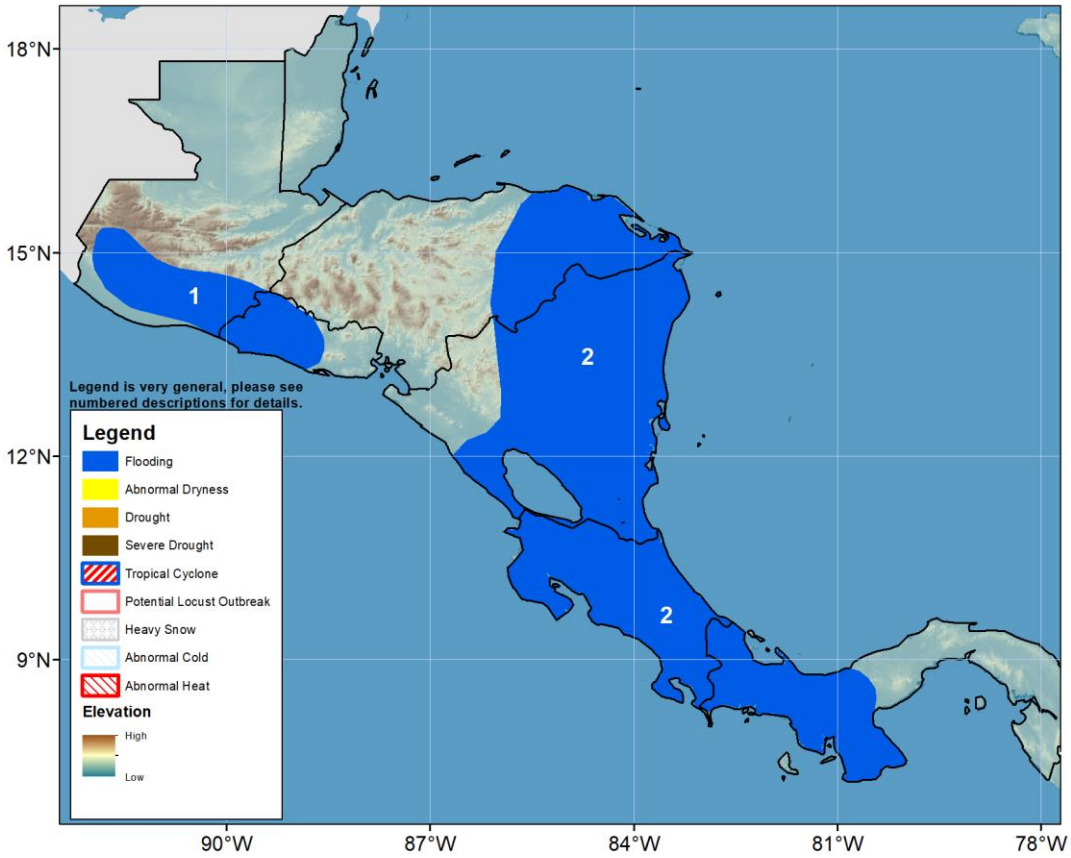
Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook
For USAID / FEWS-NET
11 – 17 August 2022

Wet weather patterns to return during the next week, elevating risks for flooding and landslides over many areas



1) Heavy rain is forecasted over the Pacific Region in southern Guatemala and western El Salvador, which elevates the risks for flooding, landslides, and overflowing of rivers across the region during the next week.

2) Continued heavy and above-average rain during the past few weeks has contributed to increase rainfall surpluses over eastern Honduras, most parts of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and western Panama. The risks for flooding and landslides remain high as heavy rain is forecast during the next week.

Note: The Hazards outlook map is based on current weather/climate information, short and medium-range weather forecasts (up to 1 week), sub-seasonal forecasts up to 4 weeks, and assesses the potential impact of extreme events on crop and pasture conditions. Shaded polygons are added in areas where anomalous conditions have been observed and predicted to continue during the outlook period. The boundaries of these polygons are only approximate at the spatial scale of the map. This product takes into account long-range seasonal climate forecasts but does not reflect current or projected food security conditions. FEWS NET is a USAID-funded activity whose purpose is to provide objective information about food security conditions. Its views are not necessarily reflective of those of USAID or the U.S. Government. The FEWS NET weather hazards outlook process and products include participation by FEWS NET field and home offices, NOAA-CPC, USGS, USDA, NASA, and a number of other national and regional organizations in the countries concerned.

