

CARIBBEAN AGRO-CLIMATIC BULLETIN OF THE CARISAM



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A joint bulletin of the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) and the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH). As of May 2017, the previous monthly CAMI bulletin transitions into the Caribbean Agro-Climatic Bulletin of the CarisAM.

KEY MESSAGES

Possible delay in the onset of the wet season for most territories as rainfall totals and the number of rain-days are likely to be reduced. This is less likely for the northwest Caribbean in the vicinity of Cuba and The Bahamas, and the Guianas.

Concerns for short term drought exists for southeastern Belize, the northern portion of The Bahamas, western Cuba, Jamaica, the Leeward Islands, Tobago, Suriname and French Guyana that merits the close monitoring of water resources in these areas. Greater concern over long term drought that can affect resources from large rivers and reservoirs, and ground water exist for southern Haiti, Antigua and northeastern Suriname.

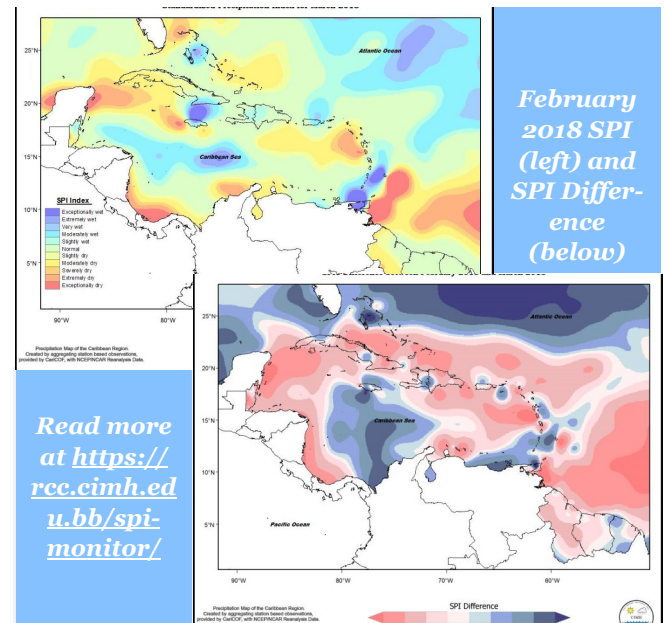
FEBRUARY IN REVIEW

Mixed conditions were experienced in the islands of the eastern Caribbean, being particularly different between the south and north. Apart from in the extreme southeast that had below normal rainfall, Trinidad was normal to exceptionally wet; Tobago and Guadeloupe normal to slightly dry; Grenada very wet; Barbados from slightly dry in the southeast to exceptionally wet in the west; St. Vincent moderate to very wet; St. Lucia and St. Croix normal; Martinique normal to slightly wet; Dominica moderate to severely dry; Antigua slightly dry; St. Kitts severe to extremely dry; and St. Maarten moderately dry. Rainfall in the Guianas was predominantly normal, particularly in Suriname and French Guiana, but ranged from severely dry in the extreme west of Guyana to normal in the east. Aruba was moderately-dry and Curacao slightly dry.

Puerto Rico ranged from normal in the west to moderately wet in the east, while Hispaniola was normal to slightly wet. Conditions in Jamaica ranged from moderately dry in the extreme west and east to exceptionally wet in the north, but Grand Cayman was moderately dry. Conditions in Cuba ranged from moderately dry in the west

to very wet in the extreme south; but northern Bahamas was extremely dry to extremely wet. Belize ranged from severely dry in the west to moderately wet in the north.

Increasing dryness has been observed over most of the region in the month of March in comparison to the month of February.



AGRI-NEWS

The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation for Agriculture (IICA) and the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI) provided US 37,000 to rehabilitate the sector and enhance food security in St. Kitts and Nevis. Read more at <https://caribbeannewsservice.com/now/category/agriculture/>

ABOUT CarisAM

The Caribbean Society for Agricultural Meteorology (CarisAM) is an online platform that hosts forums, provided online weather and climate information for agro-meteorologists, and much more. Agricultural interests can register and access relevant information and be a part of future capacity building exercises, and more. Visit us at: www.carisam.cimh.edu.bb

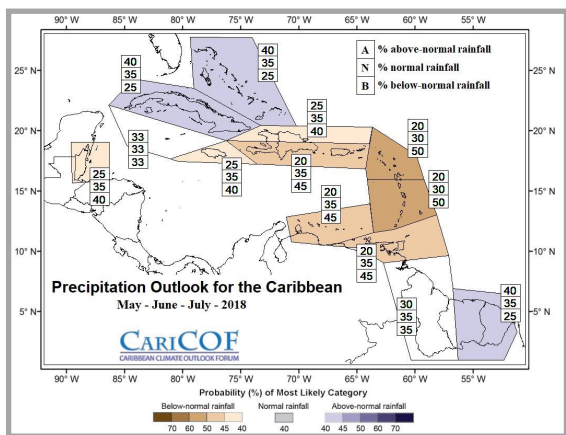
REGIONAL OUTLOOKS

Shorter term drought is evolving in Antigua, the northern portion of The Bahamas, southeast Belize, western Cuba, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, St. Maarten, St. Kitts, central Suriname, Tobago, and The Virgin Islands.

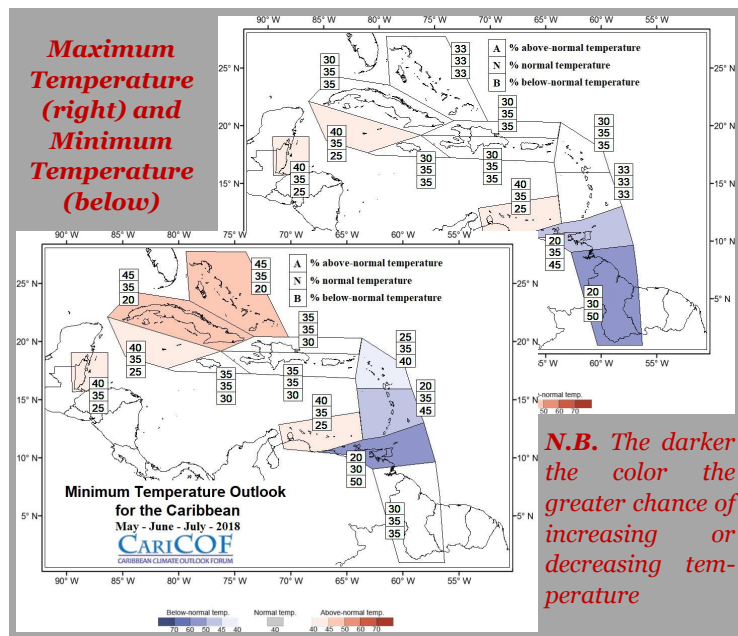
Long term drought is evolving in The ABC Islands, Antigua, northern and southeastern Belize, western Cuba, northern French Guiana, The Virgin Islands, and particularly St. Maarten, St. Martin, Suriname, and southeastern Haiti. Visit <https://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/long-range-forecasts/caricof-climate-outlooks/>

MAY—JUNE—JULY 2018

The Bahamas, Cuba, and French Guiana might be wetter than usual, with extreme wet spells being a potential concern for flooding and flash floods. However, the rest of the region may experience normal to below normal rainfall totals.



With the likelihood of normal to below normal rainfall totals along with a reduced number of wet days there is the possibility of a delay in the onset of the wet season.



N.B. The darker the color the greater chance of increasing or decreasing temperature

Night-time (minimum) temperatures may be warmer than usual in the ABC Islands and north-western Caribbean, but cooler in the Lesser Antilles. Day-time (maximum) temperatures may be cooler than usual from Trinidad southwards.

CLIMATE-SMART ADVISORIES



In territories where rainfall totals are likely to be reduced may want to delay planting until a more favorable time or may employed the following techniques to conserve soil moisture:

- Mulching
- Minimize soil compacting by reducing the passage of heavy machinery in the field
- Roughen the soil surface to enhance rainwater penetration and reduce runoff

In contrast, in territories where moisture levels may increase, farmers may need to mitigate against the effects of flooding. Farmers are advised to:

- Maintain drains around crop beds and/or plant crops on raised beds
- House animals on high ground and/or on raised pens
- Store fertilizer, feeds and pesticides away from moisture and water sources

The incidence of pests and diseases (e.g. bacterial leaf diseases and water mold) could be an issue in territories where there is above normal rainfall. Follow the guidelines from your local agricultural representatives to effectively control pests and diseases.

Cooler night-time temperatures may favour pollen viability and would also give rise to increased crop production. However, in regions where higher day-time and night-time temperatures could be a reality, this could given rise to heat stress for crops and livestock. Therefore the farmer should take necessary precautions against heat stress.

Disclaimer

The information contained herein is provided with the understanding that the CARDI, and the CIMH make no warranties, either expressed or implied concerning the accuracy, completeness, reliability or suitability of said information. This bulletin provides a broad overview of climate conditions up to 6 months in advance. It is recommended that stakeholders should use this information in combination with nearer term weather forecasts to guide operational decision making. The bulletin may be freely used by the public with appropriate acknowledgement of its source but shall not be modified in content and then presented as original material.

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