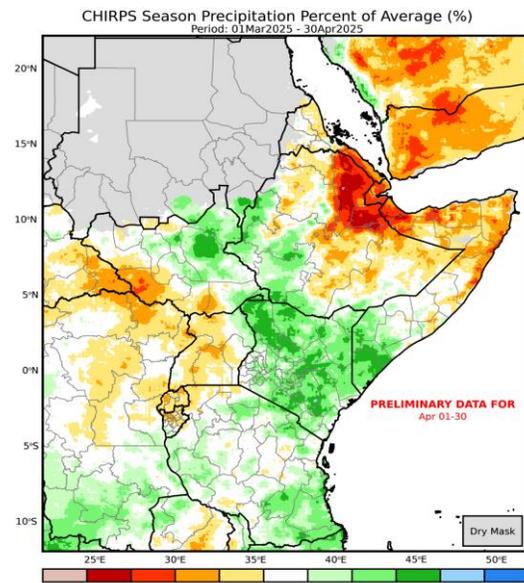


## Mixed seasonal rains across East Africa: *Extreme regional variability*

### KEY MESSAGES

- Overall, the March–April seasonal rains performance is largely average to above-average, but with persistently below-average rainfall amounts over the northern regions of Ethiopia, Somalia, and Yemen, as well as western regions of Uganda, Rwanda, northern Burundi, and western South Sudan.
- Concerns remain high for parts of Somalia, eastern and coastal Kenya, and southeastern and northeastern Ethiopia, given the delayed onset and distributed dry spells, as well as the high likelihood of timely cessation.
- Mixed crop production prospects are expected across most bimodal regions of Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Belg cropping regions of Ethiopia, given the varied onset.
- Significant improvement in rangeland and surface water conditions across the region following an above-average March–April season.
- High chances of flooding and increased inundated area in the Sudd wetlands (S. Sudan) and further downstream in Sudan following above-average forecasted rainfall across the Ethiopian highlands and Uganda in the coming weeks.
- The western sector is most likely to get a reprieve from the below-average conditions following a forecasted above-average rainfall across Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.



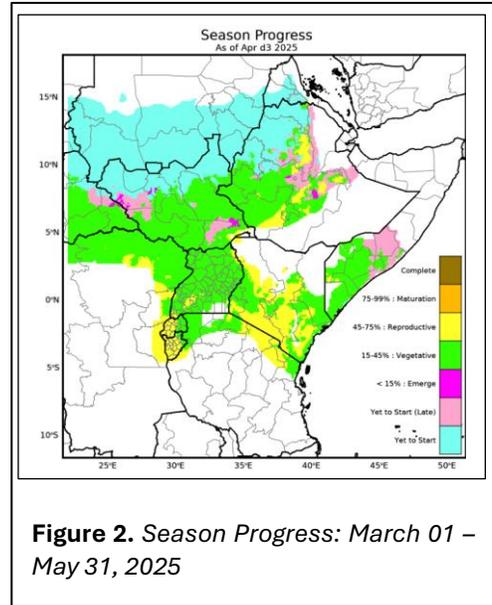
**Figure 1.** CHIRPS cumulative rainfall, March 1–April 30, 2025, percent of 1981–2020 average

**Context:** *Between March and May, the following are the areas and names of the rainy seasons underway in parts of East Africa: Gu rains in Somalia; long rains in unimodal Uganda, Kenya, Burundi, and Rwanda; belg rains (mid-February to May) in Ethiopia, as well as the diraac/sugum rains in the northern pastoral areas of northeastern Ethiopia and northern Somalia and gu/genna rains in the southern and southeastern pastoral areas of Ethiopia; and the first season rains in the bimodal zones of southwestern South Sudan and northern Uganda.*

### SEASONAL PROGRESS

The March–April seasonal rainfall across East Africa has been characterized by a generally average to above-average performance across most of the region. This has led to significant improvements in cropland, rangeland, and surface water conditions, especially across eastern Kenya and southern Somalia, where rains were initially predicted to be below-average given the anticipated La Niña conditions in early 2025. However, the enhanced rainfall has also led to adverse effects in several areas. According to UNOCHA (April, 2025 report), heavy rains and flash floods have caused fatalities, damage of property and displacement across the region with Puntland and Southwest states of Somalia being the worst affected. This highlights the dual nature of the current season’s impact.

So far, the season has been well-established across the region with the early planted crops being in reproductive stage across most parts of Kenya while the later planted crops being in vegetative stage across the rest of the region. Seasonal rains for parts of southwestern state of Somalia and northern Belg cropping zones of Ethiopia are yet to be established, emphasizing a significant reduction in production given the forecasted timely cessation (See **Figure 2**).



