



REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME agromet update



Rainfall, Vegetation and Crop Monitoring

Issue 01 dekad: 01-02 Month: November

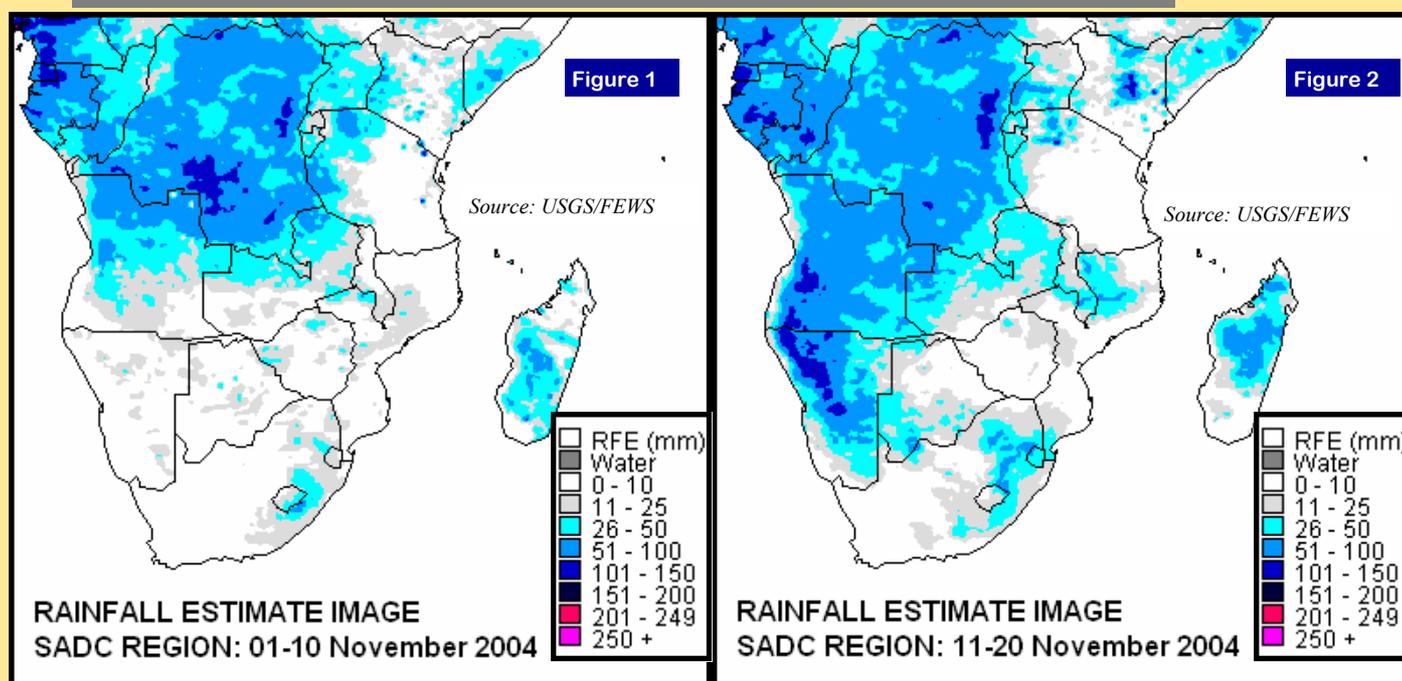
Season: 2004/2005

Release date: 30-11-2004

Highlights

- Rainfall confined to the northern parts of the region in dekad one of November 2004...
- Heavy rainfall in the western parts of the region in dekad two of November 2004...
- Rainfall onset still problematic in the SADC region...
- One to two weeks of consecutive dry days experienced in the region...

