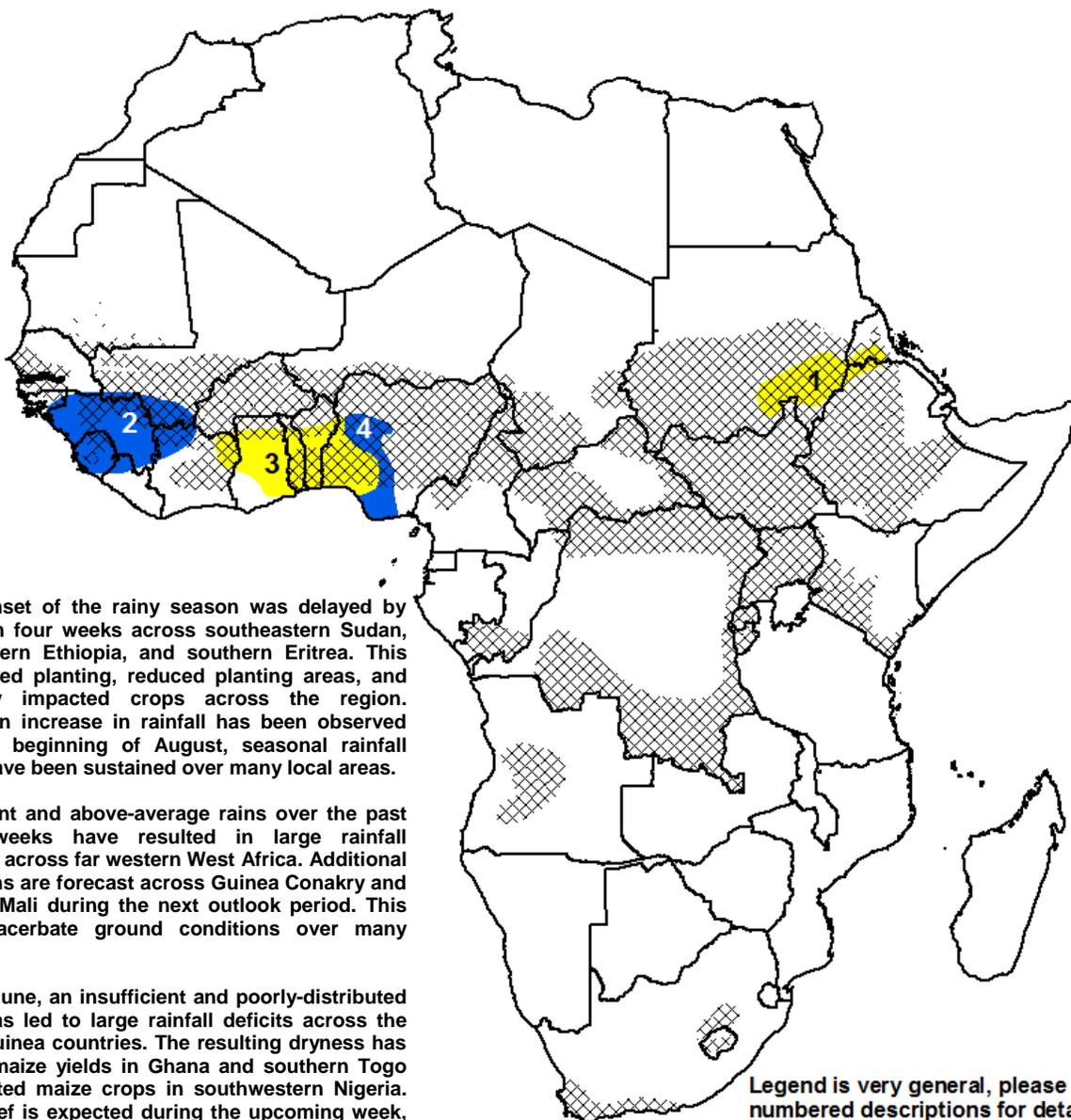




Climate Prediction Center's Africa Hazards Outlook September 12 – September 18, 2013

- Widespread, heavy rains were observed across far western Africa during the past week.



1) The onset of the rainy season was delayed by more than four weeks across southeastern Sudan, northwestern Ethiopia, and southern Eritrea. This has delayed planting, reduced planting areas, and negatively impacted crops across the region. Though an increase in rainfall has been observed since the beginning of August, seasonal rainfall deficits have been sustained over many local areas.

2) Frequent and above-average rains over the past several weeks have resulted in large rainfall surpluses across far western West Africa. Additional heavy rains are forecast across Guinea Conakry and southern Mali during the next outlook period. This could exacerbate ground conditions over many areas.

3) Since June, an insufficient and poorly-distributed rainfall has led to large rainfall deficits across the Gulf of Guinea countries. The resulting dryness has reduced maize yields in Ghana and southern Togo and affected maize crops in southwestern Nigeria. Some relief is expected during the upcoming week, with increased shower activities.

4) Heavy amounts of precipitation in late August led to flooding across northern Nigeria, and increased water discharges at the Kainji, Shiroro, and Jebba dams in the southern Kebbi, and Niger states of the country. This has elevated the risk for basin inundation along the Niger River for many local areas downstream.

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



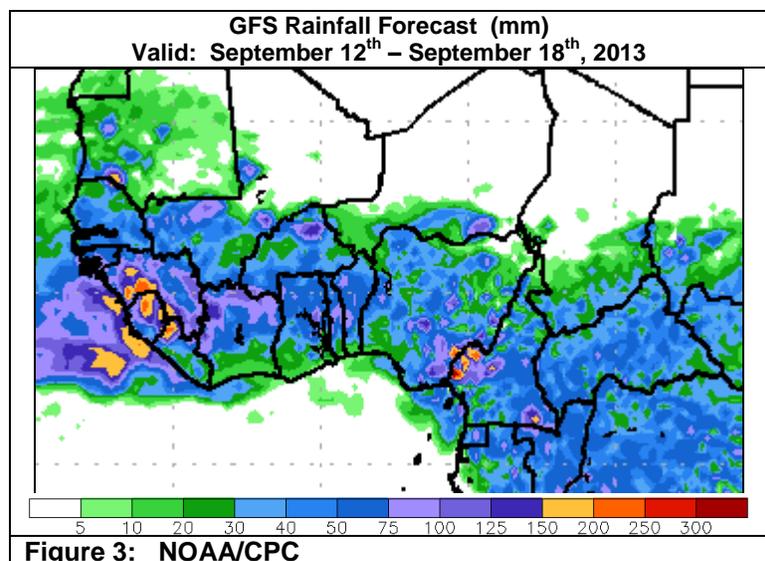
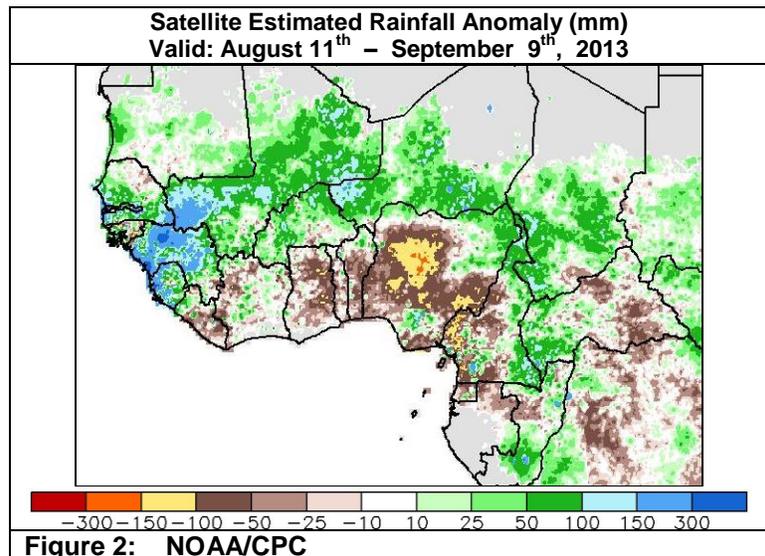
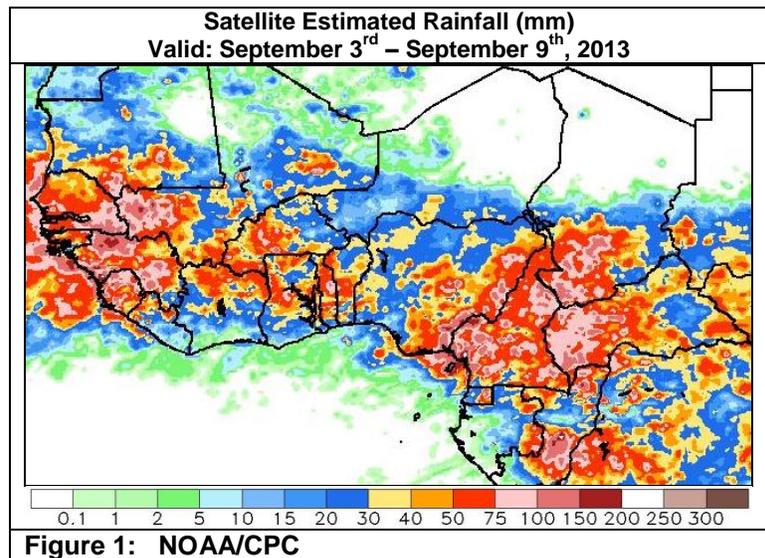
Wetness observed over far western Africa

