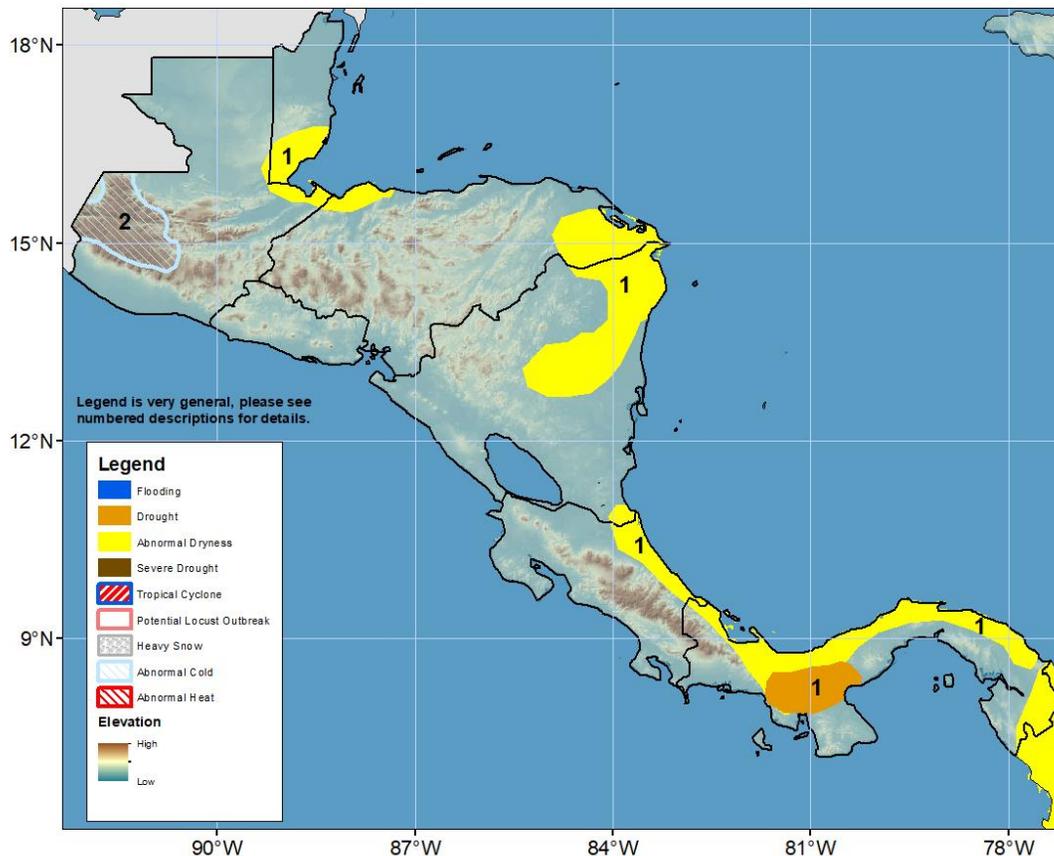


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 22 – 28 February 2024

Near-freezing temperatures and dry conditions will continue in portions of Central America.



- 1) In the past seven days, light to locally moderate rainfall was observed in western and northern Guatemala, central Costa Rica, and northern Panama. However, the lack of rainfall in the past 30 and 90 days has resulted in prolonged dryness in southern Belize, north of and south Honduras, central/northeastern Nicaragua, and the Caribbean tiers of Costa Rica and Panama. The rainfall deficits and above-average temperatures continue to affect the shipping industry in the Panama Canal.
- 2) The forecast suggests that near-freezing to below-freezing temperatures might happen in western areas in Guatemala, including Huehuetenango, San Marcos, Quetzaltenango, Totonicapán, Sololá, Quiché, Chimaltenango, and surrounding areas. We note that there is a large thermal amplitude during the day, meaning that cold temperatures are taking place during nighttime, while above-average mean temperatures are registered during the day.

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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Next week light to moderate rainfall are expected in most Central America.

Last week, Central America observed close-to-average conditions. Few areas received light to locally moderate rainfall, including western and northern Guatemala, central Costa Rica, and northern Panama. In these areas, rainfall values ranged from 05 mm to 100 mm. Meanwhile, rainfall over the past 30 days maintained below-average conditions in northern Guatemala, southern Belize, eastern Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, southern Cota Rica, and northern Panama, except in northern Belize and central Costa Rica, where slightly positive conditions were registered. Meanwhile, over the past 90 days, rainfall deficits between 100 mm and 500 mm have been observed in southern Guatemala, southeastern Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, eastern Cosa Rica, and most of Panama. The latest Normalized Difference Vegetation Index and Vegetation Health Index analysis showed near-average vegetation conditions throughout Central America; however, deteriorated vegetation conditions were observed in central and northern Guatemala, northeastern Honduras, and eastern coastal areas in Panama due to poor rainfall during the past several months. Furthermore, near-freezing temperatures were registered in the higher terrains of western and central highlands in Guatemala.

For next week, the GEFS forecast suggests rainfall values from 02 mm to 75 mm in eastern Belize, the Gulf of Fonseca, eastern coastal regions of Honduras and Nicaragua, most of Costa Rica, and Panama. Regarding anomalies, drier-than-average conditions will continue for the coming week in western and central Guatemala, the Gulf of Honduras, eastern Belize, the Atlantic Tiers of Honduras and Nicaragua, and western and southern Panama, in contrast, positive rainfall anomalies are expected in central Costa Rica. Meanwhile, near-freezing to below-freezing temperatures are forecasted to continue in the highly elevated regions of western Guatemala. These cold temperatures during nighttime might affect crop development and increase the risk of hypothermia in vulnerable groups of residents who live there. In contrast, high temperatures and winds in the region might continue to favor wildfires in northern and southern Central America; however, agricultural burning activities might also trigger some of the wildfires Guatemala.

