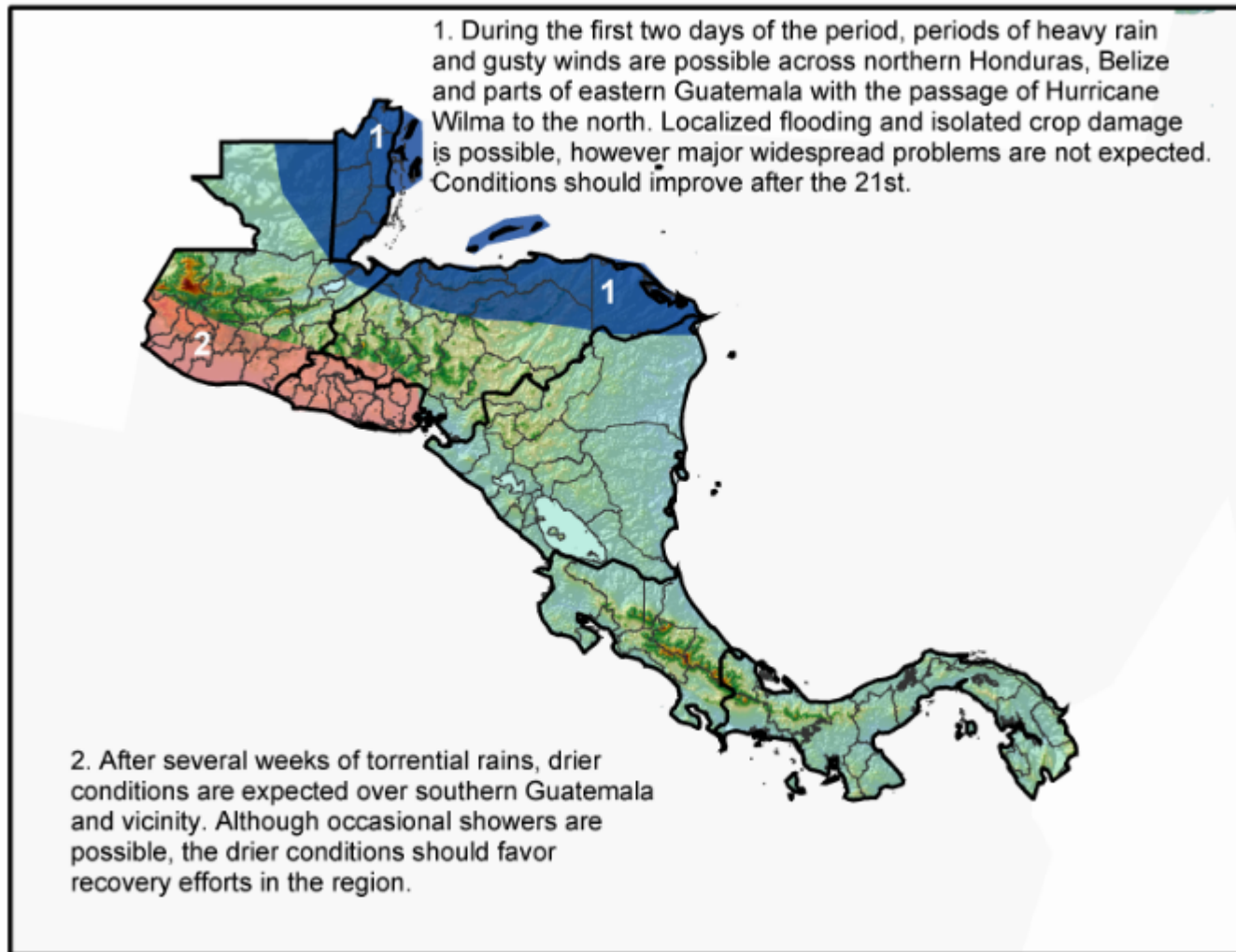


The MFEWS

Central America Weather Hazards Assessment

for

October 20 - 26, 2005



1) Major Hurricane Wilma was located north of the Honduran Coast at the time of writing, and was a powerful category 5 storm with maximum winds of 175 M.P.H. As the system moves off to the northwest, it will pass close enough to Central America for its outer rain bands to lash northern Honduras, parts of Belize and possibly far eastern parts of central and northern Guatemala on Thursday into early on Friday (October 20 and 21). These rain bands will produce occasional squalls, which will be accompanied by periods of heavy rain and gusty winds. Rainfall amounts across northern Honduras, Belize and adjacent parts of eastern Guatemala are expected to range between 50 and 100 mm. However, greater than 200 mm of rainfall is possible in a few locations. These rains may trigger some localized flooding, however widespread flooding problems are not expected. There is also the potential for an isolated landslide or two in the mountains of northern Honduras. Although winds will occasionally be strong and gusty, they should remain below tropical storm force. The exception being along the immediate coast, where wind gusts of 40 to 50 M.P.H. are possible. Therefore, wind damage should be minimal. Locally heavy rains and gusty winds may result in some isolated crop damage. Again, any crop damage should be highly localized. The system will also cause large and battering waves along the coast. By late Friday, the system should be far enough away from Central America to allow its influence on the weather to diminish and conditions to improve.

2) Several hundred millimeters of rain drenched portions of northwestern Central America during the last week of September and the first 10 days of October. Torrential rains caused deadly flooding, landslides, widespread damage and crop losses in El Salvador, southern Guatemala, southern Mexico and parts of Honduras. The heavy rains have subsided, and drier weather has developed over the region. During the period, the drier weather is expected to continue. Although occasional showers and thunderstorms are possible, the overall drier weather conditions should favor relief and recovery efforts in and around the area.

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