

Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter - May to July 2026

For climate information specific to your country, please consult with your national meteorological service.
CariCOF outlooks speak to recent and expected seasonal climate trends across the Caribbean in general.

BRIEF SUMMARY: January to July 2026

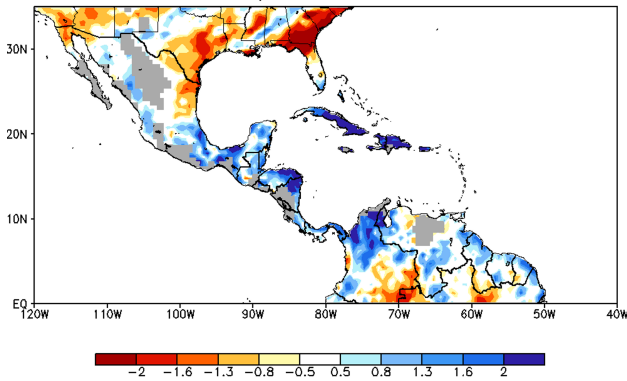
January to March 2026: The core of the Caribbean Dry Season and tail end of the Cool Season, mostly devoid of excessive heat, still recorded above-average air temperature, exacerbating dryness in the Lesser Antilles and resulting in long-term drought centred around the Windward Islands. By contrast, Belize, the Greater Antilles and the coastal Guianas observed unusually high rainfall totals.

May to July 2026: ENSO neutral conditions in the Pacific are forecast to transition to a significant El Niño by July. This, combined with unusually warm waters near to and north of the Caribbean, but seasonably warm waters in around the southern reaches imply: (i) a Caribbean Heat Season with heatwaves gradually ramping up, and night- and daytime temperatures *possibly* matching MJJ 2024 records in the northwest of the region; (ii) high evaporation rates, frequent short dry spells and drought continuation in many areas in the eastern and southern Caribbean, thus increasing wildfire potential through May or longer; (iii) while rainfall frequency could increase more slowly into the Wet Season than in most years, shower intensity should rise towards June, resulting in *high to extremely high* potential for flooding, flash floods, cascading hazards and associated impacts. Intrusions of dusty Saharan air will *likely* be frequent.

LOOKING BACK:

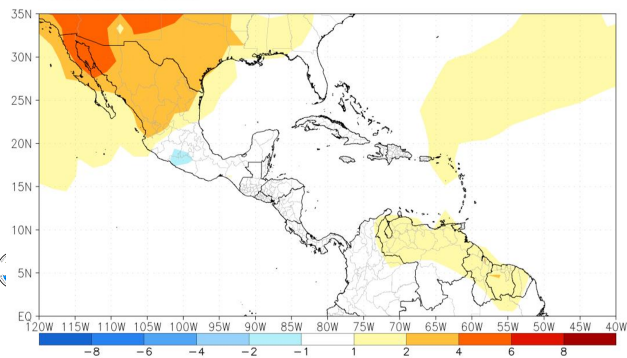
January - February - March (JFM) 2026**

CMORPH ADJ 00Z SPI 3mo
January 2026 - March 2026



RAINFALL: Belize, Central and Southern Cuba, coastal Guianas, Hispaniola, Jamaica, Puerto Rico very wet.

NCEP/NCAR Reanalysis Maximum Temperature Anomaly (degC)
Period: 01Jan - 31Mar



TEMPERATURE: Most areas in the Guianas and the northern part of the Leeward Islands more than 1°C warmer than usual.

** The Caribbean RCC is upgrading its SPI and temperature monitors at this time. The usual map format will become available soonest.

Notable Climate Records in JFM 2026:

WET: No location reported record-high rainfall totals for this period.

