



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

La Niña

Anticipatory Action and Response Plan

January 2025 update

Mitigating the expected impacts of La Niña-induced climate extremes
on agriculture and food security



The increased likelihood of extreme weather events linked to La Niña calls for anticipatory actions to mitigate the impact on vulnerable people in the countries most at risk.

Introduction

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) La Niña Anticipatory Action and Response Plan, first launched in August 2024 and updated in January 2025, **seeks USD 326 million to address the escalating risks and potential impacts on agriculture and food security**. Based on the latest forecasts and evolving conditions, FAO is prioritizing assistance to people in 41 countries currently at highest risk. Early flexible funding is fundamental to sync FAO operations with the fast-evolving forecasts and moving targets associated with La Niña.

La Niña conditions are currently active, and are most likely to persist until April 2025. The change in weather patterns – caused by unusually cool surface waters in the central and eastern Pacific – has already led to devastating floods and storms in parts of South and Southeast Asia, West Africa and Latin America, as well as unseasonably dry conditions in East Africa. Although La Niña conditions are expected to diminish after April, many countries will remain at risk of localized extreme weather events threatening already vulnerable farming communities.

We know that acting ahead of climate extremes prevents losses and results in gains. On average, FAO anticipatory actions lead to a USD 1:7 return on investment for at-risk communities. Drawing on its expertise and leveraging flexible funding from partners such as Belgium, Germany, Norway, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, FAO is actively implementing proactive measures in priority countries to mitigate these impacts. Continued donor support remains critical to enable communities to prepare effectively, reduce vulnerabilities and safeguard food security amidst the challenges posed by potential La Niña impacts and other climate extremes.

Context

The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is a naturally occurring pattern of climate variability (alternating between El Niño and La Niña episodes). It occurs every two to seven years and has a major influence on weather patterns over many parts of the world, driving extreme weather events including drought, flooding and storms.

The Climate Prediction Center's most recent ENSO outlook, issued in January 2025, indicates that La Niña conditions are currently active and there is a 59-percent chance that they will persist until April 2025; and a 60-percent chance of a shift to ENSO-neutral conditions around March–May 2025.¹ This La Niña event is expected to remain weak, shorter in duration and less pronounced compared to previous episodes; nonetheless, it could still influence global climate patterns, including agriculture and water resource management in vulnerable regions. As such, it is crucial to plan support for vulnerable farmers to mitigate its potential effects, especially in areas previously affected or experiencing ongoing impacts of El Niño.

The expected trends and impacts of La Niña on global food security include altered rainfall patterns, with an increased risk of heavy rainfall and flooding in some regions and drought in others. Specifically, Southern Africa, Latin America, parts of East Africa, and West Africa and the Sahel may anticipate above-average rainfall, benefiting crop production but heightening the risk of flooding. In contrast, the Horn of Africa and Southwest Asia could face drier conditions during crucial cropping seasons. Southeast Asia and the Pacific may experience increased cyclone activity and potential disruptions to agriculture. Past La Niña events, such as the 2020–2023 triple-dip, have shown devastating consequences, including record-setting tropical cyclone activity in the North Atlantic Ocean and severe droughts in regions like the Horn of Africa. Despite La Niña's influence, it is essential to consider other climate drivers for accurate seasonal outlooks and to address the variability in regional impacts. Given these anticipated impacts, there is an urgent need for the humanitarian community to continue supporting vulnerable families to prepare for and withstand the potential impacts and consequences of La Niña.

FAO has developed anticipatory action protocols, and is part of inter-agency anticipatory action frameworks in many of the countries historically affected by ENSO, and where food security is a major concern. In close coordination with governments and other key partners, FAO is already implementing anticipatory action and response interventions to mitigate the impact of this event on agriculture and food security.

Objectives

FAO's La Niña Anticipatory Action and Response Plan aims to protect the food security and livelihoods of rural communities against the high risk of La Niña during the projected impact period, through the first half of 2025. The activities proposed under this Plan cover two critical time windows: (i) acting ahead of the forecast shocks to prevent their impacts; and (ii) delivering first responses where devastation from La Niña could not be avoided. The Plan's overarching aims are to:

1. **Mitigate La Niña disaster impacts through anticipatory actions**, such as helping fishers protect their boats ahead of storms, reinforcing river embankments ahead of floods, distributing drought-tolerant seeds to rainfed crop farmers and protecting livestock health.
2. **Capitalize on the positive spillover effects of La Niña and offset losses**, for example by supplying seeds to flood-affected farmers so they can plant and regain a harvest as flood waters recede.
3. **Deliver early response where La Niña causes devastation**, including through prepositioning the most time-sensitive supplies such as veterinary medicines, seeds and water bladders, while providing cash to severely affected families to meet their most immediate needs.

Geographic coverage

FAO's updated Plan prioritizes actions in **41 countries** at highest risk of La Niña impacts across Africa, Asia and the Pacific – now including **Afghanistan and Myanmar** – and Latin America and the Caribbean.

Region	Below-normal rainfall	Above-normal rainfall
Asia and the Pacific	Afghanistan, Pakistan	Bangladesh, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam
East Africa	Ethiopia (eastern), Kenya, Somalia, Uganda	Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia (western), South Sudan, Sudan
Southern Africa		Angola, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Latin America and the Caribbean	Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador	Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
West Africa and the Sahel		Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Mali, Niger, Nigeria

