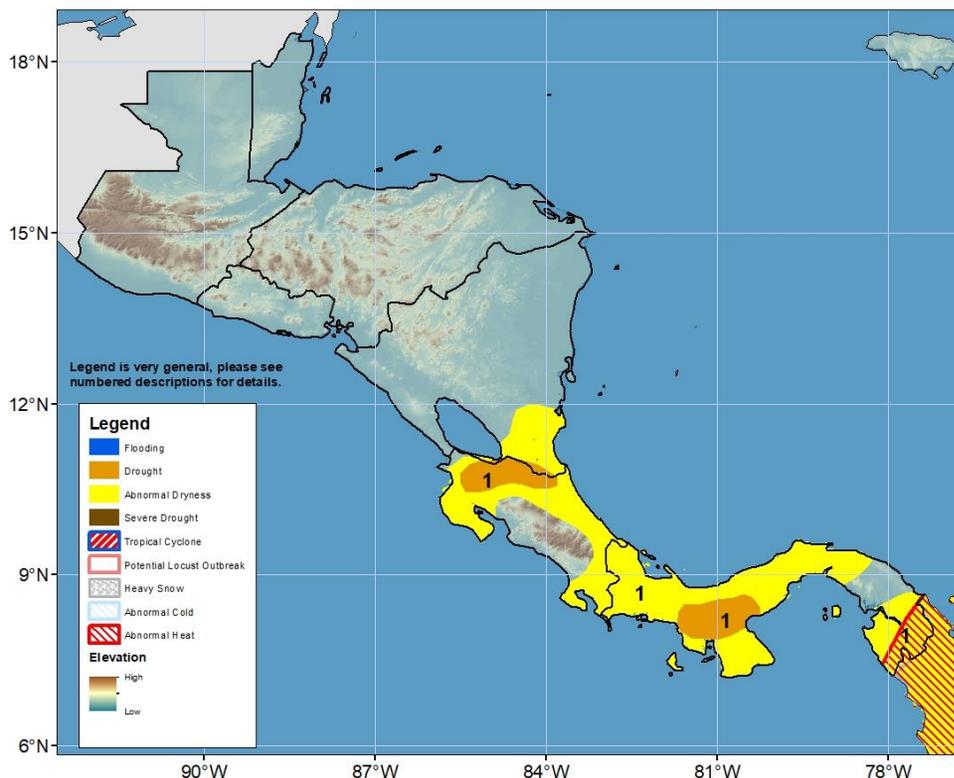


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 7 December – 13 December 2023

The rainfall season has ended for the northern half of the region, while below average rain is ongoing in the South.



1) Reasonable amounts of rainfall during the last month have helped improve short-term deficits across much of the region, but irregular and insufficient rainfall in the 90 days (long-term) and 30 days (short-term) is persisting in southern Central America. Drought and abnormal dryness polygons are removed in the North where the rainfall season ended several weeks ago, but polygons are kept in the South where end-of-season is still to come.

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

Rainfall is forecasted to be below-average in the coming week.

During last week, much of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and northern Nicaragua observed almost no rainfall, excepting a few scattered showers. In these areas, rainfall was close to average conditions except for negative anomalies in eastern Honduras and Nicaragua. Meanwhile, moderate rainfall between 5 and 25 mm was registered in Belize. Moderate to heavy rainfall (25 mm to locally more than 100 mm) was observed in parts of southern Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Even so, these regions mainly exhibited rainfall deficits for the 7-day period. Rainfall conditions across the region have improved over the last 30 days or more, showing above-average rainfall and SPI values larger than 0.3 over the majority of the region except for southwestern Guatemala and Panama. The wet period was too short in the context of the season. In the long-term (the past 90 days), northern and southern Guatemala, southeastern and southwestern Honduras, northern and southern Nicaragua, most of Costa Rica, and Panama still registered rainfall deficits larger than 100 mm. High temperatures have especially limited any recent improvement in soil moisture. The irregular rainfall and the prolonged insufficient rainfall during the 'Postrera' have contributed to the degradation of the vegetation in some regions and have impacted the agricultural sector in Guatemala. High temperatures and humidity in the next few days could negatively impact populations in parts of Panama.

For next week, the GEFS forecast suggests Caribbean-facing portions of the region, as well as northern Guatemala, may receive above-average rainfall amounts of 25 mm to 150 mm. Rainfall deficits are forecast to continue in Costa Rica and Panama with 10 - 50 mm total expected.

