



The USAID FEWS-NET

Africa Weather Hazards Assessment

for

September 21 - 27, 2006

Weekly Introduction:

Update of CPC Africa Regional Climate Forecasts:

Due to the recent trends in ENSO regional set surface temperature conditions, notably the sharp increase during the past two weeks, the CPC African Desk climate forecasts will be reprocessed and made available next week, instead of for the current Hazards document.

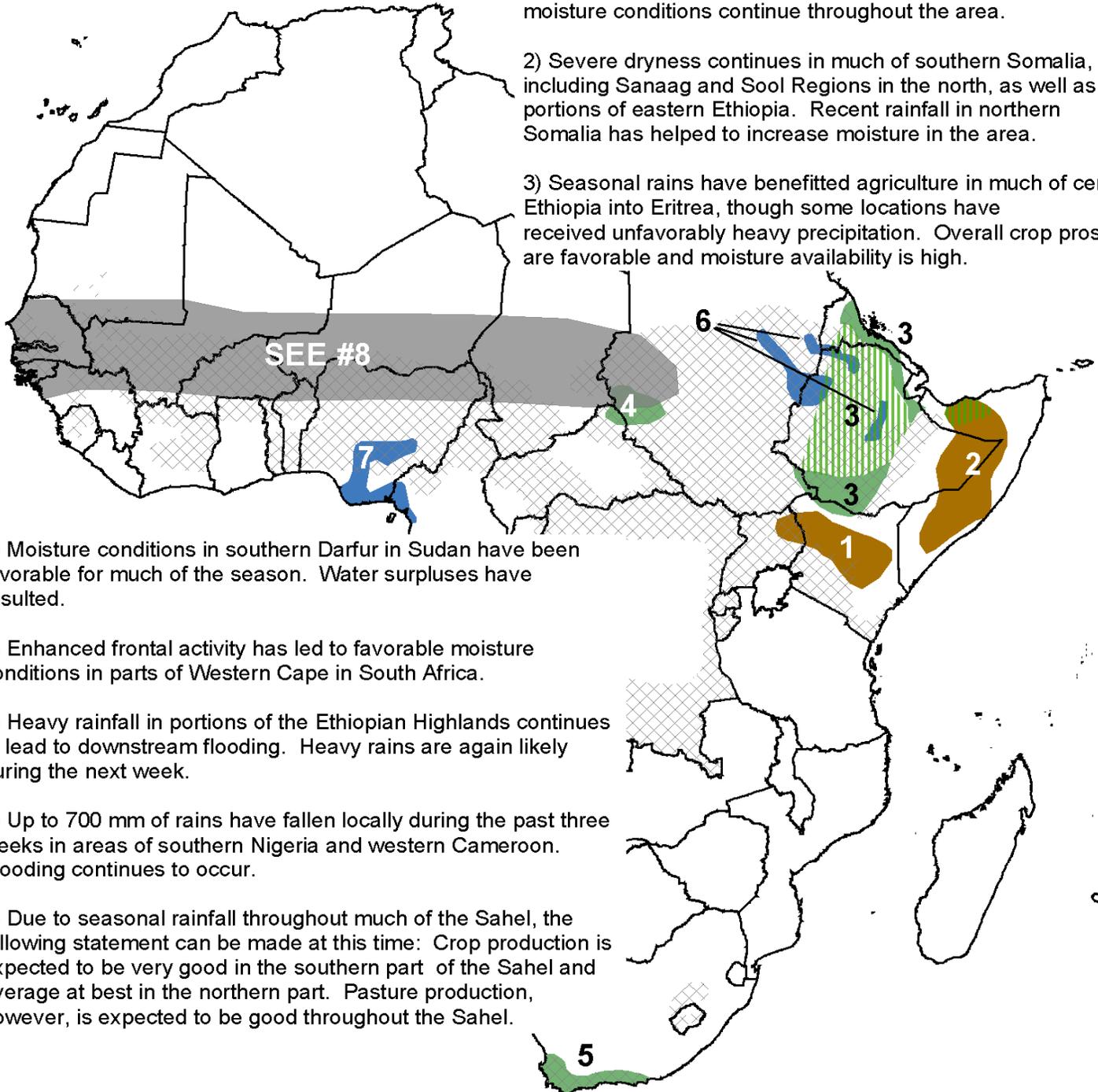
Africa Weather Hazards/Benefits Assessment

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) Long term dryness continues in much of central and northern Kenya due to successive, poor seasons. Evidence of poor moisture conditions also exists in parts of eastern Uganda. Poor moisture conditions continue throughout the area.