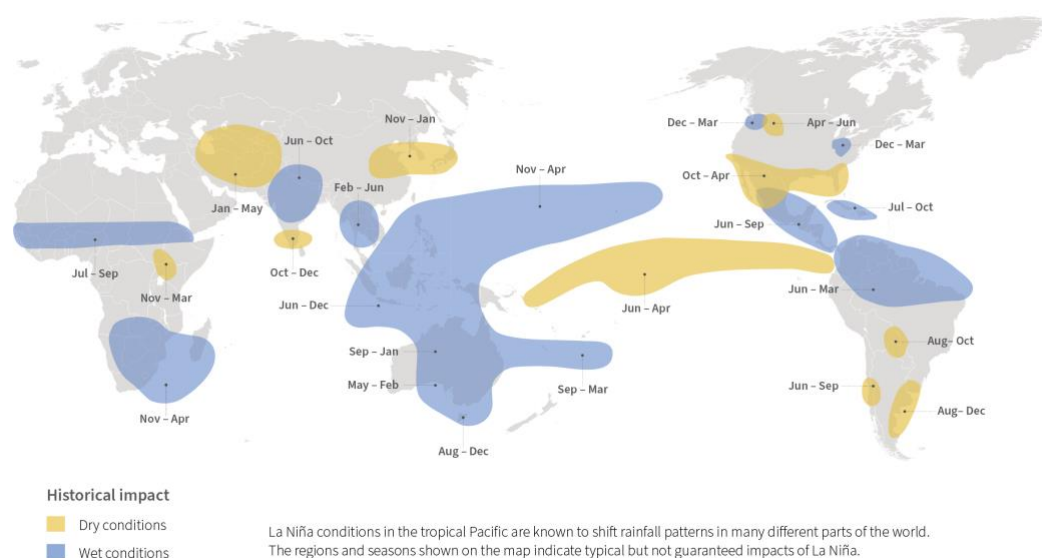
Importantly, this is not an exhaustive list of all the countries at risk of being affected by La Niña-induced hazards. The list focuses specifically on countries where FAO plans to support actions to reduce expected humanitarian impacts.

To identify priority countries at high risk of La Niña impact through the first half of 2025, the following steps were taken:

- The International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) La Niña and rainfall map (Figure 1) was used to list the countries historically impacted by La Niña, and outline when La Niña historically shifts rainfall patterns in those countries (months) and how (dry/wet).
- Seasonal climate forecasts for the December 2024–May 2025 period were applied as a filter, with countries facing normal conditions removed from the list. The main sources used include global forecast models (e.g. IRI Seasonal Climate Forecast, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, World Meteorological Organization), as well as regional and national seasonal climate forecasts when available.

- Agricultural seasonality was analysed to determine which agricultural seasons will potentially be affected during the outlook period.
- Current humanitarian needs.^a

Figure 1. La Niña and rainfall map (historical La Niña trends)



Note: Refer to the disclaimer on the last page for the names and boundaries used in this map. The final boundary between the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. Final status of the Abyei area is not yet determined. The dotted line represents, approximately, the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

Source: Columbia Climate School International Research Institute for Climate and Society. 2020. La Niña and rainfall. In: *ENSO Resources*. [Cited 8 January 2025]. <https://iri.columbia.edu/our-expertise/climate/enso>

^a FAO's [El Niño Anticipatory Action and Response Plan](#), first released in August 2023, also considered the analyses conducted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Global ENSO Analysis Cell. However, the Cell has not yet produced an analysis of countries at highest risk of La Niña effects.

Funding needs and modalities

La Niña impacts will unfold in different places, at different times, with varying intensity and impact. The Plan urgently requires USD 326 million to continue scaling up ongoing anticipatory action and response efforts in countries where La Niña-like impacts have materialized, and to implement short-term interventions in response to the evolving forecasts and needs. Flexible funding is sought to the greatest extent possible, channelled through FAO's Special Fund for Emergencies and Resilience.

Funds are needed immediately to carry out anticipatory actions in time. The triggers for anticipatory action have already been reached in parts of Asia, the Greater Horn of Africa, Latin America and Southern Africa. FAO is currently implementing anticipatory actions and response interventions in prioritized countries in these regions thanks to flexible funding from donors such as Belgium, Germany, Norway, OCHA and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In other countries, FAO continues to work with national and local partners to advance preparations for swift implementation where and when triggers are reached.

The Plan is risk-based and forward-looking. Therefore, there is an unavoidable degree of uncertainty regarding the actual occurrence of the forecast hazards. For this reason, the activities are planned on a no-regrets approach. An adaptive approach will be used to ensure that resources are re-allocated where they are most needed to prevent and mitigate the effects of La Niña across the world.

Priority actions by region

East Africa

Context

Historically, during La Niña events, localized areas of the Greater Horn of Africa tend to experience wetter-than-average conditions in northern parts of the region between July and September, and drier-than-normal conditions from November to March in central/southern parts.

Harvest prospects for Ethiopia's 2024 meher season (June–September) and Kenya's long rainy season (March–May) are broadly favourable, thanks to improved rainfall. However, 2024 gu-season (April–June) production in Somalia was significantly below average, while crop yields in South Sudan remain poor due to erratic rainfall and flooding. In the Sudan, abundant rainfall had the potential to benefit agriculture if critical challenges – such as access to fields, inputs and security amidst ongoing conflict – had been addressed. Instead, it has caused widespread flooding, causing significant destruction.

Despite the adverse effects of flooding, recent months of above-average rainfall have improved rangeland vegetation and replenished water sources, supporting livestock recovery across drought-affected areas of the Horn of Africa. However, full recovery from the multiyear drought will take time, especially with below-average rains forecast to persist in northeastern Kenya and Somalia through early 2025.

Compounding impacts of La Niña, such as an increased risk of locust infestations in the African Transition Zone, including Eritrea, further threatens food security.

Moreover, delays in rainfall onset by up to a month and severe rainfall deficits have been observed in bimodal regions, including southern Ethiopia, eastern Kenya and Somalia. Seasonal forecasts suggest a high likelihood of below-average rainfall in these areas due to the anticipated La Niña phase.

The food security situation remains dire, with approximately 36 million people in six Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) member states – Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda – in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse). The Sudan accounts for over half of this total, with 21 million people facing acute food insecurity.

Seasonal forecast

The IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre issued its seasonal forecast for October–December 2024 indicating notable rainfall and temperature variations across the Greater Horn of Africa.² By the end of November 2024, central and northern Somalia, northeastern Kenya, and parts of southern and southeastern pastoral areas of Ethiopia had received less than 60 percent of the average seasonal rains.

