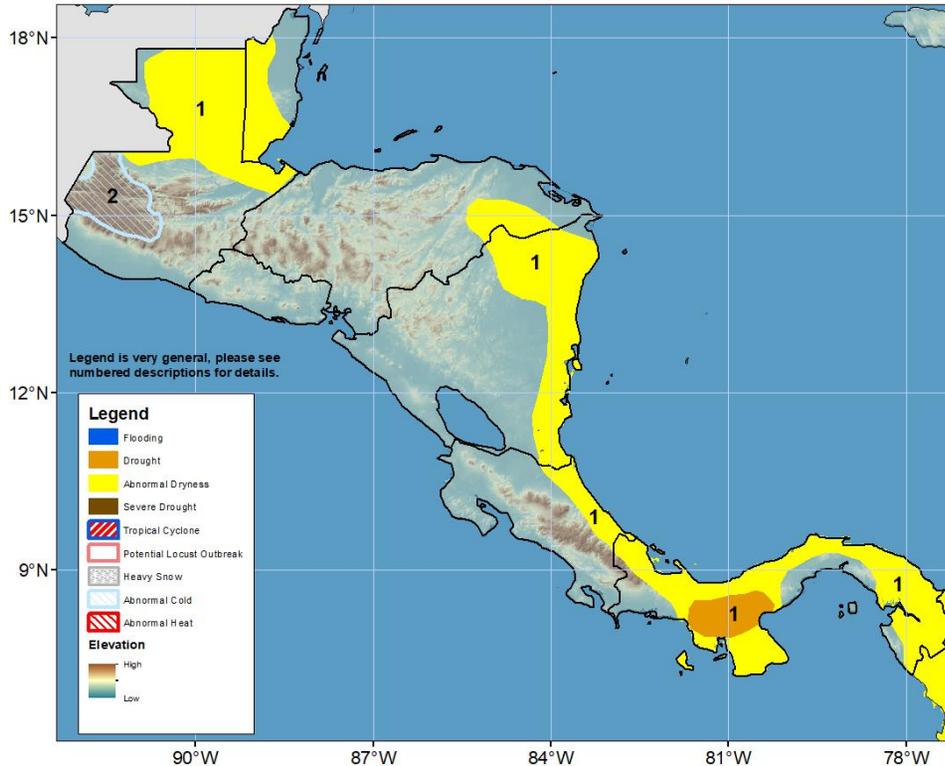


## Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET 15 – 21 February 2024

**Dry conditions are expected to continue in Central America.**



- 1) In the past seven days, light to locally heavy rainfall including the Caribbean Littorals in Honduras, the central Costa Rica, and parts of (coastal) northern and southwestern Panama. However, the lack of rainfall in both the past 30 days and 90 days have resulted in a long dryness across northern Guatemala, Belize, southeastern Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, and the Caribbean Tiers of Costa Rica and Panama. 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.
  
- 2) The forecast suggests that near-freezing to below-freezing temperatures would continue affecting western areas in Guatemala, including Huehuetenango, San Marcos, Quetzaltenango, Totonicapán, Sololá, Quiché, Chimaltenango, and surrounding areas.

**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](mailto: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](mailto:jverdin@usaid.gov)

### Next week light to moderate rainfall are expected in most Central America.

During the last week, most of Central America observed close-to-average conditions, except for a localized area in central Costa Rica that registered positive rainfall values between 25-100 mm. Few areas received light to locally heavy rainfall, including the Caribbean Littorals in Honduras, central Costa Rica, and parts of (coastal) northern and southwestern Panama. In these areas, rainfall values were between 10 mm and 150 mm. Meanwhile, over the past 30 days, rainfall deficits have ranged between 25-200 mm in portions of Guatemala, Belize, southeastern Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, eastern Costa Rica, and southern Panama. Further, cumulative rainfall over the past 90 days totaled 200-400% of the average in parts of Honduras, southwestern Nicaragua, and northwestern and central Costa Rica, while rainfall accumulation varied between 5-80% of the average in south-central Guatemala, El Salvador, western Honduras, northern Nicaragua, eastern Costa Rica, and Panama. The latest Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) analysis showed near-average vegetation conditions throughout Central America. In contrast, below-average conditions persisted in southern Guatemala due to poor rainfall during the past several months. Furthermore, near-freezing to below-freezing temperatures were registered in the higher terrains of western and central Guatemala.

For next week, the GEFS forecast suggests rainfall values from 10 mm to 50 mm in most areas in Central America, where the largest rainfall amounts are forecasted to happen in the eastern coastal regions of Belize and Costa Rica. Regarding anomalies, drier-than-average conditions will prevail for the coming week in the Gulf of Honduras, the Atlantic Tiers of Honduras, and Nicaragua. Meanwhile, near-freezing to below-freezing temperatures are forecasted to continue in the highly elevated regions of western Guatemala. These cold temperatures might impact crop development and increase the risk of hypothermia in vulnerable groups of residents who live there. In contrast, high temperatures and winds in the region might lead to increased wildfires in northern and southern Central America; however, agricultural burning activities might also trigger some of the wildfires.

### Week 1 GEFS Rainfall Total Forecast and GEFS Rainfall Anomaly Forecast (mm) 15 – 21 February 2024

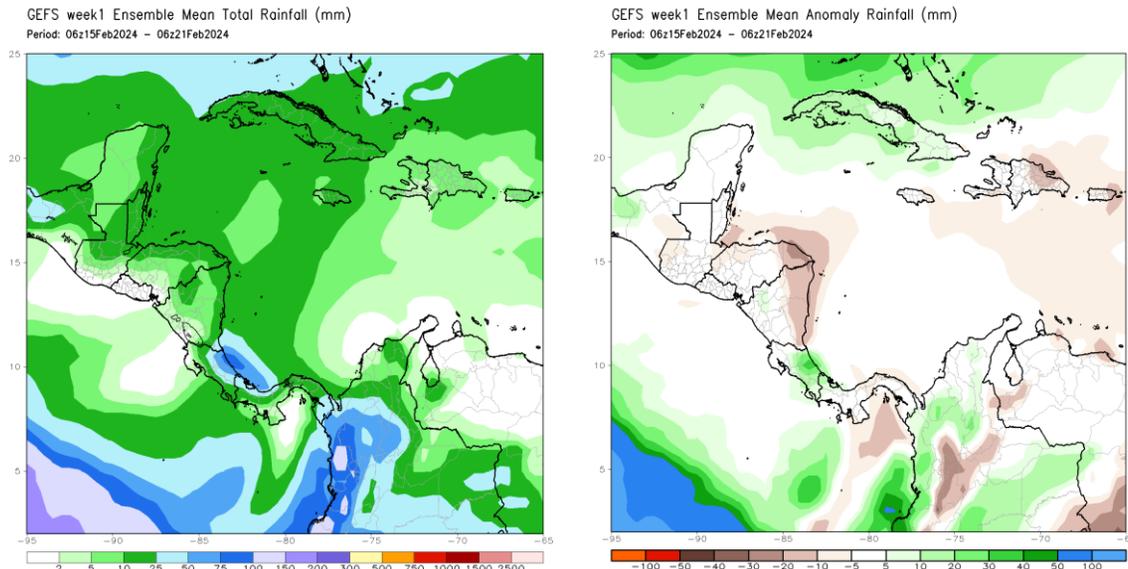


Figure 1: Source NOAA / CPC