



2026

Atlantic Hurricane Season

Outlooks – Early August Update

Less Intense Season

compiled by CIMH (*issued: 07.08.2026*)

Dr. Cedric Van Meerbeeck, *Climatologist/Senior Lecturer*
& Kathy-Ann Caesar, *Chief Meteorologist/Senior Lecturer*





The essence

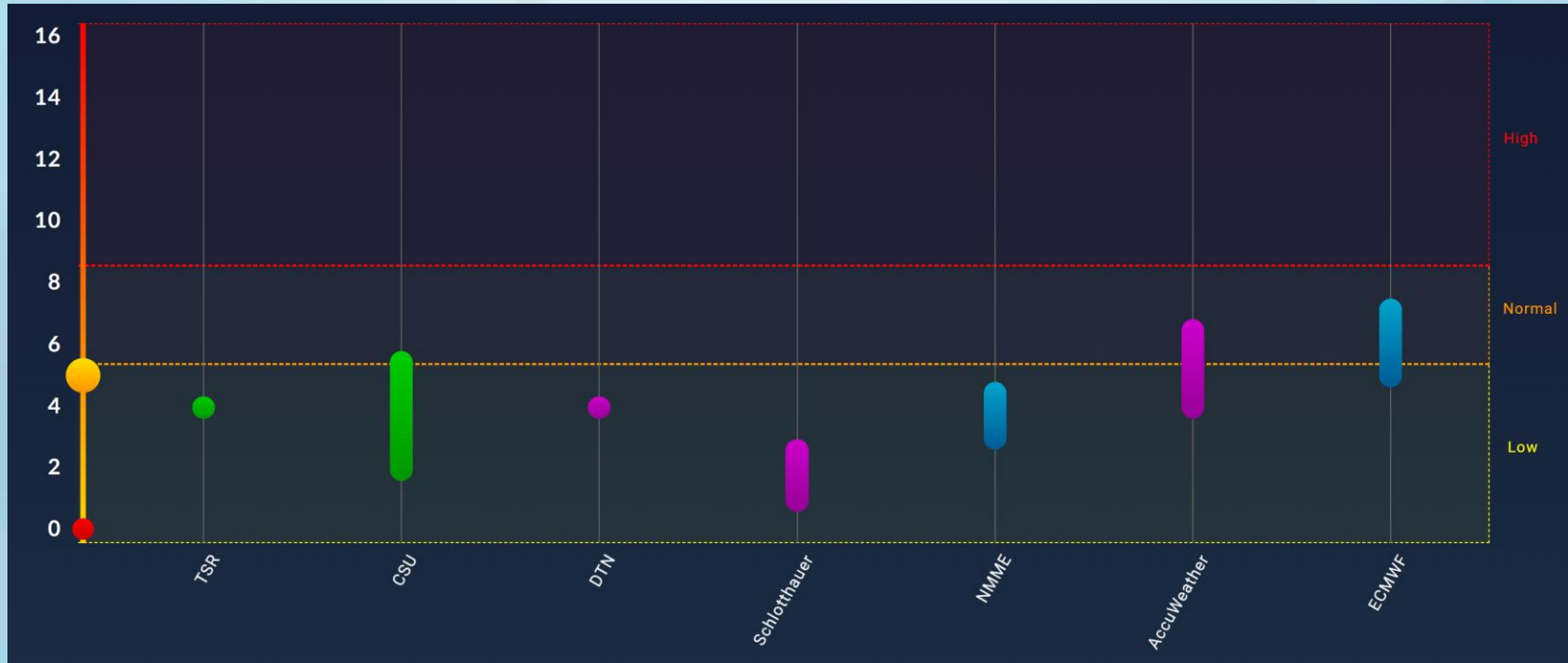
2026 Hurricane Season Forecasts – Less intense season