By December 2024, the October–November–December rainfall season appears to end early in parts of East Africa following significant disparity in rainfall across East Africa, resulting in severe rainfall deficits in significant areas of the Horn of Africa.³

The January–March 2025 seasonal forecast indicates a mixed outlook for East Africa, with below-average rainfall expected in key drought-affected areas and localized regions showing potential for recovery. Eastern regions, such as southern Ethiopia, Somalia and eastern Kenya, are expected to receive below-average rainfall, intensifying drought conditions and exacerbating risks to agriculture, water availability and food security. These dry conditions are projected to persist throughout the season, particularly in central and northeastern Somalia and southeastern Ethiopia, where cumulative rainfall has been less than 60 percent of the seasonal average. In contrast, western Kenya, northern Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and parts of the United Republic of Tanzania are expected to receive above-average rainfall, resulting in localized flooding and landslides in some areas but also supporting crop and pasture development. Temperature projections indicate warmer-than-normal conditions in Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania and southeastern Kenya, potentially increasing heat stress on crops and livestock. Conversely, cooler-than-normal temperatures are forecast for parts of Uganda, South Sudan and western Kenya. Furthermore, rainfall onset delays in the eastern Horn of Africa, coupled with shorter and less intense rainy periods, could worsen rangeland degradation and hinder water replenishment.^{4, 5} These patterns, influenced by the weakening of La Niña and neutral Indian Ocean Dipole conditions, emphasize the need for early warning systems and preparedness measures to address the impacts on food security and livelihoods.

Expected impact on agriculture and food security

The most recent seasonal forecasts indicate contrasting weather patterns across East Africa, with significant implications for agriculture and food security. In the eastern parts of the region, particularly in southern Ethiopia, Somalia and eastern Kenya, drier-than-normal conditions are expected. These areas face an elevated risk of drought, which could worsen food insecurity, impact agricultural productivity and affect livelihoods. This is particularly concerning in regions already grappling with the effects of past climate shocks, where drought conditions could further destabilize food systems, decrease food production and availability, and increase vulnerability. Additionally, warmer-than-average temperatures are predicted in several parts of the region, which could exacerbate heat stress on crops and livestock, compounding the challenges faced by already vulnerable populations. The impacts will likely be early deterioration of water and pasture conditions, as the dry season sets in from January 2025.

Planned activities



FAO requires
USD 153.2 million



to assist
6.4 million people

FAO has initiated anticipatory action interventions in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda, to support exposed vulnerable communities ahead of expected impacts. However, additional financial support is needed to ensure appropriate action at scale.

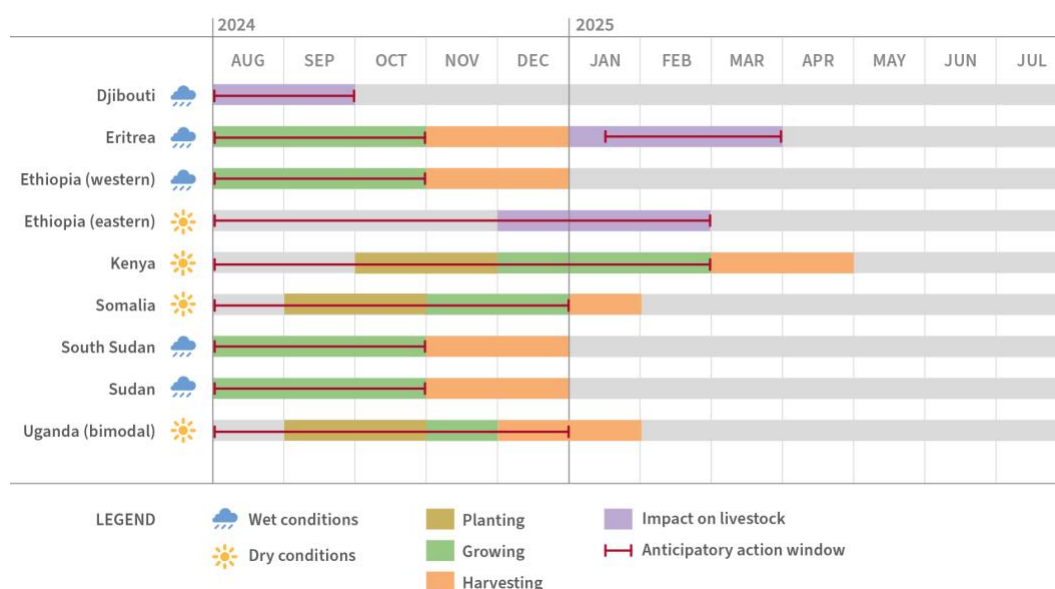
Priority actions for floods:

- Community engagement and continuous production and dissemination of early warning messages through national and local structures to ensure that communities are aware of appropriate risk management options to minimize livelihoods losses.
- Provide unconditional cash to the most vulnerable households to support their activities to prepare for and cope with the impact of floods.
- Deliver animal health interventions such as medicine, vaccinations and surveillance, to reduce the risk of flood-induced disease outbreaks and parasites.
- Distribute seeds for rapid replanting using the receding floodwater, and hermetic bags and tools to help farmers safely store their harvest.

Priority actions for droughts:

- Community engagement and continuous production and dissemination of early warning messages through national and local structures to ensure that farmers are aware of appropriate risk management options to minimize crop, livestock and other livelihood losses.
- Increase water access and availability by establishing communal rainwater harvesting and storage systems and rehabilitating water points.
- Provide unconditional cash, farming inputs including drought-tolerant short-cycle crop seeds (cereals and legumes) and vegetable seeds, small irrigation kits and training in water management.
- Protect animal health and productivity, through livestock disease monitoring, vaccination and treatment, community watering points, distribution of feed and drought-tolerant fodder seed, as well as poultry and small ruminants where appropriate.

Figure 2. East Africa priority countries seasonal calendar



Source: FAO. 2025. Internal document. Rome.

Southern Africa

Context

La Niña is associated with wetter-than-normal conditions between November and March. These patterns could support the recovery from the ongoing drought conditions experienced in the region, improving crop and livestock production. However, such rains can also result in heavy rainfall episodes, flooding and landslides.

