

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

Apart from areas in the northwest, the Caribbean has been drier than normal since December 2018. These conditions are very likely to continue up until April/May, particularly in the southern and eastern Caribbean.

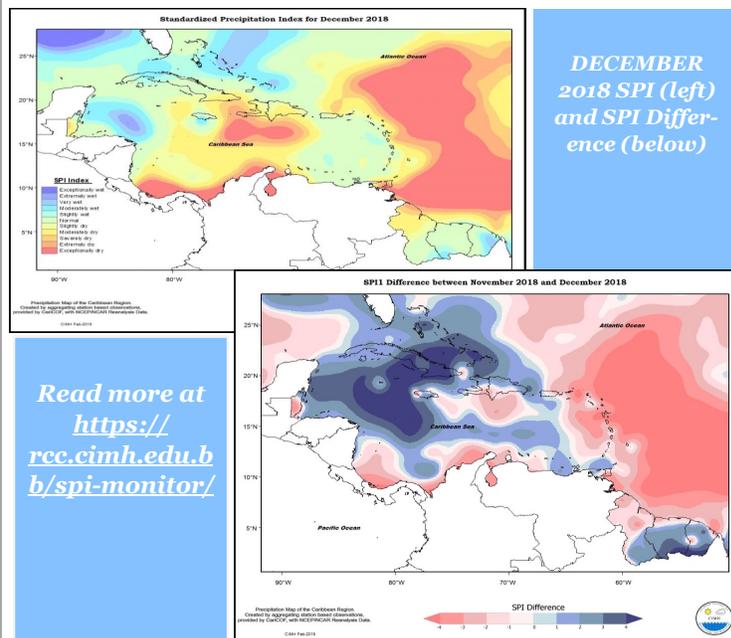
During February to April dry spells as long as fifteen days are possible, with an almost certainty of at least 3 seven day dry spells. For cropping, irrigation and water conservation measures would be necessary where water sources exist. However, generally, low water availability is likely across much of the Caribbean.

DECEMBER IN REVIEW

Rainfall was normal to below normal for the islands of the eastern Caribbean. Trinidad was moderate to exceptionally dry; Tobago moderately dry; Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Kitts normal; Barbados, Antigua and St. Maarten slight to moderately dry; St. Vincent normal to slightly dry; Martinique, Dominica and Guadeloupe normal to moderately dry. Conditions in the Guianas ranged from severely dry in northern Guyana to very wet in eastern French Guiana, and with most of Suriname being normal. Aruba was moderately dry, while Curacao was predominantly slightly dry.

Puerto Rico was normal to moderately dry, but Hispaniola ranged from normal in the north to extremely dry in the southwest. Jamaica was moderately wet in the south to slightly dry in the west and east; Grand Cayman was normal. Western Cuba was normal to moderately wet and eastern Cuba normal to severely dry; northern Bahamas was normal to moderately wet. Belize ranged from severely dry in the west to normal in the north.

The month of December was relatively drier than November in the eastern and southern Caribbean and Belize but wetter in most of the west and the north western Caribbean.



AGRI-NEWS

Caribbean region to benefit from a tool to develop differentiated policies for family farmers

<http://www.ica.int/en/press/news/caribbean-region-benefit-tool-develop-differentiated-policies-family-farmers>

An online platform for farmers and consumers

<https://thenewtoday.gd/local-news/2019/01/21/an-online-platform-for-farmers-and-consumers/#gsc.tab=0>

