

Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter - October to December 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: June to December 2026

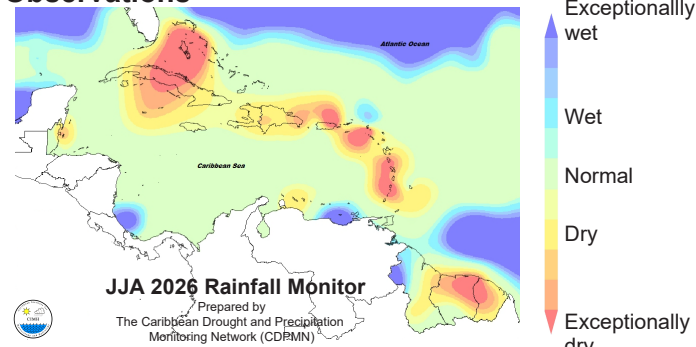
June to August 2026: This portion of the Caribbean Heat Season and Wet Season featured increased evaporation rates due to unusually high temperatures and strong trade winds combined with below-average rainfall totals in most parts of the Caribbean and Guianas. This led to agricultural, short-term and long-term drought in many countries. Little, if any tropical cyclone activity impacted the region.

October to December 2026: During the second half of the Atlantic Hurricane Season and the transition out of the Caribbean Wet and Heat Seasons, a *very strong* El Niño implies: (i) potential expansion of impactful drought; (ii) humid heat peaking in October in the Guianas and likely lingering in the Lesser Antilles, culminating in heatwaves; (iii) unusually *irregular* and infrequent tropical cyclone activity; (iv) unusually low shower, wet spell and excessive rainfall event frequency; (v) nevertheless, *high* to *extremely high* potential for flooding, flash floods, cascading hazards and associated impacts remains across the region, with the possible exception of the ABC Islands and French Guiana; (vi) coral reef bleaching potential around the Bahamas and the Greater Antilles. Dusty Saharan air intrusions, though infrequent at this time, can further inhibit tropical cyclone activity, while exacerbating heat and deteriorating air quality.

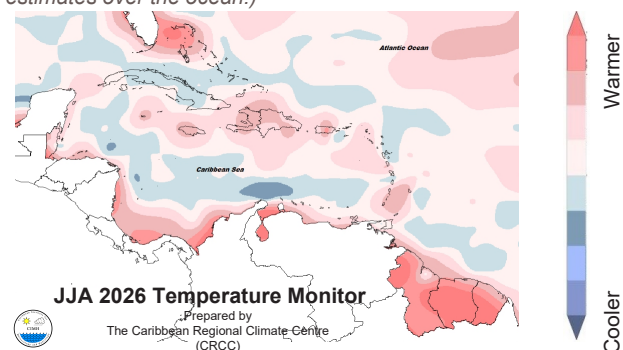
LOOKING BACK:

June - July - August (JJA) 2026

Observations



♦ **RAINFALL:** Northwest Bahamas, northern Belize, Grand Cayman, Central Cuba, SW & E Dominican Republic, French Guiana, E Puerto Rico, St. Barts, St. Croix, St. Kitts, St. Martin, northern Suriname, Windward Islands very dry; NW Guyana, very wet. (Note: map may contain spurious estimates over the ocean.)



♦ **TEMPERATURE:** Northern and Northwest Bahamas, Barbados, southern Belize, Grand Cayman, Grenada, most parts of the Guianas & Hispaniola, parts of Puerto Rico, St. Vincent 0.75-2.5°C warmer than usual.

Notable Climate Records in JJA 2026:

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

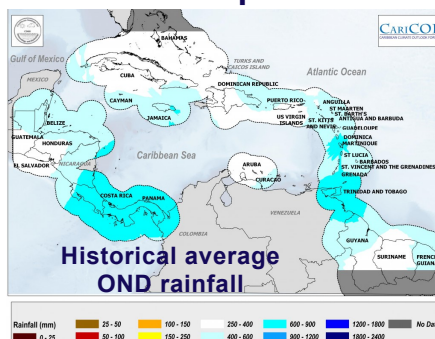
DRY: Two locations in The Bahamas, 1 in Dominica, 3 in French Guiana, 1 in Guyana, 4 in Jamaica, 4 in Martinique 2 in Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Kitts, and Sint Maarten reported record-low rainfall totals for this period (~20-55% of avg.).

