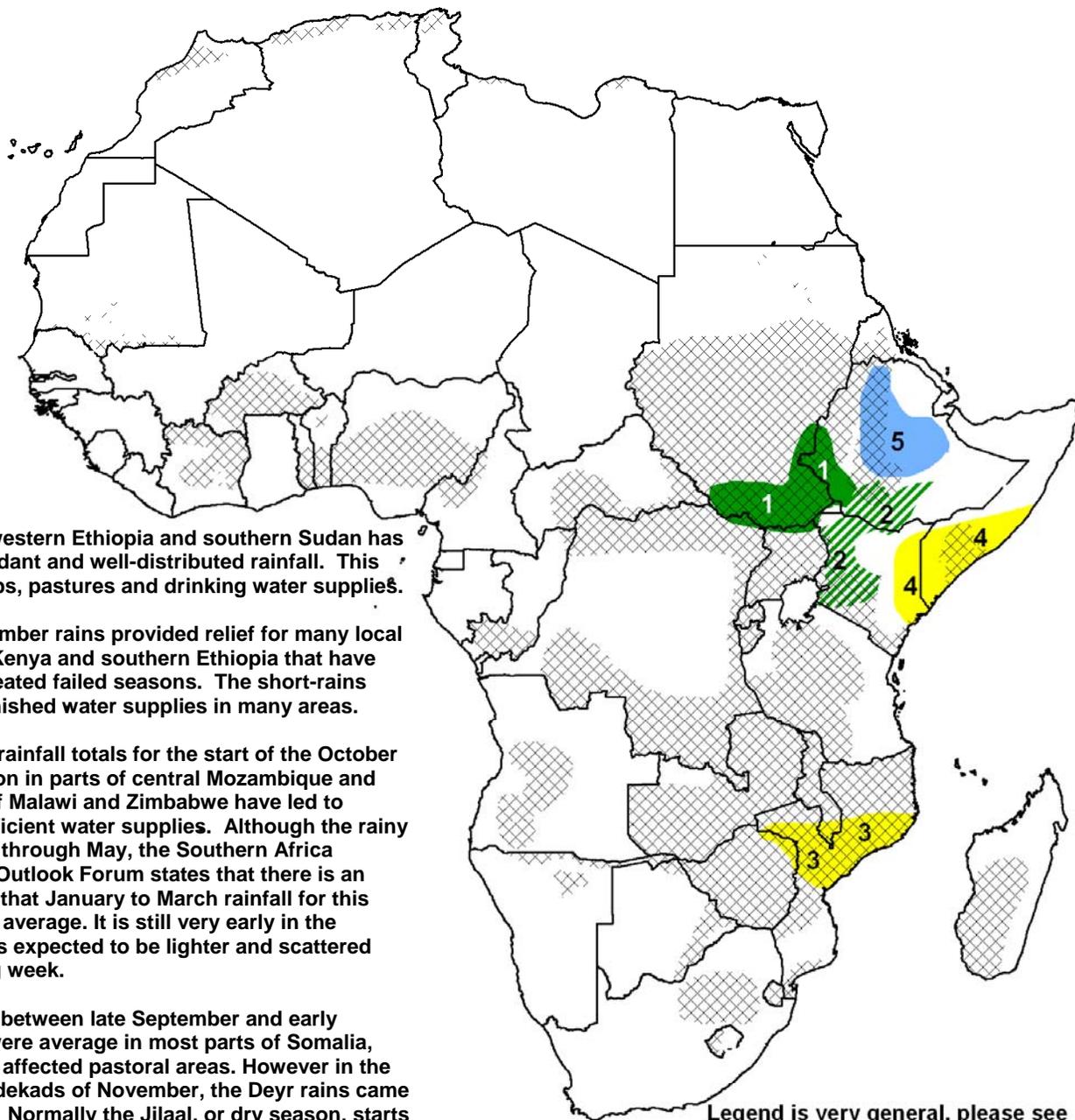


- Precipitation has been below-average across central Mozambique and nearby portions of Zimbabwe and Malawi.
- Rainfall has been average to above average across Angola, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana and South Africa.