Questions or comments about the hazards outlooks may be directed to Dr. Wassila Thiaw, Head, International Desks/NOAA, wassila.thiaw@noaa.gov. Questions about the USAID FEWS NET activity may be directed to Dr. James Verdin, Program Manager, FEWS NET/USAID, jverdin@usaid.gov

Widespread heavy and above-average rain forecast over Central America during the next week

During early August, torrential rain fell over localized areas over Central America. Rain amounts in excess of 100 mm were observed over parts of the Alta Verapaz and Izabal Departments in Guatemala, western El Salvador, southeastern Nicaragua, and parts of Costa Rica and Panama. In Honduras, flooding was reported with many people affected over the Puerto Lempira Department. Meanwhile, reduced rainfall totals with little to light rain dominated over central Guatemala, Honduras, and northwestern Nicaragua. Over the past thirty days, insufficient rain has spread over northern Central America, with the lowest percent of average rain ranging between 5 – 50 percent over Honduras and the Gulf of Fonseca. Over the past ninety days, seasonal rain accumulation has been near to above-average across much of the interior of Central America, except areas such as southern Guatemala, El Salvador, southern Honduras, and parts of Costa Rica and Panama, where cumulative rain has ranged mostly between 50 – 80 percent of the average. Consequently, the latest soil water index (SWI) has indicated that satisfactory and sufficient soil moisture dominated over much of Central America. However, moisture stress and wilting conditions were depicted over parts of central Guatemala, central Honduras, eastern El Salvador, and northwestern Nicaragua due to recent decrease in rainfall. The return of favorable rain is needed to replenish soil moisture and aid cropping activities over the dry portions of Central America.

For next week, widespread heavy and above-average rain is forecast across Central America. While the wetter-than-average conditions should help reduce moisture deficits and benefit cropping activities over many local areas, the forecast additional rain amounts could further raise river levels, exacerbate oversaturation, and increase the risks for flooding, landslides, and overflowing of rivers over many flood-prone and susceptible areas. A Tropical Wave, located to the west-southwest of the Cape Verde Islands, has a low chance of becoming a depression over the next few days.

Week 1 GEFS Rainfall Total Forecast and CMORPH Average Total Rainfall (mm)
10 August – 17 August 2022

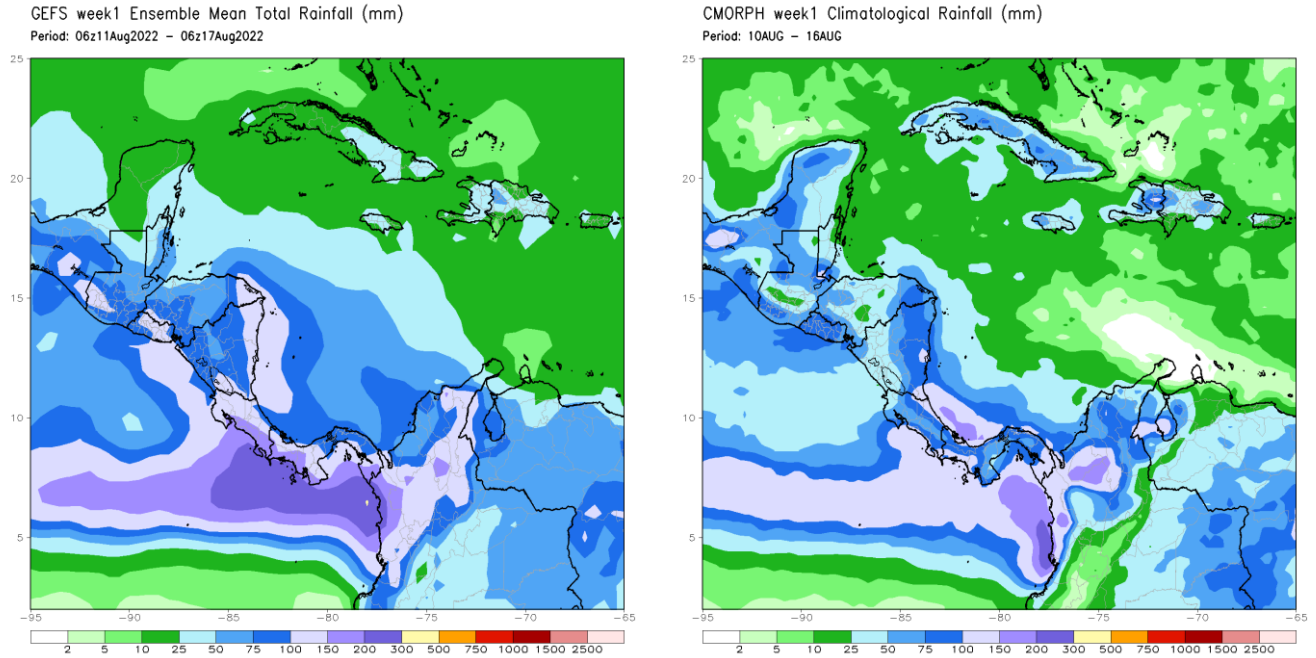


Figure 1: Source NOAA / CPC