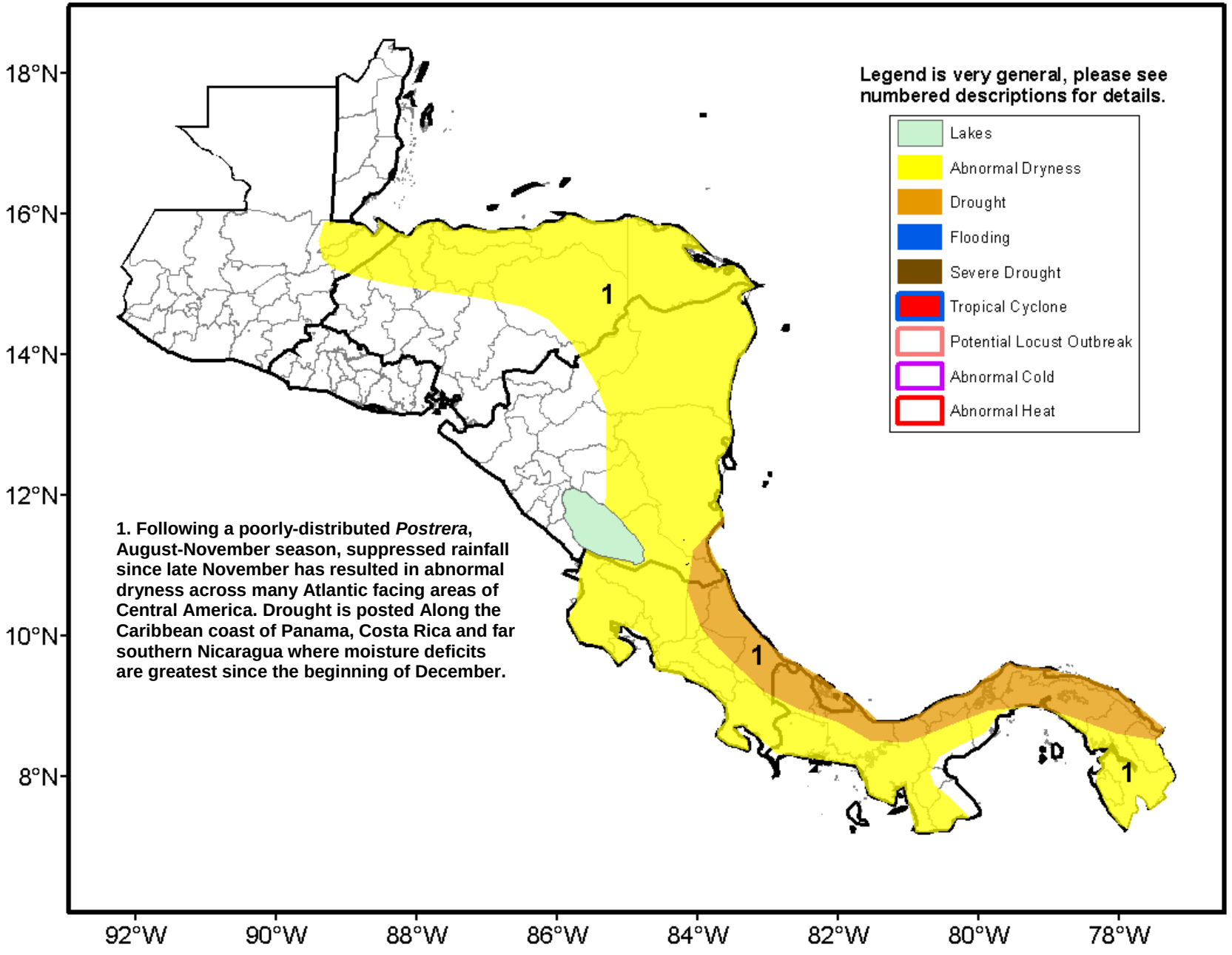
Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook
January 24 - 30, 2019

A typical January pattern of scattered light rains was observed across Central America.



1. Following a poorly-distributed *Postrera*, August-November season, suppressed rainfall since late November has resulted in abnormal dryness across many Atlantic facing areas of Central America. Drought is posted Along the Caribbean coast of Panama, Costa Rica and far southern Nicaragua where moisture deficits are greatest since the beginning of December.