1) Much of southwestern Ethiopia and southern Sudan has experienced abundant and well-distributed rainfall. This has benefited crops, pastures and drinking water supplies.

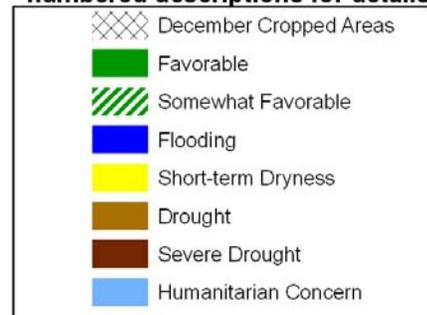
2) October – November rains provided relief for many local areas in western Kenya and southern Ethiopia that have suffered from repeated failed seasons. The short-rains season has replenished water supplies in many areas.

3) Below-average rainfall totals for the start of the October to May rainy season in parts of central Mozambique and nearby portions of Malawi and Zimbabwe have led to concerns of insufficient water supplies. Although the rainy season continues through May, the Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum states that there is an increased chance that January to March rainfall for this area will be below average. It is still very early in the season. Rainfall is expected to be lighter and scattered during the coming week.

4) The Deyr rains, between late September and early November 2008, were average in most parts of Somalia, including drought affected pastoral areas. However in the second and third dekads of November, the Deyr rains came to an abrupt stop. Normally the Jilaal, or dry season, starts in mid January, but some pastoralists have already started to migrate to water points and some crops have started wilting, as water has become scarce. Eastern Kenya is experiencing similar conditions.

5) Unseasonable rainfall during late October and early November reduced the harvest potential of already matured maize, wheat, barley and teff crops. These impacts have been largely experienced in the midland and lowland areas. The unusually rains, however, have been beneficial to late planted crops and pastures.

Legend is very general, please see numbered descriptions for details.



Precipitation tappers off in southern Somalia, is slow to start in central Mozambique

Rainfall had been heavy early during the short rains in Somalia, but then abruptly cut off. Meanwhile moisture has been slow to move into central Mozambique and nearby parts of Malawi and Zimbabwe.

After a poor long-rains season, in Somalia, the short-rains began slightly early and much heavier than average. The heavy rains caused flooding, mainly along the Jubba and Shebelle rivers. However, in mid-November the rainfall eased considerably, and for the last three weeks there has been only the occasional light rain shower (Figure 1). The rainfall distribution for the season has been quite poor. Additional rainfall is needed in this area, although next week is not likely to be favorable for precipitation.

In central Mozambique and nearby portions of Zimbabwe and Malawi, the wet season has been slow to start (Figure 2). Rainfall since October 1st has been less than half of average, with moisture deficits as high as 150 mm (Figure 3). Although it is still early in the season, an unfavorable outlook from the Southern Africa Regional Outlook Forum is calling for an increased chance of an average to below average season. Rainfall is expected to increase slightly in this area during the next week, but this will not significantly reduce current deficits.

The large scale forcing on both of these regions is a general area of suppressed rainfall currently in place over the Indian Ocean. During the past week this region has been sliding slowly east, and will continue to move in that direction in over the next several days. Although there is no guarantee that this area moving away from Africa will increase precipitation in Mozambique and Somalia, this will remove one of the causes of the below-average precipitation in both regions.

Most of southern Africa experiencing favorable rainfall

Rainfall in much of southern Africa has been near average, and in some place above average, despite early season concerns in some areas. Central Mozambique remains the exception in region with below-average rainfall totals.

Near average areas include the Maize Triangle and Western Cape province in South Africa. Most of Botswana, western Zimbabwe, southern Mozambique and most of Angola are also at about average. Meanwhile, Namibia and Zambia as well as a large area surrounding the Caprivi Strip have significantly above-average precipitation totals for this time of year. Twice the average rainfall has been reported in many locations throughout this area. (Figure 3)

During the last week rainfall has eased significantly, and that is expected to continue into the coming week. This will allow rivers a chance to drain down and should not hamper in season crops.

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