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The Republic of Nicaragua

Hurricanes Eta and Iota
Urgent call for assistance

Overview

Central America has been severely affected by a record-breaking hurricane season, with the passage of Category 4 Hurricane Eta across the region at a speed of 225 km/h during early November 2020, followed by Category 5 Hurricane Iota about two weeks later with the strongest winds (260 km/h) experienced in 127 years. The rains, strong winds, flash flooding and storm surges triggered by the Hurricanes have affected about 5 million people across Central America and Mexico, an area already hit by years of erratic weather patterns and more recently by the effects of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the results of which are potentially catastrophic. The Government of Nicaragua has indicated that preliminary estimates of overall damages and losses due to the Hurricanes amount to more than USD 742 million (6.2 percent of the country's gross domestic product).

So far, about 40 percent of those affected are from Nicaragua – 3 million people mainly from the indigenous territories of the autonomous region of the North Caribbean Coast, Triángulo Minero, Matagalpa, Jinotega, Nueva Segovia, Rivas and Carazo, where artisanal fishing, forestry and agriculture have been significantly impacted. About 44 percent (19) of indigenous territories in the country were exposed to both hurricanes with a population of approximately 130 000 people.

The Hurricanes hit at the start of the lean season when food stocks are already traditionally low and have now been depleted. Moreover, reduced harvests are expected and livestock production (cattle, pigs and poultry) has been severely affected, with significant losses reported particularly in the autonomous region of the North Caribbean Coast.