Land preparation and the planting of main season cereal crops has started in some parts of the region, under near-average weather conditions. The onset of the rainy season is slightly delayed in central Angola and in northwestern Zambia; however, it is still very early in the season. Slightly above-average temperatures were recorded in the past month across most of Angola and Namibia. The harvesting of winter wheat is ongoing in South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and is expected to conclude by the end of November. In both South Africa and Zambia, wheat production close to the five-year average is expected, whereas, in Zimbabwe, exceptionally good winter wheat production is expected. Vegetation conditions in the subregion are currently below average, following the 2023–2024 drought that reduced grazing and water availability for livestock in many areas, negatively affecting livestock conditions. This is expected to impact draught animal power available for the planting season.

Seasonal forecast

International seasonal climate forecasts for the remainder of 2024 and the first quarter of 2025 indicate average to above-average rainfall for most parts of the region, in line with the Twenty-Ninth Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum Statement released last August.⁶ If this materializes, it will support planting activities and crop development. Below-average rainfall, however, is predicted for November 2024–January 2025 in most parts of Angola and Namibia, in contrast with historical La Niña

trends. Monitoring the situation, including through short-range forecasts in the coming weeks and months is crucial. Tropical cyclones pose a significant risk to several countries near the Indian Ocean, including Comoros, Eswatini, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and South Africa, with inland nations like Malawi and Zimbabwe occasionally affected. These storms can cause extensive damage, including loss of life, displacement and destruction of agricultural assets.

The October 2024 seasonal forecast from Météo France La Réunion predicts an average to above-average cyclone season in the southwest Indian Ocean, with 9–13 named storms expected, 4–7 of which may reach cyclone intensity. Areas at higher risk include Madagascar and Mozambique.⁷

Expected impact on agriculture and food security

In Southern Africa, La Niña-induced impacts coincide with the main agricultural season between October 2024 and March 2025, and could have dire consequences, especially in countries and areas that are showing very high levels of vulnerability and food insecurity, following the 2023–2024 drought impacts. Excessive rainfall and subsequent flooding can further damage crops and infrastructure, while heavy rainfall may benefit locust breeding (especially in Madagascar) and increase the threat of pest outbreaks.

In case there is a higher-than-normal probability of increased cyclone activity in the southwest Indian Ocean during the upcoming cyclone season, the likelihood of landfalls and heavy rainfall in Madagascar and Mozambique could be observed. Cyclones can cause substantial losses of food supplies, posing a serious threat to food security. Losses of stored grains and damage to standing crops can lead to shortfalls in food supplies, particularly during the lean season.

Planned activities



FAO requires
USD 42.8 million



to assist
1.1 million people

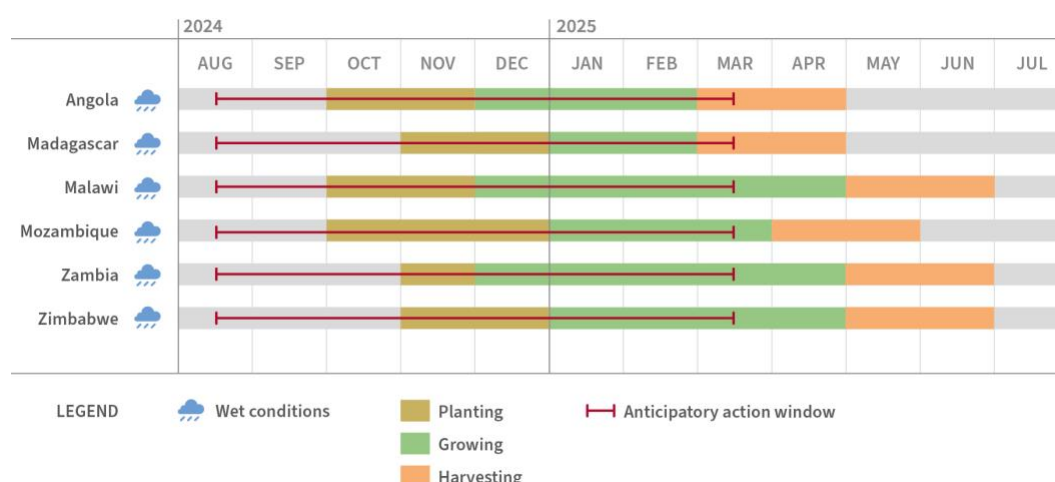
FAO will work with partners to ensure that early warnings and related agricultural advisories are disseminated to at-risk people, and that anticipatory actions are implemented to protect the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people ahead of the forecast events. Anticipatory actions will contribute to protect agricultural production and vulnerable households' assets in the face of flooding through, for example, unconditional cash and animal health interventions to limit the spread of flood-induced diseases.

FAO is ready to launch anticipatory actions in the prioritized countries. However, the resources mobilized are not enough. Urgent additional support is required to ensure the following actions can be implemented at the required scale and coverage in 2024–2025.

Priority actions for floods and cyclones:

- Disseminate early warnings and agricultural advisories to ensure farmers and communities are aware of the risks and appropriate risk management options to minimize crop, livestock and other livelihood losses.
- Distribute hermetic bags and tools to help farmers safely store their harvest and promote early harvesting of crops to enable rapid replanting using the receding floodwater.
- Deliver animal health interventions such as vaccinations to reduce the risk of flood-induced disease outbreaks and parasites; protect community fisheries resources and aquaculture assets; and provide fishing kits.
- Provide unconditional cash, vouchers, cash+ (cash transfers plus seeds to support off-season production) combined with small-scale irrigation, water harvesting and soil conservation.

Figure 3. Southern Africa priority countries seasonal calendar



Source: FAO. 2025. *Internal document*. Rome.

