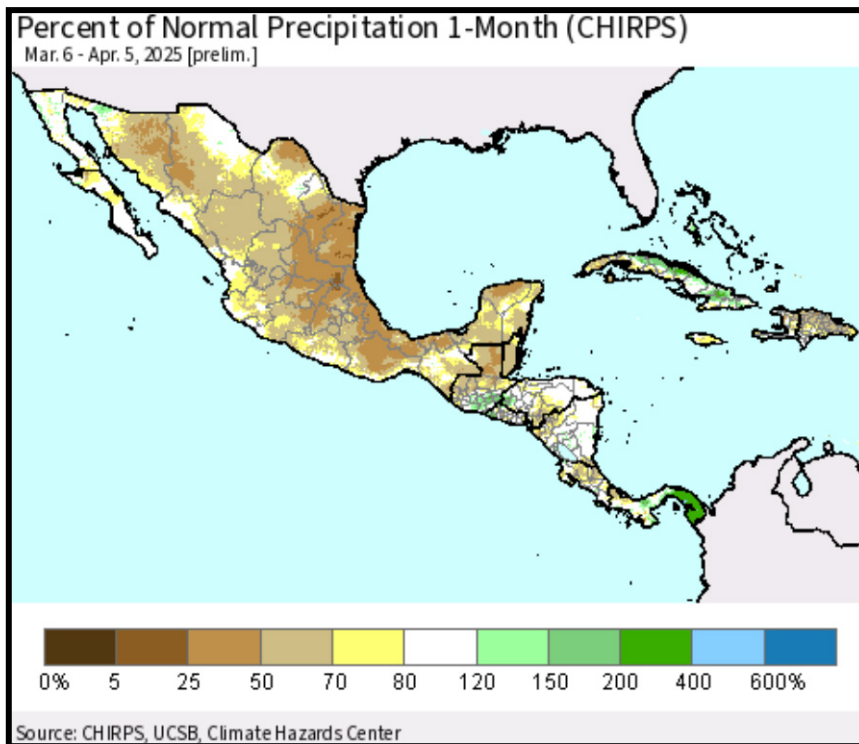


Mexico Drought Unlikely To Break Before Mid-May

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, April 11 (World Weather Inc.) – *Precipitation for Mexico was largely lower than usual during the past month. Drought prevailed in the northwestern, west-central, and north-central parts of the country due to the lack of rain. Abnormally dry pockets have also started popping up and expanding in several other locations in central and southern Mexico.* The lack of abundant precipitation has been favorable for maturing winter crops; however, production has been cut from many areas because of poor winter rainfall for dryland areas and poor water supply replenishment since drought began a year ago. Early season summer crop planting may be off to a slow start in southern production areas due to delayed seasonal rains. ***Weather patterns in North America are stagnating and unlikely to change for Mexico until the monsoon kicks in during May. Northern Mexico's best rainfall will not likely arrive until June.***

A large section of Mexico was drier than usual during the past month. Only a few pockets in southeastern, western, and northern Mexico received near normal precipitation



