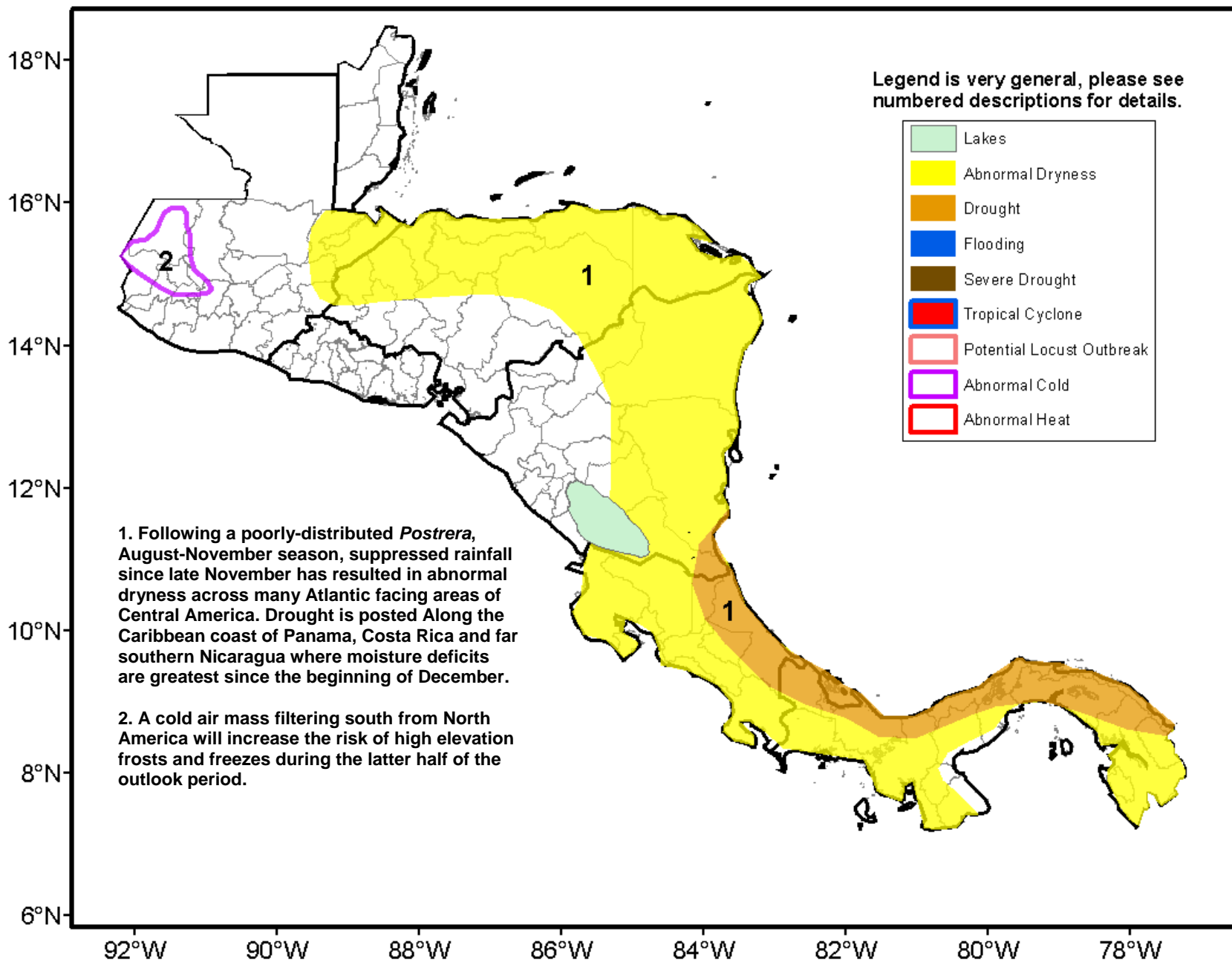




Climate Prediction Center's Central America Hazards Outlook January 17 - 23, 2019

An increase in rainfall was observed over parts of Belize and Honduras.



Dryness continues to strengthen over southern Central America countries.

Over the past week, an increase in rains over the greater Gulf of Honduras region was observed. Though rains were generally light to moderate across portions of Guatemala, Belize, and many areas of Honduras, totals as great as 53mm and 62mm were measured by gauges along the northern Honduran coast. This was welcome moisture for areas that have been a little dry over the Apante season so far. Conversely, limited rainfall amounts were again received further south across much of Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama, further extending the long dry spell. Since early December, seasonal Apante related moisture deficits continue to strengthen across southern Central America and the southern Caribbean, where many local areas have received less than a quarter, or even 5%, of their normal rainfall accumulation since December 1st. Much of the abnormal dryness follows a poor rainfall distribution since earlier this summer. Analysis of remotely sensed vegetation health indices reflects the poor rainfall performance with deteriorated ground conditions concentrated over many parts of Guatemala, Honduras, eastern Nicaragua, and Costa Rica which is likely to adversely affect cropping activities throughout the region. Vegetation indices have been surprisingly unaffected by moisture deficits in Panama thus far.

During the outlook period, models suggest rainfall will continue to be above average across the greater Gulf of Honduras region. More seasonable precipitation is indicated for southern Central American countries. However, it should be cautioned that models have done poorly there. Nighttime minimum temperatures are expected to be cooler than average over Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras, especially during the second half of the period. Sub-zero temperatures are likely in the highest elevations of Guatemala.

