



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

CARIBBEAN TOURISM CLIMATIC BULLETIN

for Tourism Businesses and Policymakers

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Photo Credit: Cayman Islands Department of Tourism



Purpose

This Bulletin is a joint effort between the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (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. It is recommended that industry stakeholders use the forecast climate information for the upcoming period (June - August 2018) presented in this Bulletin in tandem with weather forecasts (1-7 days). This suite of information can inform strategic and operational decisions related to the use of environmental resources, marketing, and enhancement of the visitor experience.

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Looking back: February to April 2018



Most areas observed at least the usual rainfall totals, in particular in south-western Dominica and Grenada, where rainfall was extremely high. As a result, **long-term drought is not currently a major issue in the Caribbean region**. Wetter than usual conditions continued to contribute to tourism recovery, particularly in Dominica through the replenishment of foliage and agricultural produce that was damaged during the 2017 Hurricane Season. Uncomfortably hot temperatures were rare before April when the region started transitioning from the cool to the hotter half year.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean

June through August marks: 1) part of the long dry season in the ABC Islands, 2) the early wet season in Belize and the Lesser Antilles, 3) the summer portion of the wet season in the Greater Antilles, and 4) the transition from the wet to the dry season in the Guianas. What should you do?



The **2018 Wet/Atlantic Hurricane Season** officially starts June 1st. Severe weather systems are expected to affect Caribbean territories, which can come with a range of hazards. Tourism operators are advised to monitor weather advisories issued by the National Meteorological Services and other information provided by the National Disaster Management Organisations, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (<http://cdema.org/>) and the US National Hurricane Center (<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>).



Climatically, June to August forms the first half of the Caribbean wet season with a fair bit of **wet days** and longer **wet spells**, but at the same time still a fair bit of dry days and dry spells. In the event of extreme wet spells, of which usually up to one or two occur during these three months (except in the ABC Islands), flash floods, contamination of food and water supplies might occur, and proper planning / contingencies for these scenarios are highly encouraged.



Although **drought** is not expected to be a major concern throughout the region, there is still the possibility of drier than usual conditions. Tourism facilities should continue to engage in precautionary water conservation practices (e.g. rainwater harvesting and repairs to leaky pipes) and advise guests of these measures across Belize and the Caribbean islands.



Night-time and day-time **temperatures** in the Caribbean are forecast to feel increasingly uncomfortably hot by August, though probably less so than in recent years. There is also the possibility of **heatwaves** across the region, particularly in August. Tourism practitioners may experience an increase in demand for cooling/hydration services (e.g. AC use and drinking water) in the upcoming period, and persons (i.e. both staff and visitors) should be sensitised to the importance of staying properly hydrated.



The **UV index** will be very high on sunny days. There is a high risk of skin damage on sunny days due to intense UV radiation. Tourists should be encouraged to apply high SPF sunscreen lotion regularly (preferably reef safe), and seek shaded areas between the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM. Staff should also be mindful to minimise skin exposure during these times, and to wear sunscreen if they frequently work outdoors.



Thanks to slightly cooler ocean temperatures than in recent years, **coral bleaching** is not presently expected to be a widespread issue from June to August, with the possible exception of The Bahamas.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean Source Markets

June through August marks the summer season in the Caribbean's major source markets.
What should you do?



Although most source markets will experience generally warm weather, northern Europe does not experience the amount of sunshine sought by many tourists. Tourism operators are therefore recommended to focus on enhanced marketing efforts to attract visitors, and to differentiate themselves through package offers, memorable customer service, and activities that take advantage of the pristine natural environments on offer.

USA & CANADA



EUROPE



Photo Credit: cia.gov

Climate Outlook for the Caribbean and Source Markets

Except in the ABC Islands, it is the wet season. What do we expect for the Caribbean?

How wet?

Rainfall totals from June to August are likely to be the usual or drier across Belize and the islands (*medium to high confidence*). By contrast, the Guianas are forecast to be at least as wet as usual (*medium confidence*).

How dry?

Drought or excessive dryness is not forecast to be a major concern during this period (*high confidence*). Despite this, some unusual dryness may occur during these months.

How hot?

Night-time and day-time temperatures in the Caribbean are forecast to be slightly cooler than usual and amongst the coolest in recent years (*high confidence*) making the summer heat likely more tolerable than in recent years (*medium confidence*).

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?

There are no distinct climate patterns currently emerging for source markets for the upcoming period.

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Upcoming Events

- **May 30 – Live media updates (via Zoom and FB Live) from CTO member countries that were impacted by hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, as well as their plans for the upcoming hurricane season.**

June 27 – Crisis communications webinar (via Zoom) for CTO member countries. To participate, please register at: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1V4T9rY_QxmS5IMx7BCV0g

Photo Credit: Antigua & Barbuda Tourism

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 3 months in advance. It is based on insights drawn from CIMH's suite of technical climate information products and industry insights from the CTO and the CHTA. 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 and distributed 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

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.