

Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter - January to March 2026

For climate information specific to your country, please consult with your national meteorological service.

CARI^{COF} outlooks speak to recent and expected seasonal climate trends across the Caribbean in general.

BRIEF SUMMARY: September 2025 to March 2026

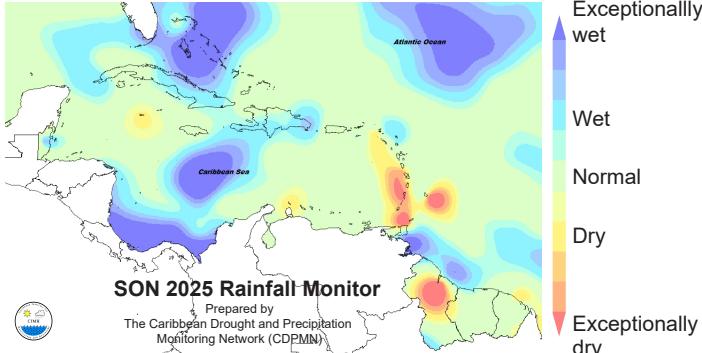
September to November 2025: Slightly above-average Tropical North Atlantic ocean temperatures intensified heat discomfort during the tail end of the 2025 Caribbean Heat Season. Drought developed across the Windward Islands during their peak of the Wet Season, as well as in a few other Caribbean locations. This stood in stark contrast with record-wet conditions in parts of The Bahamas.

January to March 2026: This part of the Caribbean Dry Season includes its annual peak in March and the continuation of the long Dry Season in the southwestern third of the Guianas. February further marks the transition from the secondary Wet Season into the Short Dry Season in the remainder of the Guianas. It also marks the Cool Season through February. Continued, unusual warmth in the Tropical North Atlantic Ocean coupled with a waning weak La Niña in the Pacific implies: (i) a slower decrease in severe weather activity, particularly through January in the Guianas, resulting in *high* potential for flooding, flash floods, cascading hazards and associated impacts there; (ii) short dry spells increase in frequency; (iii) comfortable temperatures through February, with episodes of heat discomfort likely limited to inland portions of Belize, the Guianas and Trinidad in March; (iv) drought impacts in the ABC Islands, the Windward Islands, in southwest Belize and in Grand Cayman.

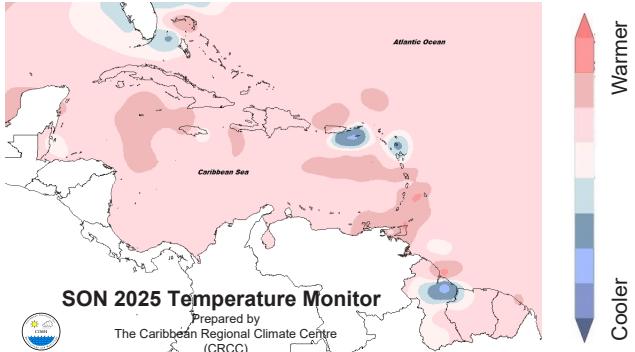
LOOKING BACK:

Sept. - Oct. - Nov. (SON) 2025

Observations



RAINFALL: Parts of northern Guyana, southeast Barbados, Windward Islands very dry; Central & NW Bahamas, eastern Dominican Rep. and SE Trinidad very wet.



TEMPERATURE: Northern Bahamas, Barbados, Grand Cayman, northwest Puerto Rico, Trinidad & Tobago, the Windward Isls. close to 1°C warmer than usual; Antigua, parts of N Guyana and St. Croix cooler than usual.

Notable Climate Records in SON 2025:

WET: One location in The Bahamas reported record-high rainfall totals (~225% of average) for this period.

DRY: No location reported record-low rainfall totals for this period.

HOT: 1 location in The Bahamas, 2 in Guyana, reported record-high mean temperatures.

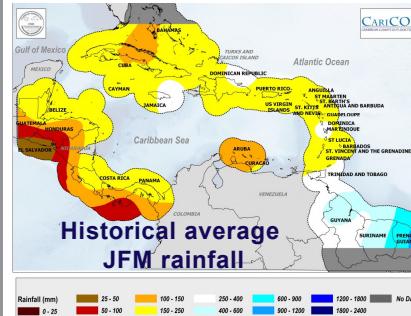
More at <https://carogenv2.cimh.edu.bb/app/stats/>

find out more by using the clickable images and headings or visit rcc.cimh.edu.bb

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WHAT NEXT?