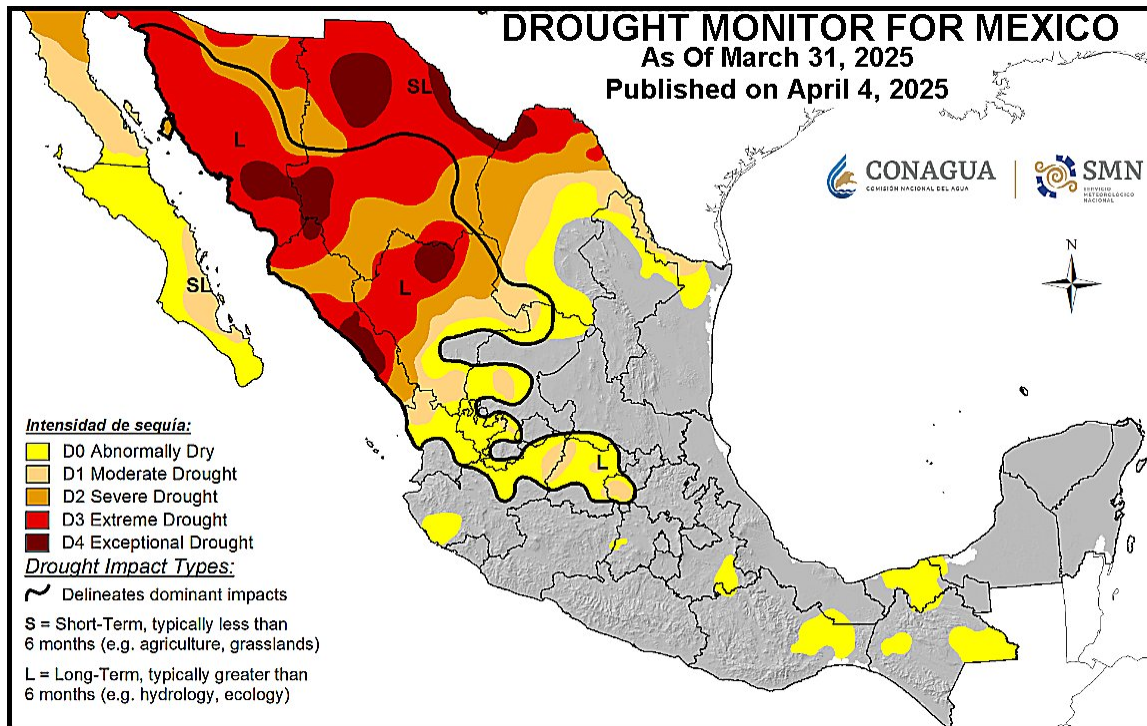
for the 30-day period ending April 5. Other locations received 25% to 80% of normal precipitation with drier pockets in east-central and northeastern Mexico.

Severe to exceptional drought (D2 to D4) was noted for a large section of west-central, northwestern, and north-central Mexico as of March 31. Several pockets in central and southeastern Mexico also saw abnormally dry pockets pop up,

which likely expanded in recent days due to the continued lack of rain.

The lack of rain in recent weeks has been beneficial for the earliest planted winter grains and oilseeds. These crops normally mature and get ready for harvest this time of year and conditions were generally good. Later-planted crops are still growing and in need of more rain, especially those that are rain-fed. The driest locations in west-central and northwestern Mexico represent some of the largest producers of winter wheat and corn, among other crops. Yields could be cut due to the drought. Production potentials are more favorable elsewhere in Mexico due to the availability of moisture, though timely rain is needed to ensure favorable conditions for late-season development.

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Planting of the summer grains, oilseeds, cotton, and other crops begins in the spring as the monsoon season approaches. Producers with ample moisture may begin planting in the coming weeks, though more widespread planting is not expected until later this spring and early summer when the monsoon begins.

Mexico will be dry or mostly dry through the end of next week. A strong high-pressure ridge will build over the country and limit the flow of moisture. Spotty rainfall will still be possible in the south, though any rain that occurs will be lost to evaporation. The Gulf of Mexico may then open and send moisture into portions of southeastern, east-central, and northeastern Mexico April 19 – 25. These areas will likely have a few opportunities for rain that will briefly lower drying rates. Other locations will remain dry or mostly dry during this time.

The temperature profile will trend near to slightly above normal for much of Mexico through the end of next week. Daytime highs will peak to the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit with portions of northwestern Mexico and pockets in northeastern Mexico often warming above 100 degrees. Temperatures will likely trend closer to normal April 19 – 25.

The lack of rain and warm to hot daytime temperatures will promote aggressive drying across Mexico through at least the end of next week. Rainfall during the second week of the outlook may provide some temporary relief, but no general improvement in soil moisture is likely. Drought will expand and intensify for much of Mexico outside pockets in the east through the end of April. Maturation and harvest conditions for the early-planted winter crops will advance swiftly. Late-season development for late-planted crops may otherwise be poor in areas with limited water resources in western and northern Mexico. Early-season planting of the summer crops may advance slowly as well.

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