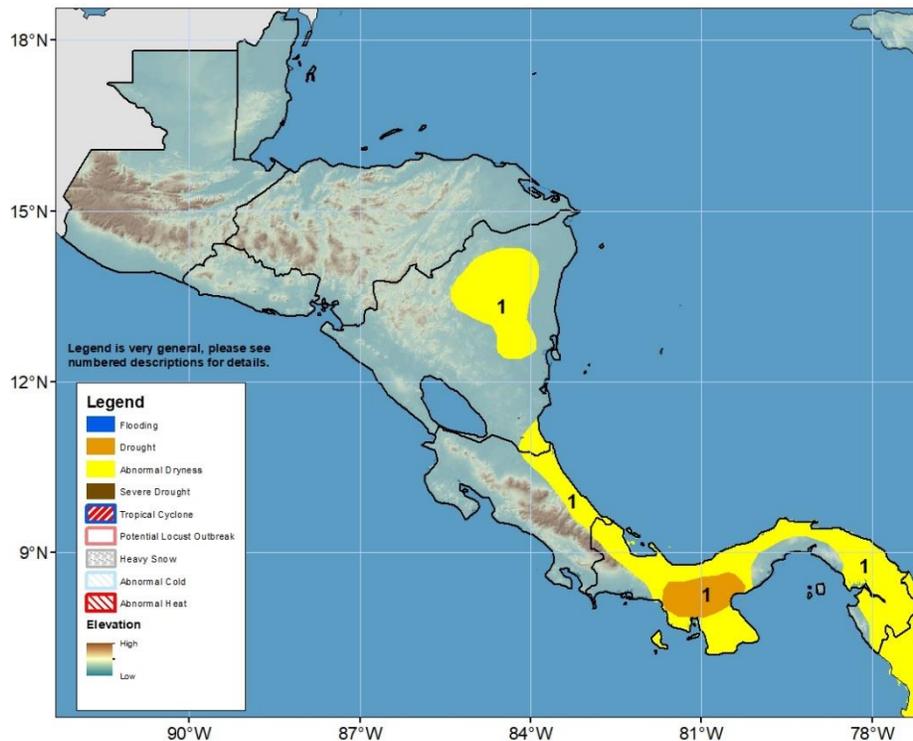


Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 1 February – 7 February 2024

Dry conditions observed and expected to continue in Central America during the next week



- 1) In the past seven days, little rainfall occurred across Central America, with the exception of light to moderate rain in parts of Guatemala, along Honduras' coasts, northwestern Nicaragua, and central Costa Rica. The lack of rainfall in the last week, coupled with abnormally-low rainfall in both the past 90 days and the past 30 days have resulted in persistent dryness across southern Central America. The rainfall deficits and above-average temperatures continue to affect the shipping industry in the Panama Canal due to below-average water levels in the Gatun Lake.

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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Below-average rainfall forecast in most places in Central America during the next week

During late January, dry conditions prevailed over Central America. However, light to locally moderate rainfall was received in northeastern Belize, parts of Guatemala, eastern Honduras, and central Costa Rica. This past week's rainfall was below-average in northern Guatemala, central and southern Belize, northeastern and southeastern Nicaragua, maintaining drier-than-average conditions over northern and part of south-central Guatemala, Belize, northeastern Nicaragua, and the Caribbean Littorals in Costa Rica and Panama over the past 30 days. Rainfall deficits ranged between 25-100 mm over these dry portions in Central America. Over the past 90 days, while cumulative rainfall totaled between 200-400% of the average across most places in northern Central America, rainfall accumulation varied between 25-80% of the average in south-central Guatemala, northeastern Nicaragua, eastern Costa Rica, and Panama. Although the latest Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) analysis showed near-average vegetation conditions throughout much of Central America, below-average conditions persisted over localized areas in south-central Guatemala due to a poor rainfall performance during the previous second rainfall season.

For next week, drier-than-average conditions, with little to light rainfall are forecast across Central America. The forecast, drier conditions are likely to increase accumulated, rainfall deficits further and worsen dryness in northern Guatemala, the Gulf of Honduras, northeastern Nicaragua, and the Atlantic Tiers of Costa Rica and Panama, which could impact winter cropping activities over some local areas. Meanwhile, strong winds and near-freezing to below-freezing temperatures are forecast in northern Central America due to passing cold fronts, increasing the risks for frosted crops and hypothermia for local residents over the higher terrains in western and central Guatemala.

