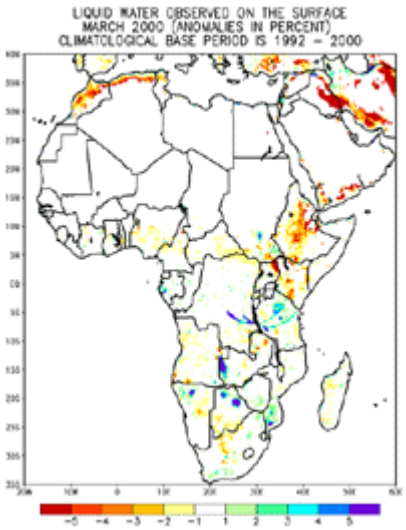
Climate of 2000 – March Global Regional Analyses

National Climatic Data Center, 18 April 2000



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Large positive wetness anomalies persisted for the second month in a row across portions of southeastern Africa. Parts of the region from Madagascar into Mozambique and Zimbabwe southward into northeastern South Africa had heavy rainfall from several tropical systems during the last two months. These storms brought deadly flooding to parts of the area. In contrast, to the north across portions of Kenya and Ethiopia, drought conditions continue to worsen with famine and starvation reported. According to media reports, the UN warned that between 12 and 16 million people in northeastern Africa are threatened by drought that has affected much of the region for nearly two years. Drought conditions also affected portions of northwest Africa. Media reports indicate that drought in Morocco has left the country's reservoirs at half their normal capacity. A substantial portion of the remaining water will be reportedly be dedicated to irrigation. More information about these conditions is available at NCDC's Climate Watch

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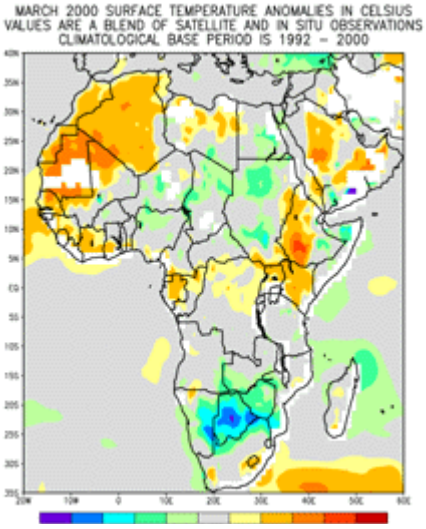
African Temperature Product

The blended temperature anomaly product mirrors the precipitation product highlighted above. The three major areas of interest include northwest, northeast, and southeast Africa. In the northeast and northwestern sections of the continent surface temperature anomalies were above average. This correlates well with below average liquid water observed across these regions and corresponds with observed drought conditions. In contrast, temperatures were cooler than the 1992-2000 average across interior sections of south Africa. This also compares well with the above average wetness observed at the surface and widespread flooding reported across the region, especially Mozambique.



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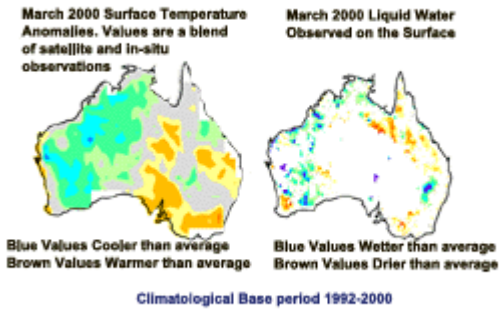
Temperature Anomalies across Australia

A broad trough covered Australia throughout March. This pattern combined with moist tropical air from the northern monsoon brought above average rainfall to much of the continent. Most of northern Australia received heavy rainfall from Tropical Cyclone Steve with briefly reached hurricane force off the northwestern coast before weakening as it recurved southeastward and moved inland. Rainfall totals for the week ending March 11th exceeded 100 mm (4 inches) across the northwestern Northwest Territory and in western and northern Western Australia. Southeastern and some western coastal areas of the continent were drier than average. This pattern mirrors the temperature anomalies for the month with cooler than average temperatures observed in the west and warmer than average conditions in the east and southeast.