HOT: Grand Bahama, 3 locations in Guyana, 1 in Jamaica, 1 in Puerto Rico, 1 in Trinidad reported record-high mean temperatures for this period.

More at <https://carogen.cimh.edu.bb/app/manage/records>

WHAT NEXT?

Rainfall patterns Oct. - Nov. - Dec. (OND)



Guianas:

Oct - Dry season with heavy showers at times.

Nov to Dec - transition to wet season. Increase in showers.

Belize :

Oct to Dec - wet season. Frequent heavy showers.

C'bean Islands north of 16°N:

Oct - wet season. Frequent heavy showers

Nov to Dec - transition to dry season.

Decreasing shower frequency & intensity.

C'bean Islands south of 16°N

(except ABC Islands):

Oct to Nov - wet season. Frequent heavy

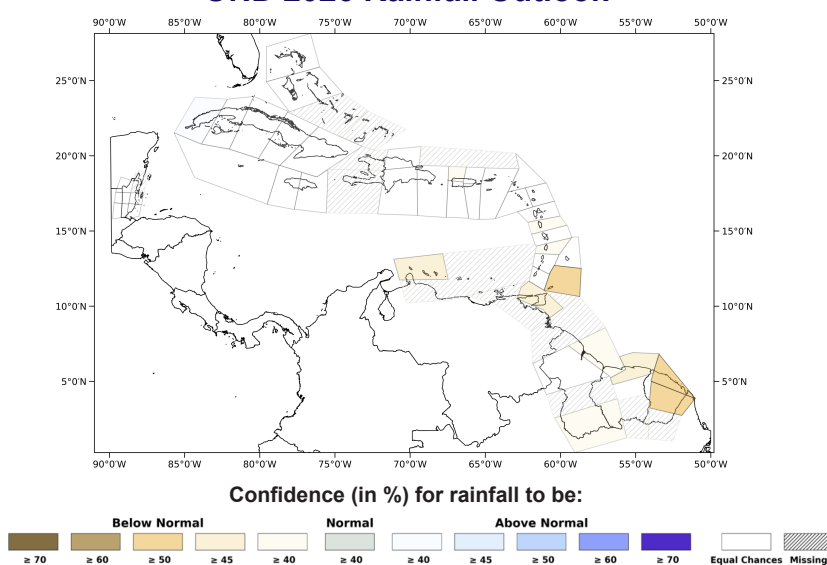
showers. Dec - transition to dry season.

Decreasing shower frequency & intensity.

ABC Islands:

Oct to Dec - frequent showers, occasionally heavy.

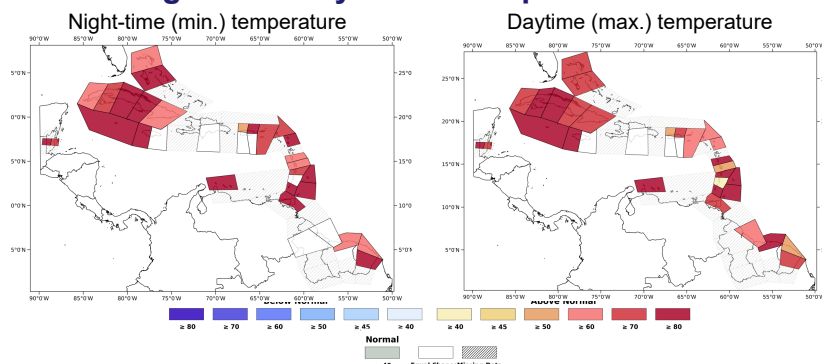
OND 2026 Rainfall Outlook



Rainfall totals from October to December are *likely* to be the usual or less in the ABC Islands, parts of the Lesser Antilles and the Guianas (*medium confidence*).

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

Night- and daytime heat up to December



OND night-time and daytime temperature will be unusually warm, with recurrent episodes of excessive, humid heat -- culminating in heatwaves -- through Oct. in Belize and the Antilles, through November in the Guianas, causing heat stress, esp. in persons in situations of vulnerability for whom adopting cooling strategies is paramount.

