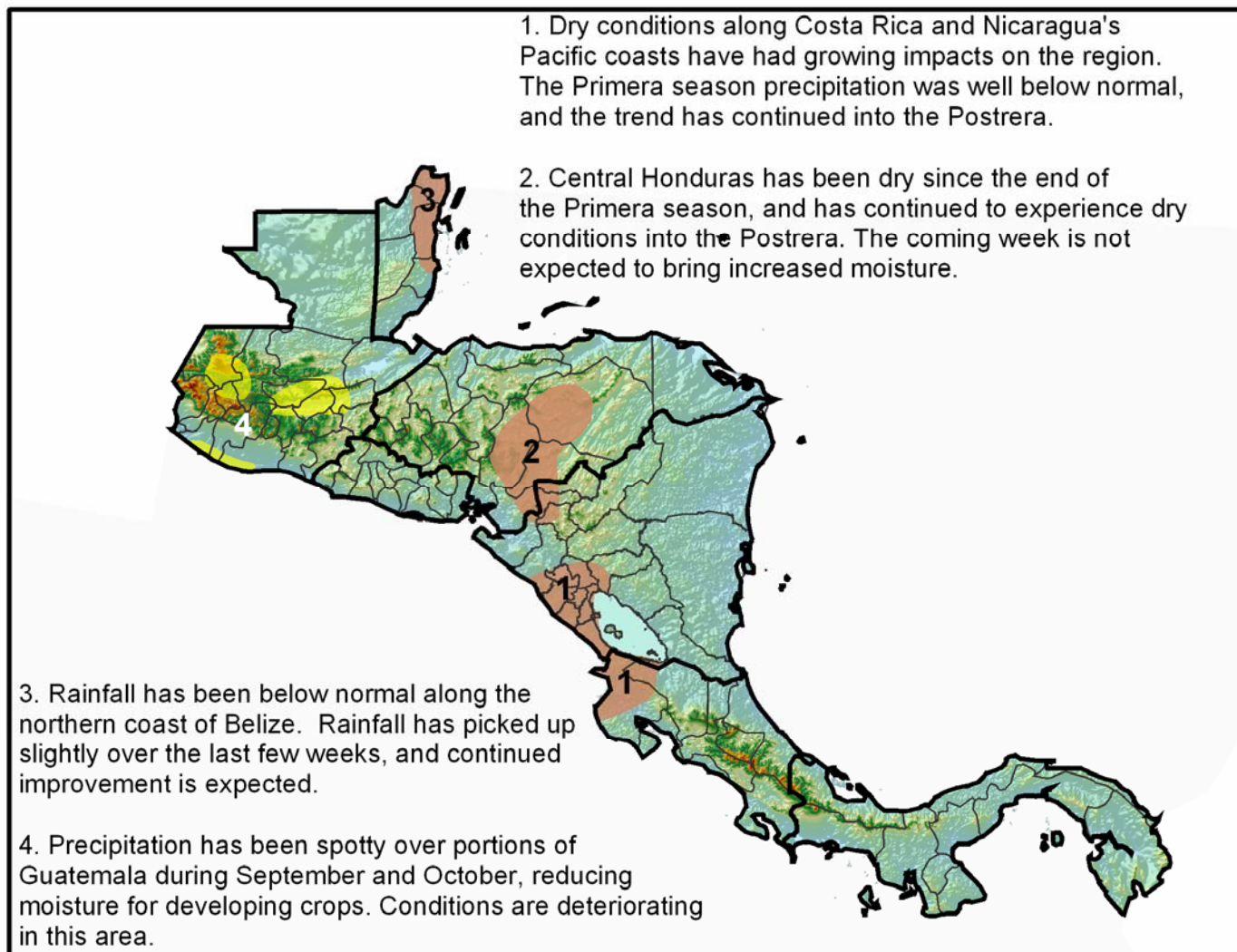


## The MFEWS

# Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

For

October 19 – 25, 2006



## ***Hazards Assessment Text Explanation:***

- 1) Two consecutive poor seasons in the narrow stretch of land between Lake Nicaragua and the Pacific Ocean have begun to have an impact. Despite the fact that the majority of crops grown in the region are drought resistant, conditions are starting to deteriorate. In Costa Rica 25 percent of normal rainfall has been reported by some stations on the ground, and in Nicaragua only slightly better conditions are reported by satellite rainfall estimates. The impacts during the Primera season were minimal, however a significant moisture deficit accrued in the area.
- 2) Seasonal rains have been light across portions of central Honduras since July, resulting in areas of dryness. The dry spell has resulted in Primera crop stress, and some losses in areas where the crop was in moisture sensitive stages of development. The area, however is more reliant on the Postrera season. The current lack of rainfall is unfavorable for crop development and significant rainfall will be needed soon to ensure crop establishment. Without significant changes in rainfall soon, crop damage may become irreversible. The departments of Olancho, Francisco Morazan and El Paraiso have experienced the worst conditions.
- 3) Rainfall during August and September was lighter than normal across northeastern portions of Belize. This has reduced moisture for crop filling and maturity. As a result, yield and crop quality losses are possible in this area. Occasional showers are possible across the region during the period. However, these rains will likely come to late to have a significant impact on crop quality. Despite this, conditions are improving in the area, possibly reviving crops with shorter growing seasons.
- 4) Observations from Guatemala indicate that September rains have been lighter than normal across portions of central Guatemala and the southern coast, with totals that are one half to three quarters of normal. This trend has continued into early October. The dry spell has raised concerns over Postrera beans, sesame and maize. Maize from the first season has not been harvested yet in the altiplano in the northwest, and could be at risk since at higher altitudes the crops take longer to mature.

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