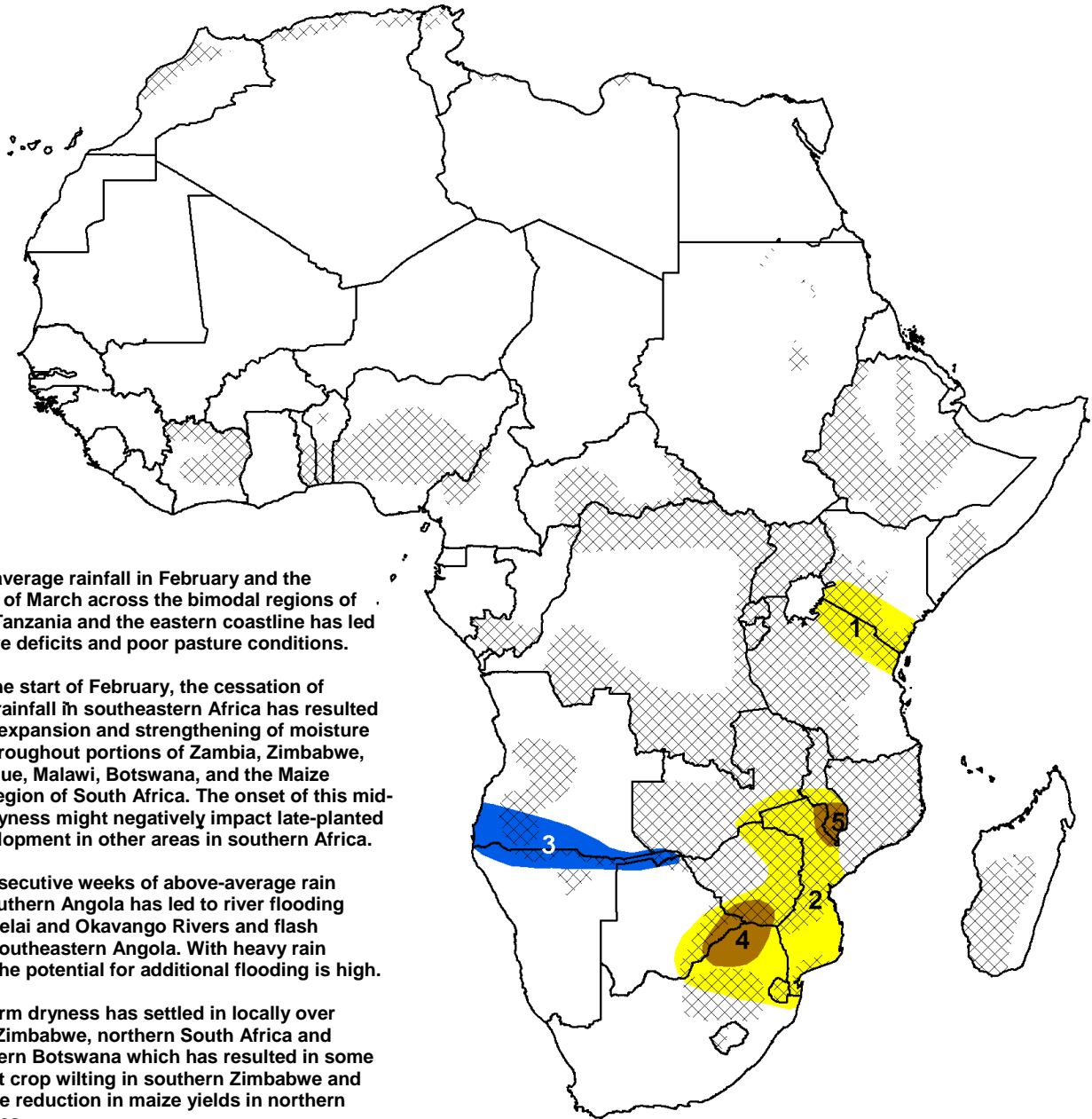


- Dry areas in northern South Africa and southern Malawi observed an increase in precipitation while locations in western southern Africa continued to receive heavy rainfall in the last seven days.
- Moderate rain was recorded across much of western Ethiopia during the past week.



