



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

# CARIBBEAN TOURISM CLIMATIC BULLETIN

for Tourism Businesses and Policymakers

Sept-Oct-Nov 2018 | Vol 2 | Issue 3



# 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 seasonal climate forecast information for the upcoming period (September - November 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: May to July 2018



Rainfall totals were above average in portions of the Bahamas, Cuba and the Guianas, but below average in Barbados, northern Belize, southern Hispaniola, portions of the Leeward Islands and in Tobago. Despite local dryness, long-term drought has not been, and continues not to be a major issue in the Caribbean region at this time.



Hot 'feels-like' temperatures were experienced from May to July with some places in the Greater Antilles, notably in Jamaica, experiencing heat discomfort in July.



# Climate Advisories: Caribbean

September through November marks: 1) the late wet season in Belize and the Caribbean Islands, 2) the transition to the wet season in the ABC Islands, and 3) the dry season in the Guianas. What should you do?



The **2018 Hurricane Season** officially runs until November 30th, but storms and hurricanes can occur beyond the official end date. Severe weather systems, which can come with a range of hazards, including high winds, landslides, flash floods, among others, are expected to affect Caribbean territories. Tourism operators are advised to monitor weather advisories issued by the National Meteorological Services and other information provided by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (<http://cdema.org/>) and the US National Hurricane Center (<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>). At all times, tourism operators should maintain a state of readiness, including communication plans and response protocols to deal with sudden eventualities.



Climatically, September to November forms a part of the Caribbean Wet Season with frequent **wet days** and longer **wet spells**, but at the same time, **dry days** and **dry spells** are still expected during this period. Usually, up to two **extreme wet spells** occur during September to November. Extreme wet spells may coincide with thunderstorms and high winds, and may result in flash floods, land slippage, power outages and possible contamination of food and water supplies. Therefore, proper planning / contingencies for these scenarios is imperative.



Although **drought** is not expected to be a major concern throughout the region, there is still the possibility of drier than usual conditions, notably in Antigua, northwestern Belize, Cayman and St. Kitts. 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 on an ongoing basis.

# Climate Advisories: Caribbean Cont'd



Night-time and day-time **temperatures** in the Caribbean are forecast to feel uncomfortably hot in September, though evidence suggests it will probably be less so than in recent years. There is also the possibility of heatwaves across the region, particularly in September. 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 initially be very high on sunny days, but will decrease towards November. 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 September to November, with the possible exception of the north-east coast of Cuba.

# Climate Advisories: Caribbean Source Markets

September through November marks the autumn season in the source markets. What should you do?



Most source markets will experience fewer and fewer spells of sunny and warm weather throughout the autumn. 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 Guianas, it is the wet season. What do we expect for the Caribbean?

## *How wet?*

Rainfall totals from September to November are likely to be the usual or drier across the ABC Islands, Belize, the Guianas and the Lesser Antilles (medium confidence). By contrast, The Bahamas and Cayman Islands are forecast to be at least as wet as usual (medium confidence).

## *How hot?*

Night-time and day-time temperatures in the Caribbean are forecast to be slightly cooler than in most recent years, making the September (and October) heat likely more tolerable than in recent years (medium confidence).

## *How dry?*

Drought or excessive dryness is not forecast to be a major concern during this period (high confidence), but should be monitored closely in particular in northern Belize, the Cayman Islands and the Leewards.

## *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

- **October 1-2 - CTO's Regional Climate Smart Training and Sensitisation Workshop.** Atlantis Resort, Paradise Island, Nassau, The Bahamas.
- **October 3-5 - CTO's State of the Caribbean Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC).** Atlantis Resort, Paradise Island, Nassau, The Bahamas. For information and registration visit: <http://sotic.onecaribbean.org>



Photo Courtesy of the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism & Aviation

## Websites

Caribbean Tourism Organization:  
[www.onecaribbean.org](http://www.onecaribbean.org)

Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association:  
[www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com](http://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

**Seasonal climate forecast** - the guidance offered by a forecaster or forecast centre on the climate conditions during the coming months.  
NB: This forecast information pertains to the 3 months highlighted in the Issue.

**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.

**Dry day** - A 24 hour period during which the rainfall total is less than 1 mm.

**Dry spell** - A succession of at least 7 consecutive dry days.

**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.