Forecast Parameter (1991-2020 average in parentheses)	CSU 5 August 2026 *68% confidence range	Tropical Storm Risk 7 August 2026	Accu- Weather 3 August 2026	NOAA CPC 6 August 2026 **70% confidence range	CIMH 7 August 2026 27 May 2026 **70% confidence range
Named Storms (NS) (14.4)	9 (7-11*)	10	8-14	7-13**	12 (7-17**)
Hurricanes (H) (7.2)	4 (2-6)	4	4-7	2-6**	5 (3-8**)
Major Hurricanes (MH) (3.2)	1 (0-2)	1	2-4	0-2**	2 (0-4**)
Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE) (123)	50 (26-83)	55	-	38-113**	85 (37-157**)

Comparing 2026 CSU Atlantic Hurricane Season outlook to 1997 & 2015 (previous very strong El Niños)

Forecast Parameter and 1991–2020 Average (in parentheses)	Issue Date 5 August 2026	1997 Obs.	2015 Obs.
Named Storms (NS) (14.4)	9	8	11
Named Storm Days (NSD) (69.4)	35	30	43.5
Hurricanes (H) (7.2)	4	3	4
Hurricane Days (HD) (27.0)	12	9.5	12
Major Hurricanes (MH) (3.2)	1	1	2
Major Hurricane Days (MHD) (7.4)	2	2.25	4
Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE) (123)	50	40.9	62.7

Agencies* predict about **5 Atlantic Hurricanes in 2026** (*forecasts issued in July/August available as of 7 August 2026)



Caribbean Landfall probabilities

► CSU:

- **17% probability for at least one major hurricane** (Cat 3, 4 or 5), tracking into the Caribbean (10-20°N, 60-88°W).
1880-2000 average probability for major hurricanes is 47%.
- For **country-by-country forecasted probabilities** of named storms and hurricanes passing within 50 miles of the location, see https://tropical.colostate.edu/TC_impact.html.

2026 Atlantic tropical cyclone names

(Source: World Meteorological Organization)

~~Arthur~~
~~Bertha~~
Cristobal
Dolly
Edouard
Fay
Gonzalo

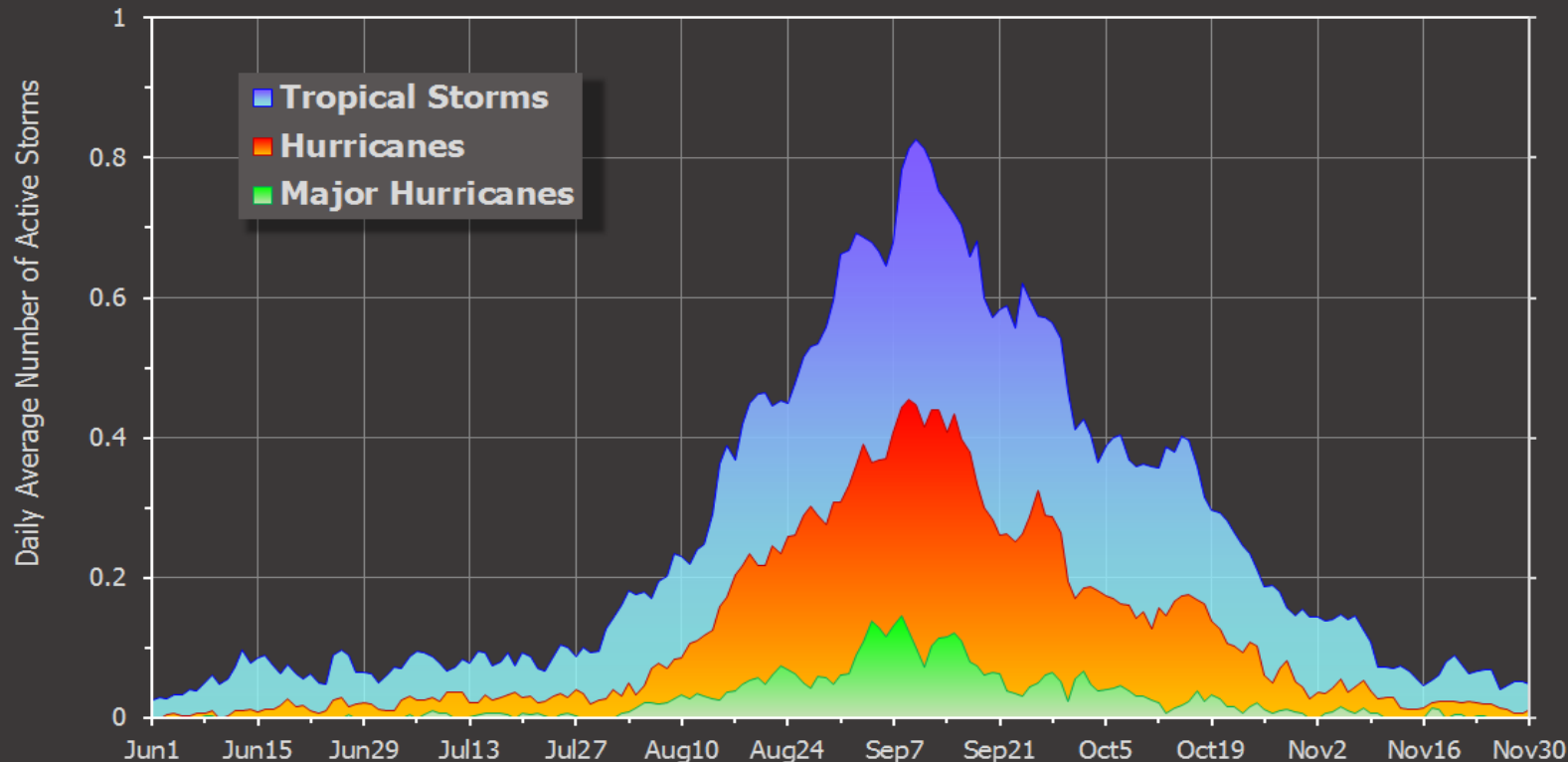
Hanna
Isaias
Josephine
Kyle
Leah
Marco
Nana