Dryness continues to persist over southern Central America countries.

Over the past week, light rain accumulations were observed by satellites over several areas including coastal Belize, northern Honduras, southern Guatemala and western Nicaragua. A couple of rain gauges along the northern coast of Honduras measured significantly heavier rainfall totals. Even so, moisture was diminished over the greater Gulf of Honduras region as compared to the previous week. Limited rainfall amounts were again 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, or even 5%, of their normal rainfall accumulation since December 1st. Much of the 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 many parts of Guatemala, Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, which are likely to adversely affect cropping activities throughout the region. Vegetation indices have surprisingly seen limited impacts by moisture deficits in Panama thus far.

During the outlook period, models suggest rainfall will be near or slightly above 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. Nighttime minimum temperatures are expected remain a bit cooler than average over parts of Honduras. However, the risk for sub-zero temperatures in the highest elevations of Guatemala is less than last week.

Week 1 Rainfall Total Forecast and CMORPH climatology (mm)
January 23 – January 30, 2019

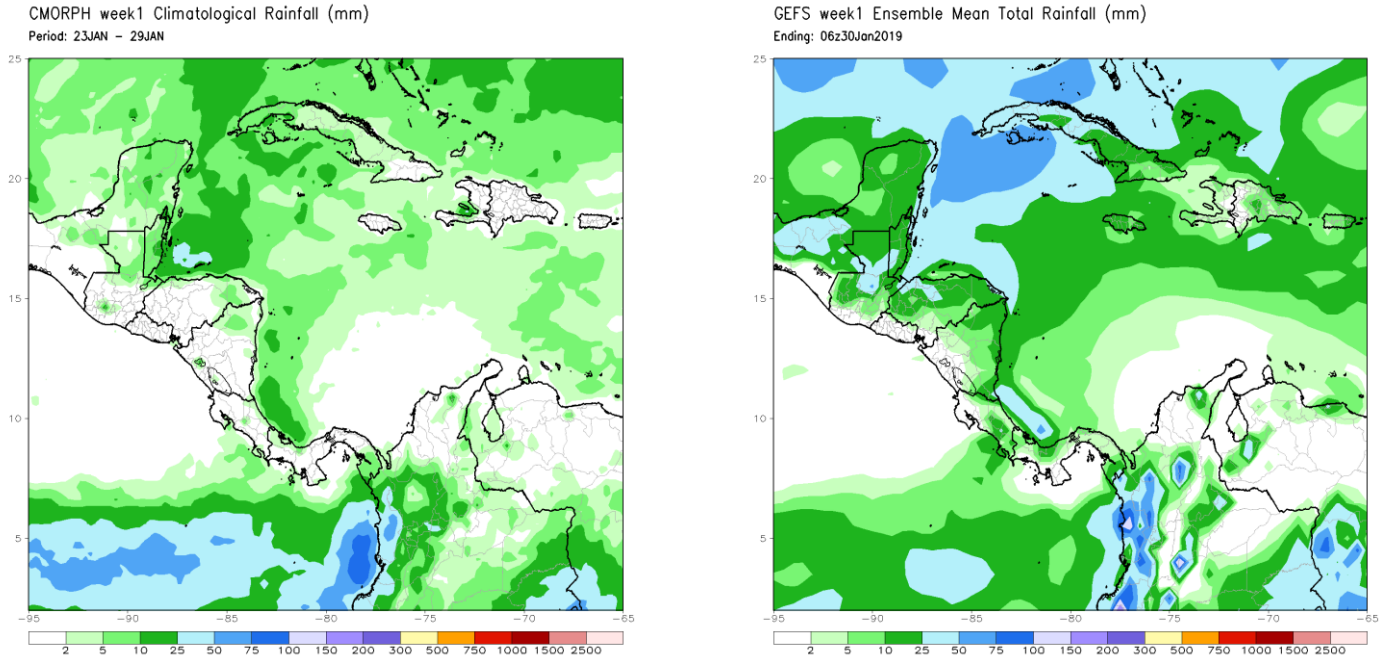


Figure 1: Source NOAA / CPC

Questions or comments about this product may be directed to Wassila.Thiaw@noaa.gov or 1-301-683-3424.