



A Joint Bulletin of the CTO, the CHTA and the CIMH

CARIBBEAN TOURISM CLIMATIC BULLETIN

for Tourism Businesses and Policymakers

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Purpose

This bulletin is a joint effort between the CTO, the CHTA and the CIMH to help tourism businesses and policymakers identify and prepare for favourable or inclement climate conditions in the Caribbean and source markets, before they occur. Use of this information can help to inform strategic and operational decisions related to the use of environmental resources, marketing, and enhancement of the visitor experience in the coming business quarter.

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Climate Advisories: Caribbean and Source Markets

The Caribbean is in the wettest part of the wet season. What should you do?



The months of August to October represent the **peak of the Atlantic rainy season**, which is noted for tropical storms and hurricanes. Forecasters advise a **higher likelihood of an above-normal season, with an increase in the predicted number of named storms and major hurricanes**. It could be the most active Atlantic hurricane season since 2010. Given the forecast of an above-normal Atlantic hurricane season, Caribbean destinations and individual hotels should **review their disaster preparedness and response plans and procedures** and make adjustments, as needed.



Most Caribbean territories will likely be very wet in the coming period, with the possible exception of Trinidad and Tobago which may be drier than usual for this time of the year. As a result, there may be more opportunities for outdoor activities during the period in Trinidad and Tobago than in other parts of the region. However, since we are very much in the Wet/Hurricane season, flooding is still very likely, particularly from individual severe weather events.



Outdoor activities may be disrupted by forecasted frequent rains in the islands north of Martinique. Tourism operators in these territories are advised to organize more indoor activities for tourists.



Flash flood potential, at times severe, is a concern throughout the region. In the event of flash floods, contamination of food and water supplies might occur, as well as, damage and/or loss of hotel property and national infrastructure.



Increasing rainfall however, should provide for more lush botanical gardens and forests which should improve the destination's outdoor flora and fauna experience.



Tourism operators in the central and northern parts of the Bahamas, extreme South & North West Belize, Grand Cayman, central Cuba, the Turks & Caicos Islands and Haiti should monitor water resources in view of persistent drought. Hotels in these territories should take precautionary measures such as rainwater harvesting and advise guests of these measures.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean and Source Markets

The Caribbean is in the wettest part of the wet season. What should you do? (Cont'd)



We are now in the **warmest part of the year with frequent heatwaves being possible** in most Caribbean territories. **Heat stress is a concern** for the most vulnerable (e.g. individuals with certain chronic diseases, the elderly and the young). Tourism practitioners are advised to prepare for an increase in the demand for cooling services and an associated increase in energy costs.



The sun's UV rays are likely to be dangerously intense in the upcoming period and particularly up until October. Tourists should be advised to frequently apply high SPF sunscreen lotion (preferably reef safe), and seek shaded areas between the hours of 10 AM and 4 PM.



Warmer sea surface temperatures have been observed throughout the Caribbean. **Slight coral paling has been reported on the west coast of Barbados.** A Bleaching Alert Level 1 (bleaching is likely) has been issued for Southwestern Cuba and Belize while bleaching warnings (bleaching is possible) have been issued for northwestern Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago. **Thermal stress conditions are predicted to be at bleaching levels from September to November.** A Bleaching Alert Level 1 (bleaching is likely) is forecast to be issued for much of the Caribbean at that time.

Summer is ending and Autumn is coming in source markets. What should you do?



Less sunny and cooler weather in the coming Autumn season in most northern source markets is likely to create a climate-driven increase in demand for Caribbean vacations. Despite the fact that there is currently little specific information in the seasonal climate forecast, tourism practitioners are advised to continue their marketing efforts in source markets, particularly targeting demographics that prefer to take advantage of a shoulder season vacation at an affordable rate.

Climate Outlook for the Caribbean and Source Markets

We are moving into the wettest time of the year. What do we expect for the Caribbean?

How wet?

As we continue into the wet season, we forecast that rainfall totals will be higher than usual, or usual in the Antilles (except Trinidad and Tobago), the Bahamas and Belize, but drier than usual, or usual in Trinidad and Tobago. Not much can be said for the Guianas at this time.

Moreover, we expect an increase in wet days and wet spells for the Antilles, the Bahamas and Belize. Flash flooding is a concern due to the possibility of extremely wet spells.

How dry?

Short-term drought is evolving in Haiti and might persist through October. Long-term drought is evolving in central Bahamas and may develop in Northern Bahamas.

How hot?

We forecast that night-time and day-time temperatures in the Caribbean will generally be higher than usual, or at least usual for this warmest time of year.

Surf's Up

Surfers, divers, fishers and marine craft operators should consult the 7-day wave forecast before planning activities.

Click here to access this product: <http://ww3.cimh.edu.bb/>

What do we expect in the source markets?

August marks the last of the summer months in source markets. With the beginning of the Autumn season in September, based on historical information, we expect less sunny and cooler weather in most northern source markets. The current temperature and precipitation forecasts provide no specific indication of seasonal climate beyond these historical expectations.

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Upcoming Events

- **September 6-8, 2017: Climate Smart Sustainable Tourism Forum (CTO), St. Kitts and Nevis**
- **October 2017: State of the Industry Conference (CTO), Grenada**



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Websites

Caribbean Tourism Organization:
www.onecaribbean.org

Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association:
www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com

Regional Climate Centre:
<http://rcc.cimh.edu.bb>

Disclaimer

This bulletin provides a broad overview of climate conditions up to 6 months in advance. It is based on insights drawn from CIMH's suite of technical climate information products. It is recommended that stakeholders should use this information in combination with nearer-term weather forecasts to guide operational decision making. The information contained herein is provided with the understanding that the CTO, the CHTA, and the CIMH make no warranties, either expressed or implied, concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability or suitability of said information. The bulletin may be freely used by the public with appropriate acknowledgement of its source but shall not be modified in content and then presented as original material.

Glossary

Definition of technical terms

Dry Spells – A period of a number of days to weeks during which rainfall is insignificant or far below the usual amounts for the time of year.

Heat Stress – A body exposed to excessive heat to such extent that it can no longer regulate its temperature and cool itself down, experiences heat stress. Heat Stress can take the form of discomfort, injuries and illnesses (e.g. including heatstroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps or heat rashes).

Heat wave – A multi-day period of continuous extremely high temperatures or feel like temperatures. Such heat waves tend to cause acute heat stress.

Long-term (meteorological) drought – A rainfall deficit over a total period of 12 months.

Short-term (meteorological) drought – A rainfall deficit over a total period of 3 to 6 months.

Wet Day – A 24 hour period during which the rainfall total is at least 1 mm.

Wet Spell – A multi-day period during which the rainfall total is large enough to cross a certain threshold.

Extreme wet spell – 3 consecutive days of which the total rainfall is extremely high and can increase the potential for flash flooding.

Definition of sub-regions

The Guianas – French Guiana, Guyana and Suriname.

US Caribbean Territories – Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands.

Leeward Islands – Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, Montserrat, Saba, St. Barthélemy, St. Eustatius, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Maarten and St. Martin.

Windward Islands – Dominica, Grenada, Martinique, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Lesser Antilles – Leeward and Windward Islands along with, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

Greater Antilles – Cayman Islands, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica and Puerto Rico.

ABC Islands – Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao

Lucayan Islands – The Bahamas, Turks and Caicos Islands.