1) Below-average rainfall in February and the beginning of March across the bimodal regions of northern Tanzania and the eastern coastline has led to moisture deficits and poor pasture conditions.

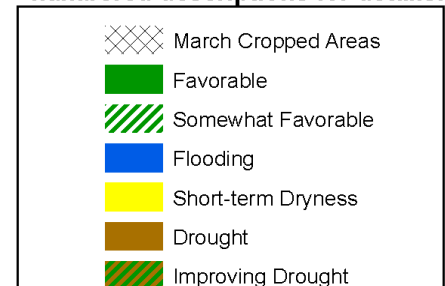
2) Since the start of February, the cessation of seasonal rainfall in southeastern Africa has resulted in a rapid expansion and strengthening of moisture deficits throughout portions of Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, Botswana, and the Maize Triangle region of South Africa. The onset of this mid-season dryness might negatively impact late-planted crop development in other areas in southern Africa.

3) Six consecutive weeks of above-average rain across southern Angola has led to river flooding along Cuvelai and Okavango Rivers and flash flooding southeastern Angola. With heavy rain forecast, the potential for additional flooding is high.

4) Long term dryness has settled in locally over southern Zimbabwe, northern South Africa and southeastern Botswana which has resulted in some permanent crop wilting in southern Zimbabwe and likely some reduction in maize yields in northern South Africa.

5) A sustained period of dry conditions during February and the beginning of March has caused permanent wilting of crops in southern Malawi and might negatively affect late-planted crops in bordering western Mozambique.

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



An increase in rainfall observed over South Africa.

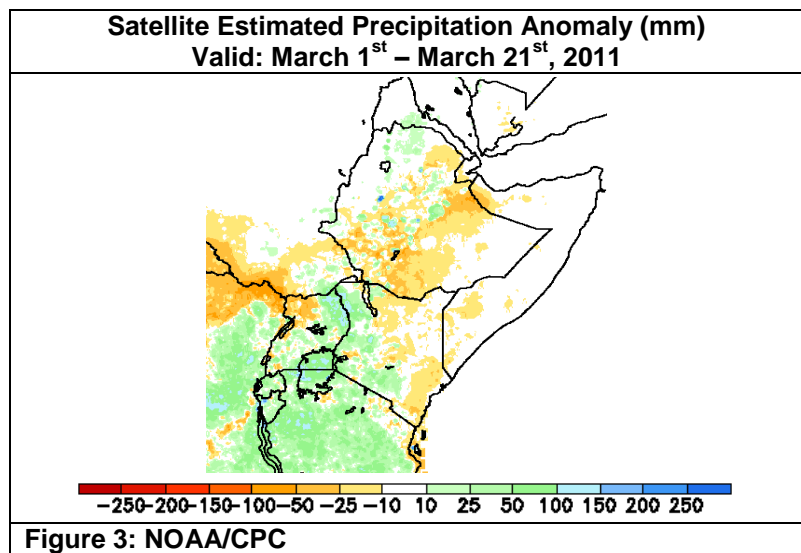
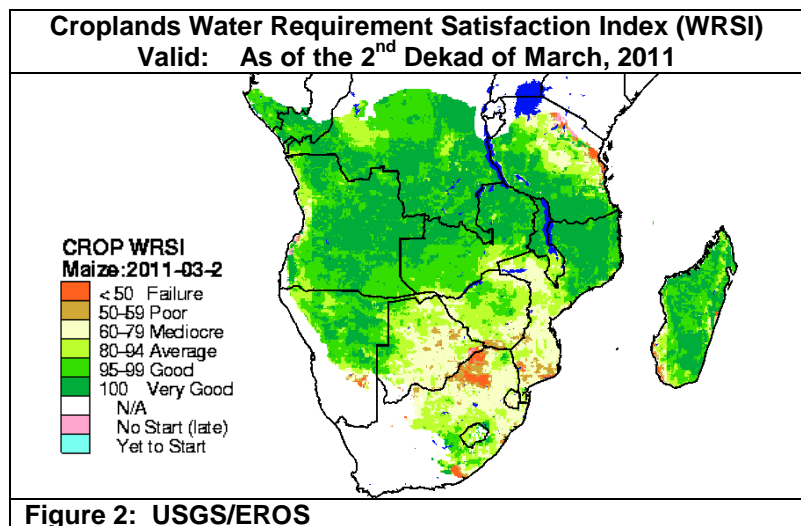
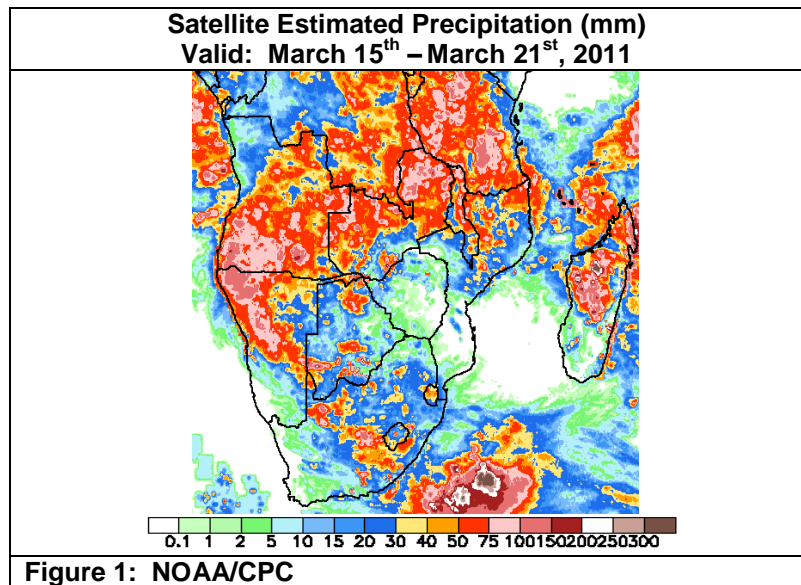
During the last week, recently dry portions of South Africa and southern Malawi observed moderate to heavy rainfall (30-50 mm). This marked an increase in precipitation from the light rain received in previous weeks. Elsewhere, precipitation totals were high (> 50mm) over saturated and flood-prone areas in Namibia and Angola exacerbating flooding conditions along the Cuvelai and Okavango Rivers along the border of the two countries. Heavy rain (> 50mm) was also observed across Zambia, northern Mozambique, Malawi, Tanzania and Madagascar during the past week (**Figure 1**). The abundant rain over dry southern portions of Malawi has helped decrease thirty day precipitation deficits to around 20 mm. However, in some areas of southern Malawi, the increase in rains has come too late for late-planted crops as permanent wilting has already occurred.

