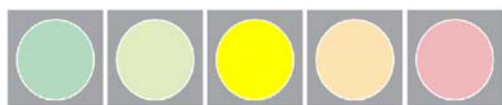


Near normal start of the first crop season



In general the 2007 maize crop season started on time in Uganda with an important possible earlier planting of one month in the Northeastern part of the country (part of Nile, North and Kamoyo provinces (Figure 1). The mentioned area is traditionally mainly used for sorghum cultivation and pasture. At the same time there are some small pockets with a 1 month delay for maize planting in the West, South and East provinces.

The results of the water balance model lead to a very good maize yield forecast for 2007 crop season in Uganda (Figure 6, page 3).

On the other hand the vegetation index shows a good starting of the crop season with a slightly below normal on the vegetation activity during the month of April, however the final situation is near to normal (Figure 9, page 5).

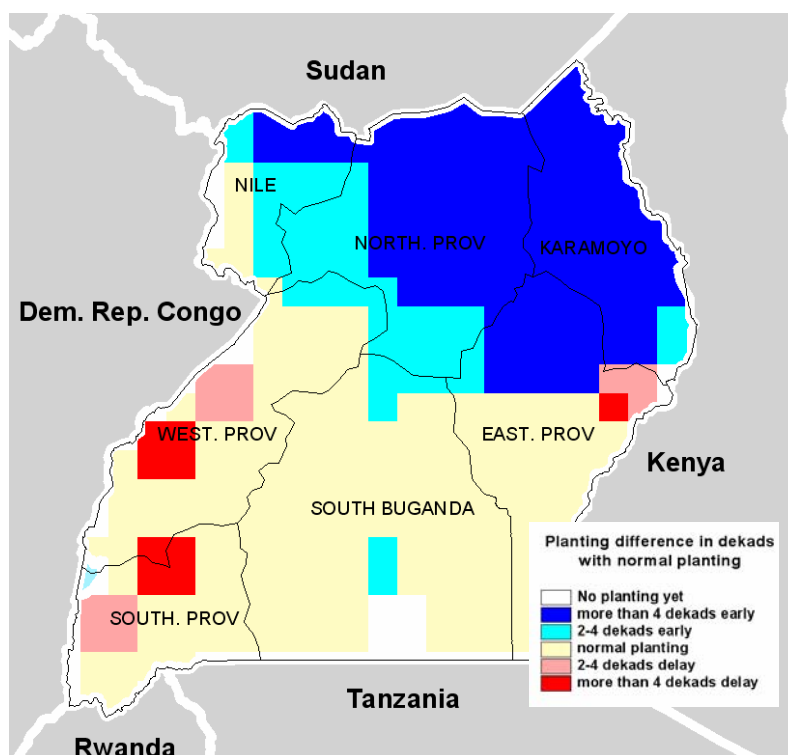


Figure 1. Difference between the current planting and normal planting in dekads.

Rainfall analysis

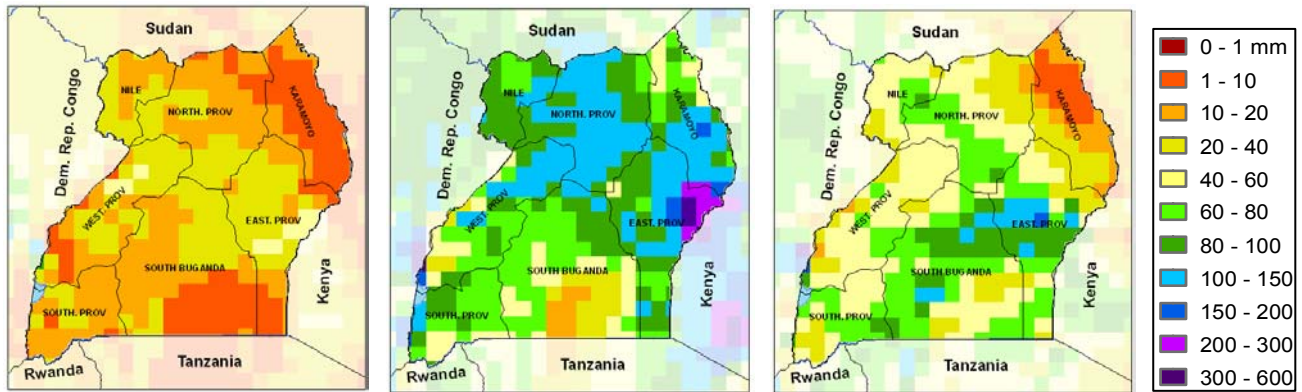


Figure 2. Dekadal rainfall (mm) during April 2007. Data derived from ECMWF model.

