

Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter - July to September 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: March to September 2026

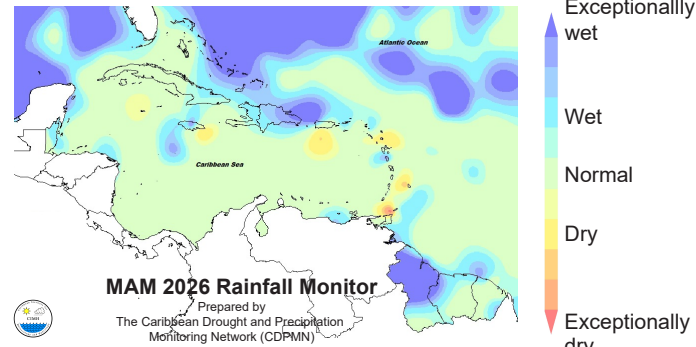
March to May 2026: The second half of the Caribbean Dry Season and transition into the Heat Season featured increased evaporation rates due to strong trade winds. Along with rainfall deficits, this exacerbated surface dryness leading to long-term drought and wildfire risk in several countries, particularly in the Windward Islands. Apart from the far north of the region, temperatures were seasonable.

July to September 2026: During the summer portion of the Caribbean Wet Season, El Niño is strengthening and water around the Caribbean steadily warming, implying: (i) increasingly intense humid heat into the peak of the Heat Season in September, culminating in recurrent heatwaves, esp. in the far north; (ii) *irregular* bouts of Atlantic Hurricane Season activity through August, *likely* followed by somewhat muted peak season activity in September; (iii) slower than usual alleviation of lingering drought into September in the Lesser Antilles; (iv) slower than usual increase in rainfall frequency than in most years; (v) the expected occurrence of excessive rainfall events leads to *high to extremely high* potential for flooding, flash floods, cascading hazards and associated impacts. Intrusions of dusty Saharan air will *likely* be frequent, inhibiting tropical cyclone activity, but exacerbating humid heat and deteriorating air quality.

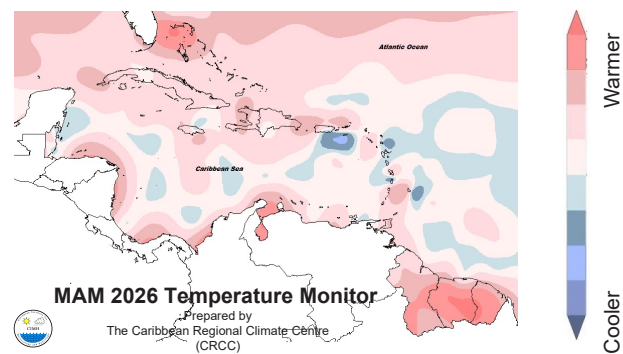
LOOKING BACK:

March - April - May (MAM) 2026

Observations



• **RAINFALL:** Southwest Tobago, western Barbados very dry; central & southern Bahamas, central and eastern Dominican Rep., northern Guyana very wet.



• **TEMPERATURE:** Aruba, western Barbados, westernmost Cuba, most areas in the Guianas, Northern and Northwest Bahamas, western Haiti, St. Thomas, St. Vincent 0.25-2.5°C warmer than usual; Antigua, St. Croix slightly cooler than usual.

Notable Climate Records in MAM 2026:

WET: 2 locations in Guyana reported record-high rainfall totals for this period (~170-225% of avg.).

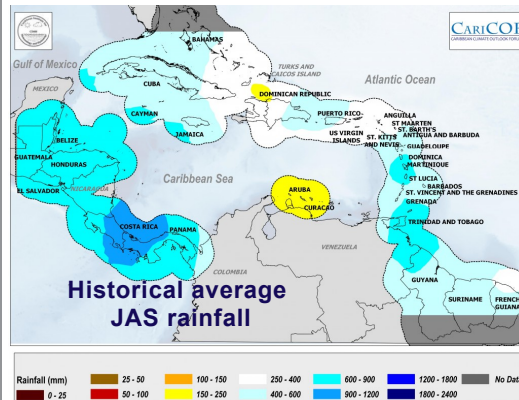
DRY: No location reported record-low rainfall totals for this period.