Omar
Paulette
Rene
Sally
Teddy
Vicky
Wilfred

The background is a light blue gradient. A large, semi-transparent white circle is centered on the page. Faint, stylized mechanical gears and lines are visible in the background, particularly on the right side. A solid dark blue rectangle is located in the top right corner.

What we know

Atlantic Tropical Cyclone Climatology (1851-2013)



Basin-wide TC activity historically **peaks on 10 September**

Drivers of hurricane season activity in 2026

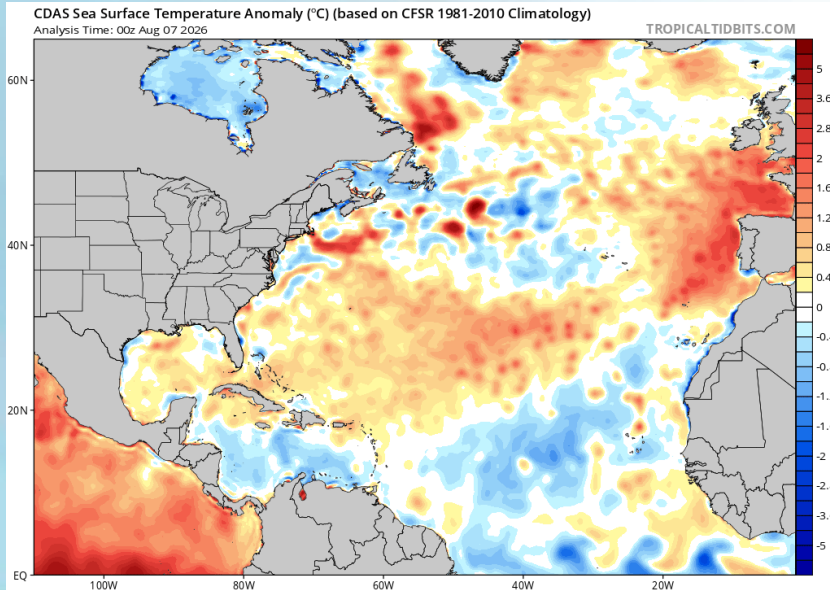
- **Main Development Region** of tropical cyclones: currently **unusually warm** around the islands, and forecast to remain warmer than average.