Figure 2 shows the dekadal rainfall in April 2007. During the second dekad of April heavy rains fell mainly in Kapchorwa and Mbale districts of East province, along the border with Kenya. Flash-floods could have occurred on these two districts; this information should be confirmed with the field reports. During the third dekad the levels of rainfall becomes more favorable for the normal crop development.

The April 2007 rainfall compared with normal rainfall (1974 -2003) shows a positive difference in the main sorghum and pasture areas of Nile, North and Karamoyo provinces and a negative balance on South Buganda, West and South provinces (Figure 3).

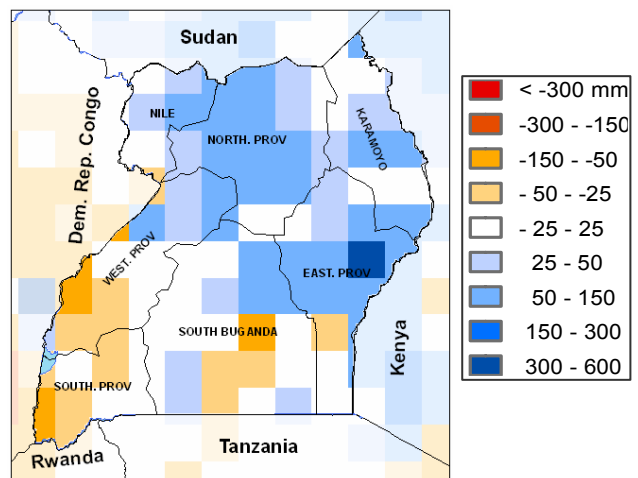


Figure 3. Monthly rainfall anomaly difference with normal (1974-2003)

Crop Water Balance Model

The results of the Crop Specific Water Balance model (CSWB) indicate high values of the Water Satisfaction Index (WSI) that can be interpreted as very good potential maize yields in Uganda (Figure 4).

Figure 5 shows the crop development of maize in the different regions of Uganda. In the main maize producing provinces (East and South Buganda provinces) maize already completed the half of his crop cycle length.

Few changes on maize yield are expecting when the Maize, Water Satisfaction Index is extended up to the harvest using the normal rainfall (Figure 6).