Rainfall patterns January - February - March (JFM)



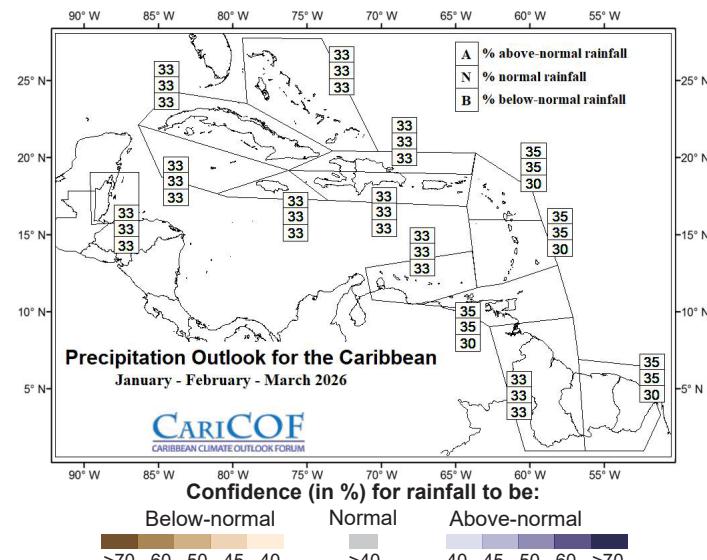
Belize: Jan - start of dry season; occasionally still wet. Feb to Mar - dry season. Mostly without heavy rainfall.

C'bean Islands north of 16°N: Jan to Mar - sunny days and some days with showers.

C'bean Islands south of 16°N (except ABC Islands): Jan to Mar - sunny days and some days with showers.

ABC Islands: Jan - wet season ending. Feb to Mar - generally dry.

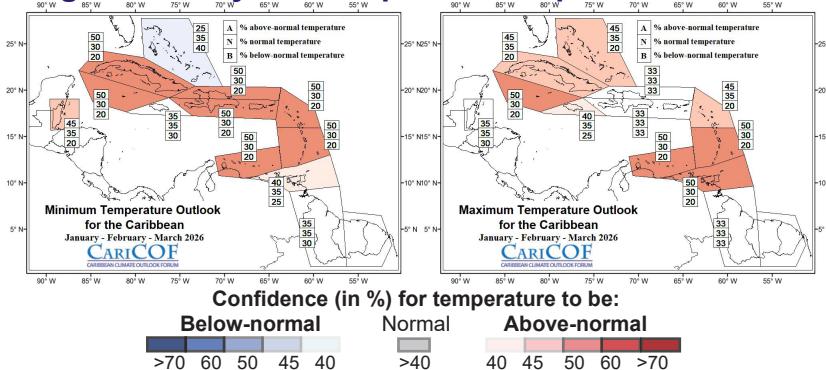
JFM 2026 Rainfall Outlook



Little information on rainfall totals from January to March is found in the forecast at this time other than that widespread record-low or record-high rainfall totals are less likely for this period.

White areas show where the forecast indicates little information on rainfall totals.

Night- and daytime temperatures up to March



JFM night-time and daytime temperatures, as well as humidity will *likely* be at least as high as usual throughout the Antilles islands and Belize (*medium confidence*). Episodes of hazardous heat stress across a wide section of the population are not expected during this period, with the possible exception of inland areas in Belize, southern Guiana and Trinidad.

Wet days/spells & flash flood potential in JFM

What usually happens from January to March?

- Number of wet days: roughly 15-30 (ABC Isl.: 10-25; northeastern Guianas: 20-50).
- # of wet spells: up to 3 (ABC Isl.: 1-4; Guianas: up to 4), of which up to 1 is very wet (ABC Isl.: up to 2; northeastern Guianas: up to 3).
- # of excessively wet days: >2 in northeastern Guianas; 1-3 in The Bahamas, S Belize, S Guyana, mountainous areas in the Antilles; up to 1 elsewhere.

