

Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook For USAID / FEWS-NET

26 September – 02 October 2024

Floods are expected along western Central America.



1) Rainfall deficits during the past 30 and 90 days have resulted in abnormal dryness in eastern Guatemala and northwestern Honduras. The erratic and scarce rainfall is affecting vegetation health in these regions.

2) Moderate and heavy rainfall continued in Central American areas facing the Pacific Ocean, helping maintain saturated soils. A flood polygon has been extended across eastern Central America due to the forecast suggesting moderate to heavy rainfall during the outlook period. In addition, Hurricane John might bring heavy rain in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras coastal areas during the following days, exacerbating the soil moisture capacity.

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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Above-average rainfall conditions are expected along the coastal areas facing the Pacific Ocean.

During the last week, heavy rainfall with values that ranged from 50 mm to 200 mm was observed in much of Central America. The heavy downpours (> 100 mm) were registered in localized areas of western-central Guatemala, eastern Honduras, western and southern Nicaragua, and central Panama. These rainfall amounts yielded above-average conditions across the region, except in most of Guatemala, Belize, eastern Nicaragua, and southern Panama, which recorded below-average rainfall (25 mm to 100 mm below the mean). It has been reported that high rainfall rates have led to floods, landslides, and infrastructural damage in several parts of central and southern Guatemala. In addition, during the last 30 days, Belize, central-western Guatemala, most of Honduras, eastern and northeastern Nicaragua, central Costa Rica, and central Panama have been wetter than average (50 mm above the mean), while some areas of Guatemala, eastern Nicaragua, and southern Panama have observed significant deficits (100 mm to 200 mm below the mean). Furthermore, the 90-day rainfall analysis shows a near-average and positive percent of average rainfall for most of Central America. However, northern and eastern Guatemala, a local area in western Honduras, southern Nicaragua, and southern Panama, registered cumulative rainfall deficits between 25-80 percent of the average. Regarding vegetation, satellite products show near-average and favorable vegetation conditions in most parts of Central America; but poor vegetation in northern and southeastern Guatemala, eastern Honduras, and eastern Nicaragua.

Next week, GEFS forecasts suggest heavy downpours (> 100 mm) along the coastal areas facing the Pacific Ocean. Positive anomalies ranging from 40 mm to 100 mm are expected in eastern El Salvador, southwestern Honduras, and western Nicaragua. Rainfall has been continuously strong along the Pacific coastal areas. Therefore, flooding is likely to occur in these regions. Maximum temperatures between 15- 35°C are forecasted across Central America, with positive anomalies between 1°C-2°C in northeastern Guatemala, Belize, southeastern Honduras, and northeastern Nicaragua.

