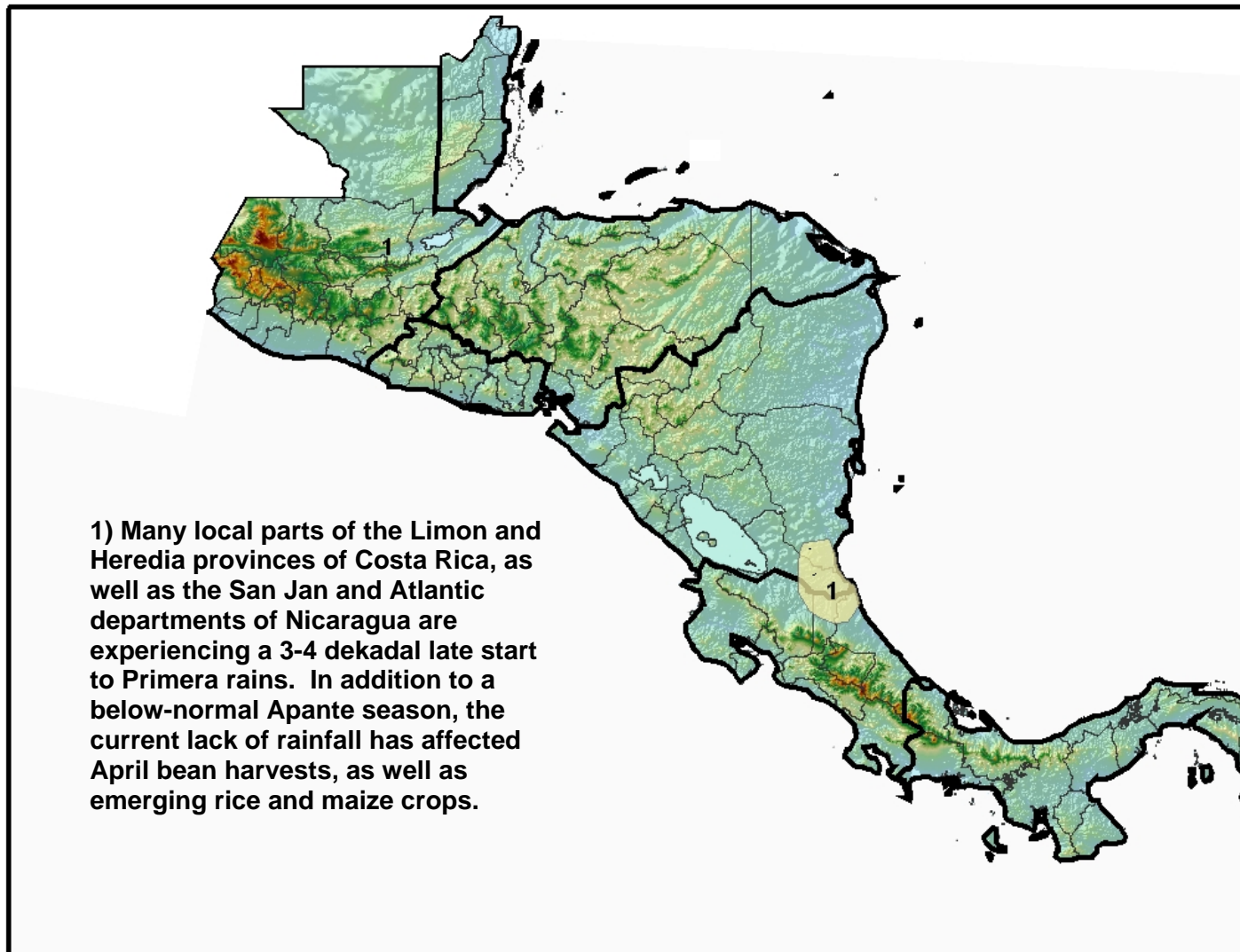


The MFEWS

Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

For

May 15 – May 21, 2008

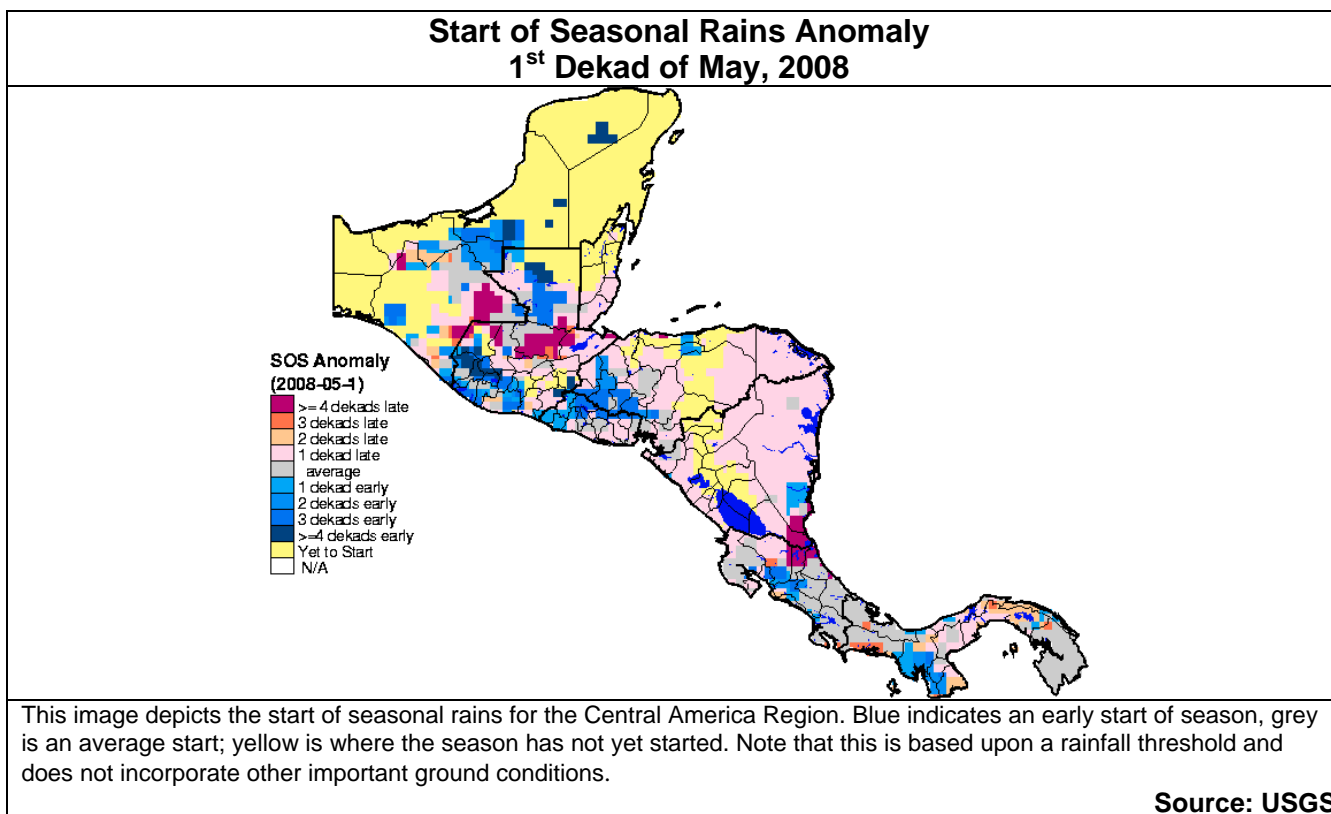


Hazards Assessment Text Explanation:

During the last week, parts of southern Guatemala and El Salvador experienced significant amounts of precipitation (> 50 mm) along the coastal departments. Heavier totals (> 100 mm) were observed in local areas of southern Honduras, as well as the higher terrains of Costa Rica southward into Panama. Since the start of May, local parts of Alta Verapaz, Guatemala and Limon, Costa Rica are experiencing a late start (~3-4 dekads) of the Primera season. In the Limon and Heredia provinces of Costa Rica, as well as, the Atlantic departments of Nicaragua near the San Juan River, early seasonal dryness has already resulted in a significant reduction of bean harvests. A continued absence of May rainfall may threaten the production of rice and sorghum crops by fall, as well as lead to depleted water availability due to a drier than normal Apante Season. Precipitation forecasts over the next seven days suggest a decreased chance for normal Mid-May rainfall for much of Central America. This decreased availability of moisture may help continue to delay the onset for Primera precipitation for seasonal late areas in Guatemala and Costa Rica. Fair to moderate rainfall totals (> 30 mm) are expected over southern Guatemala, and southern parts of Costa Rica and Panama

Presently, most of Belize and other departments of Guatemala are off to a relatively normal start of season. In Honduras, Primera season precipitation is not expected to initiate until June for the inner-North and Caribbean coastal departments. The western center and southern regions of Honduras are experiencing an early start to Primera rains, with a slightly delayed start for departments further to the east of country. In El Salvador, many parts in the coastal strip and Eastern Zone have observed an early start (~1 dekad) of Primera rains, while local areas near the Gulf of Fonseca have received lesser rainfall amounts since the start of May. For Nicaragua, early season rainfall is slow for departments near the San Juan River, as other departments to the north are not expecting a Primera onset until June. In Costa Rica and Panama, a normal Primera start has been observed except for the Limon and Heredia provinces of Costa Rica.

Primera Start of Season Information provided by the XXIV CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM OF CENTRAL AMERICA supported BY CRRH



The evaluation of climatological threats of MFEWS include the participation of the central and local offices of MFEWS, NOAA-CPC, USGS, NASA, INETER of Nicaragua, Meteorological Service of Honduras, IMN of Costa Rica, INSIVUMEH of Guatemala, ETESA of Panama, NMS of Belize and SNET of El Salvador. Any questions or comments on this product can be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov