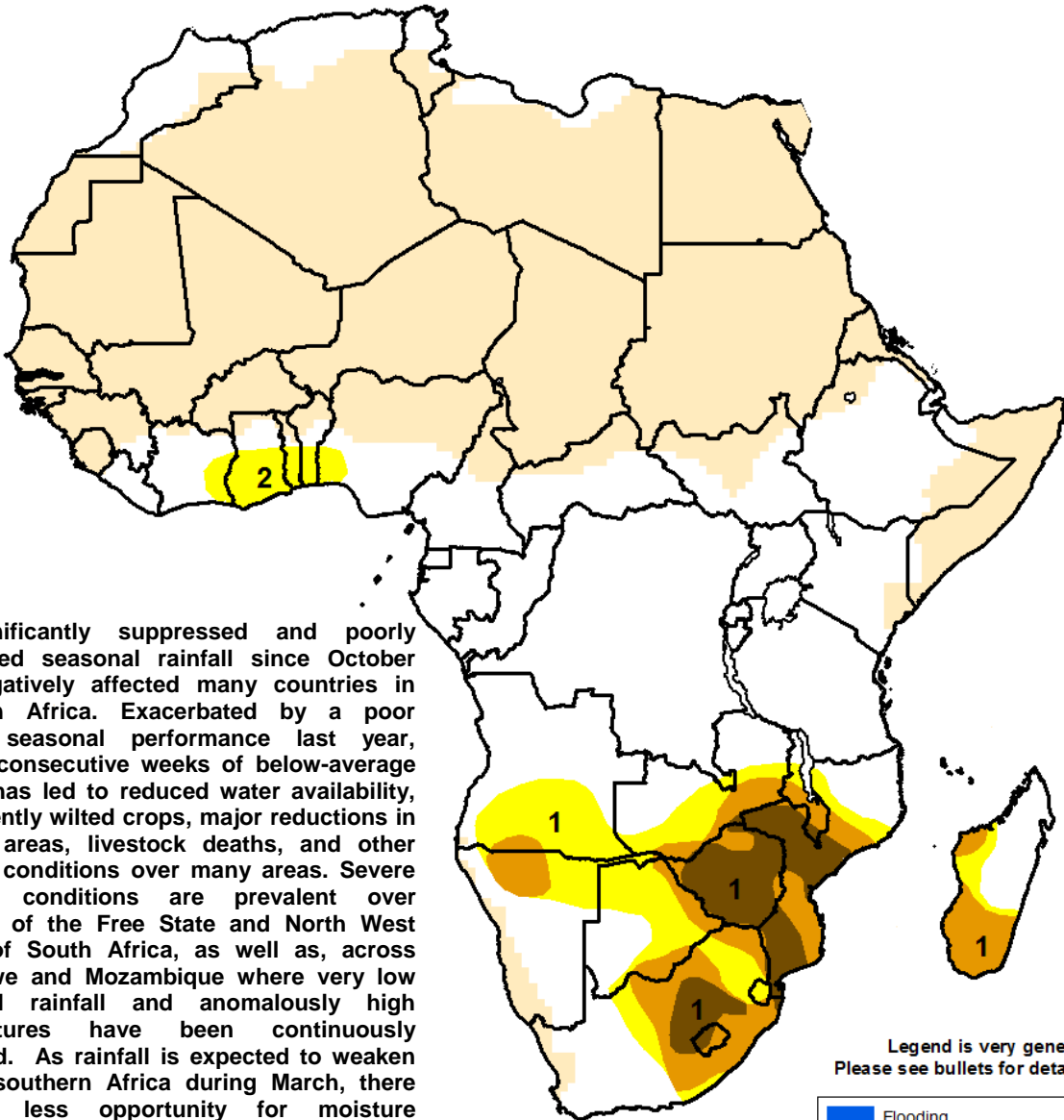




## Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook March 3 – March 9, 2016

- In late-February, increased and more favorably distributed rainfall was observed across portions of southern Africa.
- Increased rains were received across much of Ethiopia during the last week.



1) Significantly suppressed and poorly distributed seasonal rainfall since October has negatively affected many countries in southern Africa. Exacerbated by a poor rainfall seasonal performance last year, several consecutive weeks of below-average rainfall has led to reduced water availability, permanently wilted crops, major reductions in planted areas, livestock deaths, and other adverse conditions over many areas. Severe drought conditions are prevalent over portions of the Free State and North West States of South Africa, as well as, across Zimbabwe and Mozambique where very low seasonal rainfall and anomalously high temperatures have been continuously observed. As rainfall is expected to weaken across southern Africa during March, there remains less opportunity for moisture recovery.

2) Combined with a poor rains season last year, many bimodal rain areas in the Gulf of Guinea region have experienced little to rainfall since the January, which had led to quickly developing moisture deficits, dried rivers, and crop losses. Forecasts indicate suppressed rainfall over the region during early March.

Legend is very general.  
Please see bullets for details.

	Flooding
	Abnormal Dryness
	Drought
	Severe Drought
	Tropical Cyclone
	Potential Locust Outbreak
	Heavy Snow
	Abnormal Cold
	Abnormal Heat
	Seasonally Dry

**Increased rains received over many drought affected areas of southern Africa are likely too late.**

During the last seven days, a shift in the monsoon circulation brought increased amounts of rainfall and much needed moisture across many anomalously dry areas in southern Africa. Compared to the rainfall distribution observed throughout most of February, rainfall during the last week was more favorably distributed with widespread moderate (25-50mm) and locally heavier amounts (>75mm) received over the driest areas of Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Malawi, southern Zambia, and southern Madagascar (**Figure 1**). Locally heavy rainfall was also received further south into portions of eastern Botswana and northern South Africa. Throughout southwestern Africa, many local areas in Angola and northern Namibia also saw well distributed moderate rains, with the highest weekly accumulations received in provinces along the Atlantic coastline. Conversely, largely suppressed rains were observed across central and eastern Tanzania, which is expected to provide relief to saturated ground conditions following a 2-3 week period of significantly enhanced rainfall in the region.

While the increase in rainfall during the last week is expected to help mitigate short-term moisture deficits across southern Africa, the persistence of suppressed rains, anomalously high temperatures, infrequent rain days, delayed monsoon onsets, and extended dry spells which have long fraught southern Africa since last October have already resulted in adverse ground conditions leading to major reductions in crop production for the season. Despite precipitation forecasts suggesting a continuation of average to above-average rainfall during across several drought stricken countries during early March (**Figure 2**), these late seasonal rains are likely too late to overcome the drought related damages already done from possibly the poorest southern Africa monsoon in decades.

**East Africa “Belg” rains onset took place last week.**

For the first time since last year, many local areas in Ethiopia saw a considerable increase in precipitation during the last week in February. Well distributed, average to above-average rainfall accumulations were received across the highest elevations of the Ethiopia, extending northward into Eritrea, and also into parts of southern Ethiopia, northern Kenya, and southern Somalia. Despite the favorable increase in rainfall, however, some local areas in the SNNP and Oromia provinces remain marginally below-average due to suppressed rainfall during early to mid-February (**Figure 3**). Stronger precipitation deficits are being depicted according to satellite rainfall estimates across portions of northeastern DRC, Uganda, northern Tanzania which may lead to adverse ground conditions during March unless rainfall improves in the region. Forecasts suggest a seasonable distribution of precipitation across Ethiopia, with the possibility of suppressed rainfall across the Lake Victoria region during the upcoming outlook period.

**Note: The hazards outlook 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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