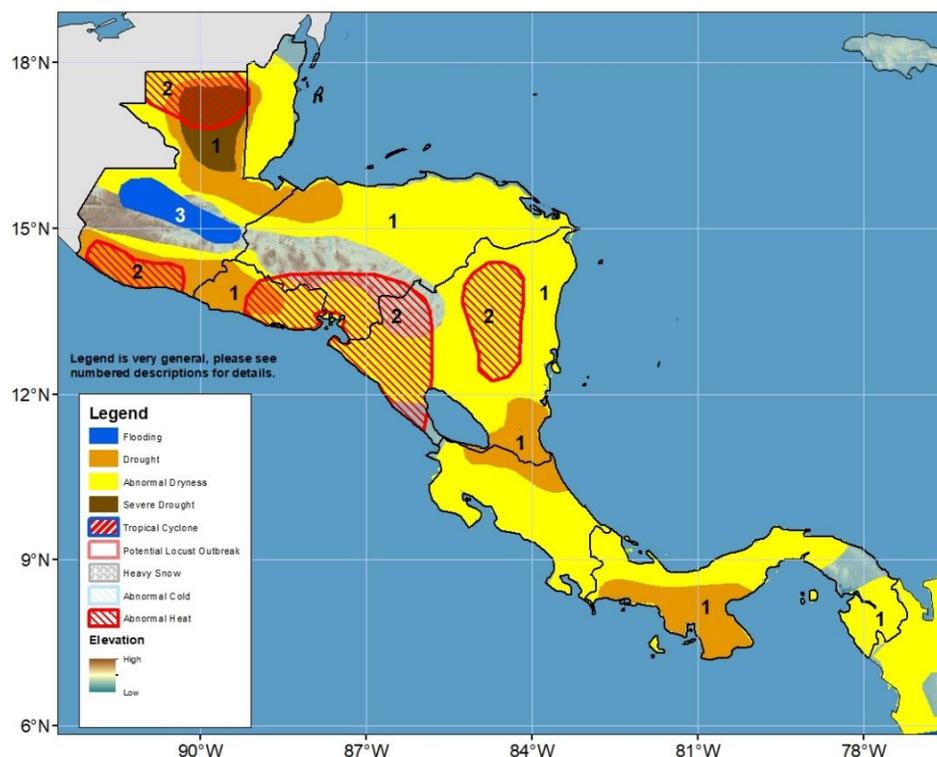


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 07 September – 13 September 2023

Rainfall deficits and abnormally warm temperatures continue in Central America.



- 1) Inconsistent and insufficient rainfall since the beginning of the “Primera” season, starting in April, has led to abnormal dryness and patches of drought across the region. Moreover, a severe drought polygon is maintained in northern Guatemala due to the continuing rainfall deficits, significant vegetation stress and dry soil conditions. The irregular rains since the start of the Primera season have mainly affected the crops of subsistence farmers who might experience yield reductions of 25% to 50% of average. In addition, the high temperatures and the lack of rain have exacerbated moisture availability in the soil. While on the border between Guatemala and El Salvador and other pacific facing zones of Guatemala, sowing activities are delayed due to the lack of rainfall and high temperatures observed last week. In addition, in Panama, the rainfall deficits are affecting the shipping industry in the Panama Canal, where the water level of the Gatun Lake has remained below average.
- 2) Weekly mean maximum temperatures are forecast to be 30-35°C and warmer than average (2-4°C) in southern and northern Guatemala, western and central Nicaragua, southern Honduras and eastern El Salvador. Therefore, an abnormal heat hazard has been added in these regions.
- 3) Southeastern Alta Verapaz and northern Zapata departments have observed above-average rainfall during the 90 days. Heavy rain is expected to continue the following week, and therefore, a flooding polygon has been added to this area.

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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Rains will likely be suppressed this week, although some locally heavy rains are likely to happen in western Guatemala.

During the last week, heavy rainfall (values larger than 100mm) was observed in central Guatemala, eastern Honduras, northeastern Nicaragua, and a few localized parts of Panama; and these areas observed above average rainfall. As a consequence, localized flash flooding has been reported in Guatemala, as well as El Salvador and Honduras. Meanwhile, light rainfall was observed in northern Guatemala, Belize, southern Honduras, western Nicaragua, parts of Costa Rica and Panama (values lower than 25 mm). Moreover, northern Guatemala, The Gulf of Fonseca region, and much of Panama show the largest below-normal conditions during the 7 days. The 30-day rainfall period shows that northern and southern Guatemala, northern El Salvador, some areas in Honduras, central Nicaragua; and localized areas in Costa Rica and Panama received less than 50 percent of normal rainfall. Moreover, in the 90-day seasonal period, the largest rainfall deficits are still observed in northern and southern Guatemala, El Salvador, the border between Nicaragua and Costa Rica, and central/southern Panama, where deficits are larger than 500 mm. Meanwhile, warmer than average temperatures (2-4 °C above the mean) were observed in eastern Guatemala, western Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and some areas in Panama.

During the next week, forecasts suggest heavy rainfall (values larger than 50 mm) across western and southern portions of Central America, with the largest values in western Guatemala and Panama. However, the forecast suggests below-average rainfall conditions in most of Central America with the largest anomalies in central Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua (more than 30 mm below the mean). Furthermore, the maximum temperature anomalies forecast suggests hotter than average temperatures during next week in southern and northern Guatemala, El Salvador, southern Honduras, Nicaragua, and localized parts of Costa Rica and southern Panama.

