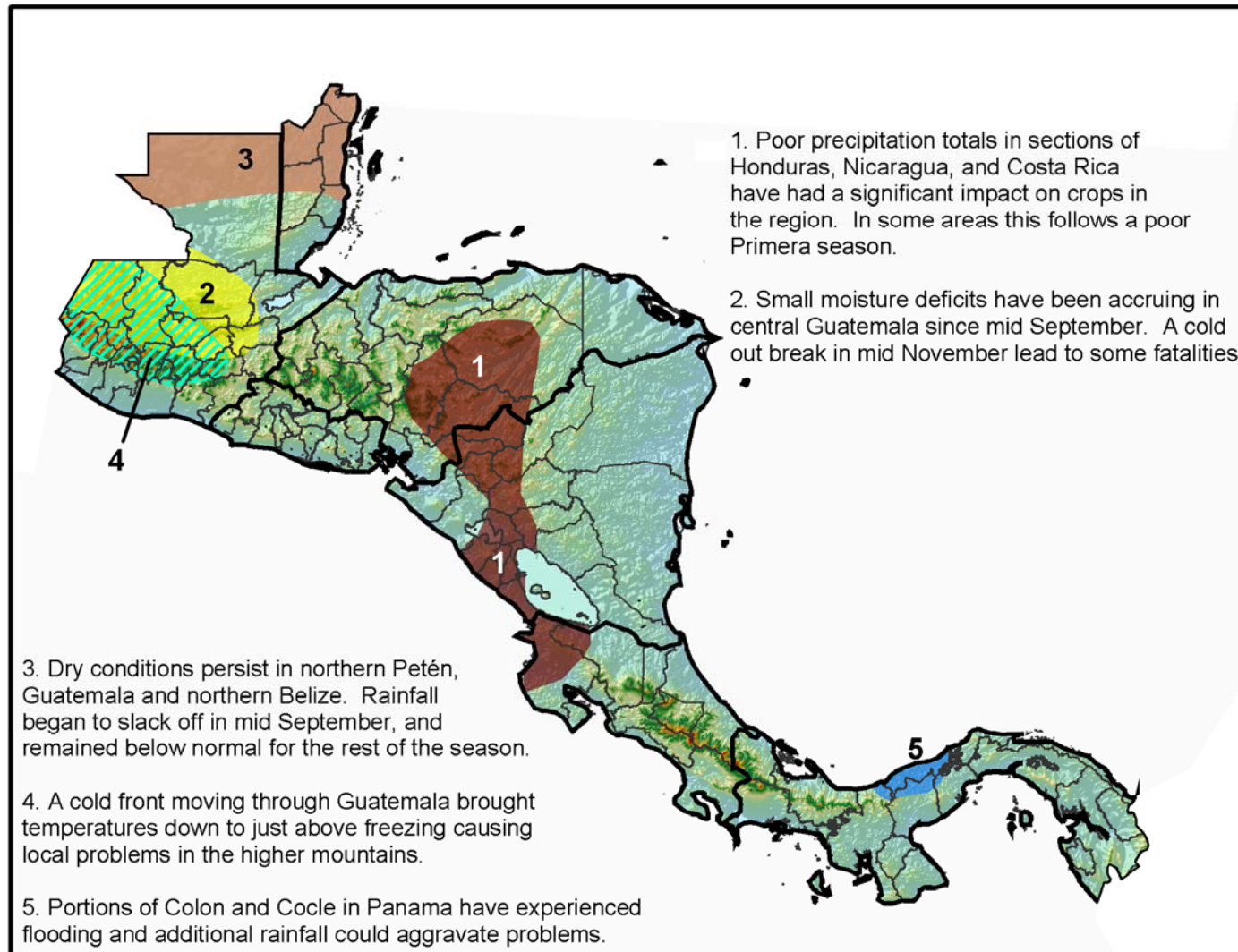


The MFEWS

Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

For

November 30 – December 6, 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 poor enough that there has been some damage. Further south in Costa Rica 25 percent of normal rainfall has been reported by some ground stations, and in Nicaragua only slightly better conditions are reported by satellite rainfall estimates. The impacts during the Primera season were minimal. However moisture deficits continue to accrue in the area. Further north in the Honduras departments of Francisco Morazan, Olancho and El Praiso the Postrera season, which the region is primarily reliant on, has been poor. Rainfall has been less fifty percent of normal, in central Honduras, as estimated by precipitation satellite.
- 2) Rainfall in central Guatemala has been below normal. Deficits ranging from 20 to 40 percent below normal precipitation have been reported during the August to October period. Despite heavy rains, some of which significant flooding earlier in the season, moisture deficits have continued to rise in the area. Heavy rainfall in early November likely did little to improve conditions, and instead caused scattered reports of damage and loss of life. Conditions have quieted down since. Some scattered rainfall will continue fall in the area.
- 3) Rainfall during August to November was lighter than normal across northern portions of Belize and Guatemala. The poor conditions are impacting both crop quality and crop yield throughout the area. Rainfall is likely during the coming period however, these rains will likely come to late to bring significant improvement to long season crops in the region. Crops with shorter growing seasons will still benefit from rainfall. These dry conditions are the southern extent of dryness impacting the Yucatan Peninsula.
- 4) Below normal temperatures in the Guatemala highlands has caused crop damage. The damage occurred during the middle of November and temperatures have rebound since, but local crop losses can be expected especially in higher elevations.
- 5) Heavy rainfall last week caused isolated floods and landslides in Colon and Cocolé provinces in Panama. Although rainfall this week is not expected to be particularly heavy, additional precipitation falling on saturated soil will aggravate the situation. There are reports of fatalities and damage to infrastructure throughout the area.

AUTHOR: Eric J Wolvovsky