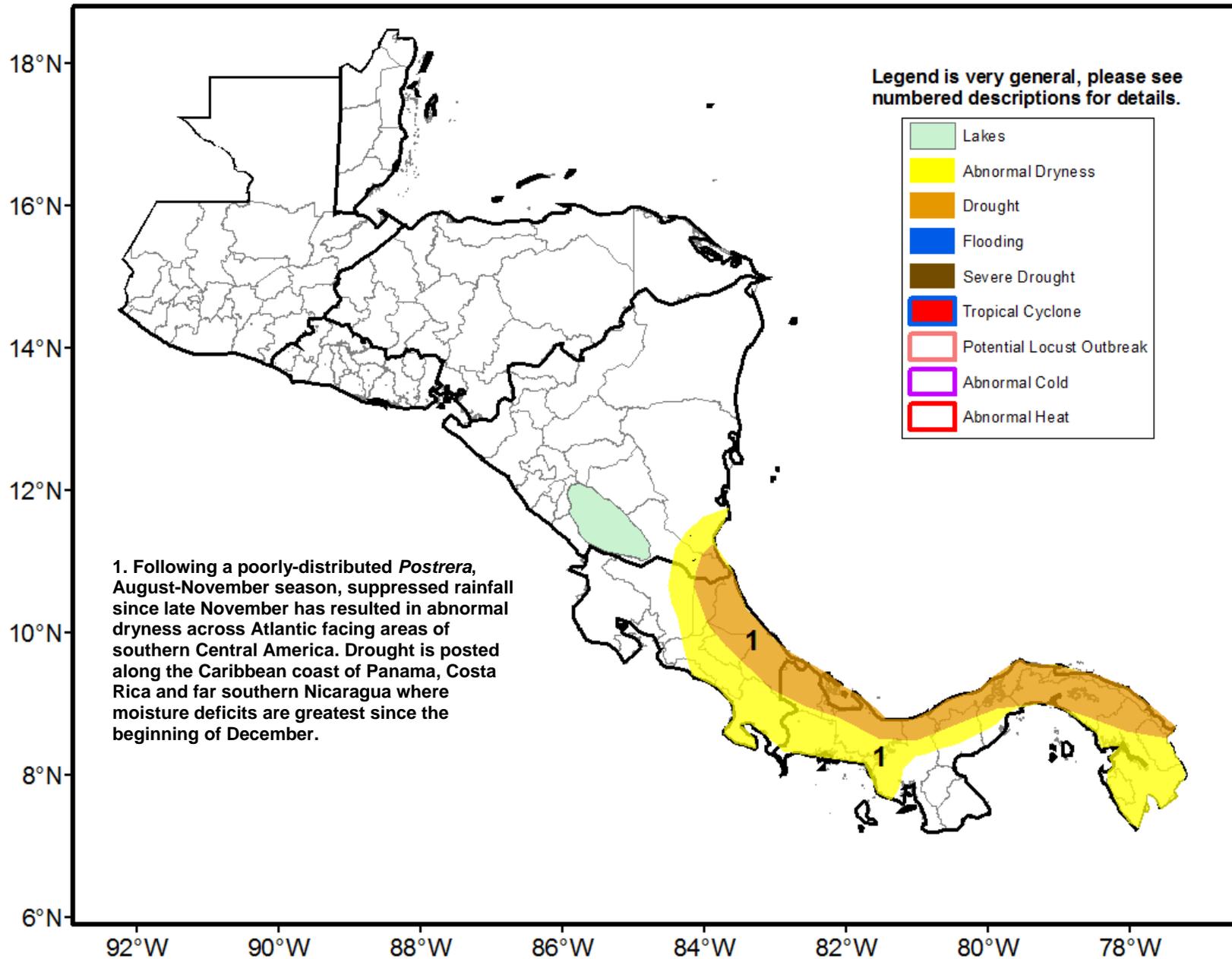




Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook February 28 – March 6, 2019

Despite this past week's observed light rainfall over the southern Caribbean, drought has continued.



An increase in rainfall is possible over the southern Caribbean during the next week

From February 18 – 24, light rainfall was received across eastern Honduras, northeastern Nicaragua, and eastern Costa Rica, while little to no rainfall was registered elsewhere, according to the CPC Unified rainfall data. Although the suppressed rainfall was typical of the region during this time of the year, the consistent, dry weather pattern over the past few weeks has contributed to maintain moisture deficits along the Atlantic Basin of Central America over the past thirty days. Furthermore, poorly-distributed rainfall since December of the past year has resulted in large negative seasonal rainfall anomalies along the Atlantic tier of Central America and particularly Costa Rica and Panama. While awaiting the beginning of the upcoming first rainfall season, the insufficient rainfall has already negatively impacted ground conditions over many local areas. Drought conditions have already impacted water resources over Panama, according to media reports. In addition, recent vegetation health index continued to exhibit below-average conditions and stress over many local areas, including northern and central Guatemala, southern Honduras, and central Costa Rica. Also, the combined effects of scarce rainfall, dry soils, and strong winds may favor forest fires over many local areas.

During the next outlook period, a dry weather pattern, similar to that of the previous week, is forecast over much of Central America. Suppressed rainfall is forecast across much of the inland of the region. However, increased, moderate to locally heavy rainfall is possible over Costa Rica. If the forecast rainfall verifies, it may help provide partial relief to dryness over the region. Meanwhile, model temperature forecasts suggest near-average surface temperatures over the region. Though, minimum temperature could drop near freezing, which may affect residents over elevated terrains during night time or early morning.

