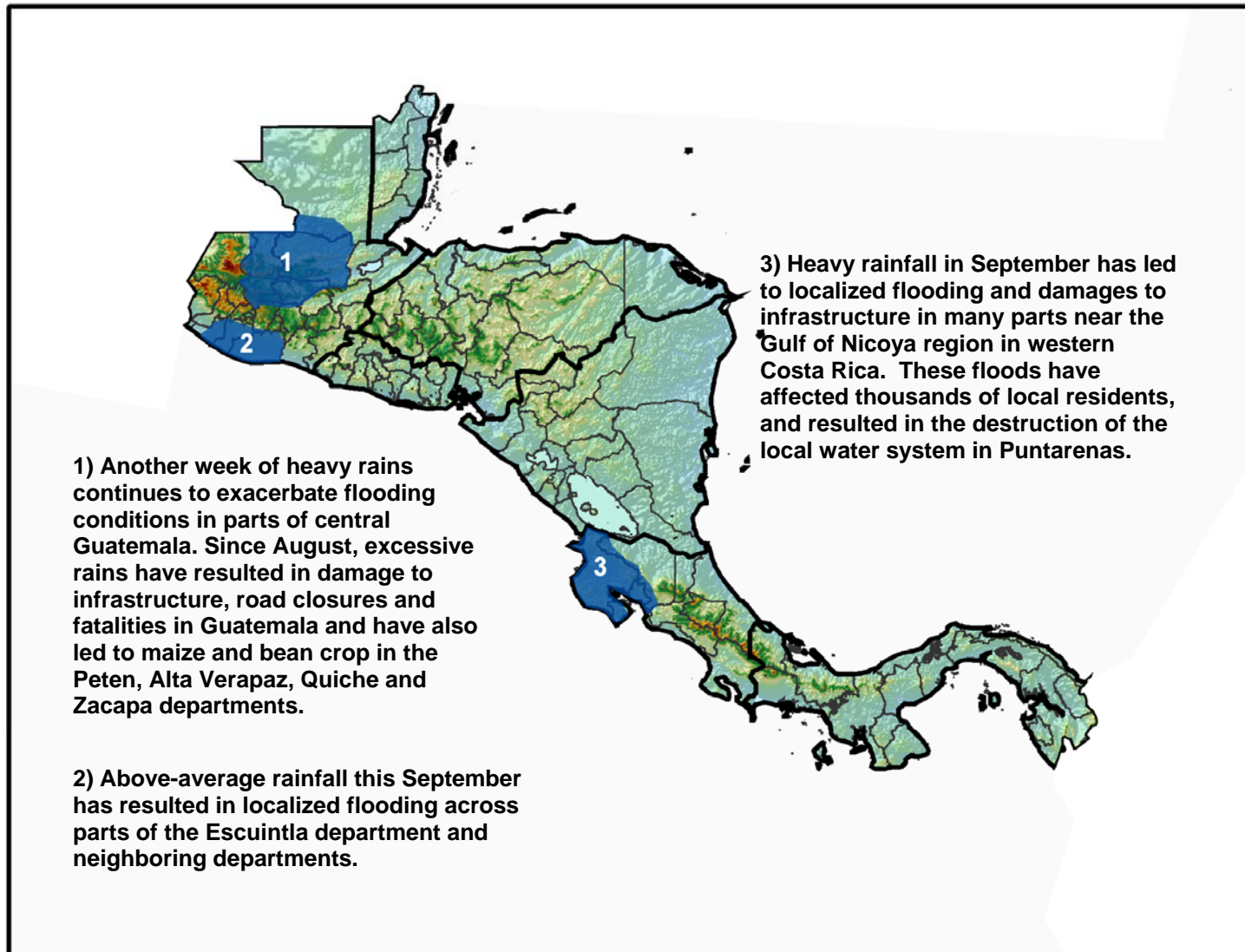


The MFEWS

Central America Weather Hazards and Benefits Assessment

For

September 18 – September 24, 2008

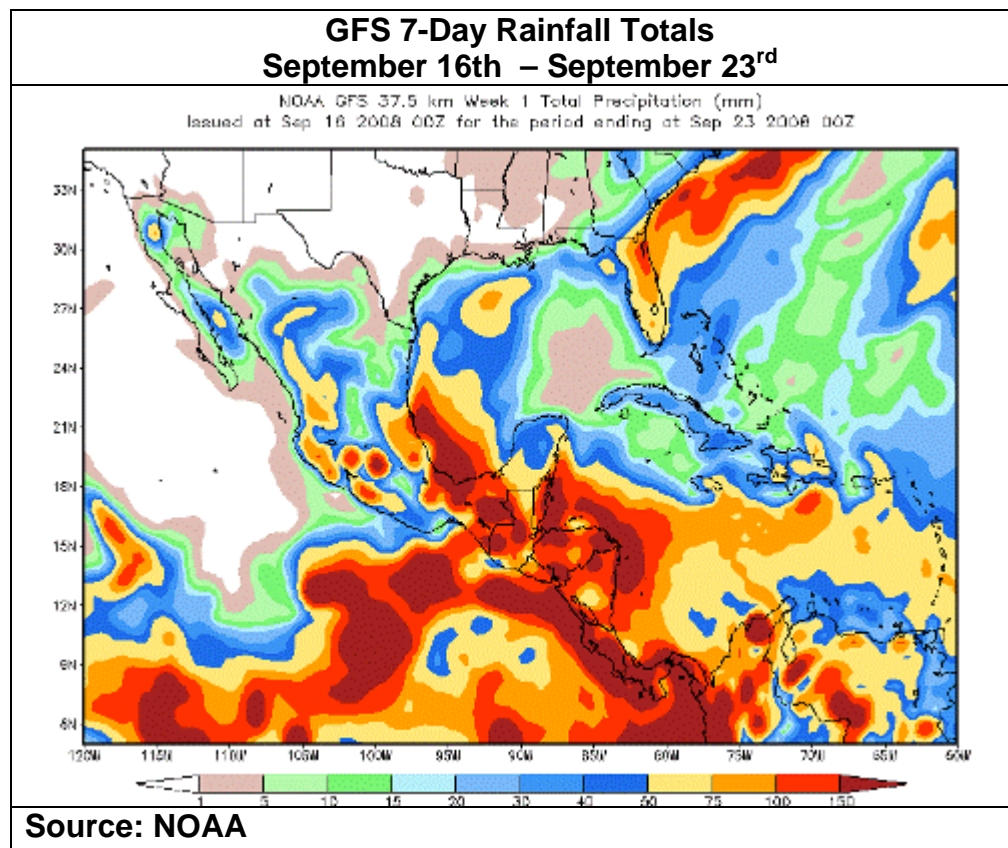


Hazards Assessment Text Explanation:

During the last observation period, moderate to heavy amounts of rain (> 60 mm) were observed in many parts of Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. While much of this rainfall in Guatemala will help alleviate many dry areas in the Peten department in the north, additional rains in the central and south departments are expected to aggravate flooding and crop conditions. In the Quiche, Alta Verapaz and Baja Verapaz departments, above-average rainfall (~175 percent since mid-August) has resulted in losses of maize and bean crops, and saturated soils are expected to lead to poor crop harvests in the next several weeks. The excessive rainfall has also resulted in damage to infrastructure, including numerous landslides and road closures that have impacted many local communities.

In Honduras, increased precipitation over the past seven days has provided moderate relief in the north-eastern portions of the country. These rains are expected to improve ground conditions and drinking water availability. Further south in Costa Rica, ample rainfall during the last week resulted in flooding near the Gulf of Nicoya region. Heavy rains have affected thousands in the Guanacaste province, which reportedly led to the destruction of a local water system in Puntarenas.

For the September 16th – September 23rd observation period, increased precipitation totals are forecast over many portions in Central America. A wave disturbance embedded in the ITCZ is expected to bring significant precipitation (> 75mm) along the Pacific basin, which has the potential to worsen conditions in many of the flooded regions of Guatemala and Costa Rica. Heavy rainfall is also expected along the Caribbean side of Central America, bringing needed moisture to some of the drier parts of central and southern Honduras.



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