Early season dryness developing in parts of Guatemala

Africa Weather Hazards

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. Since late February, heavy rainfall has helped to mitigate both short-term and long-term moisture deficits.

2. Poorly distributed seasonal rainfall since late February has led to increasing moisture deficits for many areas in central and northern Ethiopia. Average to above-average rainfall is forecast for the region during the next week.
Africa Overview

Belg season rains continued to underperform this past week

During the last week, rainfall across Ethiopia continued to be below average. According to satellite rainfall estimates, isolated, heavy rainfall accumulations (>50mm) were registered in the western Oromia, and SNNPR regions of the country, with light to moderate precipitation amounts (10-50mm) observed towards the North (Figure 1). Rainfall improved but was still lacking for some belg-producing areas of Central Ethiopia. Towards the east, little to no rainfall was received throughout the Somali region of Ethiopia, eastern Kenya, and Somalia. Around the Lake Victoria region, moderate to heavy rainfall was observed over Uganda, all of Tanzania, and southwestern Kenya.

Despite the increased rains in the eastern Amhara and Afar regions of Ethiopia, many belg-producing areas continue to experience increasing seasonal dryness characterized by a delayed start and/or an erratic rainfall distribution since February. Analysis of satellite-estimated rainfall anomalies over the past 30 days depict mainly below-average moisture conditions, with isolated pockets of favorable, above-average conditions (Figure 2). Currently, the strongest moisture deficits are located across the Afar region and along the higher elevations of the Rift Valley. Outside of Ethiopia, the greatest deficits can be observed in Uganda, despite improvement last week. Delayed plantings have been reported. While emerging dryness in the southern/eastern portion of the Horn may lead to adverse ground impacts, suppressed seasonal rainfall in Ethiopia may exacerbate ground conditions following two consecutively failed rainfall seasons in the region.

During the next week, precipitation forecasts show enhanced rainfall across southern and eastern Ethiopia and neighboring Somalia. Well above-normal rainfall totals are possible, which are expected to help alleviate anomalous dryness and moisture deficits in the region. Kenya will also see more widespread rain.

As heavy rains pushes northward across the continent, southern Africa rapidly dries out

Following a poor rainfall season, increased March rains decreased or eliminated moisture deficits in many regions. This was likely able to replenish water resources/availability, and may benefit some of the cropping areas that planted later into the season, although many areas had already experienced permanent wilting. Last week exhibited rapid drying in Southern Africa (Figure 3). Much of the southern and central part of the region saw little to no rainfall. This may signal the end of monsoon rains for parts of Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana, likely locking current levels of dryness. Moderate rain was observed across central South Africa. Some parts of Madagascar picked up beneficial rainfall for another week, slowly chipping away at moisture deficits. The forecast for next week is for precipitation to be climatologically spread across the region. The heaviest rains should stretch from northern Mozambique into Tanzania.
Central Asia Weather Hazards

No hazards are posted for Central Asia.

*Temperatures:* Above-normal temperatures prevailed across Central Asia from March 27 to April 2 with the largest positive anomalies (7°C or more) across eastern Kazakhstan. Maximum temperatures reached the low to mid 30s (°C) across southern Turkmenistan and the lowlands of western Afghanistan. During the next week, above-normal temperatures are likely to continue across Kazakhstan, with near to below-normal temperatures expected for the remainder of the region.

*Precipitation:* Widespread moderate to locally heavy rainfall (more than 50 mm) affected Afghanistan, southern Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan from March 27 to April 2. Deadly flash flooding was reported across northwest Pakistan at the beginning of April. Locally heavy precipitation (rain and high-elevation snow) is likely across Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Central America and the Caribbean Weather Hazards

No hazards posted for Central America and the Caribbean.
Central America and the Caribbean Overview

Early season dryness develops across portions of southern Guatemala

Last week, light to moderate amounts of precipitation were received across many coastal areas along the Gulf of Honduras and the southern Caribbean according to satellite estimates. For many interior departments, little to no rainfall accumulations were registered. Although rainfall is climatologically light during early April, analysis of weekly anomalies since late March depicts generally below-average rainfall over the past two weeks. Since the beginning of March, developing moisture deficits have emerged across several departments of central and southern Guatemala, signaling the possibility of delayed start of the Primera rains in the region. Elsewhere, rainfall conditions have been near average throughout much of El Salvador, Nicaragua, with pockets of anomalous wetness across northern Honduras and Belize. Satellite-estimated vegetation health conditions continue to look quite favorable throughout most of Central American countries; however localized pockets of less favorable conditions have been noted across parts of southern Guatemala and eastern Nicaragua.

For the upcoming week, precipitation models suggest little change from this past week’s rainfall distribution, as most of the rainfall is forecast across many coastal areas along the Gulf of Honduras, with little to no rainfall expected for several interior departments in Central America. Below-normal rains are expected throughout many parts of Guatemala.

Rainfall continues to remain below average for many local areas in Hispaniola

During the last week, a slight increase in rainfall was observed throughout some parts of central and southern Haiti, however, little rainfall accumulation was registered throughout many other areas of the island. Several consecutive weeks of suppressed March rainfall has led to the development of spring dryness throughout the island. Since early March, many local areas in northern Haiti and northern Dominican Republic have received less than a quarter of their normal rainfall accumulation, with drier-than-average conditions also across the southern Haitian peninsula. Remotely-sensed vegetation indices depict generally favorable conditions, though some deterioration has been observed over some areas in the Centre, Nord, and Nord-Est departments of Haiti. For the upcoming week, precipitation models suggest a seasonal distribution of rainfall for early April. Moderate to locally heavy amounts of precipitation are likely throughout central Hispaniola, with less amounts expected for many coastal areas.

ABOUT WEATHER HAZARDS
Hazard maps are based on current weather/climate information, short and medium range weather forecasts (up to 1 week) and 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.