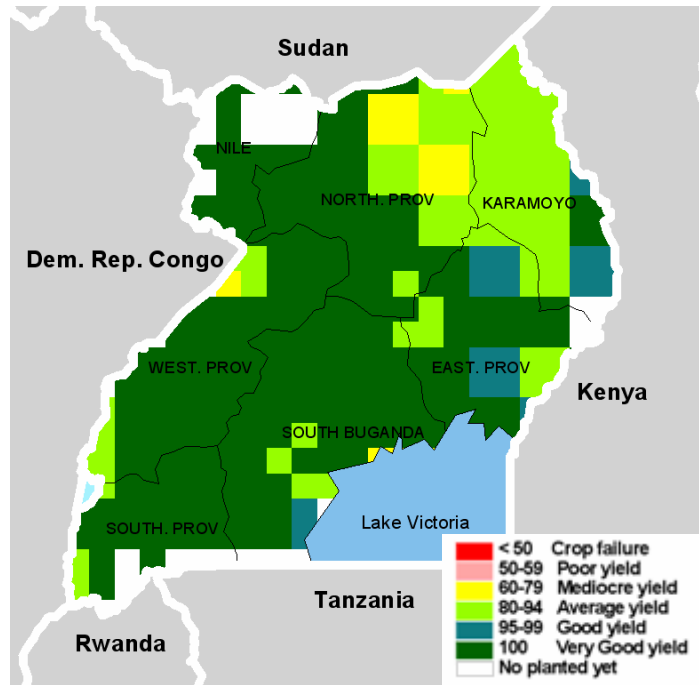


Figure 4. Maize, Water Satisfaction Index up to the end of April

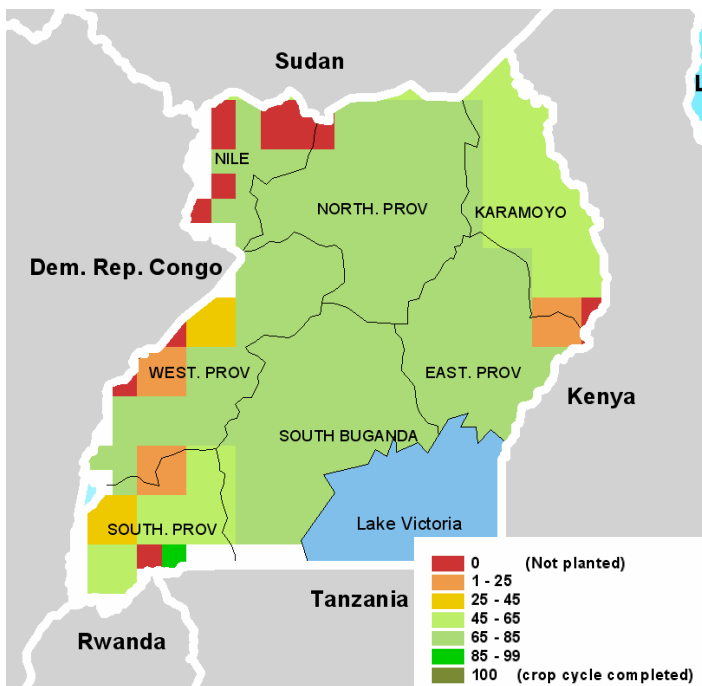


Figure 5. Maize crop cycle progress in % of the total cycle length.

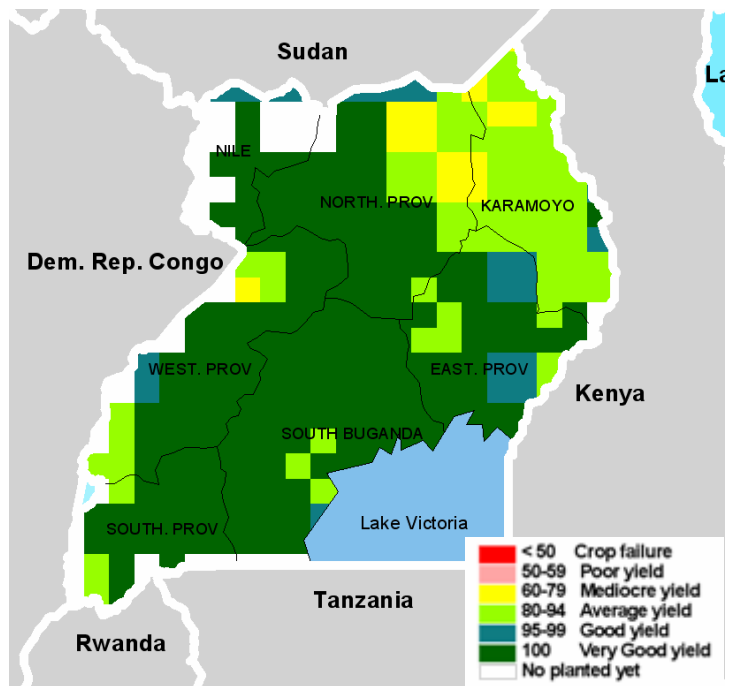


Figure 6. Maize, Water Satisfaction Index extended up to the end of crop cycle using the normal rainfall (1974 – 2003).

Remote Sensing Analysis - Agriculture

The April NDVI difference with historical average (1998-2006) shows on overall below-normal situation for Uganda. However on the main maize agricultural areas this decrease on vegetation activity is less evident (shaded areas on Figure 7).

Due to the fact that the maize production in Uganda is concentrated on East and South Buganda provinces (73% of the national maize production) the general situation for maize is considered near normal.

The below normal vegetation activity is mainly localized in North and West provinces. Karamoyo province shows the best situation on vegetation activity in Uganda during the month of April.