Rainfall performance during 1st and 2nd dekad of November 2004



In most cases, the beginning of the rainy season determines the agricultural production of the season and therefore it is important that the onset is timely and the distribution is consistent. The 2004/2005 is expected to have commenced in earnest by this time, however, not many areas in the sub-region have received sufficient rainfall to allow sowing of seed (figure 3). Analysis of November 2004 rainfall (Rainfall Estimates) shows that the first dekad (figure 1) experienced rainfall which was confined to the northern parts of the region covering Angola, DRC, northern Tanzania and Zambia. The rest of the region received rainfall below 25mm except for parts of Lesotho and South Africa. However, the rainfall received

was sufficient for land preparation but not to support seed germination and sustainability of the seedling. Further analysis in terms of rain days also shows limited number of rain days in a 30 day period (figure 5). The second dekad of November experienced substantial amounts of rainfall in the western parts of the sub-region. The RFE imagery (figure 2) indicates rainfall of up to 100 mm in parts of Angola and Namibia. Amounts of over 50 mm are likely to have occurred in DRC and other parts of Angola and Namibia. Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces of South Africa also recorded some rainfall sufficient for planting during the second dekad. The Vuli rainy season in northern Tanzania has consistently received good rainfall in the first two dekads of November improving on the crop prospects.

This Agromet Update bulletin is a joint product of the SADC Regional Early Warning Unit (REWU); Regional Remote Sensing Unit (RRSU), and USAID FEWSNET.

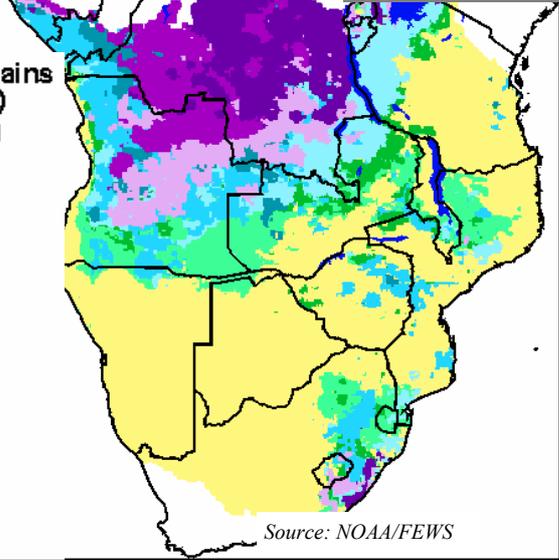
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Figure 3

Onset of rains in the SADC region for 2004/2005 Season

Onset of Rains (2004-11-2)

- <= Sept 1
- Sep 2
- Sep 3
- Oct 1
- Oct 2
- Oct 3
- Nov 1
- Nov 2
- Nov 3
- Dec 1
- Dec 2
- Dec 3
- Jan 1
- Jan 2
- Jan 3
- >= Feb 1
- N/A
- No Start

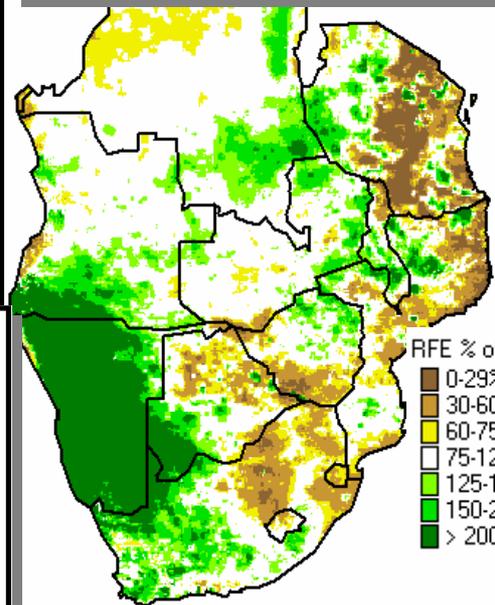


Source: NOAA/FEWS

Onset of rains is identified as the 1st dekad in which at least 25 mm of rain fall, followed by two dekads which total at least 20 mm of rain. If the following two dekads total at least 20 mm of rain, the 1st dekad of 25 mm rainfall is identified as the dekad of onset of rains, and the start of the agricultural growing season. If the following two dekads do not total at least 20 mm of rain, the 1st dekad is declared a failed planting, and the search for onset of rain, or planting dekad, continues with the following dekad. Based on the defined threshold, the growing season appears