Drought conditions

Lastest drought situation: (as of Sept. 1st, 2026) Severe (or worse) **agricultural drought** has developed in [see p.1 section on JJA Observations]; **short-term drought** has developed in Antigua, N/NW Bahamas, Central Cuba, Gr. Cayman, Grenada, NE Puerto Rico, St. Barts, St. Kitts, St. Vincent, Tobago; **severe (or worse) long-term drought** in Gr. Cayman, W Fr. Guiana, Tobago, St. Barts, St. Kitts, Windward Isls.

Agricultural drought (at the end of Oct. 2026) Agricultural drought is *evolving* in ABC Isls, NW Bahamas, E Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Fr Guiana, N Guyana, Martinique, NE Puerto Rico, St. Lucia, USVI, and *might possibly develop or continue* in N Bahamas, Barbados, NW Belize, Cuba, Gr. Cayman, Dom. Rep., S Guyana, Jamaica, Martinique, NW/SE Puerto Rico, St. Barts, St. Martin, Suriname, Trin. & Tob.

Short-term drought (at the end of Dec. 2026) Short-term drought is *imminent* in Dominica, *evolving* in ABC Isls, Antigua, N & NW Bahamas, NW Belize, E Dom. Rep., Fr. Guiana, Grenada, Martinique, St. Barts, St. Lucia, St. Martin, Tobago, USVI, and *might possibly develop or continue* in Gr. Cayman, Jamaica, Cuba, N/S Dom. Rep., coastal Guianas, S Guyana, other Lesser Antilles Isls, NW/SE Puerto Rico.

Long-term drought (at the end of Nov. 2026) Long-term drought is *imminent* in N/NW Bahamas, St. Lucia, *evolving* in ABC Islands, Antigua, NW Belize, Tobago, USVI, and *might possibly develop or continue* in the Grenada, Martinique, E Puerto Rico, St. Vincent.

BRIEF CLIMATE OUTLOOK - January to March 2027

In the Caribbean, this period marks the progression to the peak of the Dry Season and the transition out of the Cool Season in March. This year's *very strong* El Niño, combined with unusual heat in the tropical North Atlantic will drive higher than usual air temperatures across the Caribbean. The unusual heat should be more comfortable at least through February, but will compound growing rainfall deficits in the many areas where agricultural and hydrological drought is in place or will *likely* build up. This could expand and worsen drought, with *likely* growing cascading impacts across various sectors of the economy even by May 2027. Strong El Niño events further tend to decrease the *risk* of severe weather throughout much of the region (except the far north), but the risk of flooding, flash floods, and cascading impacts remains *moderate*. Finally the very strong Niño means an earlier start to the 2027 Heat Season. *For temperature and precipitation outlooks for JFM 2027, 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 *very strong* El Niño conditions.

Model forecast and guidance: The forecast models suggest continued El Niño conditions through OND and JFM (~100% confidence).

Expected implications: *Very strong* El Niño conditions in OND are most often associated with reduced shower and tropical cyclone activity, but exacerbated heat and air humidity, including heat waves. Rainfall deficits tend to grow deeper and more widespread, particularly in the eastern & southern Caribbean and in the Guianas. In JFM, excessive dryness tends to worsen in the latter areas, but shower activity is typically increased in the far northern Caribbean.

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.

In any event, to get the most accurate country-specific climate information, please consult your National Meteorological & Hydrological Services and/or any national level bulletins they may provide.

DISCLAIMER

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Wet days/spells & flash flood potential in OND

What usually happens from October to December?

- Number of wet days: roughly 35-50 (Guianas: 20-40; ABC Islands: 15-35).
- # of wet spells: 3-6 with 1-4 being very wet (Guianas: up to 2).
- # of excessive rainfall events: 4 or more in Belize, far east French Guiana; easternmost Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Windward Islands, mountainous areas in the Antilles; 3 to 5; elsewhere 3 or fewer.

Forecast and Implications through December 2026:

- Potential for flooding, flash floods, compound hazards and cascading impacts *moderate to high*; risk somewhat lower than usual for this time of the year with roughly 1 very wet spell & 1 excessive rainfall event less than usual.
- Lower than usual frequency of wet spells translating to *likely* slower rise in water levels of surface reservoirs/river.
- Unusually low number of wet days (i) dampens the number of rain disruptions of outdoor activities; (ii) only slowly builds up surface & soil moisture which reduce wildfire potential; and (iii) reduces the prevalence of moisture-related pests.