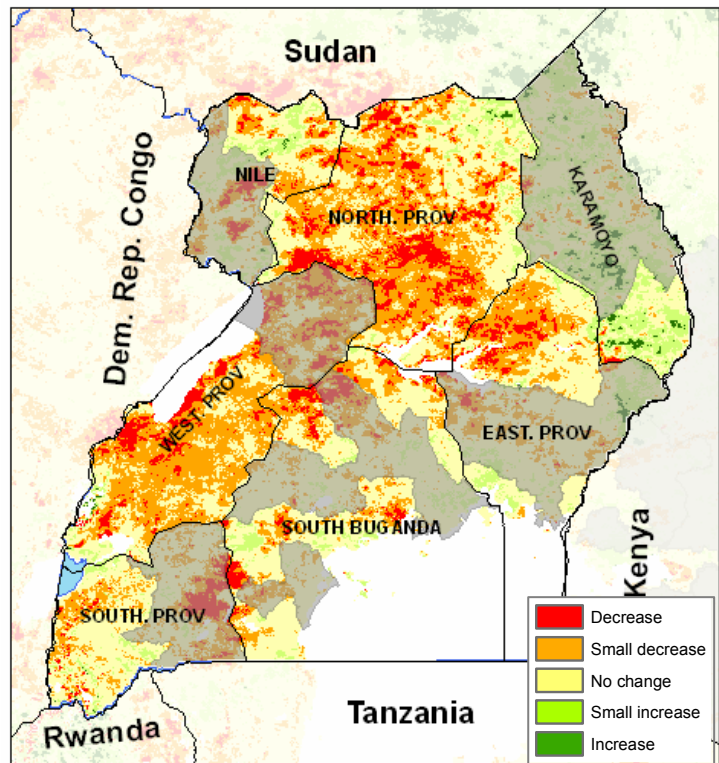


Figure 7. NDVI Monthly difference with the long term average (1998-2006). Main maize areas on gray.

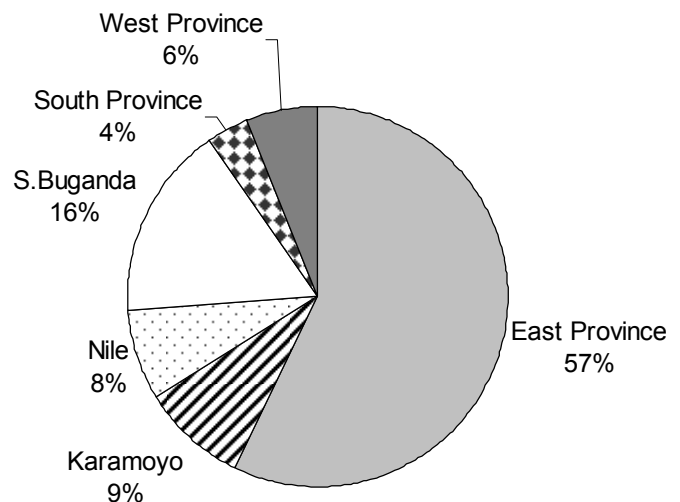


Figure 8. Number of pure maize plots
Source: Population and Household Census 2002.

