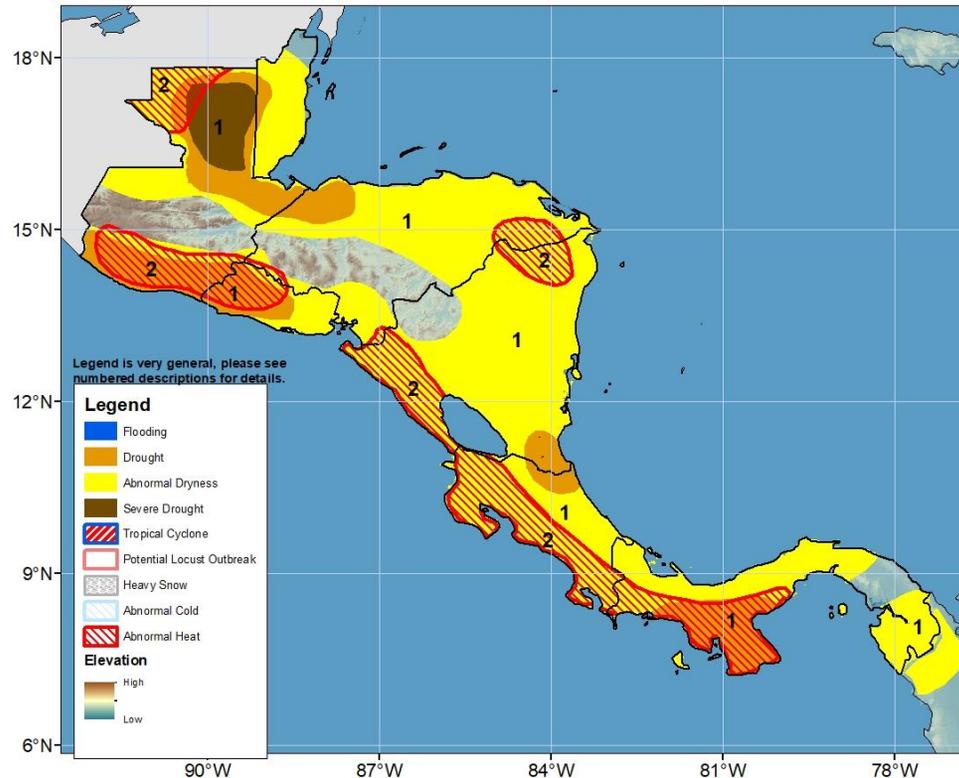


## Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 27 July – 2 August 2023

Heavy rainfall continued in central Guatemala, southern Belize and eastern Nicaragua. Hot and dry conditions continued in most parts of Central America.



- 1) Inconsistent and insufficient rainfall since the beginning of the “Primera” season starting in April has led to large reductions in total rainfall and expanding abnormal dryness across the region. As the period of below-average rainfall continued and deficits deepen, drought is placed in northern/southern Guatemala, El Salvador, northeastern Honduras, southern Nicaragua, northeastern Costa Rica, and south-central Panama. Due to the continuing and growing rainfall deficits, significant vegetation stress, dry soil conditions and ground observations, a severe drought polygon is placed in northern Guatemala.
- 2) Weekly mean maximum temperatures are forecast to be above average by 2-4°C across the Pacific basins of Central America, with values exceeding their 95% percentiles for 3 or more days. This led to the placement of extended Abnormal Heat hazard in the western basins and over northern Nicaragua and southern Honduras.

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.

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## Central Guatemala, southern Belize, eastern Nicaragua, and eastern Panama continued receiving heavy rains.

Heavy rains continued over central/eastern Guatemala, southern Belize, and Nicaragua during 17-23 July 2023. In particular, heavy rainfall totals of 75-200mm continued in east-central departments of Guatemala (Huehuetenango and Izabal departments), southern Belize, most of eastern half of Nicaragua, western coasts of Costa Rica, and eastern coasts of Panama (Guna Yala and contiguous departments). These regions received 25-100mm excess rainfall above their climatological averages. Some of the heaviest rains in Guatemala occurred in regions that experienced recent flooding and landslides. Elsewhere, rainfall generally was isolated and meager, leaving most of Central America to stay drier than average for the week. As a result, substantial 7-day deficits of 50-100mm are widely present across El Salvador, southern Guatemala, northeastern Costa Rica, and western Panama. In addition, 7-day rainfall deficits of 25-50mm were expansive across northern Guatemala, eastern Honduras, and northeastern Nicaragua. Except over central departments of Guatemala, southern Belize, western Honduras, and part of Nicaragua, all of which experienced wetter conditions, the 30-day cumulative rainfall analysis shows dry conditions prevailing across the remaining parts of Central America. Deficits of at least 200mm are present over southern Guatemala, eastern Panama, northern Costa Rica, and southern Nicaragua. Deficits between 100-200mm are widespread and cover northern and southern Guatemala, southeastern Nicaragua and bordering northeastern Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Panama. Many of these deficits translate to 50% or even 75% reductions in rainfall. The 90-day deficits are similarly expansive. As a result, abnormal dryness is steadily expanding through Central America and patches of drought are now present. Vegetation health is relatively poor through northern Honduras, Nicaragua, northern and southeastern (up to Chiquimula) Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, and parts of central Panama. Due to the continuing and growing rainfall deficits, significant vegetation stress and dry soil conditions, a severe drought polygon has been retained in northern Guatemala. Maximum temperature anomalies were at least 2 to 4°C above normal in eastern Guatemala, western Honduras, and bordering El Salvador, Costa Rica, and western Panama.

During the outlook period, models predict a slight lull in heavy rainfall episodes in Guatemala and Nicaragua compared to last week, but 50-75mm rainfall is still expected to continue in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. Coastal areas in Costa Rica, Panama and Nicaragua may record up to 100mm during the week. Belize, northern Guatemala, and northwestern Nicaragua will receive 25-50mm. These rainfall totals will be near the climatological average for southern Panama, central/northern Nicaragua, and above average for western Honduras, El Salvador, and northern Guatemala. However, the rains will be insufficient to meet the climatological mean, and will result in drier than average conditions for most of Panama, Costa Rica, and eastern Nicaragua for the week (Fig 1). Maximum temperatures will continue to be 2 to 4°C warmer than average across southern and northern Guatemala, parts of El Salvador, western and northern Nicaragua, Costa Rica and parts of Panama. Maximum temperatures will be above the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for 3 or more days in parts of Guatemala and El Salvador, and western coasts of Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. As a result, Abnormal Heat hazard has been placed along the Pacific basins of Central America and over northern Nicaragua and southern Honduras.