2) Severe dryness continues in much of southern Somalia, including Sanaag and Sool Regions in the north, as well as portions of eastern Ethiopia. Recent rainfall in northern Somalia has helped to increase moisture in the area.

3) Seasonal rains have benefitted agriculture in much of central Ethiopia into Eritrea, though some locations have received unfavorably heavy precipitation. Overall crop prospects are favorable and moisture availability is high.



4) Moisture conditions in southern Darfur in Sudan have been favorable for much of the season. Water surpluses have resulted.

5) Enhanced frontal activity has led to favorable moisture conditions in parts of Western Cape in South Africa.

6) Heavy rainfall in portions of the Ethiopian Highlands continues to lead to downstream flooding. Heavy rains are again likely during the next week.

7) Up to 700 mm of rains have fallen locally during the past three weeks in areas of southern Nigeria and western Cameroon. Flooding continues to occur.

8) Due to seasonal rainfall throughout much of the Sahel, the following statement can be made at this time: Crop production is expected to be very good in the southern part of the Sahel and average at best in the northern part. Pasture production, however, is expected to be good throughout the Sahel.

Weather Hazards Text Explanation:

1. Long term drought continues in much of central Kenya due to a failed long rainy season in 2005 and poor performing rains thereafter. Recent evidence also suggests that negative moisture anomalies exist in portions of eastern Uganda. The region is experiencing drinking water shortages and poor pasture conditions, and is generally affecting livelihoods in a negative manner. Little rainfall is expected in the region during the next week, as seasonal dryness is observed. Rainfall should begin in mid-October throughout a good portion of the region if trends follow climatological patterns.
2. Poor rains during the 2005 and 2006 March-May rainy seasons, combined with poor rains from other periods, resulted in drought across much of Somalia and eastern Ethiopia. In some areas, this was in addition to previous poor rainy seasons. The poor 2006 MAM rainy season resulted in crop losses, degradation of pastures and low water supplies. The past week brought slight relief in many areas of northern Somalia, with 7-day total rainfall accumulations exceeding 15 mm in some locations. Current model forecasts indicate a chance for substantial precipitation in portions of eastern Somalia during the next week. Conditions appear to be slightly more optimistic in coastal regions of southern Somalia.
3. Seasonal rainfall has been widespread and generally heavier than normal across much of central and western Ethiopia. This has led to favorable moisture conditions virtually throughout the region, though some locations have experienced negative repercussions due to periods of very intense thunderstorm activity. Crop production for the current season should be above normal.
4. In southern Darfur in Sudan, rainfall during the later half of the season has been widespread and continuous. The ITCZ has reached its peak northward location and has begun to move southward, thus rains will begin to diminish in many areas within the next few dekads.
5. Successive frontal passages in southern areas of Western Cape province in South Africa have led to above average moisture conditions in agricultural regions shown in the highlighted area.
6. Associated with the heavy rains described in Area 3, downstream flooding continues in much of the region surrounding the Ethiopian Highlands. During the previous week, widespread falls of greater than 50-75 mm were observed in central and western locations, and heavy rains are again expected generally in western higher elevations. Therefore, flooding will continue in western Ethiopia and eastern Sudan, and water levels are declining in the upper parts of Shebelle and Jubba Rivers of southern Somalia.
7. 3-Week rainfall totals exceeding 600 mm were observed in some locations of southern Nigeria and western Cameroon during the previous weeks. Latest meteorological forecasts indicate a moderate chance for heavy rains to exceed 100 mm during the next week, thus leading to continued flooding along and downstream of areas with the most intense thunderstorm activity.
- 8) Due to seasonal rainfall throughout much of the Sahel, the following statement can be made at this time: Crop production is expected to be very good in the southern part of the Sahel and average at best in the northern part. Pasture production, however, is expected to be good throughout the Sahel.

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