Asia and the Pacific

Context

In much of Southeast Asia and the Pacific, La Niña typically brings wetter-than-normal conditions during the June–December period. While typhoons can form throughout the year in Southeast Asia, they are most common between May and October. However, La Niña can alter this pattern, potentially causing typhoons to develop at different times. During these events, typhoons are less frequent, but studies are showing they can be more powerful and intensify closer to landfall. Conversely, in the North Pacific Islands (Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu), La Niña is associated with prolonged dry periods, usually from June to the following April. During the 2023–2024 El Niño, drought emergencies were declared in the North Pacific,

specifically in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, which is atypical for this phenomenon. Therefore, if dry conditions persist, it could be another year of water and agriculture constraints. Conversely, the South Pacific countries (Samoa through to Solomon Islands) are commonly wetter. Across the North and South Pacific, tropical cyclones are commonly below-average due to the strong shear winds. In Southwest Asia and the Levant, La Niña events have been known to lead to above-normal rainfall in most of India and southeast Pakistan between June and October, as well as a reduction in rainfall from January through May in an area encompassing Afghanistan and extending through northern Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the southeastern tip of Iraq.

In Afghanistan, the sowing of winter wheat has started under close-to-average conditions, but a rainfall deficit is forecast in the coming months. Harvesting of rice has started, and prospects are good thanks to above-average crop biomass across the country. However, acute food insecurity continues to affect one in two people as a result of the economic and social crises. In South Asia, harvesting of kharif crops (rice, maize and millet) is underway in Pakistan with favourable prospects, while harvesting of aman rice (which represents about 35 percent of total production) will start in November in Bangladesh, and prospects are average to above average. In Sri Lanka, the harvest of second season (yala) rice and maize ended in September with good prospects, while the planting of the main season (maha) rice and maize started in the east under close-to-average moisture conditions in the last month.

Recent floods and typhoons have heavily impacted South and Southeast Asia. In South Asia, floods in Sri Lanka (October 2024) displaced some 7 000 people, Nepal experienced record rainfall in September, and floods in Bangladesh (August 2024) affected 6 million people and caused agricultural losses of USD 438 million. Anticipatory actions included USD 2.6 million in early response in Bangladesh, benefiting 4 million people, and USD 6.5 million in Nepal for seed protection, health and cash assistance.

In Southeast Asia, Typhoon Yagi, a rare Category 5 storm, affected 20 million people across several countries, followed by three typhoons that displaced 700 000 people in the Philippines. Drought and heatwaves in 2023–2024 have worsened flood risks and hindered farmers' recovery efforts. Proactive measures included relocating livestock in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and disaster preparedness in Viet Nam.

Seasonal forecast

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, below-average rainfall is expected from December to April, likely leading to dry or drought conditions. There's a high probability (over 70 percent) of agricultural drought, particularly in rainfed and irrigated areas across the Northeast, North and West regions, impacting water resources and crop yields.⁸

In Southeast Asia, the monsoon season (November–April) may be prolonged and intensified, which can benefit rice production but may also increase the risk of strong typhoons, as storms that enter the region tend to be more intense during La Niña.⁸

On the other hand, the North Pacific typically experiences below-average rainfall from June to April, raising concerns over water availability and drought.

Expected impact on agriculture and food security

From December to May, La Niña is expected to have varied impacts across Afghanistan, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste.

In South Asia, Afghanistan is likely to experience below-average rainfall starting in January, limiting snowpack accumulation and potentially leading to water shortages for irrigation, and increasing drought risks in early 2025. Pakistan may see decreased rainfall in northeastern regions.

In Southeast Asia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam are expected to see heavy rainfall, improving soil moisture and irrigation for crops. However, excessive rains increase the risk of flooding, soil erosion and crop losses. Flooding could also delay rice planting and harvesting and create conditions for pests and crop diseases, particularly in waterlogged fields. In the Philippines, above-average rainfall may disrupt planting and harvesting schedules, and the intensification of typhoons during this period could exacerbate agricultural losses, particularly in rice, maize and vegetable production. In Timor-Leste, while rainfall may benefit crop production, flooding threatens rice and maize planting, food stocks and fishing equipment, complicating recovery efforts from the previous season's poor harvests.

In Cambodia, La Niña is expected to bring above-average rainfall, which could benefit crop production by improving soil moisture and irrigation. However, the excessive rainfall also increases the risk of flooding, which can damage agricultural land, wash away crops and disrupt harvests. Like other countries in Southeast Asia, the heavy rains could lead to waterlogged fields, preventing cultivation and delaying planting schedules, particularly for rice (dry season), which is a staple crop. The excess moisture also creates favourable conditions for pests and crop diseases, which further threatens agricultural productivity.

In Timor-Leste, while rainfall may benefit crop production, flooding threatens rice and maize (main season) planting, food stocks and fishing equipment, hindering recovery efforts from the previous season's poor harvests.

In the Pacific, Papua New Guinea will experience heavy rains that support staple crops like sago and sweet potatoes. However, flooding near riverbanks could damage crops, erode soil and promote crop diseases. Subsistence farmers, who make up the majority of the population, may face food security challenges if farming plots are destroyed.