HOT: Grand Bahama reported record-high temperatures for this period.

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

WHAT NEXT?

Rainfall patterns July - August - September (JAS)



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

Jul to Aug - wet season. Often includes a mid-summer dry spell.
Sep - wet season. Usually frequent heavy showers.

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

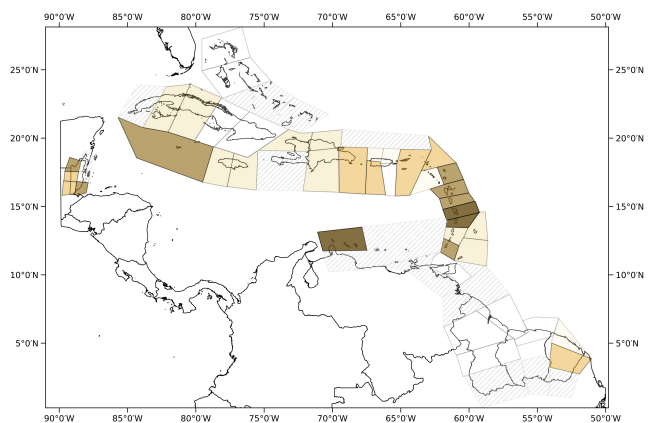
Jul to Sep - wet season. Increasingly frequent heavy showers.

ABC Islands: Mostly dry with occasional wet spells.

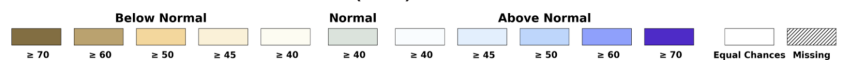
Guianas:

Jul to Aug - long wet season. Heavy showers are frequent. Sep - dry season. Heavy showers at times.

JAS 2026 Rainfall Outlook



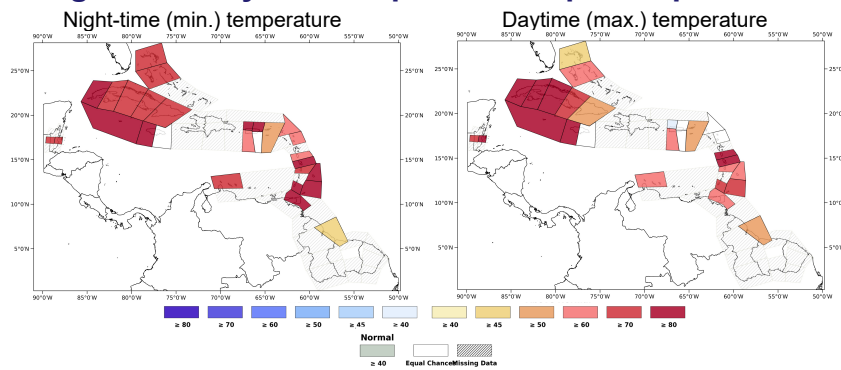
Confidence (in %) for rainfall to be:



Rainfall totals from July to September are *likely* to be the usual or less across Belize, the Antilles and the interior of French Guiana (*medium to high confidence*).

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

Night- and daytime temperatures up to September



JAS night-time and daytime temperature will *likely* be at least as warm as usual, with recurrent episodes of excessive, humid heat -- culminating in heatwaves -- causing heat stress, especially in persons in situations of vulnerability for whom adopting cooling strategies is paramount. The risk of extreme heat is highest in the northern Caribbean.

Wet days/spells & flash flood potential in JAS

What usually happens from July to September?

- Number of wet days: 35-50 in low-lying areas, 50-65 in mountainous areas and in the Guianas (ABC Is. 5-15).
- # of wet spells: 2-6 (ABC Is. 1-4), with 1-3 very wet spells (ABC Is. 0-2).
- # of excessively wet days: 4 or more in The Bahamas, central/south Belize West & Central Cuba, mountainous areas; elsewhere no more than 3 or 4.

Forecast and Implications up to September 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* be slower than usual in Belize and the Antilles.
- A slower than usual increase in wet days into August dampens the increase in rainfall disruptions of outdoor activities, only slowly builds up soil moisture and reduces wildfire potential, but also reduces the prevalence of moisture-related pests.

Drought conditions

Lastest drought situation: Severe (or worse) short-term drought has developed in southwest Tobago and western Barbados; severe (or worse) long-term drought in easternmost Cuba, Grenada, easternmost Guadeloupe, southwest Jamaica, Martinique, southwest Puerto Rico, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent, and southeast Suriname.

Agricultural drought (by the end of July 2026) Agricultural drought is *evolving* in Saint Lucia and *might possibly develop or continue* in the ABC Islands, Eastern Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, the Leeward Islands, Martinique and Tobago.

Short-term drought (by the end of Sep. 2026) Short-term drought is *evolving* in Antigua, Grand Cayman, Martinique, northeast Puerto Rico, St. Kitts, Saint Lucia, Tobago and the USVI, and *might possibly develop or continue* in the ABC Islands, Barbados, parts of Belize and Grenada.

Long-term drought (by the end of Nov. 2026) Long-term drought is *evolving* in Antigua, Martinique, St. Kitts and Saint Lucia, and *might possibly develop or continue* in Martinique and St. Kitts.

BRIEF CLIMATE OUTLOOK - October to December 2026

This period marks the transition out of the Caribbean Wet and Heat Seasons, the Atlantic Hurricane Season and into the Dry and Cool Seasons. Ocean temperatures around the Caribbean are forecast to warm into September -- with record heat possible in the far north of the region. Meanwhile, this year's El Niño is forecast to *very likely* be *strong to very strong*. Higher than usual air temperatures expected across the Caribbean may still peak during heatwaves and leading to *significant* heat stress through October, but become more comfortable into December. Despite that El Niño tends to decrease the *risk* of severe weather -- incl. tropical cyclones -- in this season and, instead, increase drought risk, the risk of flooding, flash floods, and cascading impacts remains *high*. Finally, the stronger the El Niño, (i) the more intense the heat and (ii) the more *likely* regional drought during the 2026-27 Dry Season becomes. For temperature and precipitation outlooks for OND 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 moderate El Niño conditions in recent weeks.

Model forecast and guidance: The forecast models suggest *virtually certainly* continued El Niño conditions through JAS (~100% confidence), and *very likely* becoming *strong* or *very strong* into OND (~90% confid.).

Expected implications: Strengthening El Niño conditions in summer are often associated with reduced shower activity across the Caribbean, but exacerbated heat and air humidity, including heat waves. From September onwards, tropical cyclone activity tends to be reduced in frequency and rainfall deficits growing and becoming more widespread.

Climate conditions in the Tropical North Atlantic and Caribbean

Recent observations: SSTs hovering ~0.5°C cooler than average in the Main Development Region for hurricanes (MDR), but running 0.5-2°C warmer than usual in the subtropical North Atlantic.

Expected conditions: Models are forecasting warming SST anomalies into JAS, further increasing to 0.5-2°C above average by OND.

Expected implications: Cooler than average SSTs in and around the Caribbean tend to contribute to milder air temperatures with below-average humidity, seasonal rainfall totals, an decreased frequency of extreme rainfall and tropical cyclone activity. By contrast, the anticipated warmer than average SSTs in the MDR tends to increase air temperature and humidity, as well as severe weather activity.

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. CariCOF Outlooks offer region-wide objective seasonal forecasts as well as the necessary contextual information. National Outlooks may, at times, differ from regional outlooks. 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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