➔ **Increases** hurricane season activity north of 18°N

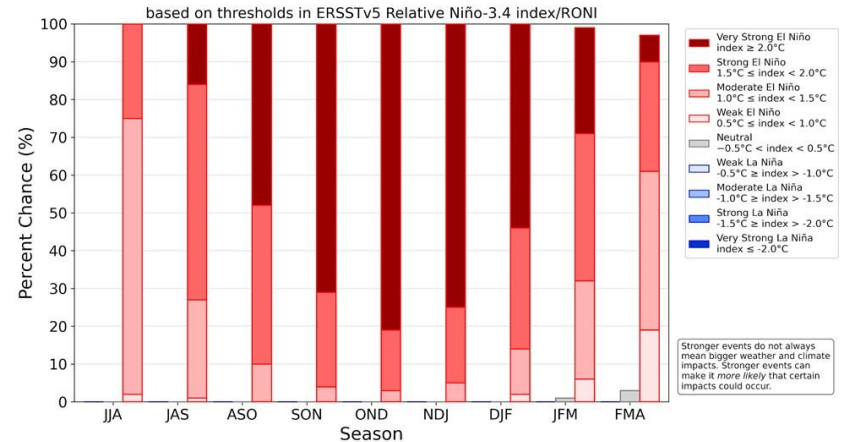
➔ **Higher chance of rapid intensification** near landfall

A strong (and, likely, very strong) El Niño event developing in the Pacific

➔ **Reduces** late hurricane season activity



NOAA CPC ENSO Strength Probabilities (issued July 2026)

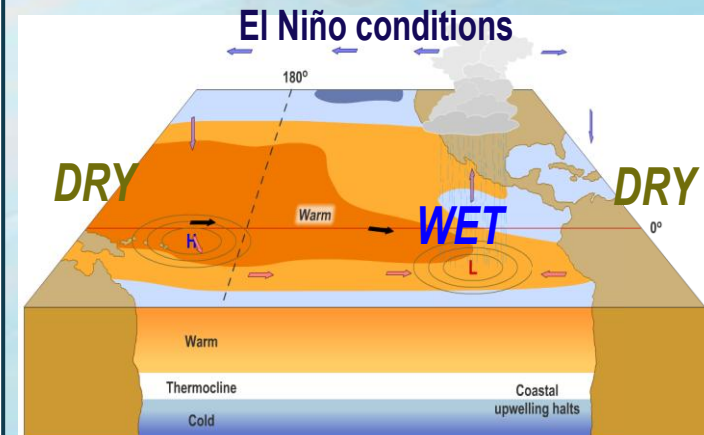
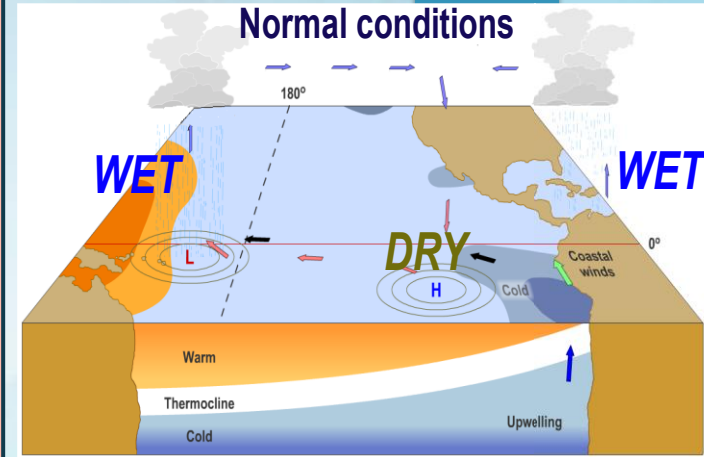


The official NOAA ENSO forecast from July indicates 48% chance of rONI being $\geq 2.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ during ASO, with 90% chance rONI $\geq 1.5^{\circ}\text{C}$.

El Niño & the Caribbean

- El Niño **impacts on the atmosphere** in the Caribbean:
 - Increases temperatures in the upper level of the atmosphere
→ **stabilises the atmosphere & inhibits deep convection**
 - Increases **vertical wind shear** between trade winds near the surface and upper level westerly winds
→ **tears up storm** clouds
 - From November to March, the subtropical jet stream shifts further south than in other years
→ leaves more room for rain-carrying **cold fronts** to intrude the **Greater Antilles**, but **increases wind shear further south**.