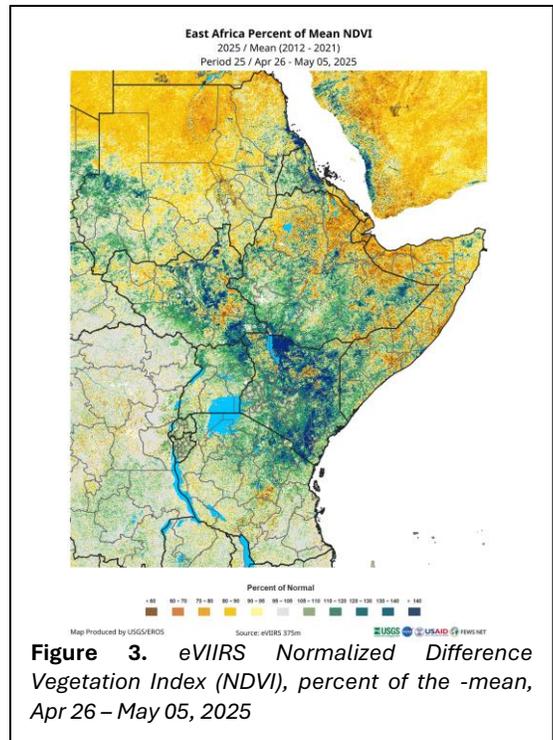
**Figure 2.** Season Progress: March 01 – May 31, 2025

However, areas of concern due to significant rainfall deficits have been observed across Somalia, and Yemen, as well as western parts of Uganda, Rwanda, northern Burundi, western South Sudan, and northern Ethiopia—where localized areas have received rainfall totals 30% to 45% below average (See **Figure 1**).

In parts of Somalia, eastern and coastal Kenya, southeastern and northeastern Ethiopia, delayed onset, intermittent dry spells, and a high likelihood of early cessation of rains have heightened the risk of poor seasonal outcomes, with crop production prospects remaining mixed across most bimodal regions including Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Ethiopia’s Belg-producing areas.

Overall, despite the localized deficits, the season is likely to have a favorable outcome.

The vegetation condition across the region has significantly improved as depicted by the eVIIRS (NDVI) image in **Figure 3**. This is very beneficial to the pastoral community given the availability of pasture and water. However, northern Ethiopia and most parts of Somalia and Yemen remain of concern given the poor vegetation condition, which is characterized by the delayed onset and below-average rainfall (**Figure 1**).



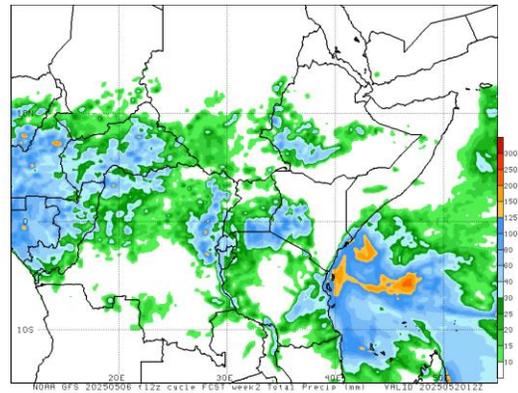
**Figure 3.** eVIIRS Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), percent of the -mean, Apr 26 – May 05, 2025

### AGROCLIMATIC OUTLOOK

The short-term forecast based on NOAA GFS (**Figure 4**) indicates above-average rains across western and coastal Kenya, western Ethiopia, most parts of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi. This above-average outlook will significantly improve the conditions across the western sector of the region, which might likely lead to average crop production prospects.

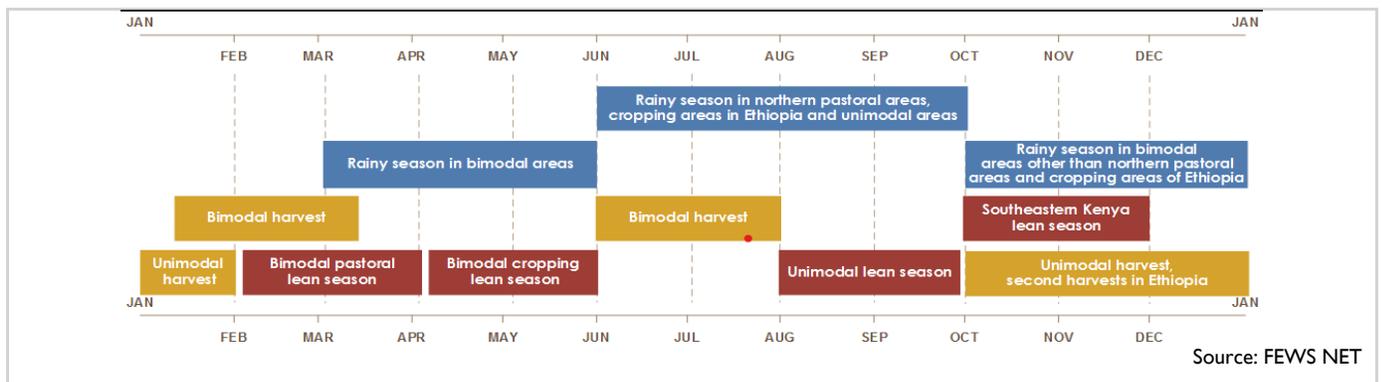
Flood risks remain moderate across the northern sector, including parts of South Sudan and Sudan, given the enhanced rains forecasted for the Ethiopian Highlands (western region) and over the Lake Victoria basin.

High concerns for the eastern sector of the region, including eastern Kenya, most of Somalia, and eastern Ethiopia, as well as northern Belg cropping regions, given the lower likelihood of rains in the coming 2 weeks. This is likely to reduce production for the already planted crops and impact land preparation for long-cycled crops.



**Figure 4.** NOAA GFS 2 weeks Forecast valid between, May 05 – May 20, 2025

### Seasonal Calendar for a Typical Year



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