Overall, the effects of the mid-season dryness on cropping conditions since the start of February can be seen in the Water Requirement Satisfaction Index (WRSI) for the second dekad of March. Local areas in northern South Africa, southern Zimbabwe, southeastern Botswana and southern Mozambique continue to show poor to failure values in the WRSI. This is consistent with field reports which have mentioned likely reduced maize yields in northern South Africa and permanent wilting of late-planted crops in southern Zimbabwe. Further north, mediocre conditions are present over western Mozambique and portions of southern Malawi (**Figure 2**). Crops planted over southeastern southern Africa during the above-average rains to start the season in October have not been as affected by the mid-season dryness as late-planted crops in the same region.

Forecast models indicate another week of light rainfall totals across dry areas of southeastern southern Africa while heavy rain (> 50mm) is expected to continue across saturated portions of western southern Africa, Zambia, and Tanzania. Light to moderate rain (5-15 mm) is also forecast across southern portions of the Maize Triangle in South Africa.

Moderate rain observed across western Ethiopia.

During the past seven days, moderate rain (15-30mm) has been observed across much of western Ethiopia with localized areas in the Amhara, eastern Oromiya and SNNP regions receiving heavy rain (> 50mm). Compared to previous weeks, the moderate rainfall was more spatially widespread during the last week. Since the start of the Belg rainy season, though, rainfall has not been spatially consistent or in enough quantity as moderate precipitation deficits (25 to 50 mm) have developed (**Figure 3**). The slow start to the Belg rainy season has already begun to negatively affect crops. With model forecasts of light rain during the next week, rainfall deficits are expected to grow across Belg cropping areas.



Note: The hazards assessment map on page 1 is based on current weather/climate information and short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week). It assesses their potential impact on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at this continental scale. This product does not reflect long range seasonal climate forecasts or indicate current or projected food security conditions.

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