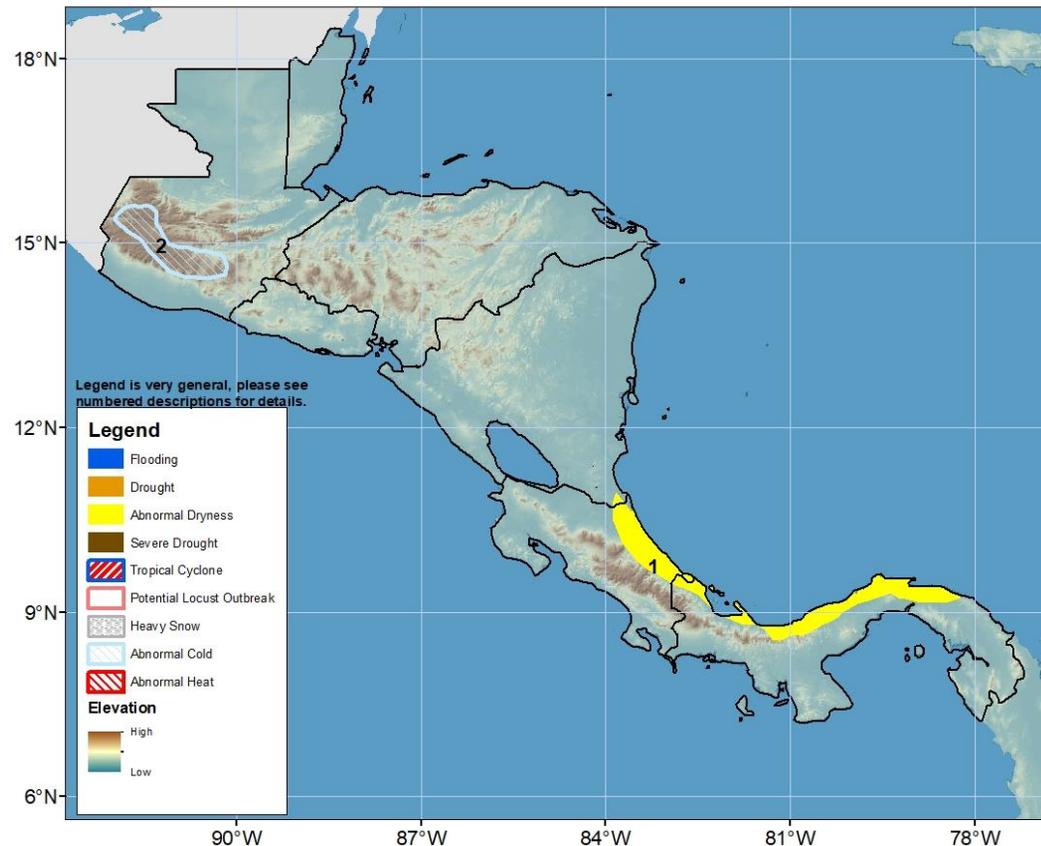


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 2 – 8 February 2023

Cold weather and drier conditions to continue in parts of Central America during the next week



1. Suppressed rainfall since December of the past year and the corresponding low Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) values in eastern Costa Rica and northern Panama have led to abnormal dryness in the region.
2. Dominating high pressure system over the Atlantic and frontal system passage across the Gulf of Mexico could result in below-average and below-freezing minimum temperature in the higher elevations in western Guatemala, potentially impacting the livelihoods of residents 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

A potential increase in rain expected along the Atlantic Tier of Central America during the next week

During late January, a slight increase in rainfall was observed over Central America. Scattered light (up to 25 mm) rain fell in parts of northern Guatemala, southern Belize, southeastern Nicaragua, and central Costa Rica, whereas dry conditions with suppressed rainfall dominated elsewhere. Consequently, the past 30-day rainfall anomalies showed some improvement with an erosion of rainfall deficits in parts of Costa Rica and Panama relative to those of the previous observation period. However, abnormal dryness is maintained along the Caribbean coastal areas in Costa Rica and Panama, where moisture deficits remained. Over the past 90 days, seasonal rain was below-average, with an accumulation accounting for only between 25-80 percent of the average throughout most areas. For vegetation, the latest analyses indicated that near-average conditions dominated over the region. Meanwhile, dry soils and strong winds have led to forest fires across Central America, including many protected zones, based on reports. Strong winds have also been reported to damage crops over localized areas.

During the next week, rainfall forecasts suggested that a slight increase in rainfall is likely with moderate to locally heavy amounts in parts of northern Guatemala, eastern Belize, the Gulf of Honduras, eastern Honduras, and the Atlantic-facing regions of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama, while little to no rainfall is forecast elsewhere. If the forecasts materialize, the additional moisture could help ease dryness in the region. Meanwhile, frontal passages across northern Central America and associated strong winds could bring below-freezing minimum temperature in western Guatemala, potentially negatively impacting the livelihoods of residents in the region.