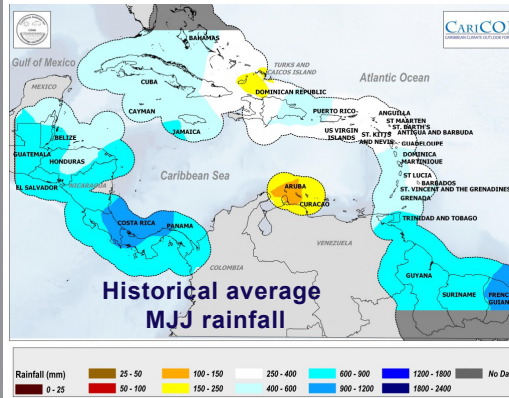
DRY: No location reported record-low rainfall totals for this period.

HOT: No location reported record-high temperatures for this period.

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

WHAT NEXT?

Rainfall patterns May-June-July (MJJ)



Belize & C'bean Islands north of 16°N:

May & Jun - usually frequent heavy showers.

Jul - wet season, often including a mid-summer dry spell.

C'bean Islands south of 16°N (except ABC Islands):

May - end of dry season.

Limited spatial extent and duration of heavy showers; occasionally very wet.

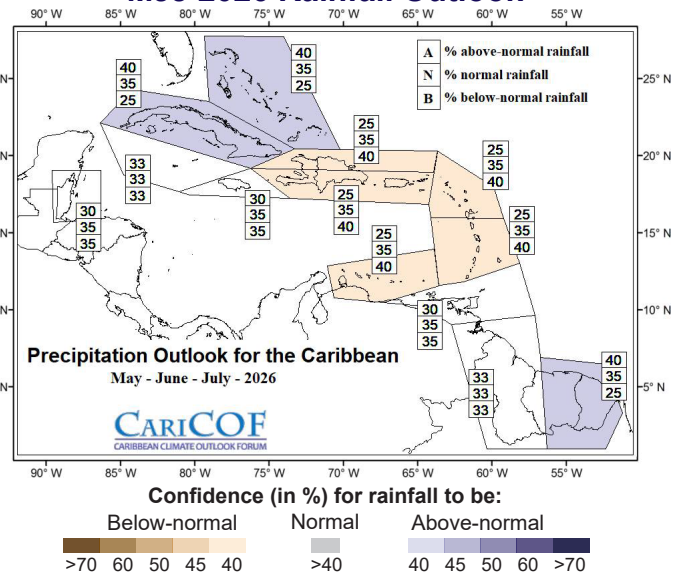
Jun & Jul - early wet season.

Increasingly heavy showers.

ABC Islands: May to Jul - mostly dry.

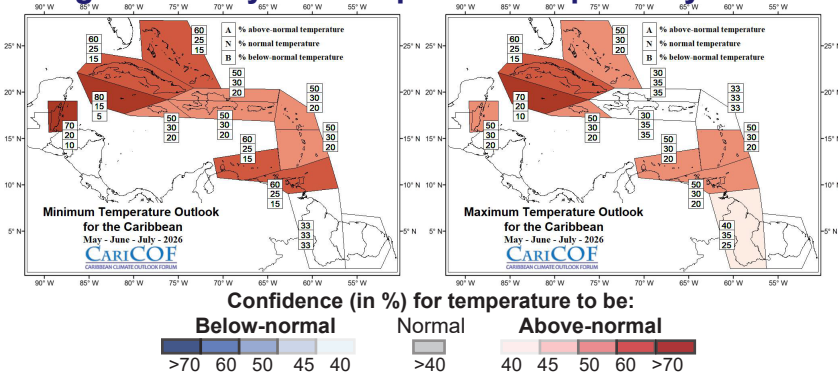
Guianas: May to Jul - long wet season; heavy showers are frequent.

MJJ 2026 Rainfall Outlook



Rainfall totals from May to July are *likely* to be the usual or more in The Bahamas, Cuba and eastern parts of the Guianas, but the usual or less in the ABC Islands, Hispaniola, the US Cbean Territories and the Lesser Antilles (*medium confidence*). White areas show where the forecast indicates little information on rainfall totals.

