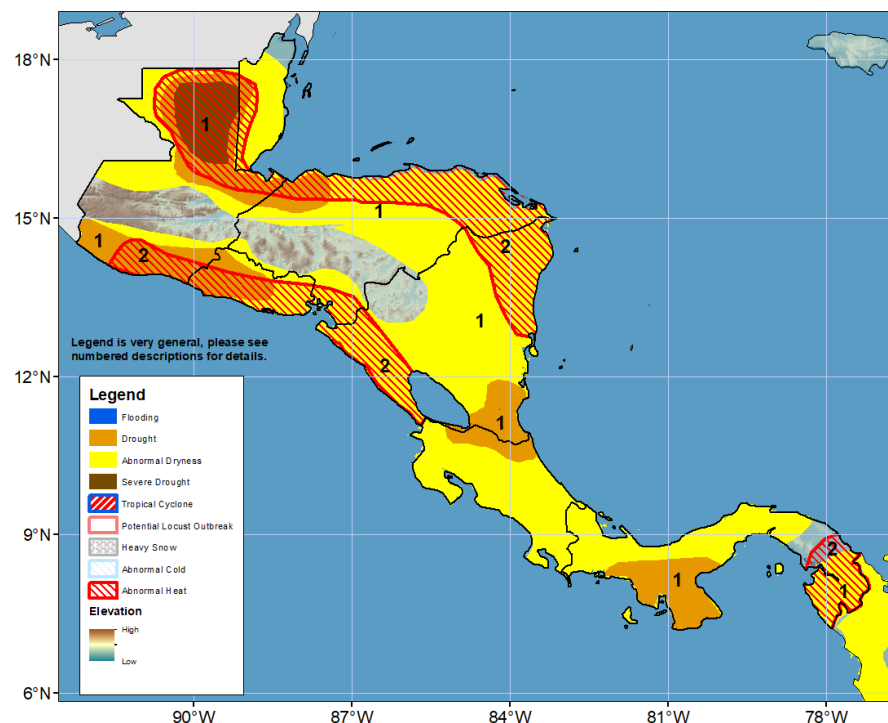


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 17 – 23 August 2023

Rainfall deficits continue in most parts of Central America, while abnormally warmer temperatures are expected in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.



- 1) Inconsistent and insufficient rainfall since the beginning of the “Primera” season, starting in April, has led to abnormal dryness across the region, particularly in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and central Panama. Moreover, a severe drought polygon is placed in northern Guatemala due to the continuing and growing rainfall deficits, significant vegetation stress, dry soil conditions, and ground observations. The irregular rains since the start of the Primera season have mainly affected the crops of subsistence farmers in the departments of Zacapa, Chiquimula, Jalapa, Jutiapa, and El Progreso. Due to the lack of continuity of rains, these farmers had to perform at least one or up to three replanting, and they might experience yield reductions of 25% to 50% of average yields. In addition, the high temperatures and the lack of rain have exacerbated moisture availability in the soil.
- 2) Weekly mean maximum temperatures are forecast to be 30-40°C in some areas of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and southern Panama. In these regions, maximum temperatures will likely be warmer than average (0.5-4°C). Therefore, an abnormal heat hazard has been placed in these countries.

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.

Heavy rains are likely to persist in Costa Rica and Panama.

During the last week, heavy rains (75-150 mm) were observed in a local area in eastern Guatemala, southern Belize, southern Nicaragua, and Costa Rica; meanwhile, light to moderate rain was registered in most of the region (10-50 mm). These rainfall patterns contributed to keeping dryer-than-normal conditions across Central America, except for an area on the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica that recorded slightly favorable rainfall conditions. The 30-day rainfall period shows that northern Guatemala, northern Honduras, and most of the Central America coastal areas facing the Ocean Pacific have received between 1 to 25 percent of average rainfall. Moreover, in the 90-day seasonal period, the northern and southern of Guatemala, El Salvador, southeastern Nicaragua, some areas in Costa Rica, and central and southern Panama register the largest rainfall deficits. Further, the last analysis for vegetation's health indicates that dryer-than-average conditions dominate central and northern portions of Central America. Meanwhile, warmer than average temperatures (2-3 °C above the mean) were observed in central Panama.

During the next week, forecasts suggest heavy downpours (values larger than 100mm) in eastern Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and most parts of Panama, while moderate to heavy rain (25-100mm) in most parts of Central America. Despite the larger rainfall amounts expected, the forecast suggests normal to slightly below average for the most part of Central America, except for eastern Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama where above—average conditions are expected. Furthermore, the maximum temperature anomalies forecast suggests hotter than average temperatures during next week over parts of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

