



Title: CROP OUTLOOK FURTHER DETERIORATES IN MADAGASCAR AND MOZAMBIQUE FOLLOWING ...

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CROP OUTLOOK FURTHER DETERIORATES IN MADAGASCAR AND MOZAMBIQUE FOLLOWING CYCLONE "HUDAH"

Cyclone "Hudah", one the most powerful registered in the Indian Ocean, struck northern Madagascar on 2 April with wind speeds of up to 300 km/hour. The most affected areas are the north-eastern districts of Maroantsetra, Andapa and Antalaha, which had already suffered severe damage from Cyclone "Eline" in mid-February and Tropical Storm "Gloria" two weeks later. Floods are also reported around the town of Befandriana on the northwestern coast. Although the cyclone did not bring extremely heavy rains, it soaked areas that had not yet dried out from previous floods and the high force winds caused further damage to infrastructure, housing and crops, especially tree crops. Particularly affected are the town of Antalaha and surrounding areas, where houses, schools, health centres, airport and telecommunication facilities, have been destroyed.

Preliminary reports indicate 17 deaths, 100 000 people left homeless and 308 000 persons having experienced damage to housing and means of subsistence, as well as crop losses. This adds to 560 000 people already affected by previous storms. The extent of the damage to agriculture is not yet fully known. The region is the main vanilla producing area in the country and is also an important coffee and clove growing region. Severe losses to these crops and serious damage to the paddy crop are reported. Food stocks in warehouses and household granaries have been destroyed and therefore serious food shortages are expected in the affected areas. Most villages are isolated by floodwaters, landslides, fallen trees and damaged roads. About 100 000 persons are estimated to be in need of emergency food and other humanitarian assistance. Persistent rains are hampering relief operations as well as assessment of the damage. The United Nations has launched an appeal for US\$15.5 million to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to the affected population.

Cyclone "Hudah" hit central and northern areas of Mozambique on 9 April with less intensity. Previously flooded southern areas were not affected. The cyclone brought rains

and gusty winds that caused damage to infrastructure and housing, mainly in the coastal town of Pebane. An assessment of the agricultural damage is not yet available. However, rains and winds are likely to have negatively affected the maize crop now at the maturing stage in the important growing areas of Zambezia and Nampula, which had not been affected by floods in February/March. Yield reductions in these areas would result in a deterioration of the overall harvest prospects, possibly forcing the country into a net maize importer position from its position as a net exporter over the last three years.

FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions are scheduled to visit both countries shortly to assess the extent of crop damage and its impact on the overall national food supply situation for the months ahead.

This report is prepared on the responsibility of the FAO Secretariat with information from official and unofficial sources. Since conditions may change rapidly, please contact Mr. Abdur Rashid, Chief, ESCG, FAO, (Fax: 0039-06-5705-4495, E-Mail (INTERNET): GIEWS1@FAO.ORG) for further information if required.

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