Night- and daytime temperatures up to July



MJJ night-time and daytime temperature will *likely* be higher than usual in most areas. Episodes of hazardous, extreme heat with heatwaves could ramp up into July. The Guianas and wind-exposed areas in Windward Islands will *unlikely* experience long-lasting heatwaves. Elsewhere, significantly *increased risk* exists, with frequent hot spells.

Wet days/spells & flash flood potential in MJJ

What usually happens from May to July?

- Number of wet days: roughly 20 to 40, (ABC Isls. 5-15; Guianas: 45-65).
- # of wet spells: 1 to 5 (Guianas: 4 to 7), of which 2 to 3 are very wet are very wet (ABC Is. up to 1; Guianas: 1 to 5).
- # of excessively wet days: at least 7 in the Guianas; 4 or 9 in mountainous areas of Belize and the Caribbean Islands, 2 to 5 in small/low lying islands.

Forecast and Implications up to July 2026:

- The potential for flooding, flash floods, related hazards and compound or cascading impacts due to excessive rains will be *high to extremely high* in most areas except the ABC Islands.
- Water recharge rates in surface reservoirs and rivers will *likely* accelerate slower than usual in Belize and the Antilles.
- A slower than usual increase in wet days into July dampens the increase in rainfall disruptions of outdoor activities, slowly builds up soil moisture and reduces wildfire potential into July.
- *An anticipated El Niño will tend to reduce rain impacts.*

Drought conditions

Lastest drought situation: *Moderate* (or worse) short-term drought has developed in Antigua, the northwest and northern Bahamas, French Guiana, St. Kitts, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and Suriname; *moderate* (or worse) long-term drought in Aruba, southern Belize, western

Short-term drought (at the end of July 2026) Short-term drought is evolving in Grenada and *might possibly develop or continue* in other parts of the Windward Isls., the ABC Isls., Antigua, Barbados, NW & SE Belize, Grand Cayman, W & E Cuba, St. Kitts, Trinidad & Tobago.

Long-term drought (at the end of May 2026) Long-term drought is *imminent* in Grenada and Saint Lucia; *evolving* in the ABC islands, SW Belize, Martinique, St. Kitts, St. Martin, St. Vincent; and *might possibly develop or continue* in N Bahamas, Barbados, SE Belize, Dominica, N Dom. Rep., Guadeloupe, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago.

BRIEF CLIMATE OUTLOOK - August to October 2026

This period marks the annual peak of the Caribbean Wet Season and Heat Season, as well as the Atlantic Hurricane Season. Ocean temperatures are forecast to remain unseasonably warm around the Caribbean, especially in the far north, where record levels as experienced in 2023 and 2024 are possible. Meanwhile, confident forecasts suggest a transition into (*likely strong*) El Niño conditions in the Pacific. Near-record high air temperatures are expected, including recurrent, significant heat stress, peaking during heatwaves. The *risk* of severe weather impacts, incl. flooding, flash floods, and cascading impacts is expected to be *high*. Hurricane season activity should peak in September. However, should a strong El Niño manifest, more intense drought and heat, but less frequent than usual severe weather and tropical cyclone activity may ensue, especially in case intrusions of dusty Saharan air are very frequent. *For temperature and precipitation outlooks for ASO 2026, please visit 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 have warmed to near average, i.e., ENSO neutral conditions.

Model forecast and guidance: The forecast models suggest a *likely* transition into to El Niño conditions by MJJ (~60-85% confidence), further developing or continuing into ASO (~90% confid.).

Expected implications: El Niño conditions that develop in summer are often associated with reduced tropical cyclone and reduced shower activity across the Caribbean, but exacerbated heat and air humidity, including heat waves.

Climate conditions in the Tropical North Atlantic and Caribbean

Recent observations: SSTs near-average south and east of the Caribbean, but 0.5-2°C warmer than usual in the subtropical North Atlantic.

Expected conditions: Models are forecasting persistently warm SST anomalies of 0.25-1°C above average in MJJ and increasing in most areas to 0.5-2°C above average by ASO.

Expected implications: 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. The likelihood of extreme rainfall is higher than usual.

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.

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