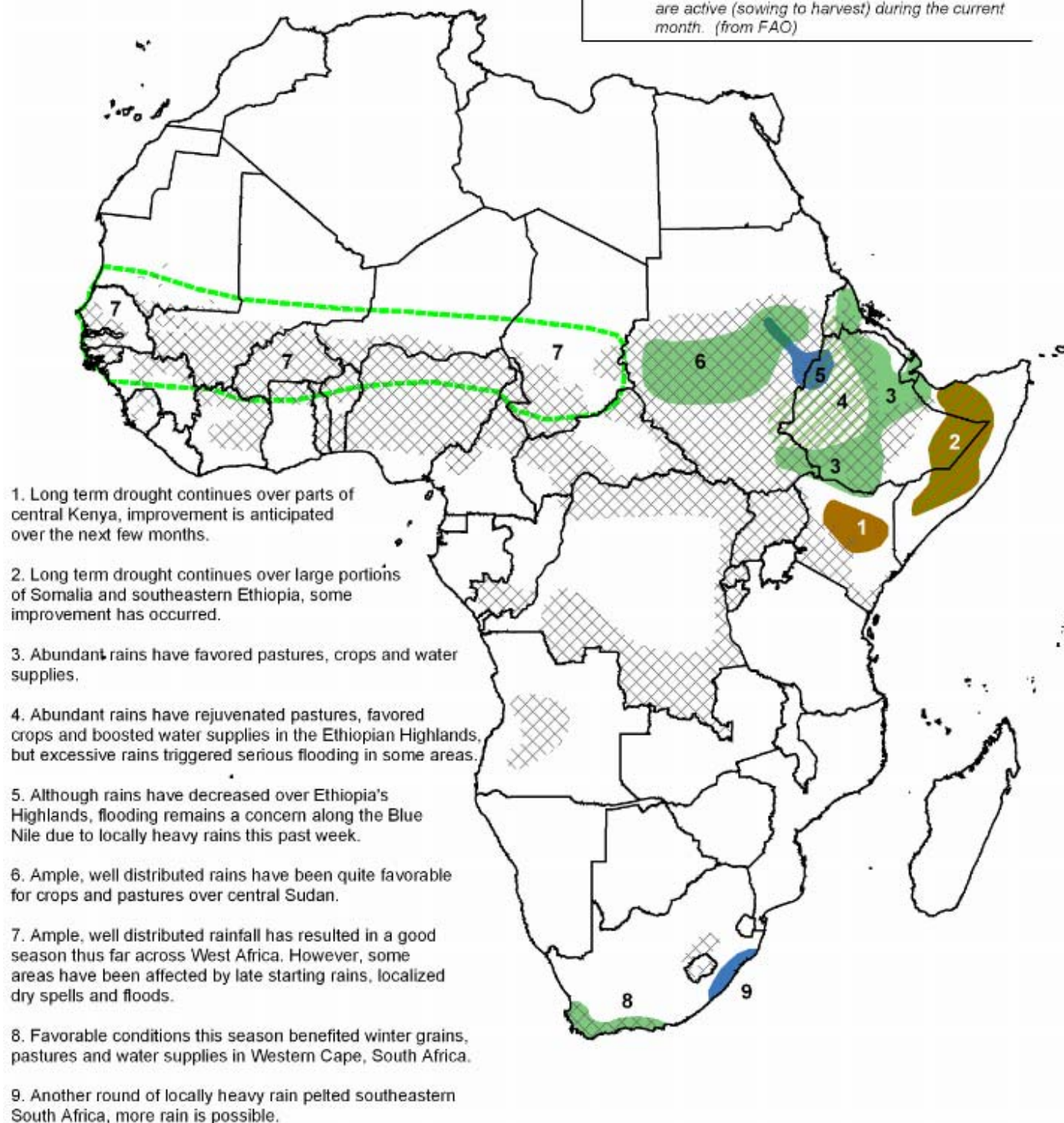
Locust Update: Breeding in West Africa continues but locust numbers remain low

The FAO site (<http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html>) was last updated on October 2.

Small-scale breeding continues in the Sahel of West Africa in southern and central **Mauritania**, the Tamesna Plains in **Niger** and probably in northern **Mali**. Summer rains may be coming to an end in some of these areas. Consequently locusts could concentrate in those places that remain green and there is a slight risk of small local outbreaks developing. As conditions dry out in the Sahel, low numbers of adults will most likely move to NW and N **Mauritania**, and to the **Western Sahara** where good rains fell recently. Limited control operations were conducted against small hopper and adult infestations that persisted in irrigated areas near Adrar in central **Algeria**. No locusts have been seen during surveys in a portion of the summer breeding areas in **Sudan** and **Eritrea**. Isolated adults are present on the Red Sea coast in **Yemen** and southwest **Saudi Arabia**. As good rains have fallen on both sides of the Red Sea, additional locusts should arrive there shortly and breed on a small scale.

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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: October 5 - 11, 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. Although seasonably dry conditions are expected during the period, improvement is expected in the next few months as the short rains begin.
- 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. Recent rains, combined with post-seasonal rains earlier this year have resulted in some improved range and pasture conditions. Continued seasonal rains should result in further 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) Heavy rains over Ethiopia's western highlands this season have resulted in flooding along the Blue Nile in Ethiopia and Sudan. Heavy rainfall returned to the area during the last week of September. Satellite rainfall estimates indicate that upwards of 200 mm of rain fell over portions of North Gonder in western Ahmara. As a result, the potential for flooding remains as runoff drains into the river. Rainfall is expected to be lighter during the period, reducing runoff. As a result, the flood risk should begin to ease along the Blue Nile and its tributaries.
- 6) Ample, well distributed rains have fallen across much of central Sudan 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 in many areas. Rainfall is expected to be on the decrease as seasonal rains retreat southward.
- 7) 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 localized 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 and in Niger's Tillaberi Department west of Niamey. Despite these localized trouble spots, much of West Africa is on track for a good 2006 season.
- 8) 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.
- 9) After torrential rains triggered floods in coastal portions of KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape in South Africa on September 26th, another round of moderate to heavy rain pelted the area on Tuesday October 3. Although not as heavy as the September 26th rains, some areas received upwards of 100 mm of rainfall. Dry weather is expected across the region until late in the period, when another frontal system brings additional rains to the area.

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

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