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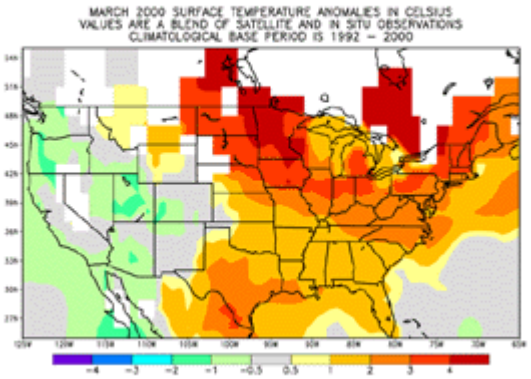
Temperature Anomalies across Australia

The blended temperature anomaly product across the United States showed much of the nation from the Rockies to the east coast had above average temperatures. Warmest departures stretched from the northern Plains eastward into New England where anomalies were more than 4 C above average. This was the fourth warmest March on record since 1895. Additional details are available on the Climate of 2000- March U.S. National Analysis. The only cool anomalies were across the intermountain west and scattered areas along the west coast.



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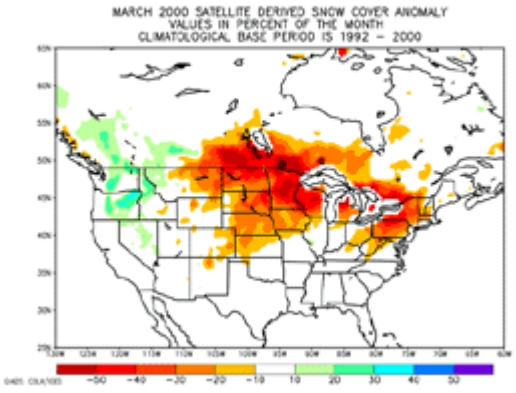
Snow Cover Anomalies in North America

The snow cover anomaly map to the right reflects the general upper-level pattern across the U.S during March. The pattern generally follows the temperature map for the month. Percent of snow cover was below the long term average across much of the central and northern Plains eastward across the Great Lakes and through the middle Atlantic region into southern New England. The combination of lack of snow cover and less precipitation than average has led to decreased water levels in the Great Lakes. The Great Lakes are at the lowest water levels since 1965 and may reach new records this year unless there is an extremely wet spring and summer. The complete NOAA report is available by clicking here.



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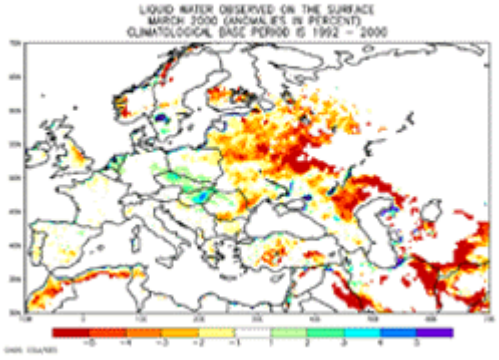
Wetness Anomalies across Europe

A large area of western Russia southeastward into Kazakhstan had another month with negative wetness anomalies. This region has generally been dry and mild over the last several months especially in the area around the Caspian Sea. Liquid water observed on the surface was below average as well in parts of central Turkey but that was due to heavier than average snowfall which is not picked up by the wetness signal. In contrast, large positive wetness anomalies were reported over portions of Slovakia and Hungary. Media reports indicate that flooding due to heavy rains over the late winter and early spring has affected Hungary for the second year in a row. Flooding has been worse in the east central part of the country along the Tisza River. Last year, in March of 1999, the combination of heavy rains and melting snows also resulted in a series of floods and landslides.



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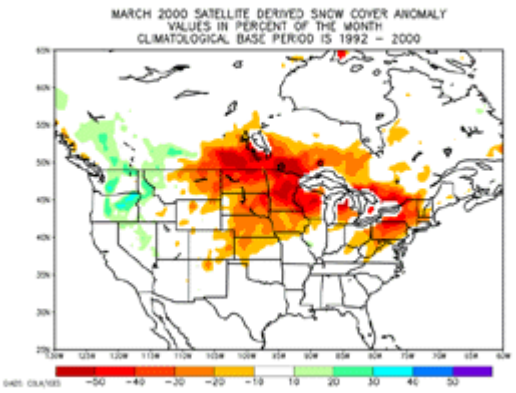
Asian Snow Cover Anomalies

Conditions across the continent varied greatly this month. Temperatures were significantly warmer leading to less snowfall across parts of the region. The snow cover was again below average from Kazakhstan eastward into the high deserts of Tien Shan in extreme western China. Scattered areas of above average snow cover were reported across the remainder of western China. The largest anomalies were across the Tibetan plateau.

animation



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References:

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For more information, refer also to ...
SSMI Derived Products
Global Historical Climatology Network (GHCN)
The Global Temperature Anomalies

Citing the Article

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