Planned activities



FAO requires
USD 17.5 million



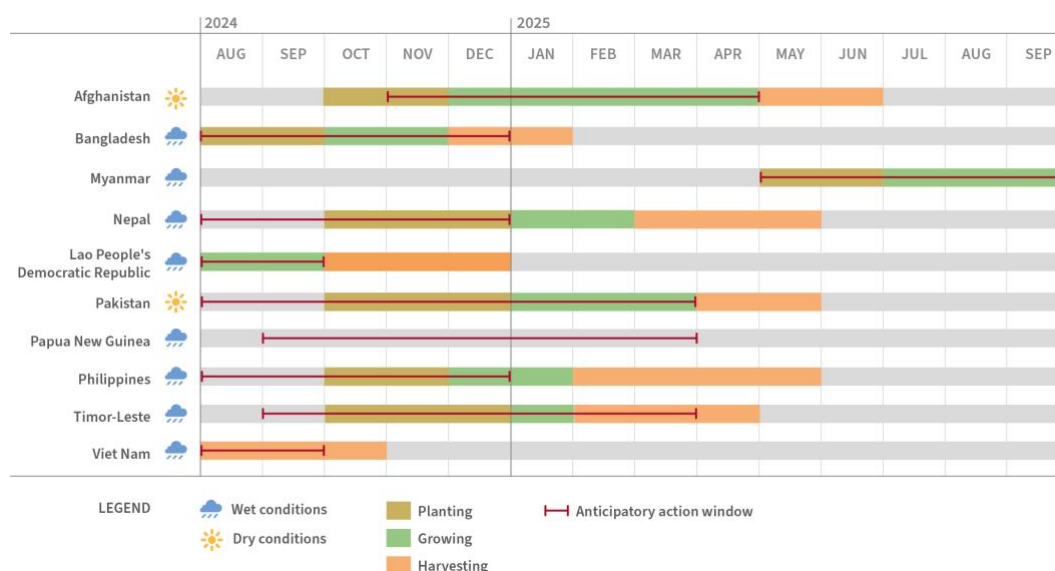
to assist
339 725 people

FAO urgently requires funding to expand and strengthen anticipatory action efforts in the prioritized countries. Additionally, it seeks support for rapid response interventions to reach disaster-affected families. Powerful cyclones and floods can swiftly devastate livelihoods and assets. The funds will be used to implement a range of activities tailored to each country's context, comprising both anticipatory action and rapid response measures.

Priority actions for floods/cyclones:

- Disseminate early warning messages accompanied by agricultural advisories, such as recommendations for early harvesting or relocating equipment. Ensure that the messages are gender-sensitive and socially inclusive in both their communication methods and the ways they are received.
- Distribute seed/feed storage silos or hermetic bags, as well as cash assistance, including multipurpose cash to ensure access to food and support transport and other basic needs.
- Evacuate livestock to safe locations, in coordination with government counterparts, providing feed and medicine in these focal areas; and protect fisheries assets, including through the distribution of boat-strengthening kits and watertight drums, to keep fishing gear safe.
- Work with women groups and collectives to harvest crops early through cash for work, and set up floating gardens.
- After cyclones, distribute cash for work to help rebuild markets, carry out animal restocking, and support boat repair and fishing gear replacement.

Figure 4. Asia and the Pacific priority countries seasonal calendar



Note: No specific cropping season is indicated for Papua New Guinea, as the planting of root crops (e.g. taro, cassava and kumara) is continuous and rotational. **Source:** FAO. 2025. *Internal document*. Rome.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Context

La Niña often leads to above-average rainfall in the northern part of South America, Central America and the Caribbean islands. This can result in flooding, tropical cyclones and landslides (particularly in mountainous regions). In 2023, El Niño conditions led to prolonged droughts and water shortages in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, the Central American Dry Corridor and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), alongside intense rainfall and flooding along the coasts of inland Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador and Peru.

As of November 2024, crops in the sowing and vegetation stages in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia and Peru are developing as usual, as rainfall in the last months has been average in most croplands. There are, however, exceptions in key producing departments such as San Martín in Peru, and Valle del Cauca and Tolima in Colombia, where accumulated rainfall deficits or delays to the start of the rains have been observed. The harvesting of primera cycle crops (maize and beans) in Central American countries is concluding. Harvesting prospects are favourable in the main producing areas of El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. In Guatemala, however, large areas in the central and eastern parts of the country show poor vegetation activity and are likely to have lower-than-average yields. The progress of the postrera cycle is showing mixed results, with large areas showing poor vegetation activity in western El Salvador and in eastern and central Guatemala, while average conditions are observable across other areas, including most croplands in Honduras and Nicaragua. On the other hand, in Cuba, Ecuador, Haiti and Peru, ongoing harvests have favourable prospects, with average to above-average vegetation conditions observed in most cropland areas.

Severe flooding in northern and southern Haiti has impacted over 18 700 families, leaving five dead, 13 injured and five missing. In Cap Haïtien, heavy rainfall since early December caused widespread flooding, affecting 12 500 families and prompting a state of environmental emergency to facilitate aid distribution. In the Sud department, floods affected 4 175 families, while in Grand'Anse, landslides and river overflows destroyed crops and homes, impacting over 2 300 families. Relief efforts are underway, including food, medical aid, shelter, hygiene kits and cash assistance. The United Nations and local authorities are coordinating response efforts and conducting assessments to address critical needs.⁹

During the rainy season and tropical cyclone season in Colombia, floods affected more than 383 285 people (76 657 families), most belonging to Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities in 36 municipalities in the departments of Choco and La Guajira. The loss of crops and the shortage of drinking water have triggered food insecurity and unsanitary conditions in both regions, and 74 educational centres in Choco and 31 in La Guajira have been affected.¹⁰ In November, the government declared a National Disaster Situation for 12 months to face the flood emergencies that have left more than 66 000 hectares of crops affected and thousands of animals dead. Although humanitarian aid is ongoing, the situation remains of concern.¹¹

Seasonal forecast

Recent climate forecasts anticipated wetter-than-average conditions until the end of November for the Central American countries, which could benefit the ongoing postrera season outcomes. In terms of rainfall, conditions in the next month are forecast to be wetter than average in the main producing areas of these three countries until end November, except in Santa Cruz (Plurinational State of Bolivia).

High tropical cyclone impact probabilities are forecast in Central America and the Caribbean.

Expected impact on agriculture and food security

The increased rainfall can be beneficial for agriculture in some areas, promoting good crop yields. However, it can also lead to severe flooding, waterlogged soils, crop diseases and difficulties in harvesting, which may affect agricultural productivity negatively. Tropical cyclones can have a severe impact on crop cultivation, animal mortality and fishing assets/equipment. Furthermore, La Niña can affect marine ecosystems and fisheries. It may lead to changes in ocean currents and fish distribution, impacting fishing activities and the livelihoods of coastal communities dependent on fisheries.

In Bolivia (Plurinational State of), El Niño-induced drought in 2023–2024 affected about 550 000 families, causing damage to more than 80 000 cultivated hectares, especially in western parts of the country. The country also experienced heavy rains and flooding in inland areas. La Niña is expected to bring drought in the Chaco and inter-Andean valley regions, affecting livestock production during the dry season due to reduced availability of water and fodder, and negatively impacting the production of summer crops.

