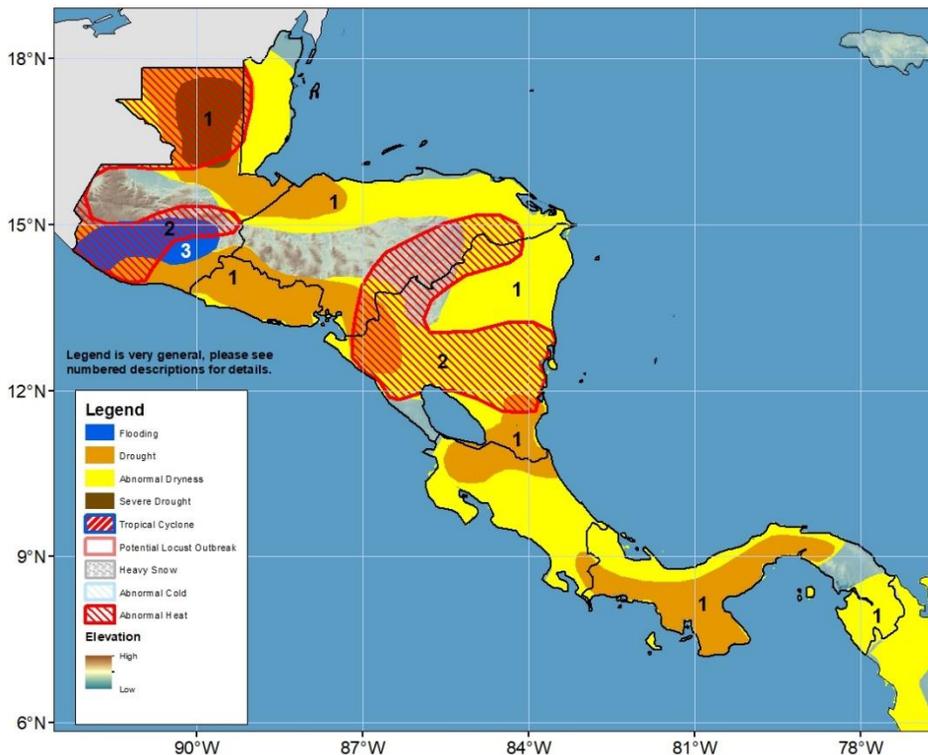


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 5 – 11 October 2023

Abnormally hot weather and drier conditions have prevailed in Central America despite many localized flooding due to an erratic rainfall distribution.



- 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. Sowing delays are still reported in Guatemala. The rainfall deficits in Panama are affecting the shipping industry in the Panama Canal, where the water level of the Gatun Lake is below average.
- 2) Abnormal heat hazards are posted in northern and southern of Guatemala, southern Honduras, northern and central Nicaragua as elevated maximum temperature and heat index are expected to persist for three or more consecutive days during the next week.
- 3) This past week heavy rainfall has caused a river in Guatemala City in Guatemala to burst its banks, causing many fatalities. Abundant rainfall has also resulted in flooding, which have negatively impacted crops in the Retalhuleu and Suchitepéquez Departments in the Pacific Region in Guatemala. Heavy rainfall is forecast to continue during the next week, maintaining high risks for flooding in the region.

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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Flooding risks are high as heavy and above-average rainfall is forecasted along the Pacific-facing region during the next week.

During late September, a slight increase in rainfall was observed in Central America. Heavy and above-average rainfall was received in southern Guatemala, El Salvador, eastern Honduras and central Nicaragua. In Guatemala, the past few weeks' localized heavy rainfall has resulted in flooding, which have impacted people and crops in Guatemala City and the Retalhuleu and Suchitepéquez Departments in the Pacific Region, according to reports. Meanwhile, light to moderate and below-average rainfall continued elsewhere. Over the past 30 days, rainfall was below-average, with moderate to large (> 100 mm) moisture deficits over much of Central America, except for western El Salvador and east-central Honduras, where rainfall surpluses were indicated. Over the past 90 days, while many areas registered below-average rainfall, with totals between 50-80% of the average, northern Guatemala, the Gulf of Fonseca, and parts of the southern Caribbean recorded 25-50% only of the average, resulting in droughts in northern and southern Guatemala, the Gulf of Fonseca, and the southern Caribbean. In Panama, the ongoing drought has led local authority to reduce ship crossings along the Panama Canals to conserved water, according to reports.

During the next week, heavy and above-average rainfall is forecast along the Pacific-facing region in Central America, increasing the risks for flooding over many local areas in the region. Meanwhile, high temperatures and heat index are also forecasted to persist for at least three consecutive days, which may affect vulnerable people over areas in northern and southern Guatemala, southern Honduras, northern and central Nicaragua.