to assist
130 000 people



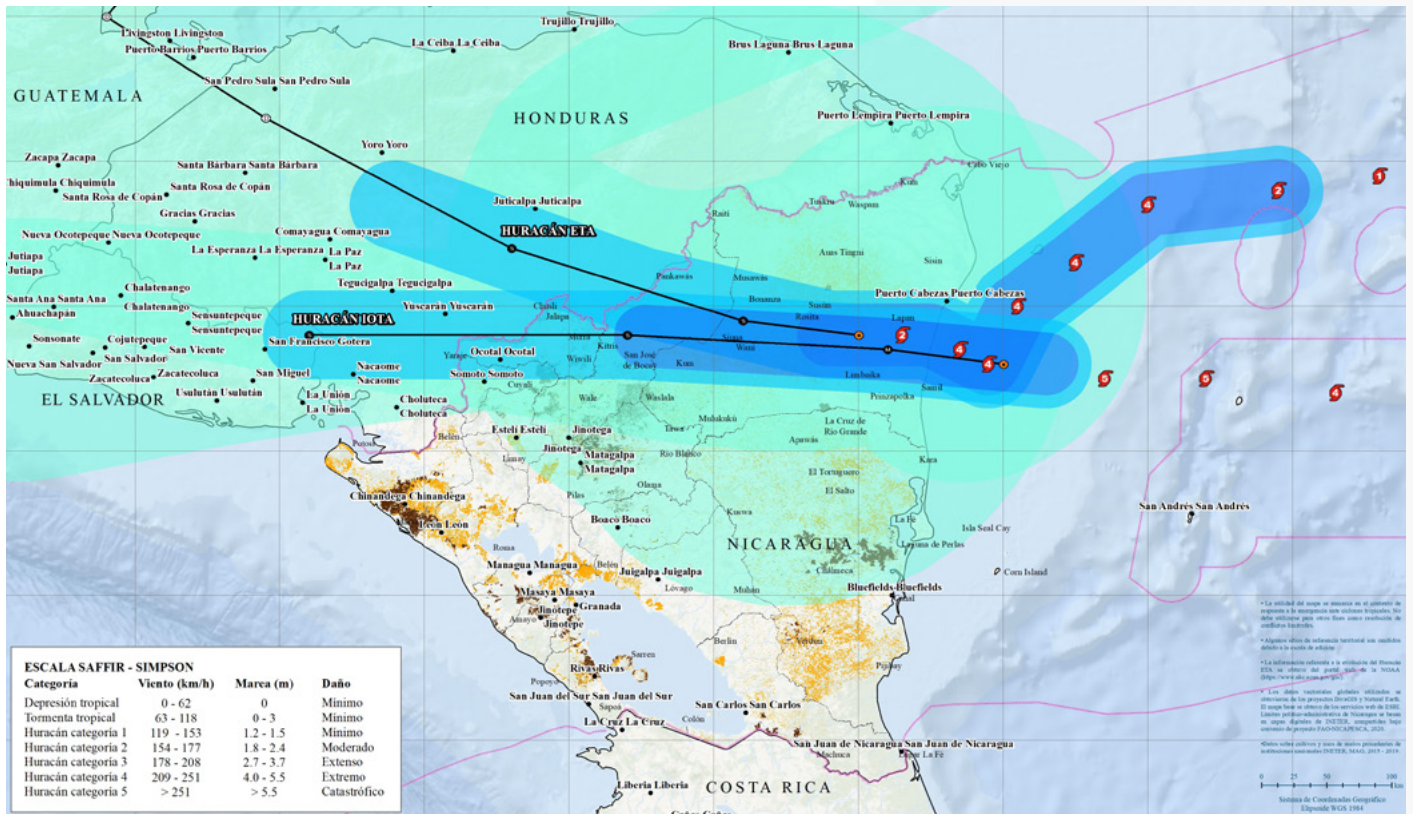
FAO requires
USD 6.4 million



period
**December 2020–
November 2021**



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Fishers have also lost their equipment, putting their livelihoods at risk. Vulnerable households, who mainly rely on agriculture, livestock and fishing as their main source of food and income, will likely face challenges in accessing basic needs that could lead to the adoption of negative coping mechanisms, including selling what's left of their productive assets or reducing the number of meals per day. Providing emergency agricultural assistance is thus crucial.

Planned activities

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) will carry out a rapid emergency response intervention identifying the immediate needs of the population affected by the Hurricanes, tailoring its activities to provide time-critical inputs, protect livelihoods and improve the food security of the vulnerable families in the autonomous region of the North Caribbean Coast and of communities in the Alto Wangki-Bocay in the Jinotega department. Targeted beneficiaries include people who rely on small-scale subsistence farming and artisanal fishing for their livelihood.

Impact

Increased livelihoods resilience of households affected by Hurricanes Eta and Iota, including of indigenous peoples and through a gender-sensitive approach.

Result

The livelihoods and food security of 25 000 rural households (130 000 people) affected by Hurricanes Eta and Iota in the autonomous region of the North Caribbean Coast and the communities of the Alto Wangki-Bocay in the Jinotega department are protected, rehabilitated and diversified.

Source: FAO, 2020.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of FAO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers and boundaries. Dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Situation analysis



1.8 million people affected in Nicaragua with damages in 56 municipalities



220 000 ha of permanent and annual crops lost



43 667 livestock (cattle, poultry, small ruminants, swine) lost



4 000 fishers lost their equipment and **USD 19.6 million** is the total estimated value of damages and losses to the fisheries sector

Output 1

The availability of and access to food in the indigenous territories of the autonomous region of the North Caribbean Coast and Alto Wangly are ensured.

Activities

- Provide crop seeds (bean, maize and rice) in time for the *primera* planting season.
- Provide livestock production support, including livestock re-stocking (pigs, poultry).
- Conduct trainings for emergency veterinary interventions to prevent the spread animal diseases and ensure the control of endemic animal diseases.
- Conduct training on biosafe disposal of animal carcasses that may increase after floods caused by the Hurricanes.
- Provide resources and technical assistance for the rehabilitation of seed processing and storage infrastructure.

Output 2

Livelihood support is provided to the most vulnerable small-scale farmers and fishers through the restoration of farming and artisanal fishing activities.

Activities

- Provide fishing gear and equipment (fishnets, crab traps, stingers, pots, longlines, baskets, thermoses, etc.) to artisanal fishers.
- Provide materials to repair artisanal boats damaged by the Hurricanes (pangas, boats, launches, cayucos, canoes, etc.) to resume production and trade activities.

Output 3

The capacities of government institutions (Ministry of Agriculture, Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology, Nicaraguan Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture, etc.) are strengthened for agricultural recovery.

Activities

- Provide technical support for needs assessments and detailed damage and loss evaluation, in close coordination with the *Sistema Nacional para la Prevención, Mitigación y Atención de Desastres* (SINAPRED) agriculture commission.
- Provide technical assistance for the development of an agriculture sector recovery plan, including strategies and requirements for the medium- and long-term rehabilitation of rural livelihoods.



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The combined effects of Hurricanes Eta and Iota, and of COVID-19 are expected to exacerbate vulnerabilities, with increased levels of food insecurity and malnutrition; as 30 percent of the working population relies on agriculture for their livelihoods, it is essential to provide emergency agricultural support to the most vulnerable, affected households.



Ongoing response

FAO is working in close collaboration with SINAPRED and other first responders who are focusing on providing water, food, shelter, sanitation and health related assistance.

Rapid needs assessments for the agriculture and fishery sectors are ongoing thanks to the release of Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities funds. Preliminary results point to a worsening situation with increasing numbers of people affected and dire needs. FAO is engaging with partners at regional and national levels to scale up resource mobilization efforts to maximize response activities to address the rising needs in the aftermath of the Hurricanes.

Partnerships

FAO will implement activities together with the Ministry of Agriculture and SINAPRED, and will be aligned to the Government's strategic actions and strategies on response and recovery. Close collaboration with other United Nations agencies and local Food Security Sector stakeholders will be ensured.

For progressive and safe animal re-stocking, partnership with regional and international organizations such as the Regional Organization for Plant Protection and Animal Health, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture and the World Organization for Animal Health is envisaged. Moreover, regular monitoring and assessment of zoonotic events will be undertaken through FAO's Emergency Management Centre for Animal Health in coordination with the team at headquarters and the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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