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Environment and
Climate Change Canada

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The Caribbean Regional Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF) Georgetown, Guyana November 27th – 30th, 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:

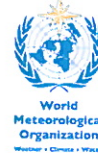


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- A Partnership Workshop that brought together key partners and users of climate information and
- The Stakeholder Outlook Forum that discussed the rainfall forecast with users, which determined the final product.

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, Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines prior to the 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 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 outlook forum merged into one General Assembly for stakeholders.

In collaboration with our partners the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Environment and Climate Change Canada, The Investment Plan for the Caribbean Regional Track of the Pilot Program for Climate Change (PPCR), The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF SPC), the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the USA, and the Government of Guyana, the WMO Regional Climate Centre (RCC) for the Caribbean housed at the CIMH will deliver the 2017 Dry Season CariCOF which will take place from 27th – 30th November, 2017 in Georgetown, Guyana.

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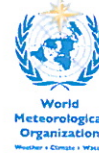


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As has become the norm for the dry season forum, much emphasis will be on the agriculture and water sectors. Training for meteorologists will take place from 27th – 28th November, and will (i) focus on dry spell forecasting and products, and (ii) the WMO's Climate Services Toolkit (<http://www.wmo.int/cst/>), as well as (iii) discuss a potential Caribbean agenda and approach to sub-seasonal forecasting.

Training will be followed by the Stakeholder General Assembly on 29th - 30th November, 2017. Apart from the signature activity of CariCOF – the delivery of the seasonal forecast and discussions on their implications and impacts – there will be some emphasis on sector climate information, and enhancement of sector related services. Further, after the devastation caused by two Category Five hurricanes in the Caribbean, it would be remiss of the Caribbean RCC not to place some emphasis on the now-ending 2017 hurricane season, its impacts and the relevance of weather and seasonal information for preparation and decision-making. Finally, there has been much focus between 2014 and 2016 on drought, with many Caribbean countries suffering from low water availability, and concerns particularly over shortages of potable water. To keep the discussion alive in preparation for the next drought period, whenever such may be in the future, the RCC will lead a discussion on drought management and planning, with the view to energizing the development of national drought plans across the region.

Co-host:



Collaborators:



