Seasonal rainfall deficits continue to strengthen across the Greater Horn of Africa

Africa Weather Hazards

1. Seasonal rainfall deficits since October have resulted in significant dryness across Angola, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

2. Continued below-average rainfall and high temperatures have strengthened moisture deficits in South Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, and Tanzania.

Source: FEWS NET/NOAA
Africa Overview

Parts of eastern Ethiopia and Somalia receive little to no rainfall

Last week, increased seasonal rainfall was received in southwestern Ethiopia and parts of South Sudan, with well distributed weekly amounts exceeding 50mm. Parts of central Ethiopia continued to receive light rainfall, while east of the Oromia, little to no precipitation was registered, delaying the start of season (Figure 1). Similarly, parts of Somalia, Kenya, and northern Tanzania saw no increase in seasonal precipitation, except for isolated activity along the Kenya and Somalia border. Seasonable rainfall was received across parts of Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi.

A rapid strengthening of anomalous dryness has been observed across East Africa over the past several weeks, with notable moisture deficits of 25-200 mm, reflecting a delayed start of season in eastern Ethiopia and Somalia, and poor rainfall performance in parts of Uganda, Kenya, and northern Tanzania (Figure 2). Coupled with the effects of above-average temperatures and below-average rainfall since early March, the continued below-average rainfall this month is increasingly likely to worsen ground conditions. Additionally, poor rainfall from the October-December rainfall season last year, is likely to amplify already dry conditions across the Greater Horn.

Next week, increased rainfall is possible over eastern Ethiopia and northern Somalia, however below-average precipitation is expected across central and southern Somalia, Kenya, northern Tanzania, South Sudan and Uganda into late April.

Increased rainfall in many Gulf of Guinea countries

Last week, heavy rainfall was received across parts of southern Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Benin, and southwestern Nigeria, with amounts exceeding 100mm causing floods in some areas. In Nigeria, the increased rainfall marked the first week of favorable moisture following a slow start to the rainfall season, though anomalous dryness persists throughout the central and southwestern parts of the region (Figure 2). Meanwhile, above-average moisture conditions remain in eastern Guinea, Liberia, Cote d’Ivoire, and Ghana.

Next week, a return to drier conditions across Nigeria is expected with more seasonable rainfall forecast over the western Gulf of Guinea countries.
Central Asia Weather Hazards

Temperatures
Last week, above-normal temperatures continued with the largest anomalies (7-8 °C) observed across southwestern Afghanistan and northern Kazakhstan. Maximum temperatures were in the lower 30 °C in southern Afghanistan and near 30 °C in southwestern Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The warmer temperatures continued to cause rapid snow melt. Above normal temperatures are likely to persist across much of the region. Maximum temperatures are forecast to be near 30 °C in southern Kazakhstan, while maximum temperatures could exceed 35 °C in southern Turkmenistan and southwestern Afghanistan.

Precipitation
Afghanistan has received frequent precipitation since early January, resulting in widespread moisture surpluses and above-normal snow water volume in higher elevations. The heavy rainfall is expected to aid the planting of spring wheat. Early in the week, Afghanistan experienced heavy rainfall and flash flooding in 16 of its 34 provinces. Low-pressure systems bringing heavy rainfall to the Middle East and Central Asia are forecast to continue into next week. Precipitation is also forecast to exceed 50 mm in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. A high risk of flash and river flooding is posted for Afghanistan due to the likely heavy rainfall and snowmelt runoff.

Central America and the Caribbean Weather Hazards

Source: FEWS NET/NOAA
Central America and the Caribbean Overview

Widespread rainfall signals the start of Primera rainfall season

Last week, the onset of Primera season rains continued across Central America. Widespread rainfall was recorded over Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and light rainfall in Nicaragua. The heaviest 7-day totals exceeded 50mm and even 75mm in parts of Guatemala and Belize. The rest of Guatemala and Honduras received between 10-50mm of rainfall, while moderate rainfall amounts (>25mm) were observed in Costa Rica and western Panama. The increased rainfall has provided relief to moisture deficits in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. Since early 2019, seasonal Apante-related moisture deficits have persisted in Costa Rica and Panama. The onset of rains over recent weeks has favored early Primera season cropping activities occurring at the end of April, however, poor rainfall performance and dry conditions are still evident in parts of Guatemala, central Honduras, and eastern Nicaragua.

Next week, widespread rainfall is expected to continue, with light to moderate (10-50mm) rainfall forecast for Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and Honduras. Light rain showers are also expected in Nicaragua. Increased rainfall is also likely for Costa Rica and Panama, with totals possibly exceeding 50mm.

Hispaniola received scattered light rainfall last week

Hispaniola received below average rainfall last week. Rainfall totals remained in the single digits and any observations were mainly confined to coastal regions. Rainfall since early March has been unevenly distributed across the island, indicating below-average rainfall across the region. The largest deficits are evident in central portions of the island. Even so, some gauges did measure locally heavy rainfall in late March. Since mid-January, precipitation has been below normal throughout the island. Long-term moisture deficits persist in parts of northeastern Haiti, and parts of northwestern and southern Dominican Republic. Unless the island receives increased before the end of the month, early season cropping activities may begin to be adversely impacted. Next week, a seasonable pattern of light rainfall is expected with 7-day totals of 5-25mm likely across the island.