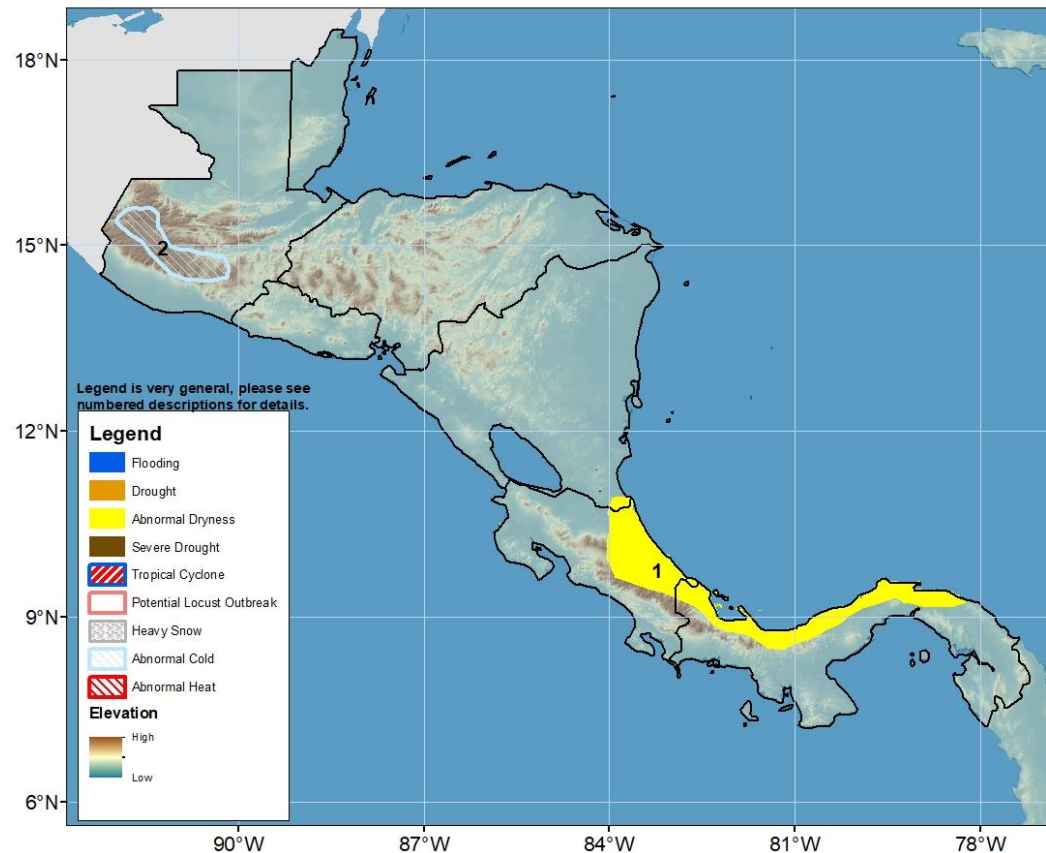


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 26 January – 1 February 2023

Abnormal cold and dryness to continue in parts of Guatemala and the southern Caribbean during the next week



1. Suppressed rainfall since December of the past year and the corresponding low Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) values in eastern Costa Rica and northern Panama have led to abnormal dryness in the region.
2. Below-freezing temperatures are expected to persist over the higher elevations in western Guatemala as frontal systems are forecast to move across northern Central America during the next week. The low temperatures could negatively affect local people or lead to frost during nighttime or early morning.

Note: The Hazards outlook map is based on current weather/climate information, short and medium-range weather forecasts (up to 1 week), sub-seasonal forecasts up to 4 weeks, and assesses the potential impact of extreme events on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed and predicted to continue during the outlook period. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at the spatial scale of the map. This product takes into account long-range seasonal climate forecasts but does not reflect current or projected food security conditions. FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity whose purpose is to provide objective information about food security conditions. Its views are not necessarily reflective of those of USAID or the U.S. Government. The FEWS NET weather hazards outlook process and products include participation by FEWS NET field and home offices, NOAA-CPC, USGS, USDA, NASA, and a number of other national and regional organizations in the countries concerned.

Questions or comments about the hazards outlooks may be directed to Dr. Wassila Thiaw, Head, International Desks/NOAA, wassila.thiaw@noaa.gov. Questions about the USAID FEWS NET activity may be directed to Dr. James Verdin, Program Manager, FEWS NET/USAID, jverdin@usaid.gov

Near-average to below-average rain expected over Central America during the next week

During mid-January, dry conditions with suppressed rainfall prevailed over Central America. This dry pattern contributed to maintain 30-day negative rainfall anomalies along the Atlantic Littorals of the region, including Costa Rica and Panama, where moisture deficits ranged between 25-100 mm. Since December of the past year, the accumulated rain has remained below-average, with totals accounting for less than 50 percent of the average over most areas of Central America, indicating a somewhat poor performance to the *Apante*, December-April, growing season. Also, the typical lack of moisture during this time of the year, combined with strong winds, has led to an environment that is favorable to forest fires over many local areas as depicted by remote sensing. For vegetation conditions, the latest analysis has indicated that near-average to favorable conditions dominated over most areas of Central America.

During the next week, rainfall forecasts suggested that light to locally moderate rain is expected over the Atlantic-facing region of Central America. While rainfall accumulation could total slightly above-average in northern Guatemala, Belize, and the southern Caribbean, weekly amounts could be below-average in Honduras and Nicaragua. Meanwhile, approaching fronts may bring cold air mass, with accompanying near-freezing to below-freezing nighttime or early morning temperatures, which could potentially impact the livelihoods of residents over the higher terrain in western Guatemala.

