



The Caribbean Regional Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF) Kingstown, St. Vincent May 29th – June 02nd, 2017

Concept Note

Addressing climate change and increasing climate variability have been made regional and national priorities by the heads of government of the Caribbean community. Climate variability and change, as exemplified by extreme weather and climate events, such as droughts, floods and tropical cyclones, continue to pose significant risks for the Caribbean region. These make early warning information systems critical components of preparedness, risk reduction and adaptation.

Regional Climate Outlook Forums (RCOFs), promoted by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) are active in several parts of the world. These RCOFs are critical for the development and effectiveness of early warning systems in that they provide real-time seasonal climate forecasts and interpretation across relevant time and spatial scales. Appropriate climate services, tailored to the Caribbean islands, will rely on such early warning information systems if the goals of supporting adaptation and disaster risk reduction are to be realized.

In June 2010, a workshop was convened to re-establish the Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum (CARICOF) in order to develop a sustained collaborative process that provides credible and authoritative real-time regional climate products. In February/March 2012 a CARICOF was held that consisted of three separate but complementary activities:

- A Technical Training Workshop that developed a draft seasonal (three-month) rainfall outlook,

Co-host:



Collaborators:





- A Partnership Workshop that brought together key partners and users of climate information and
- The Outlook Forum that discussed the rainfall forecast with users, which determined the final product.

Since the 2012 CARICOF, the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) has been coordinating climate forecasting activities leading to a consistently growing body of climate forecasters contributing to the monthly production of consensus-based seasonal climate outlooks, with engagement of the user community that allows awareness-building within those sector communities. At the 2012 CariCOF, it was also agreed that the bi-annual hosting of such forums, roving across the region, just prior to the beginning of the wet and dry seasons in the Caribbean, be pursued. Since 2012, CariCOF workshops were held in:

- Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St. Lucia and Dominica prior to the 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016 wet/hurricane seasons, respectively;
- Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis and Grenada for the Dry Season CariCOF - November to December 2014, 2015 and 2016.

These followed a similar agenda to that in 2012, but with the partnership workshop and forum merged into one General Assembly.

Additionally, climate variability and change occur on timescales ranging from sub-seasonal to seasonal and decadal and beyond, impacting the region's socio-economic sectors sensitive to climate, and making it necessary to develop effective Early Warning Information Systems Across Climate Timescales (EWISACTs). One of the areas of focus of the Programme for Building Regional Climate Capacity in the Caribbean (BRCCC Programme) is the development of sector-specific climate information, including forecast information, which can be particularly helpful to anticipate, prepare for and respond to climate-related risks and opportunities. To aid in this delivery, and guided by the Global Framework for Climate Services led by the World





Meteorological Organization(WMO), the region established the Consortium of Regional Sectoral EWISACTs Coordination Partners, which is conceived to be a key mechanism to champion the co-design, co-development and co-delivery of sector-tailored climate products and services in six priority climate-sensitive sectors (agriculture and food security, water, health, disaster risk reduction, tourism and energy) in the Caribbean. So far, regional partner institutions representing five of these sectors have signed on to an LOA to support the sector-specific climate services delivery. Another development under the BRCCC programme is the production of sector specific climate bulletins, so far tested for the agriculture, tourism and health sectors, and most recently the commencement of discussions of a water bulletin. In collaboration with Consortium partners, the development of sector-specific climate information is supported by research into index and product development.

CIMH and its partners also view the role of the media as significant for public awareness on critical weather and climate issues. This CariCOF will also focus on the capacity and education of media houses on weather and climate issues relevant to the Caribbean, and the types of appropriate messaging.

In collaboration with our partners the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) and the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the 2017 Wet/Hurricane Season CariCOF will take place from 29th May to 2nd June, 2017 in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The final two days of that week (1st-2nd June, 2017) are dedicated to showcasing the work of EWISACTS and its sector-specific climate services, and determining post BRCCC-Program strategies and how to sustain climate services delivery in the Caribbean.

Co-host:

Collaborators:

