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

CARIBBEAN TOURISM CLIMATIC BULLETIN

for Tourism Businesses and Policymakers

June–August 2026 I Vol 10 I Issue 2

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 (June-August 2026) 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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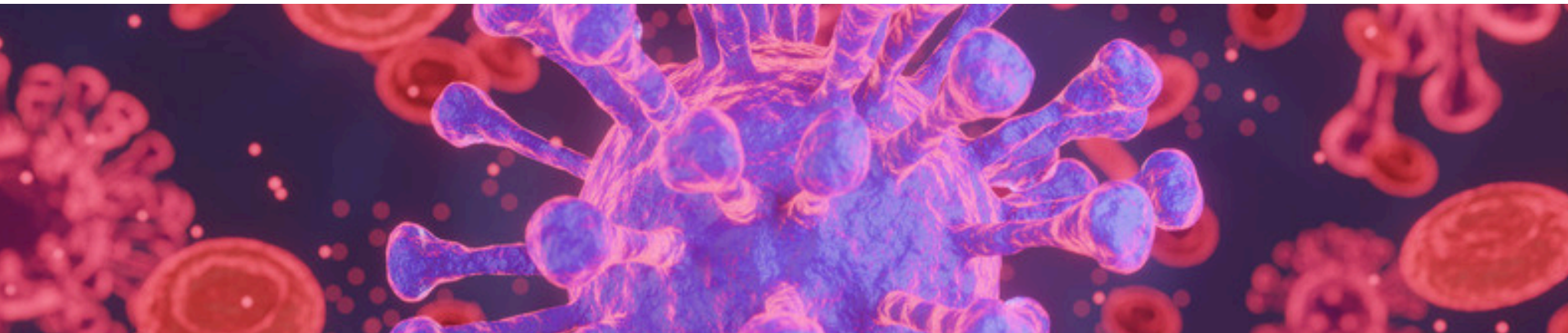
CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT & VISITOR HEALTH

Climate risk management linked to enhancing visitor health and safety, remains a critical factor in ensuring tourism sector resilience and managing the overall visitor experience. Tourism interests across the region should be prepared to deal with weather and climate emergencies in addition to ongoing concerns related to managing respiratory issues and dengue, as well as other possible threats as they arise.

The CTO, CHTA, and CIMH will continue to closely monitor the situation.



Climate Advisories: Caribbean

June through August forms part of the Caribbean Heat Season and 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 **2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season** officially starts on 1 June. Severe weather events can occur at this time and come with a range of hazards, including high winds, landslides, long-term flooding, flash floods, coastal flooding, among others.

The **Caribbean Heat Season** – characterised by the recurrence of heatwaves and hotter night-time and daytime temperatures – usually peaks toward late-August (except in the Guianas, where the Heat Season starts with the onset of the long dry season in August).

This season is also typically characterised by a progressive increase in **intense shower and thunderstorm activity**, as well as the number of wet days and wet spells, but a decreasing number of dry days and dry spells towards the end of August in many of the Caribbean Islands and in Belize. The resulting increase in surface moisture quickly decreases wildfire potential and the concentration of local dust in the air.

Intrusions of **dusty Saharan air** will likely be frequent and, while over a certain area it may inhibit tropical cyclone activity over that area, but exacerbate humid heat and deteriorate air quality.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean

This year, an **El Niño event*** is unfolding and strengthening in the tropical Pacific Ocean, meaning ocean temperatures in the eastern Tropical Pacific are substantially warmer than average. This year's El Niño event is *likely* to be classified as *strong* or even *very strong*. Unless ocean temperatures in and around the Caribbean are (near-)record warm, strong El Niños typically are the dominant driver of climate variability between different years.

By changing the amount of heat in the ocean and atmosphere across the tropics, El Niño:

1. increases the chance of drought while decreasing rainfall frequency - particularly in the Lesser Antilles and the Guianas, but only during summer in The Bahamas and the Greater Antilles,
2. decreases Atlantic Hurricane Season activity - particularly after August,
3. increases the number of hot and sunny days - with the year after the onset of a strong El Niño often ending up with (near-) record heat,
4. and increases the chance for an early, abrupt onset to the wet season in the year after the El Niño starts.

*Because El Niño can spark multiple episodes of climate extremes in many regions of the world, tourism operators are advised to consult official sources of El Niño (and La Niña) monitoring and forecast information, such as the CTO/CHTA/CIMH Tourism-Climatic Bulletin or the WMO El Niño/La Niña Updates found at: https://community.wmo.int/site/knowledge-hub/programmes-and-initiatives/climate-services/wmo-el-ninola-nina-updates).

Climate Advisories: Caribbean

At the same time, upper ocean temperatures currently are and are forecast to remain warmer than average around and north of the Antilles, adding heat and humidity to the atmosphere in our region, particularly in The Bahamas, Cuba and Jamaica. Ocean heat fuels intense shower and tropical cyclone activity. Hence, the above-average temperatures in the north may increase the chance for development and rapid intensification of storms. By contrast, chances of significant tropical cyclone activity early on in the Hurricane Season are reduced in the Lesser Antilles where water temperature is cooler than it has been in recent years, with very low risk of a record-early category 4 or 5 hurricane like Hurricane Beryl.

The forecast for June to August 2026 further suggests:

Region-wide, the unusually warm Caribbean Heat Season of 2026 will feature episodes of intense **heat stress** ramping up towards August, particularly in The Bahamas, Cuba and Jamaica where record-breaking summer heat is a distinct possibility. Therefore, tourism practitioners should expect a significantly **higher demand for cooling/hydration services** (e.g., AC use and refrigeration use, use of pools and showers, and drinking water) than usual for the period, and should advise their staff and guests accordingly in the upcoming period.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean Cont'd

Overall, the **2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season** is forecast to *potentially* be less intense with *irregular* bouts of activity. Forecasts estimate **8-16 named storms** (i.e., tropical storm, hurricane or major hurricane), including approximately **3-7 hurricanes**, of which around **1-3** may intensify into a major hurricane (i.e., category 3, 4 or 5 on the Saffir-Simpson scale) over the entire season (*medium to high confidence*). However, CIMH predicts 3-10 named storms through the end of August compared to the historical average of 5 (*medium confidence*). And, with the waters around Cuba, the Bahamian archipelago and north of the Greater Antilles being unseasonably warm, the possibility of rapidly intensifying storms is of particular concern in the northern Caribbean. Indeed, devastating hurricanes have tracked through The Bahamas in 1965 (Betsy) and 2015 (Joaquin) during strong and very strong El Niño years, respectively.

Seasonal **rainfall amounts** are forecast to *very likely* be the usual or less across The Bahamas, Belize and the Antilles (*medium to high confidence*), but likely the usual or higher in coastal French Guiana (*medium confidence*). While a majority of locations may record **fewer showers** than usual, when it does rain, the intensity is forecast to still be as high as usual during the **2026 Caribbean Wet Season** (*medium confidence*). Intense showers are beneficial for drought relief and the reduction of wildfire risk in currently affected areas of the Lesser Antilles - particularly in Barbados, St. Kitts, and many of the Windward Islands -, as well as for the progressive recharge of water reservoirs. However, **excessive rainfall** occurrence translates to a *high* to *extremely high potential* for **flooding, flash floods, cascading hazards & impacts** (except in the ABC Islands).

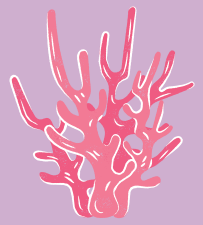
Climate Advisories: Caribbean Cont'd

Severe weather systems related to tropical cyclones, as well as heavy showers may affect Caribbean territories repeatedly. Tourism operators are advised to **constantly monitor and abide by weather advisories** issued by 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. Frequent weather updates are required and, therefore, ought to be regularly monitored to indicate when an uptick of activity is expected to occur.

Even though this part of the Caribbean Wet Season is likely to end up drier than usual for many, **drought concerns** by the end of August in the Caribbean are few. However, tourism facilities should continue to enhance/upgrade their water conservation practices, as well as rainwater harvesting and repairs to leaky pipes, etc., and advise staff and guests of the need to reduce water wastage on an ongoing basis to mitigate the impacts of potential drought towards the end of the year.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean Cont'd

In view of the very *high* to *extremely high* exposure to **harmful UV light** on sunny days, visitors and staff 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. Outdoor tourism operators and staff should also be mindful to minimise skin exposure during these times, and to wear sunscreen and protective clothing when they work outdoors.



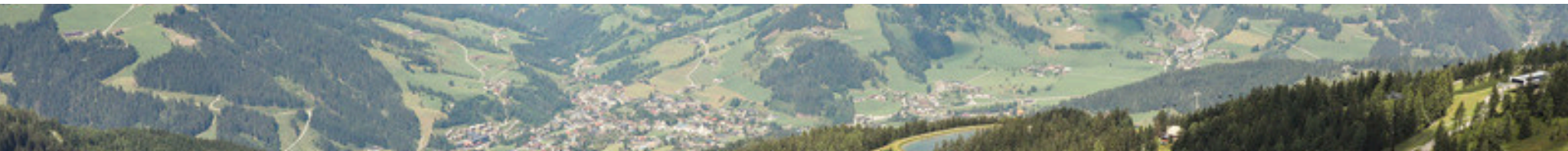
The possibility of marine heatwaves triggering **coral bleaching** is *unlikely* through July, but may ramp up from there on out, with a greater risk in the far northern Caribbean. The forecasted sea surface temperatures will *possibly* produce a long period of heat stress after July, ultimately reducing the chance of recovery of previously bleached corals. Therefore, it is imperative to minimise runoff of pollutants into coastal waters and to encourage the use of reef-safe sunscreen by guests and locals alike. This can increase the survival chances of coral reefs. Until early August, this is also a good season to engage in coral reef restoration activities, especially in destinations where there is an on-going standalone program or partnership between tourism practitioners and coastal managers.

Climate Advisories: Caribbean Source Markets

June to August marks the summer season in the source markets. What should you do?

Source markets tend to experience the warm and sunny summer conditions vacationers are seeking at this time, with the exception of northern Europe. Tourism operators are therefore recommended to focus on enhanced marketing efforts to attract visitors. Additionally, they should differentiate themselves through innovative package offers, memorable customer service, and activities that take advantage of the unique cultural heritage, gastronomy, and pristine natural environments on offer.

Furthermore, inbound Tour Operators are recommended to monitor the weather forecasts in the source markets during this season. They should be on the lookout for reports of inclement summer weather in Canada and northern Europe, as well as reports of wildfires causing a deterioration in air quality in Canada, the Northern US and the Mediterranean tourism markets. They should also be on the lookout for reports of widespread wildfires and the ensuing reduced air quality in the archipelago of Southeast Asia, and market the generally pure air in the Caribbean markets.



Surf and Sargassum Outlook

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/

Sargassum Outlook

Tourism operators may consult the University of the West Indies / Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (UWI/CERMES)'s Sargassum sub-regional Outlook Bulletin for the Eastern Caribbean or the monthly University of South Florida (USF)/NASA Sargassum Outlook Bulletin for the entire Caribbean before planning activities. Click here to access the latest UWI/CERMES product: https://www.cavehill.uwi.edu/cermes/projects/sargassum/outlook-bulletin.aspx.

Click here to access the USF/NASA product: https://optics.marine.usf.edu/projects/SaWS.html.

A visually easy to interpret forecast for the next one to six months is offered by The Sargassum group at the Laboratoire d'Études en Géophysique et Océanographie Spatiales (LEGOS) and can be found at: https://www.legos.omp.eu/sargassum/sargassum-old-viewer/.

Additionally, a Sargassum resource guide is available from the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST) and can be accessed here: https://caribbeanhotelandtourism.com/publications/

Additional resources and publications for Sargassum management are also available from CTO here: https://www.onecaribbean.org/our-work/sustainable-tourism-dept/sargassum-resources/

Contact Us

Narendra Ramgulam
Deputy Director, Sustainable Tourism, CTO
Email: ramgulamn@caribtourism.com

Loreto Duffy-Mayers
CHTA
Email: loreto.duffy-mayers@un.org

Dr. Roché Mahon
Social Scientist, CIMH
Email: rmahon@cimh.edu.bb

Dr. Cédric Van Meerbeeck
Climatologist, CIMH
Email: cmeerbeeck@cimh.edu.bb

Upcoming Events

No upcoming events

Websites

Caribbean Tourism Organization:
www.onecaribbean.org

Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association:
www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com

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

Glossary

Seasonal climate forecast - the guidance offered by a forecaster or forecast centre on climate conditions during the coming months. Forecast information in this Bulletin pertains to the 3 months highlighted in the Issue.

El Niño - a naturally occurring climate pattern associated with large-scale weakening of the trade winds and warming of the ocean surface temperatures in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean.

Short-term drought – A rainfall deficit over a total period of 6 months.

Long-term drought – A rainfall deficit over a total period of 12 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, with increased flash flood potential.

Caribbean Heat Season - most heatwaves and the associated spikes in heat stress occur between April or May and October in the Caribbean

Caribbean Cool Season - occurs between December and February or March when the Caribbean experiences comfortably cool weather

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.

For more technical climate terms: https://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/glossary-of-terms/