- In doing so, **El Niño tends to lead to**
 - 1) **Rainfall deficits** during summer across the region;
 - 2) **Rainfall deficits** continuing into the next winter & resulting in **widespread drought** in the Lesser Antilles and Guianas;
 - 3) **Reduced hurricane activity**, particularly after August;
 - 4) **Higher temperatures** and **more heat waves** from summer onwards and until the following summer;
 - 5) **Earlier onset of the wet season** the year after.

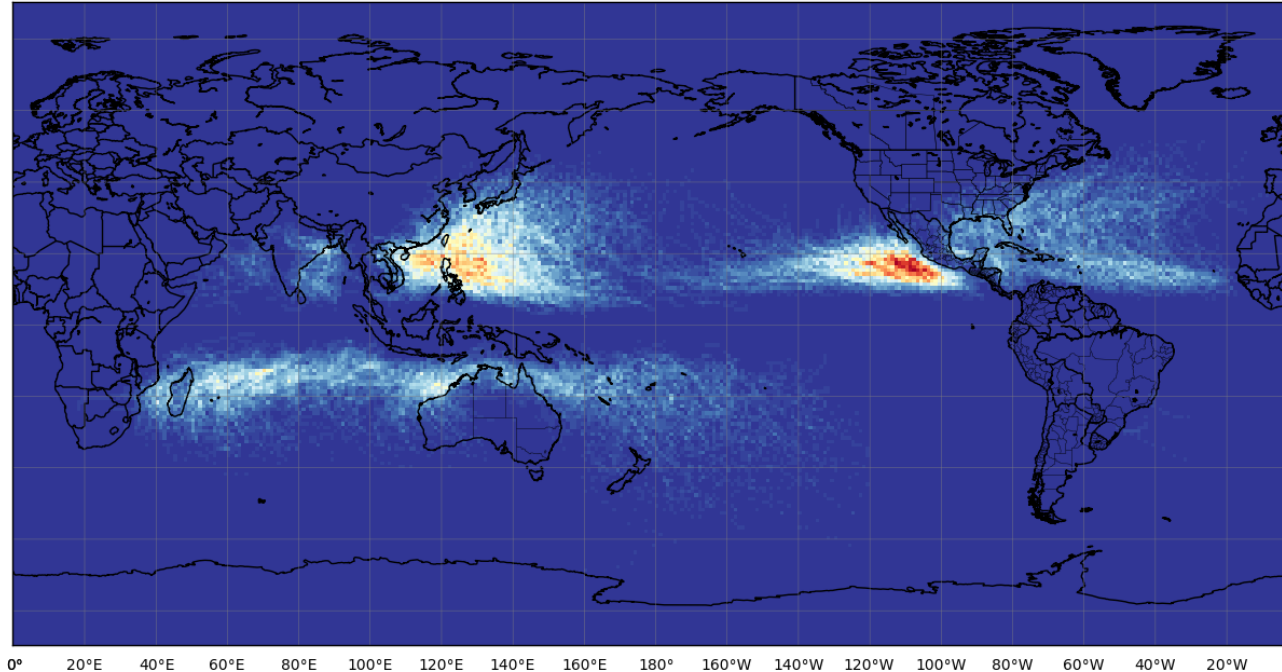


Two little known climatological facts that contribute to risk:

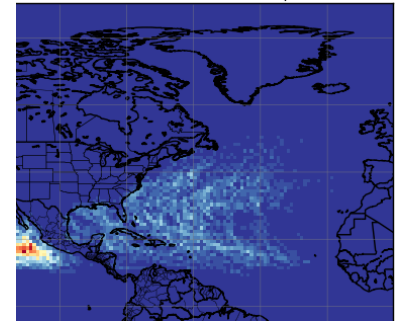
- 1/ The Hurricane Belt is larger than most people think (*see maps below*).
- 2/ Atlantic Hurricane Season activity levels vary more from year to year than in any other basin.

