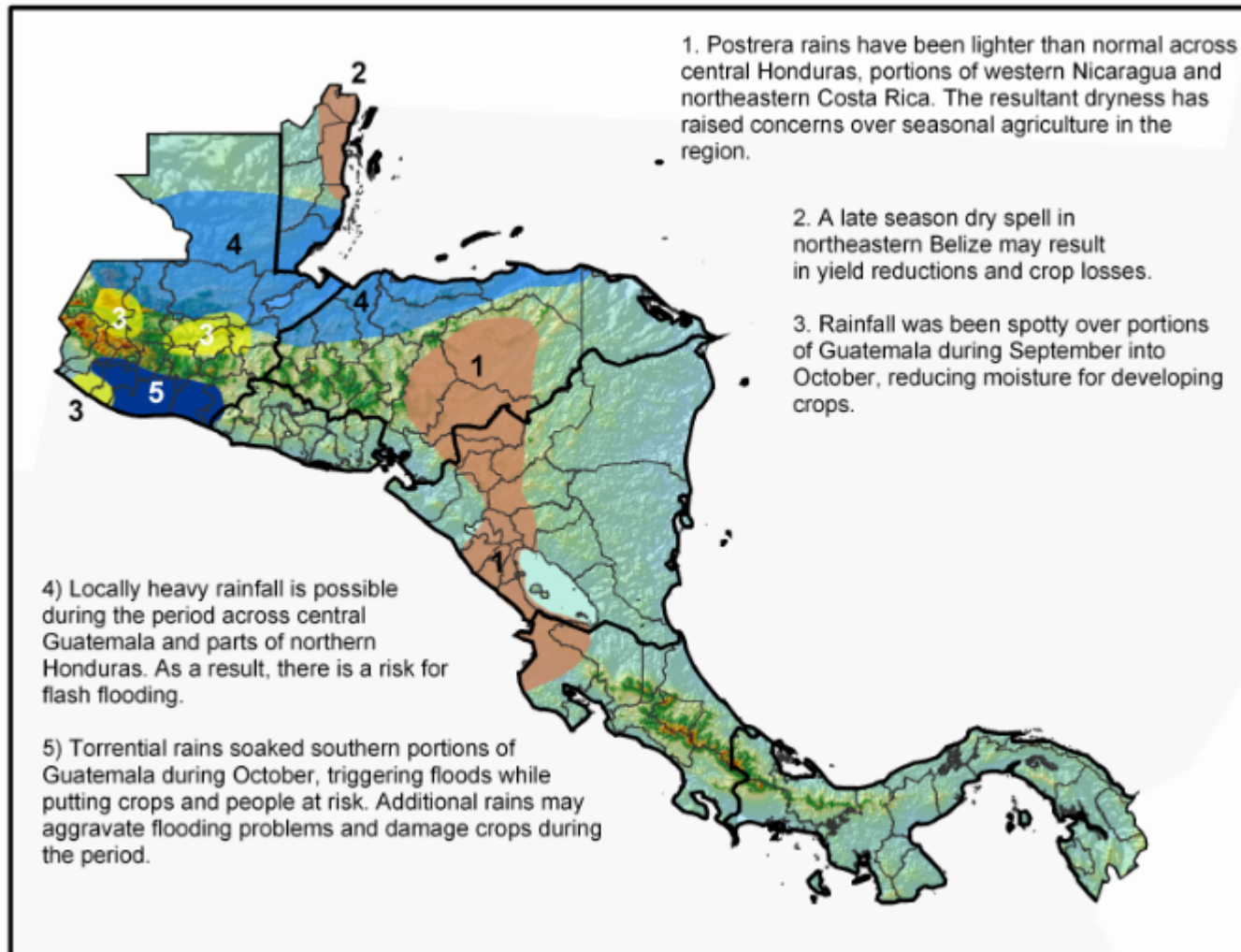


The MFEWS

Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

November 2 - 8, 2006



- 1)** Rainfall during the latter half of the Primera season dropped off across portions of central Honduras, with dry conditions observed across parts of southwestern Nicaragua. Postrera rains have been much lighter than normal across these areas as well, with dryness extending into northwestern Costa Rica. Dry conditions have been observed spreading into northwestern Nicaragua as well. The current lack of rainfall has raised concerns over the quality of Postrera Crops. The worst conditions have been reported in Honduras, with the departments of Olancho, Francisco Morazan and El Paraiso most severely affected. Showers are expected during the period; however the benefits to agriculture are expected to be minimal at this time.
- 2)** Rainfall during August and September was lighter than normal across northeastern portions of Belize. This has reduced moisture for crop filling and may result, yield and crop quality losses. Showers are expected during the period, which will reduce moisture deficits. However, benefits to agriculture will be limited.
- 3)** Observations from Guatemala indicate that September rains have been lighter than normal across portions of central Guatemala, with totals that are one half to three quarters of normal. This trend has continued into 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. Thus, they only have one harvest a year. In southern Guatemala, field reports indicate that a lack of rainfall during August and September affected postrera crops in Retalhulea. Recent showers have increased moisture across much of central Guatemala; however precipitation was light over the dry pockets. There is another chance for significant rainfall during the period. Localized flooding is possible across Guatemala as a result.
- 4)** Periods of heavy rain are expected across central Guatemala, southern Belize and northern portions of Honduras. As a result, there is a potential for flooding and landslides in these areas during the period. The best chances for heavy rainfall will be during the early part of the period. At this time, widespread flooding is not anticipated.
- 5)** Torrential rains pelted southern Guatemala October 18 – 20. Additional rains fell thereafter. These rains triggered significant floods. In Escuintla, areas in and around Puerto San Jose and Nueva Concepcion were underwater for days. Agricultural production has been affected in these areas as a result. Yield for maize and cash crops is expected to be reduced. Significant flooding has been reported in Santa Rosa and Jutiapa as well. The extent of the impact to agriculture is not known at this point, however these areas are important postrera maize and black bean production areas. Periodic rains are expected, however flooding and excessive rainfall are not expected.