During the past week, heavy rains were observed over a wide portion of far western Africa, including Senegal, southern Mauritania, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea-Conakry, Sierra Leone, and western Mali (**Figure 1**). The continued above-average rainfall over the region was partially attributable to persisting anomalous on-shore flow, bringing moisture influx into the region and anomalous northward position of the Inter-Tropical Front (ITF), rain-bearing weather system, which brought enhanced convective activities over the Sahel. Farther east, abundant (> 50 mm) rains were recorded over eastern Nigeria and Cameroon as the ITF continued its equatorward retreat, gradually increasing rainfall to the South. Meanwhile, moderate rains were registered elsewhere except eastern Liberia and southern Cote d'Ivoire, where marginal little to light (< 10 mm) rains were registered.

Rainfall anomalies over the past thirty days exhibit large (> 150 mm) surpluses over Guinea-Conakry, northern Sierra Leone, and western Mali, while an expansive area of the Sahel experiences positive anomalies exceeding 50 mm (**Figure 2**). Above-average rains over the past four weeks have reduced moisture deficits over local areas of northeastern Senegal and west-central Mali. In contrast, negative anomalies remained along the Gulf of Guinea extending from Ghana to Nigeria, with the largest (> 100 mm) deficits observed over west-central Nigeria. Despite the observed increase in rainfall along the Gulf of Guinea during the past few weeks, it was not enough to fully erode accumulated deficits associated with the poor rainfall distribution since June across the dry portions of the region. For instance, the prolonged dry, *August break*, period has already negatively impacted cropping activities in southern Nigeria.

Conversely, in Nigeria, the increase in rainfall over the past few weeks had already caused flooding over many local areas and increased water discharges at the Kainji, Shiroro, and Jebba dams in the southern Kebbi, and Niger states. Although the continuation of enhanced rains should help to relieve dryness over the dry portions of central Nigeria, additional heavy rains could exacerbate conditions on the ground over many parts of the flood-prone areas of the northern and eastern states of the country.

During the next outlook period, model rainfall forecasts suggest heavy rains to continue across far western Africa, including the already-saturated countries of Guinea-Conakry and Sierra Leone (**Figure 3**). This maintains elevated risks for additional flooding, exacerbation of ground conditions, and potential waterborne disease outbreaks in the region. An increased chance for heavy rains also exists over northwestern Cote d'Ivoire and the southern and central parts of Nigeria, where additional abundant rains could trigger localized flooding. Meanwhile, light to moderate rains are expected elsewhere.



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.