Forecast and Implications up to March 2026:

- High to extremely high* potential for long-term flooding, flash floods and related hazards in Belize, the Guianas and mountainous areas in the Antilles, *moderate* potential in other areas.
- Faster depletion of large water reservoirs and soil moisture in the ABC Islands, the coastal Guianas and the Lesser Antilles.
- The number of wet days is to increase towards March, though *possibly* slightly slower than usual, still resulting in a decrease in outdoor activity disruptions, but increasing wildfire potential.

Drought conditions

Lastest drought situation: *Moderate* (or worse) short-term drought has developed in Aruba, SE Barbados, Grand Cayman, Dominica, Grenada, (as of Dec. 1st, 2025) N Guyana, Martinique, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent; *severe* (or worse) long-term drought in Aruba, SE Barbados, SW Belize, Cayman Islands, Central & Western Cuba, Grenada, N Guyana, W Jamaica, Martinique, St-Barts, St. Croix, St. Vincent.

Short-term drought
(at the end of Mar. 2026)

Short-term drought *might possibly develop or continue* in ABC islands, W Belize, Dominica, Martinique, NW Puerto Rico,

Long-term drought
(at the end of May 2026)

Long-term drought is *imminent* in Grenada *evolving* in SW Belize, Grand Cayman, Dominica, Martinique, Saint Lucia and *might possibly develop or continue* in ABC islands, SE Belize, St. Kitts and St. Vincent.

BRIEF CLIMATE OUTLOOK - April to June 2026

This period marks the transition into the 2025 Heat Season in April or May, the Wet Season in May or June and the Atlantic Hurricane Season in June. An unseasonably warm Tropical and Subtropical North Atlantic, combined with ENSO neutral conditions are forecast for this period. Temperatures are set to become increasingly uncomfortable by April and May, and *likely* higher and with more humidity into the 2026 Heat Season than usual. The risk of severe weather impacts from intense shower activity, including flooding, flash floods, and cascading impacts should be *moderate* or *high* by May with the likely exception of the ABC islands. Dry season impacts might linger and be exacerbated by increased evapotranspiration in areas affected by unusual heat, particularly where drought is evolving. *Detailed outlooks for AMJ 2026 are available at rcc.cimh.edu.bb/caricof-climate-outlooks*

What influences the next season?

El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)

Recent observations: Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) in the Eastern Equatorial Pacific are 0.5-1°C below average, i.e., indicative of weak La Niña conditions.

Model forecast and guidance: The forecast models suggest a return to ENSO neutral conditions in JFM (~65% confidence) and AMJ (~65-80% confid.).

Expected impacts on rainfall and temperatures: La Niña conditions are often associated with increased heavy shower activity and rainfall totals in the southeastern half of the Caribbean, as well as a (much) wetter secondary wet season in the coastal Guianas and a drier than usual early dry season in the northwestern Caribbean.

Climate conditions in the Tropical North Atlantic and Caribbean

Recent observations: SSTs around the Caribbean and in the subtropical North Atlantic are 0.2-1°C warmer than usual.

Expected conditions: Models are forecasting persistently warm SST anomalies of 0.2-1°C above average in JFM and in AMJ around the Caribbean region.

Expected impacts: Warm SSTs in and around the Caribbean tend to contribute to higher air temperatures with above-average humidity, seasonal rainfall totals, an increased frequency of extreme rainfall and increased tropical cyclone activity through the end of the year. The likelihood of extreme rainfall is higher than usual, even in the Dry Season.

Climate outlooks - background

The Caribbean Climate Outlooks are prepared by the Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF). The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology, in its role as WMO Regional Climate Centre, coordinates the CariCOF process. Contributors to the Outlooks are the Meteorological Services from the region.

The Precipitation and Temperature Outlooks are issued in the form of a map, which shows regions where the forecast rainfall or temperatures have the same probabilities to be:

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Above-normal (A) | - within the wettest/hottest third of the historical record |
| Near-normal (N) | - within the middle third of the historical record, i.e. a range called the 'usual' |
| Below-normal (B) | - within the driest/coldest third of the historical record |

CariCOF Outlooks offer consensus-based information averaged across multiple territories. In some cases, individual national results may differ from region wide results. To get information on your specific country context, please consult your National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and/or any national level bulletins they may provide.

DISCLAIMER

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