

CARIBBEAN DROUGHT BULLETIN

August 2015 | Volume II | ISSUE 3

Announcement

Below normal rainfall conditions continued in July over most of the northern Windward and Leeward Islands and across to the western Caribbean, including Belize, extending the drought conditions and impacts. Though rainfall quantities will continue to increase, below normal rainfall will most likely continue during the wet season. Drought warnings are recommended for much of the northern Windwards and Leeward Islands and parts of Jamaica and Belize as the end of the wet season approaches. Drought preparations should continue or begin in the forecasted hot-spot areas. Other countries should also monitor the situation closely.

Month at a Glance

Normal to below normal rainfall was experienced for the month in the islands of the eastern Caribbean. [Read more...](#)

Headline Impacts

There is a prevailing drought ravishing Anguilla resulting in ploughed fields being vastly uncultivated. ([The Anguillan](#))

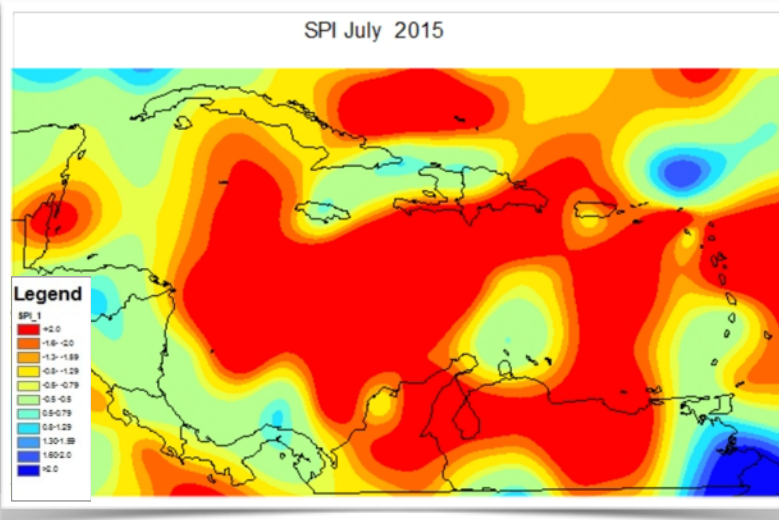
Drought in Antigua remains at severe levels. Surface catchments are nearing depletion. ([Antigua Clisec](#))

In Cuba, 75 percent of the island is enduring a drought that has killed cattle and destroyed thousands of hectares of crops. ([NYTimes](#))

More than 1.5 million people affected by water shortages in Puerto Rico. The amount of water supplying the island's reservoirs is at an all-time historic low. ([Washington Times](#))

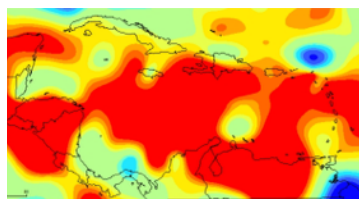
Farmers urged to step up use of drip irrigation during dry spell. ([St. Kitts & Nevis Observer](#))

There have been reports that crops including coconuts, cashews and oranges are withering in St. Lucia. ([Washington Times](#))

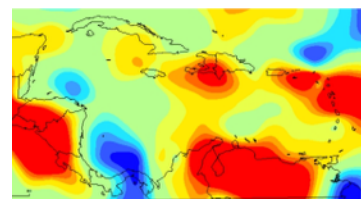


May-June-July Rainfall Summary

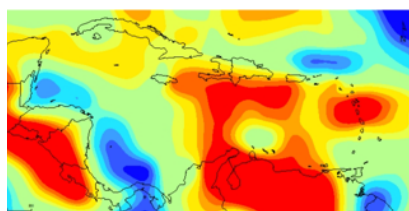
For the three-month period, the islands of the eastern Caribbean experienced normal to below normal rainfall. Trinidad was normal to slightly dry; Tobago, St. Vincent and Anguilla moderately dry; Barbados, Dominica, Antigua, St. Maarten and St. Croix exceptionally dry; and St. Kitts severely dry. Guyana was exceptionally wet. Aruba was slightly dry, but Puerto Rico severe to extremely dry. Conditions in the Dominican Republic ranged from normal in the north to exceptionally dry in the south, while in Jamaica, central areas were normal varying to extremely dry to the east and west. Grand Cayman was normal. Rainfall in most of Cuba was normal to slightly dry, apart from the extreme south that was moderately dry. Belize was normal in the south and slightly dry in the north.