Number of TCs Passing Through 1° x 1° Boxes (1979-2012)

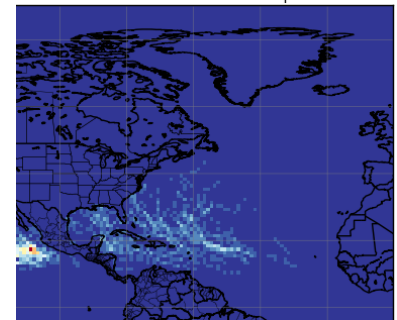
Levi Cowan - tropicaltidbits.com



Number of hurricanes



Number of major hurricanes





Effects of Sahara Dust when above the ocean



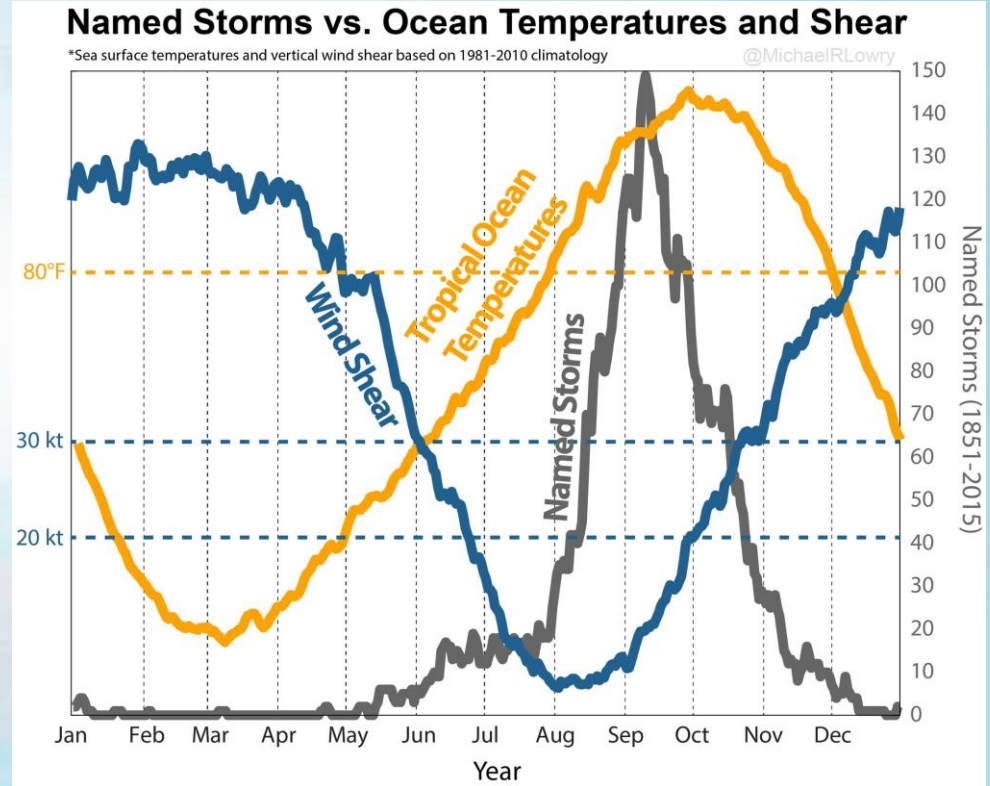
The accuracy of CIMH's 2025 Forecasts

Could we make useful predictions of parts of the season?

► The **peak of the season** is from August to October

➔ what will this period bring?

➔ What could the **first half** (June to August) and **second half** (September to November) of the season look like?



Source: Michael Lowry/FEMA

How good were the CIMH 2025 forecasts?

Activity well forecasted through August, but below the forecast range after that.

Period	Observed	Mid-May 2025		Early August 2025	
		Forecast	Range	Forecast	Range
Number of Named Storms					
2025 (entire season)	13	19	13-25	20	16-24
Jun.-Aug. (1 st half)	6	7	3-10		
Aug.-Oct. (peak)	10	12	8-17		
Sep.-Nov. (2 nd half)	7	10	7-13		
Aug.-Dec.	10			17	13-21
Accumulated Cyclone Energy (ACE)					
2024 (entire season)	133	145	83-225		

What to learn from the 2025 Season?

Overall activity **normal** during second half of 2025 Season.

