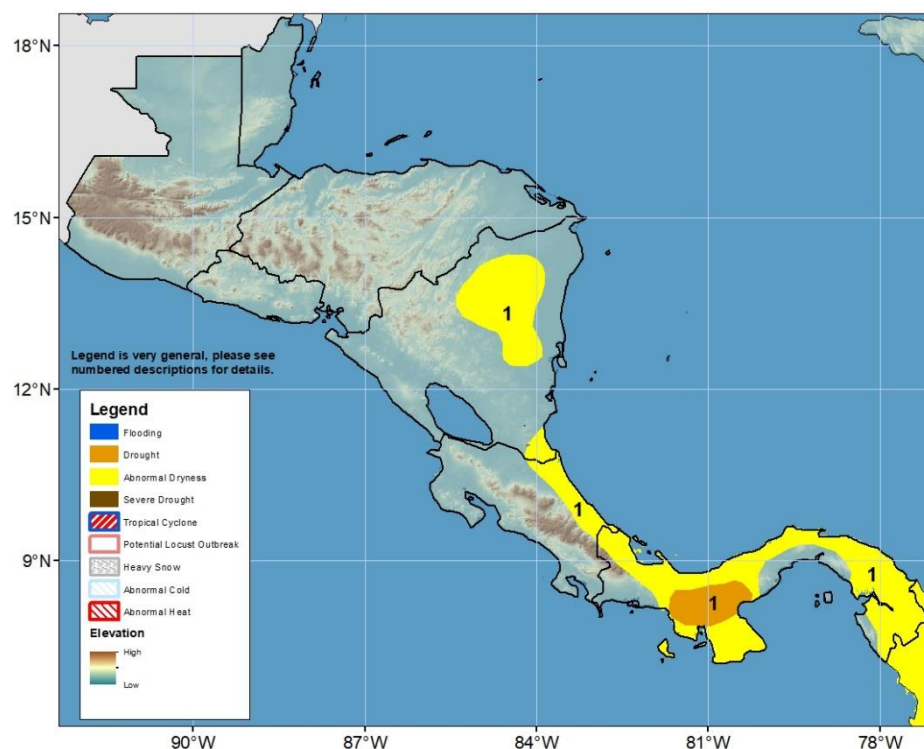


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET

25 January – 31 January 2024

Little to no rainfall observed over most places in Central America during the past week



- 1) In the last week, little rainfall occurred across Central America. That weather pattern, coupled with abnormally low rainfall in both the past 90 days and the past 30 days have resulted in persistent dryness across southern Central America. The rainfall deficits and warmer-than-average conditions continue to affect the shipping industry in the Panama Canal due to below-average water levels in the Gatun Lake.

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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Near-average rainfall forecast to continue over many areas in Central America

During the past week, dry conditions dominated over Central America. However, light to locally moderate rainfall was observed along the Atlantic coasts in the sub-region, including the Gulf of Honduras, northeastern Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Also, moderate rainfall was received in localized areas in northern Guatemala and central Costa Rica. Over the past 30 days, rainfall was below-average in northern Guatemala, north-central and southern Belize, northeastern Nicaragua, and the Caribbean Littorals in Costa Rica and Panama. Abnormal dryness has been posted in northeastern Nicaragua and the Caribbean coasts in Costa Rica and Panama, where moisture deficits ranged 25-100 mm. Conversely, rainfall was above-average along the northern coasts in Honduras, southern Honduras, southern Nicaragua, the Pacific-facing region in Costa Rica, and parts of western Panama. Over the past 90 days, total rainfall was between 150-400% of the average in northern Central America, including eastern Guatemala, Belize, much of Honduras, southwestern Nicaragua, and northwestern Costa Rica, whereas cumulative rainfall was below 80% of the average in south-central Guatemala, north-central Nicaragua, eastern Costa Rica, and Panama. In Panama, poor rains and above-average temperatures, which have led to below-average water levels have impacted ships crossing along the Panama Canal, according to reports.

For next week, light to moderate (< 50 mm) rainfall is forecast in northern Guatemala and along the Atlantic Tier of Central America, which should, generally, help reduce 30-day rainfall deficits and partially relieve dryness over the dry areas in Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Farther south, little to light (< 25 mm) rainfall and below-average precipitation is, however, expected in Panama, potentially worsening ongoing drier conditions in the region. Meanwhile, although above-average minimum temperatures are expected across Central America, near-freezing or below-freezing temperatures, which could lead to frost and hypothermia are still possible over the higher terrains in western Guatemala.