Such effects would threaten the food security of the region's population, especially households engaged in family farming.

In Colombia, during La Niña 2021–2023, more than 2 million hectares of crops and pastures and more than 6 million heads of livestock were affected, with damages and losses amounting to about USD 2.15 billion in the agriculture sector. According to the government, the highest prevalence of food insecurity is found in departments that have been historically most affected by La Niña such as Córdoba, Sucre, Arauca, Cesar, Bolívar, La Guajira, Putumayo and Chocó. The expected impacts of La Niña-induced floods would exacerbate the negative impacts of El Niño-induced drought in 2023 and early 2024.

In Ecuador, abnormally dry conditions in the central and southern coastal areas may affect the harvest of maize, cocoa, rice, vegetables and the development stage of bananas. Additionally, the water scarcity may impact livestock and fishing activities. This may result in reduced household food reserves among vulnerable farming households, difficulties in accessing safe food and water, and the consequent increase in the number of food-insecure households.

In the Dry Corridor countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua), flooding and tropical cyclones may have an impact on crop production in the postrera season, increase animal disease and mortality, destroy fishing boats and equipment, and reduce the demand for agricultural labour. Such effects would compound the severe agricultural impacts experienced in 2023 due to El Niño-induced dry spells, leading to a deterioration of food security in the affected areas.

In Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, forecasts point to a high risk of flooding and cyclones over the coming months. These hazards are expected to cause waterlogging and damage to crops, fishing boats, equipment and livestock, as well as irrigation and drainage infrastructure, in addition to leading to an increase in pests and diseases. This is likely to result in higher prices and lower availability of and access to food for affected families in rural, urban and peri-urban areas. In Haiti, such impacts would occur while nearly 5 million people are already experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity, and in a context of displacement and humanitarian access difficulties due to high levels of insecurity.

In Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), heavy rainfall and floods are expected to affect crop production due to waterlogging of soils and increased incidence of pests, impacting particularly maize, bean, banana and vegetable production during the first cropping cycle. These impacts would compound the negative effects of El Niño-induced drought in 2023.

Planned activities



FAO requires
USD 42.6 million



to assist
885 105 people

FAO, together with partners, has already started the planning of anticipatory and response actions to mitigate the expected impact of potential floods in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Additional resources are urgently needed to expand the scale and coverage of the interventions across all high-risk countries, and to ensure that support can be provided to vulnerable households across all prioritized countries. The sequencing and combination of activities would depend on each country's context and agricultural calendars.

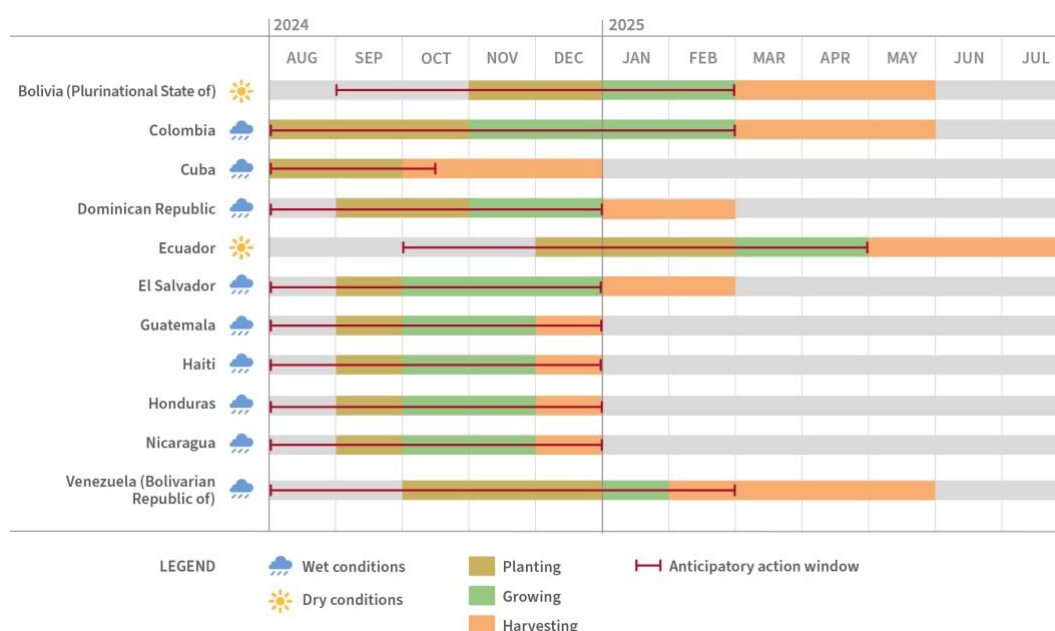
Priority actions for floods:

- Disseminate agrometeorological bulletins and early warning messages at the community and local levels, and conduct workshops and meetings with communities and authorities to coordinate and articulate government and community efforts.
- Distribute cash, inputs, seeds, tools and hermetic containers for safe storage of grain seeds and agricultural inputs, and staple food production kits.
- Support livestock evacuation from areas exposed to flood risk, supply fodder to evacuation centres, and provide vaccines and supplements for livestock.
- Provide supply centres with essential equipment and supplies to meet the basic needs of families and maintain food production.
- Repair and restore meteorological and river level monitoring stations; and reinforce drainage and irrigation systems for flood-prone crops, as well as productive infrastructure for the protection of domestic animals.
- Clean up tributaries and areas of streams accessible to communities to prevent avalanches and water build-up.

Priority actions for drought in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Ecuador:

- Deliver water storage containers, freezers for preserving fish products, seeds, silos, as well as complementary feed for livestock.
- Provide short-cycle crop varieties and other inputs to reduce the risks of drought, combined with institutional and productive capacity building of technicians and producers.
- Promote rational use and management of water for livestock and agricultural production.