not to have commenced in many parts of the region. This

Percentage of rainfall received as of 20 November 2004



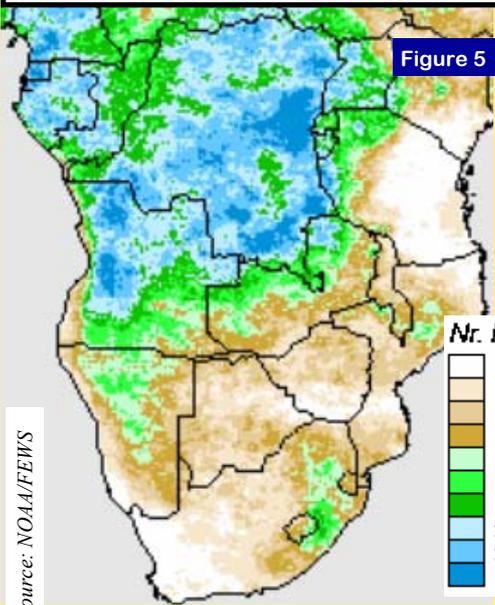
- RFE % of normal
- 0-29%
 - 30-60%
 - 60-75%
 - 75-125%
 - 125-150%
 - 150-200%
 - > 200%

situation is evident in parts of Zambia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa. As the season enters December, it is critical that the rainfall performance improves if food security is to be realized in the re-

Looking at the onset of rainfall map (figure 3), most parts of the sub-region experiencing food insecurity have received less than 75% of normal rainfall so far (figure 4). The amount of rainfall received in Namibia was mostly in the second dekad of November due to heavy rainfall. Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland have areas that have received less than 60% of the normal rainfall. It is hoped that rainfall will stabilize as the season enters December which is critical for planting.

Number of rain days in the past 30 Days, as of 20 November 2004

Figure 5



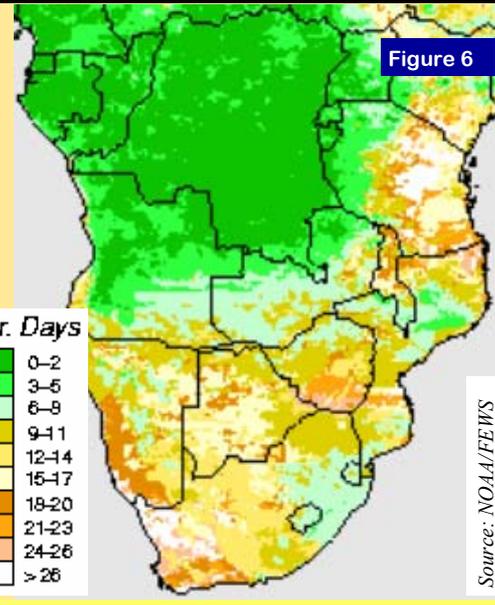
- Nr. Days
- 0-2
 - 3-5
 - 6-8
 - 9-11
 - 12-14
 - 15-17
 - 18-20
 - 21-23
 - 24-26
 - > 26

Source: NOAA/FEWS

Analysis of rainfall performance in the last 30 days up to 20 November 2004 shows poor performance of rainfall especially in the southern parts of the sub-region with less than half of the 30 days having experienced rainfall (figure 5). It is important to note that a rain day has been defined as a day with 1 mm or more. This may not be sufficient for crops and therefore dry days may actually be more when the effect on crops of the rainfall is taken into account (figure 6).

Maximum consecutive dry days in the past 30 Days, as of 20 November 2004

Figure 6



- Nr. Days
- 0-2
 - 3-5
 - 6-8
 - 9-11
 - 12-14
 - 15-17
 - 18-20
 - 21-23
 - 24-26
 - > 26

Source: NOAA/FEWS