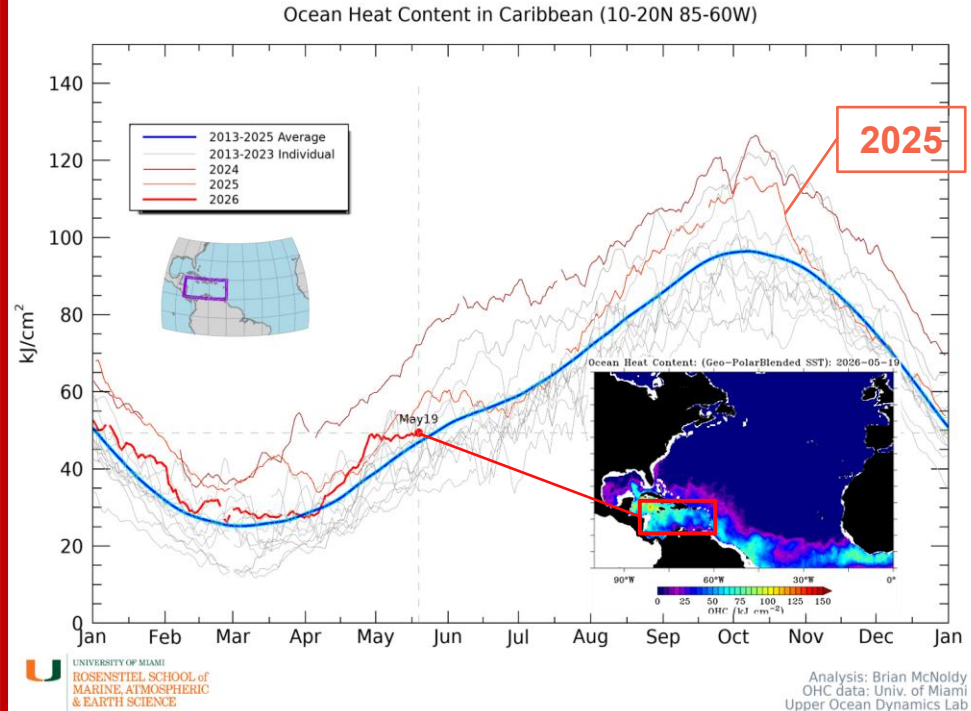
⇔ **BUT: explosively intensifying & record-strong Cat 5 Melissa in October.**

EXCESS HEAT in the ocean

- better measured by **Ocean Heat Content (OHC)** than by Sea Surface Temperatures (SST)

➔ **Could OHC inform better forecasts?**

- increases chance of intense tropical cyclone activity **IF & WHEN** the atmosphere is conducive...





CIMH's 2026 forecasts



2026 Atlantic Hurricane Season Activity

CIMH Forecasts (as of 7 August 2026 – statistical model based on sea surface temperature only)

Period	1991-2020	Forecast	Range*	Confidence level
Entire season (issued May 27 th , 2026)				
Named storms	14	12	6-18	<i>High</i>
Hurricanes	7	5	3-8	<i>Medium</i>
Major Hurricanes	3.2	2	0-4	<i>Medium</i>
ACE	123	85	37-157	<i>Medium</i>
August 2026 forecasts for the Number of Named Storms				
Entire season	14	12	7-17	<i>High</i>
Aug. to Dec. 2026	12	10	5-15	<i>High</i>

*70% confidence range, i.e. the observed number has a 70% chance of falling in this range

NOTE

- ▶ Authorities and interests are advised to **constantly monitor and abide by official weather advisories** issued by the **National Meteorological Services ... and ...**
- ▶ ... they should also **constantly monitor** other information provided by the **Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (<http://cdema.org/>)** and the **US National Hurricane Center (<https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>)**.

DISCLAIMER

- ▶ CIMH provides special weather and climate interpretation of the current and forecasted tropical weather and climate conditions affecting the Caribbean region.
- ▶ CIMH is not an official forecasting authority.



For climate monitoring information, climate outlooks and climate bulletins, please visit:

rcc.cimh.edu.bb

Additional early warning tools are found at

www.cimh.edu.bb

Thank you