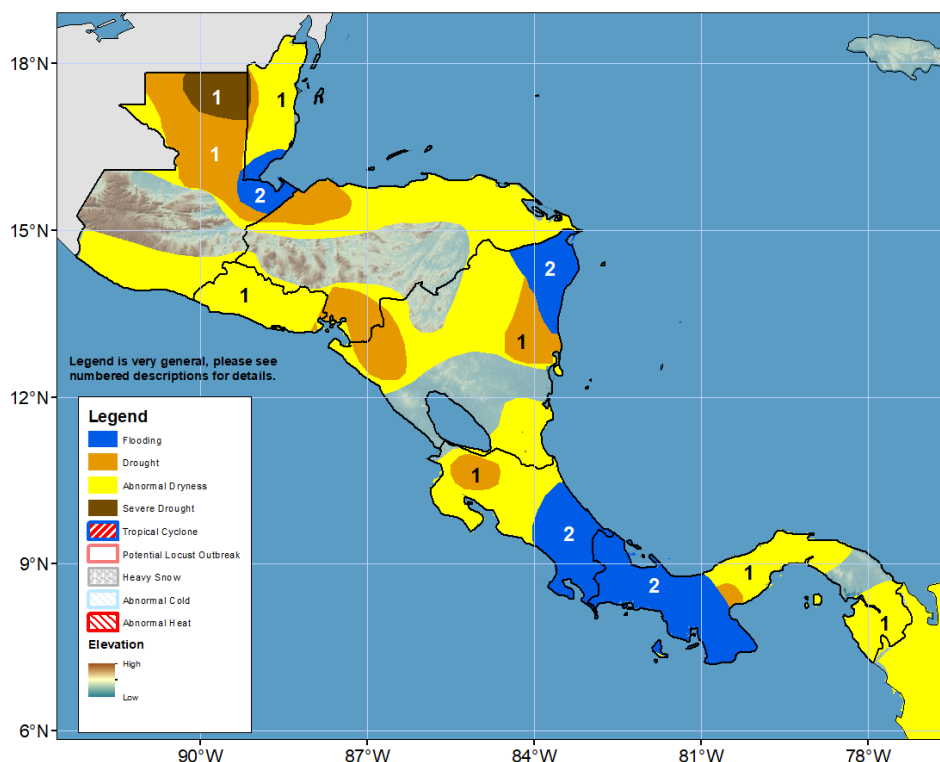


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 16 – 22 November 2023

Forecast suggests heavy rainfall across different areas in Central America.



- 1) Even though reasonable amounts of rainfall during the last weeks have helped to improve soil moisture conditions in some areas in northern Central America, rainfall deficits for the season are still observed. The inconsistent and insufficient rainfall since the beginning of April has led to abnormal dryness and patches of drought across Central America. For this reason, dry polygons are kept in most parts of the region. Moreover, a severe drought polygon is maintained in northern Guatemala due to the continuing rainfall deficits, significant vegetation stress and deficits in soil moisture conditions. The irregular rains since the start of the *Primera* season have mainly affected the crops of subsistence farmers, who might experience yield reductions of 25% to 50% of average. In addition, high temperatures and a lack of rain continuing affecting the agriculture sector. Sowing delays are still reported in Guatemala. The rainfall deficits are also affecting the shipping industry in Panama Canal, where the water level of the Gatun Lake is below average.
- 2) Tropical disturbances in the western Caribbean Sea brought heavy rainfall across Central America, particularly over the Gulf of Honduras. Currently, there is a chance larger than 60% that a low-pressure system would form in the southwestern Caribbean Sea. This tropical disturbance has the potential to produce heavy rains over portions of the Caribbean coast of Central America and might bring floods

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.

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The forecast suggests an increase in the risk of flooding across many areas in Central America.

Last week, tropical weather disturbances brought moderate to heavy rainfall across the countries of Central America. Heavy rains reached up to 300 mm in the Gulf of Honduras and values up to 200 mm across Belize. Further, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, and most of Nicaragua Rica observed positive rainfall anomalies with values between 25 mm and 200 mm. According to reports, the recent increase in rainfall has contributed to elevated river levels and flooding over many areas in Central America, including the Huehuetenango, Alta Verapaz, and Baja Verapaz Departments in Guatemala. Over the past 30 days, central Guatemala, most parts of Honduras, Belize, and western Nicaragua report above-average conditions, while the most prominent below-average rainfall conditions are recorded in northern and southern Guatemala and northeastern Nicaragua. In addition, over the past 90 days, north Guatemala, eastern Belize, southeastern and southwestern Honduras, northern Nicaragua, most of Costa Rica, and Panama still registered the region's lowest (< 80% of the average) rainfall accumulation. The prolonged insufficient rainfall has already led to moderate to large rainfall deficits and degraded vegetation in some regions, leading to abnormal dryness and droughts in those areas, particularly in northern Guatemala.

During the next week, the GEFS forecast suggests that moderate to heavy rainfall (values from 50 mm to 200 mm) might occur across Central America. Mainly, there is a high risk of flooding and landslides in areas surrounding the Gulf of Fonseca and the Caribbean coastal areas of northeastern Nicaragua. Also, heavy rains are expected to lead to flash floods in southern Costa Rica and western Panama, where anomalies are expected to be larger than 50 mm.

