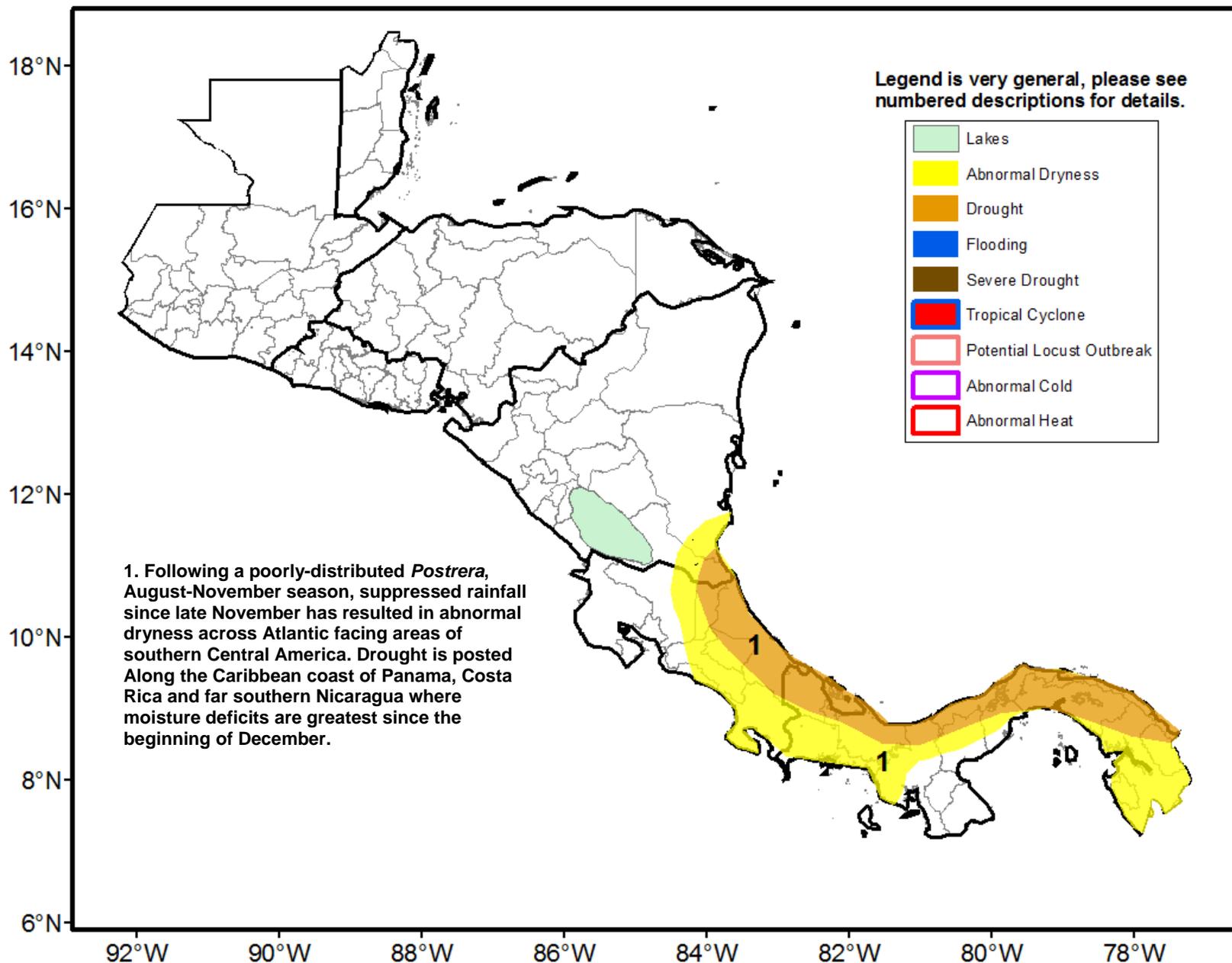




Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook January 31 – February 6, 2019

Dryness continues to persist over southern Central America countries.



A cool air mass is forecast to move into northern parts of the region.

Over the past week, light rain accumulations (<10mm) were observed by satellites over several areas including coastal Belize, northern Honduras, and southern Guatemala. A couple of gauges along the northern coast of Honduras measured higher rainfall totals up to 18mm. Very limited rainfall amounts were received farther south across much of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama, further extending the long dry spell. Since early December, seasonal Apante related moisture deficits remain large across southern Central America and the Southern Caribbean, where many local areas have received less than a quarter of their normal rainfall accumulation since December 1st. Much of the long dry spell and abnormal dryness follows a poor rainfall distribution since earlier this summer. Analysis of remotely sensed vegetation health indices reflects the poor rainfall performance with deteriorated ground conditions concentrated over parts of Guatemala, eastern Nicaragua, and localized parts of Costa Rica, which are likely to adversely affect cropping activities throughout these regions. Vegetation indices in Panama have been surprisingly limitedly impacted by moisture deficits thus far.

During the outlook period, models suggest rainfall will be near average across the greater Gulf of Honduras region. More seasonable precipitation is indicated for southern Central American countries. However, it should be cautioned that models have done poorly there. A cool air mass is expected to affect northern portions of the region. The Yucatan peninsula, northern Guatemala, and Belize may experience negative nighttime minimum temperature anomalies of 2-6°C. However, the coldest air is expected to remain north of Guatemala's higher terrain where the risk for sub-zero temperatures would be higher.