MAY - JULY 2015
SPI 3 MONTHS



FEB - JULY 2015
SPI 6 MONTHS



AUG 2014 - JULY 2015
SPI 12 MONTHS

The Caribbean Drought & Precipitation and Monitoring Network (CDPMN)

The Caribbean Drought and Precipitation Monitoring Network was launched in January 2009 under the Caribbean Water Initiative (CARIWIN). The goal of CARIWIN was to increase the capacity of Caribbean countries to deliver equitable and sustainable Integrated Water resources Management (IWRM).

The concept was born out of the need to mitigate and respond to the creeping phenomenon, drought. Drought and the general precipitation status is monitored at the regional scale. Efforts are being made to enhance drought monitoring at the national level.

The Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF)

The CariCOF brings together climate experts and meteorological services in the Caribbean region on an operational basis to produce a monthly climate outlook. CariCOF interacts with sectoral users to assess the likely implications of the outlooks on the most pertinent socio-economic sectors. The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), in its role as WMO Regional Climate Centre in demonstration phase, coordinates the CariCOF process. [Read more...](#)

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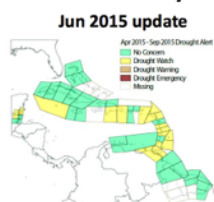
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Website: [CDPMN Drought Monitor](#) (Click here)

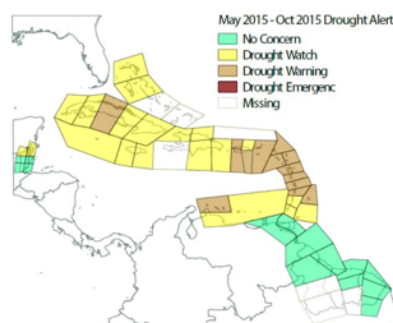
Drought Outlook for the End of October CariCOF's Drought Alert Map

SPI outlook May to Oct – areas under immediate drought concern?



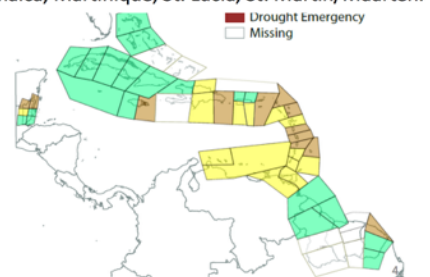
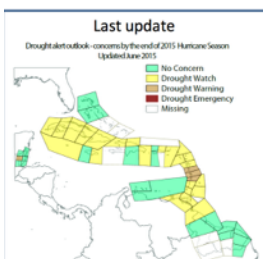
July 2015's update:
 Drought concern is noted in ABC Islands, Barbados, Central Cuba, US C'bean Terr., Leewards and Windwards (except Grenada, St. Vincent), where we issue a drought warning.

Some drought concern is further noted in all other areas of the Caribbean Islands (except Trinidad) and in N Belize.



Long-term drought outlook – drought concerns until end of the 2015 Caribbean hurricane/wet season (Nov 30th, 2015)?

- This 12-month SPI-based drought outlook uses observations until June 2015, with potential impacts on large surface water reserves and groundwater. In general, impacts are expected if the 12-month SPI is ≤ -1.3 (*very dry or worse* – ref.: CDPMN).
- Impactful hydrological drought by the end of the wet season is a concern across all the Antilles, from E Jamaica and Dom. Rep. going east- and southward, northern portions of Belize and northern French Guiana.
- A drought warning is issued for Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, N Belize, Dominica, E Dom. Rep., N French Guiana, E Jamaica, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Martin/Maarten.



Current Drought Situation

–Because of below-normal rainfall during the previous wet season and the dry season which ended, water shortages occur in portions of the Antilles.

–South-eastern Jamaica, Haiti, many of the Leeward and some of the Windward Islands are in longer-term drought and have suffered water shortages. After a very dry month of June (except in Cayman, Cuba, N. Dom. Rep. and Trinidad and Tobago), many of the Antilles islands, are currently facing shorter-term drought.

•Shorter-term (till October):

–We expect that a shorter-term drought situation may persist in the ABC Islands, Windward and Leeward Islands, but generally improve in other areas.

•Longer-term (November and beyond):

–El Niño is intensifying. El Niño often results in a late start and early end of the wet season (except for the NW Caribbean), and particularly so in the SE Caribbean. This may lead to drought concerns towards the next dry season. Areas with existing water shortages may not see full recovery in the wet season, in particular Dominica, E. Jamaica, Leewards, Martinique and St. Lucia. [\[Available for download\]](#)