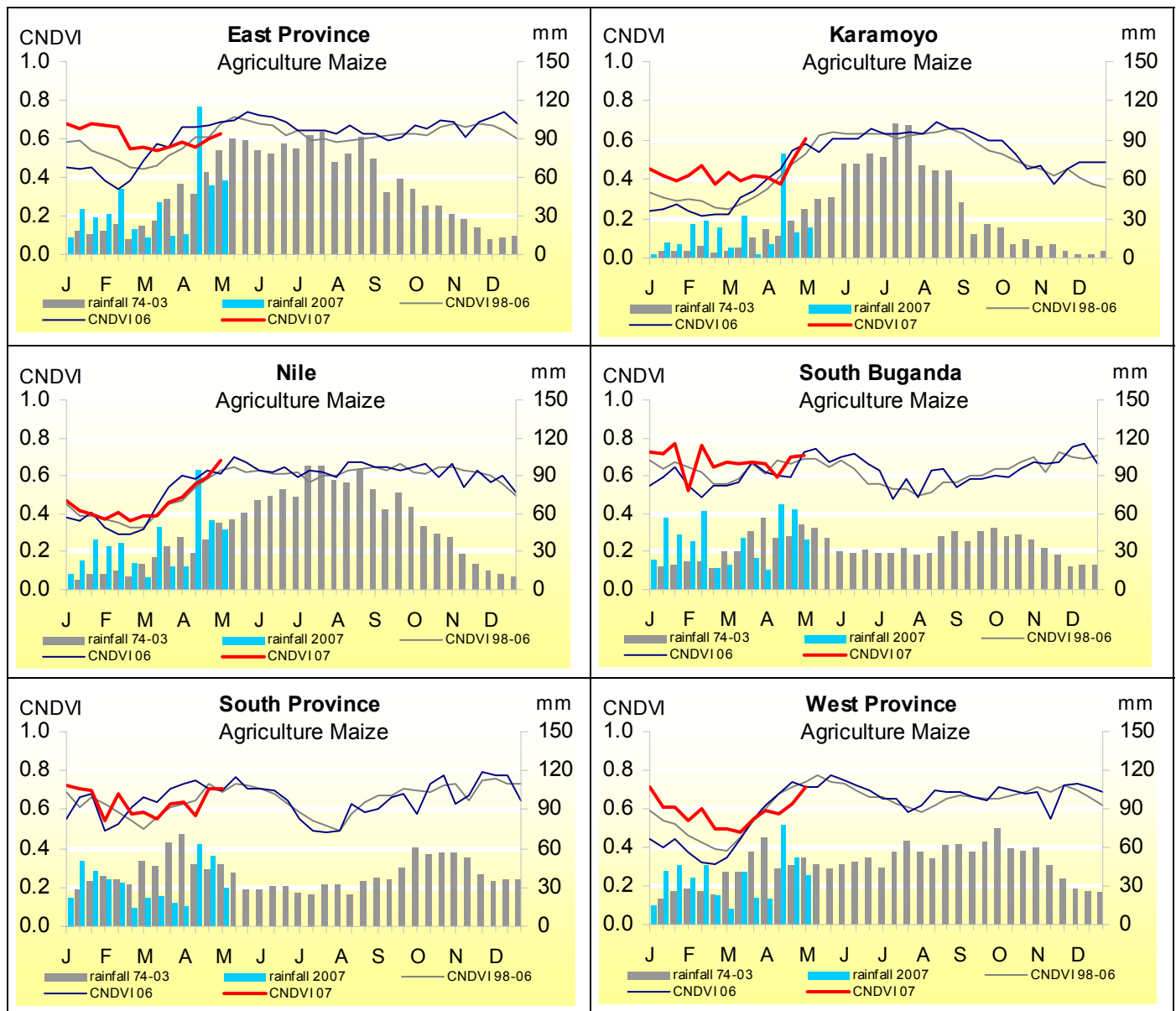


Figure 9. Time series of crop specific NDVI and rainfall patterns by province in Uganda. The graphs compare the current season with the historical average and the previous year.

Figure 9 shows clearly a high vegetation activity during start of the 2007 crop season for East, Karamoyo, South Buganda and West provinces due to the unusual high level of precipitation fallen during the months of January and February. The vegetation activity reaches the profile of near normal activity at the end of April.



Remote Sensing Analysis - Pasture

The April NDVI difference with historical average (1998-2006) shows a below-normal situation for the pastoral areas of Uganda; exception for the Karamoyo province (shaded areas on Figure 7).

However the time profile of the pasture specific NDVI shows a high activity during the first quarter of 2007, indicating favorable conditions for the pasture development that at the end of April turned to near normal.