Figure 5. Latin America and the Caribbean priority countries seasonal calendar



Source: FAO. 2025. *Internal document*. Rome.

West Africa and the Sahel

Context

The correlation between ENSO and the climate across West Africa and the Sahel appears weaker than in other regions, due to the strong influence of nearby Atlantic and Mediterranean climatic phenomena, which can play a significant role in shaping the ENSO outcomes in these areas. Historical analysis indicates that La Niña often brings above-average rainfall to parts of West Africa and the Sahel between July and September, coinciding with the main agricultural season of most countries in the region. This can be particularly beneficial for agriculture, promoting good crop yields and replenishing groundwater levels. However, excessive rainfall can also lead to flooding. In recent years, record rainfall has severely impacted West African countries, affecting millions across West and Central Africa. Floods have displaced thousands, destroyed food stocks and cultivated land, and killed livestock. Agricultural losses have heightened food insecurity and malnutrition risks for vulnerable populations. The forecast La Niña event could put further strain on the food security situation in a region already characterized by high levels of instability and conflict, which persist in Central Sahel, stretching from Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, to northern Nigeria, causing massive displacement and disruption of agricultural livelihoods and markets.

The main season is coming to an end, and a good regional production outlook is expected, despite crop losses caused by floods and conflict impeding agricultural activities. According to the Prevention and Management of Food Crises mechanism, in September 2024, cereal production forecasts were between 68.5 million tonnes (9 percent above the five-year average) and 80 million tonnes (12 percent above the five-year average), excluding production in Liberia and Senegal.¹² Production shortfalls are

expected in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria. Rainfall in the last month has been average to above average across the southern bimodal areas where second-season maize is in the growing stage and, generally, crop conditions are good; however, poor biomass conditions for second-season maize are observed in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana. Pastoral conditions are generally good across the region and good livestock production is expected; however, pasture development is below average in southern Chad, southern Côte d'Ivoire, southern Ghana, the middle belt of Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

According to the OCHA, since June 2024, torrential rains and severe flooding have affected 6.9 million people in West and Central Africa.¹³ So far, Chad is the worst-hit, with 1.9 million people affected, followed by the Niger, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Moreover, 824 000 hectares of land have been rendered unsuitable for agricultural and livestock production due to flooding, and 122 000 head of cattle were swept away by the floods. In countries grappling with multidimensional crises, mainly linked to conflict, economic shocks and climate extremes, the impact of the floods is threatening the region's entire food system and worsening already high levels of acute food insecurity.¹⁴

Expected impact on agriculture and food security

In 2024, the subregion experienced significant challenges during the rainy season, with severe flooding impacting countries like the Niger and Nigeria. The predominance of wet conditions led to widespread hazards, including submerged cultivable lands, damaged infrastructure and substantial agricultural losses in crops and fodder. Livestock and human lives were endangered, with increased cases of waterborne diseases, such as cholera and malaria. Movement restrictions for people and animals further exacerbated the situation, alongside soil erosion, landslides, water pollution and crop pest infestations.¹³ Despite these challenges, localized water abundance provided opportunities for agricultural recovery through home gardening, receding crops and dry season cultivation.

The 2024/25 agricultural season in West Africa and the Sahel has been marked by contrasting rainfall patterns. Rainfall ranged from below-average to average in countries along the Gulf of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and parts of Burkina Faso, Chad and southern Mauritania, while it was normal to above-average in other regions. Heavy rains caused significant flooding, resulting in loss of lives, livestock, crops and infrastructure across the Sahel. River basins, including the Niger and Senegal, recorded water levels surpassing red alert thresholds, causing further flooding and filling key reservoirs.

Agriculturally, the rainy season began late in several areas, disrupting planting. By the end of August, cereal crops varied in growth stages, with harvest underway in southern Sahel. Rainy season continuity into October could improve yields, particularly in central and eastern Sahel, however risks like dry spells, floods and pests should be monitored closely. Expected cereal yields are generally below or near the five-year average, with better outcomes projected in central and eastern Sahel countries, if rains persist.

The region's phytosanitary situation remains stable overall, though fall armyworm, defoliator caterpillars and granivorous birds have been reported. Increased rainfall has

led to outbreaks of fungal and bacterial crop diseases. Locust breeding conditions have improved due to exceptional rains in Sahelian front-line areas, though current populations are low, with small-scale breeding expected in the coming months.

Planned activities



FAO requires
USD 70 million



to assist
2 million people

Resources are urgently needed to expand the scale and coverage of interventions, and to ensure that support can be provided to vulnerable households across all prioritized countries. The sequencing and combination of activities would depend on each country's context and agricultural calendars.

Priority actions for floods:

- Strengthen early warning systems at community and municipal levels, and provide training and awareness raising activities on anticipatory action and disaster risk reduction.
- Provide emergency multipurpose cash transfer assistance to vulnerable households, as well as cash for work.
- Distribute water pumps, storage materials, tools, high yielding seeds, as well as livestock fodder and vaccines.
- Conduct post-flood assessments and strengthen coastal shores against wind and water pressure through riverbank tree planting.

Coordination

The activities foreseen in the Plan cannot be implemented in isolation. FAO will continue to coordinate closely with affected communities and their national and local governments, including disaster risk management authorities and ministries of agriculture, as well as national meteorological services and civil protection. Country-led efforts are reinforced by strong collaboration with regional organizations such as IGAD, the Southern African Development Community, the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America.

Coordination on anticipatory action is pursued through global platforms, such as the Anticipatory Action Task Force, the Anticipation Hub and Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership, as well as through regional and national technical working groups for anticipatory action. Where the cluster system is active, coordination with humanitarian actors will be ensured both within the Food Security Cluster and across clusters. Joint implementation with partners will be favoured wherever possible, including through Central Emergency Response Fund inter-agency anticipatory action frameworks. Close coordination and collaboration with the World Food Programme will be ensured wherever both agencies are activating anticipatory action protocols.

Notes

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FAO's anticipatory action approach uses risk analysis and forecasts to trigger interventions before a crisis escalates into a humanitarian emergency.

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