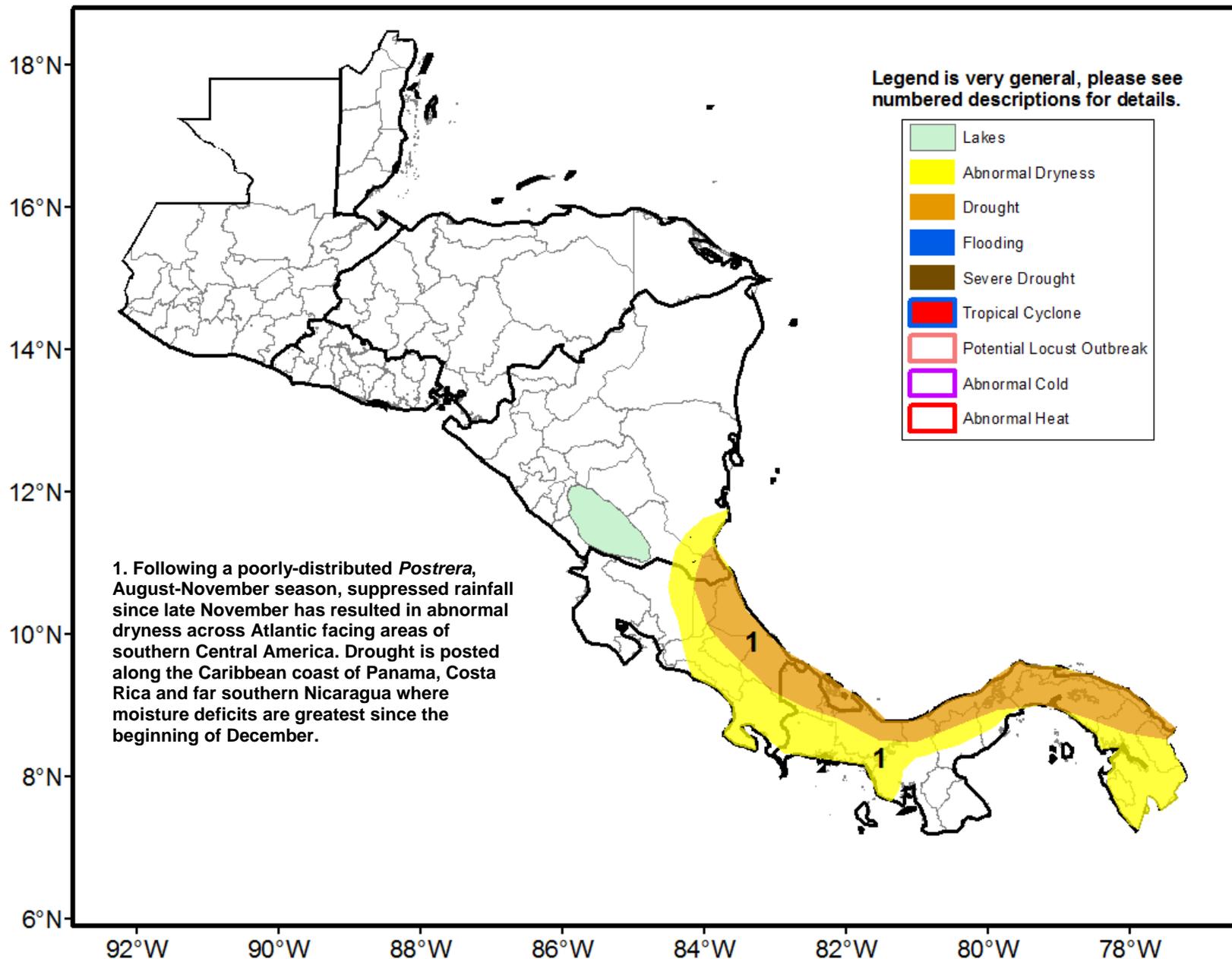




Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook February 14 – 20, 2019

A poor performance of the December-April rainfall season was observed over the southern Caribbean.



Dry weather conditions to continue over Central America

During the past week, dry conditions prevailed over Central America. Suppressed rainfall was recorded throughout the region, according to gauge measurements. This weather pattern was typical of the dry season during this time of the year, so that seven-day rainfall anomalies showed mostly neutral conditions. An analysis of the accumulated rainfall since January, however, indicated persisting below-average rainfall along the Atlantic Basin of Central America, with the largest deficits across the southern Caribbean, based on the CPC unified precipitation data set. As far as the December - April rainfall season performance is concerned, acute dryness, with large deficits ranging between 50 – 200 mm, was observed over southeastern Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. This has already negatively affected the ground conditions as indicated by poor and below-average vegetation conditions over many areas of Central America, including northern and central Guatemala, western Honduras, central Nicaragua, northern Costa Rica, and western and eastern Panama. While the dry season progresses, the lack of rainfall, combined with dry soil and potentially strong winds could create environments that are favorable for forest fires over many areas.

During the next week, dry weather conditions, with mostly suppressed rainfall are expected to continue over Central America. This, therefore, is likely to contribute to maintaining dryness and drought conditions over the southern Caribbean. Meanwhile, minimum temperature is forecast to average near-normal. However, it can fall near or below freezing point over elevated terrains, potentially affecting the livelihoods of residents.