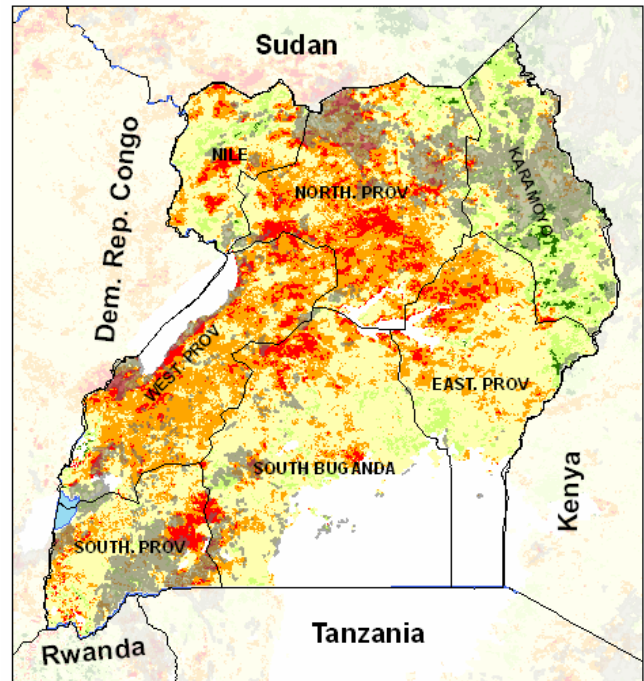
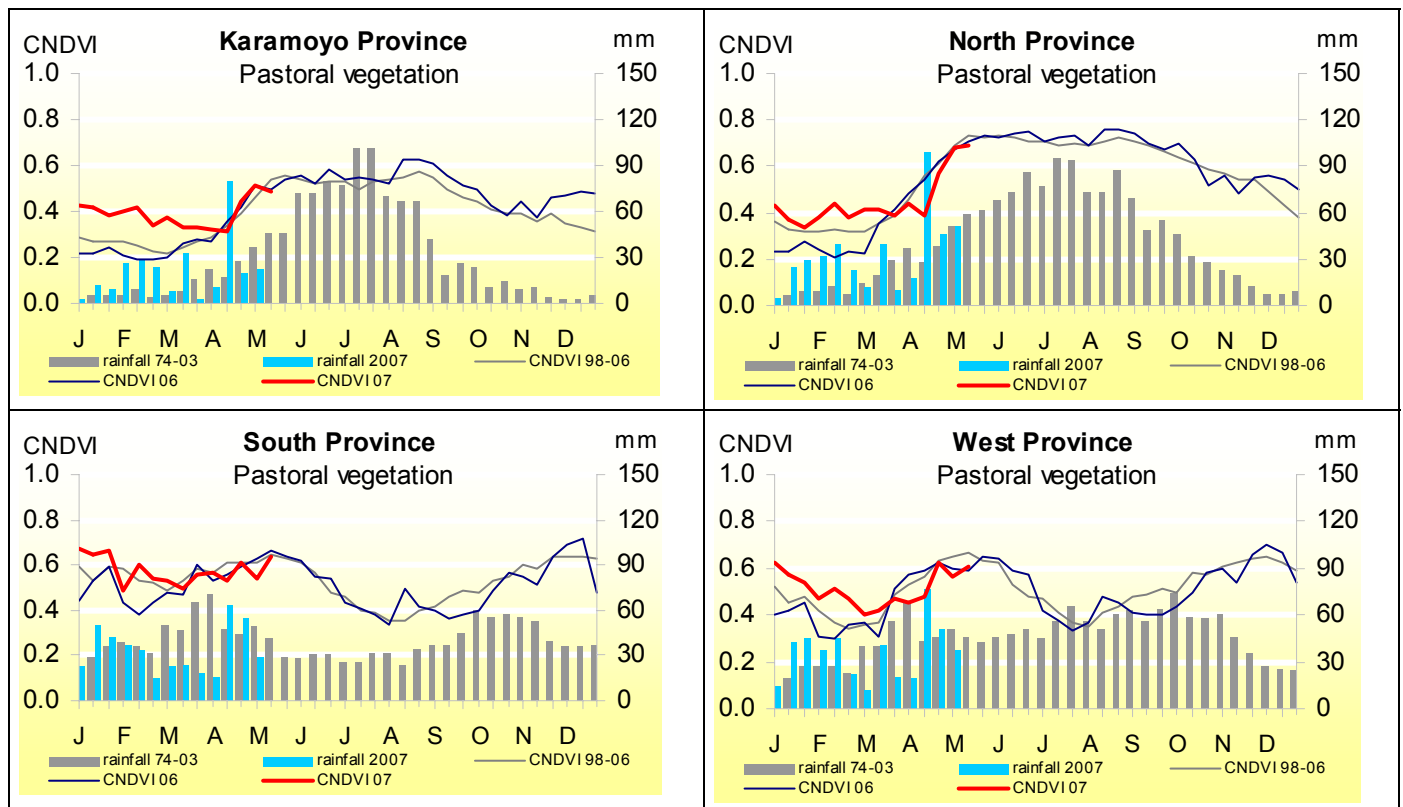


Figure 10. NDVI Monthly Difference with the long term average (1998-2006). Pastoral areas on gray from Africover land cover database.



Coming activities:

-New monthly bulletins similar to this one will be released for the 2007 crop season for the following countries: Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda.

-CRAM forum activities: the CRAM Workshop (Nairobi 27th -31st of March) proceedings are under preparation. Any news will be posted on the CRAM website <http://cram-forum.jrc.it/default.asdx>

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