ABOUT CarisAM

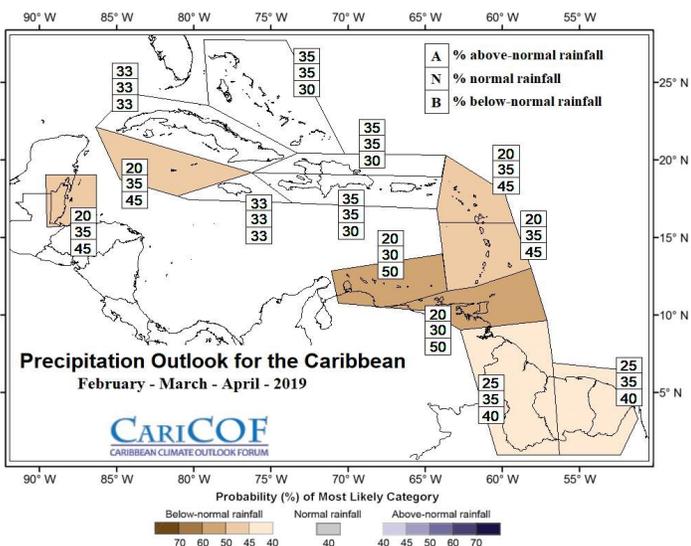
The Caribbean Society for Agricultural Meteorology (CarisAM) is an online platform that hosts forums, provided online weather and climate information for agro-meteorologists, and much more. Agricultural interests can register and access relevant information and be a part of future capacity building exercises,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

REGIONAL OUTLOOKS

RAINFALL AND DRYSPELLS (FEBRUARY TO APRIL)

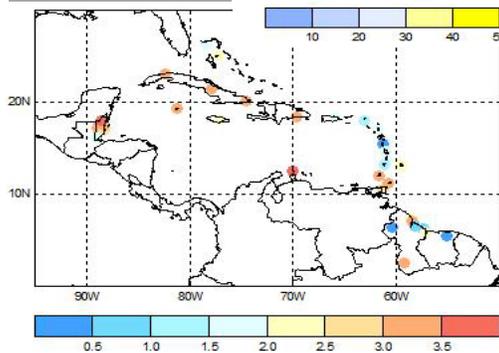
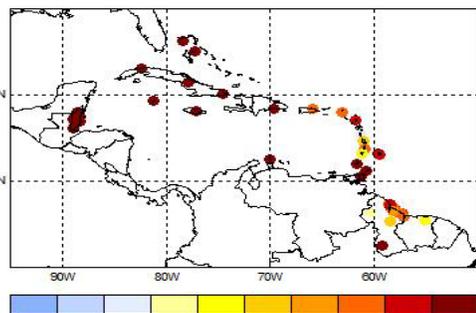
Rainfall totals from February to April are likely to be drier in the ABC Islands, Belize, Cayman, Guianas, the Lesser Antilles, and Trinidad and Tobago.

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



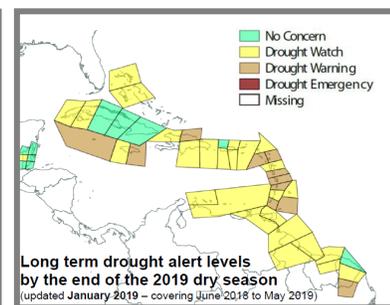
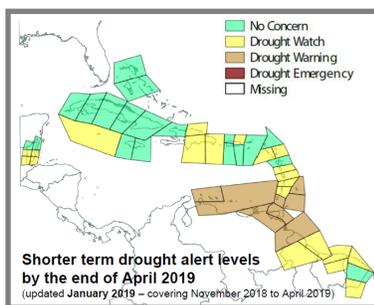
There is a favourable chance of the region receiving at least three 7-day dry spells during February to April with a possibility of many more than three in the northwestern and southeastern sections of the region. The region may receive at least one 15-day dry spell with the possibility of exceeding this in the northwestern and southeastern sections.

Probability of at least three 7-day dry spells (right) and MAX number of 15-day dry spells (below)



Read more at: <http://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/dry-spells-outlook-for-february-march-april-2019/>

DROUGHT



We are currently entering the core of the dry season. This time around, drought concerns exist throughout much of the region due to a developing weak El Niño that is likely to reduce rainfall up until the end of April. The evolving situation is likely to reduce yields in rainfed crops.

Short term drought, that can impact on surface irrigation resources such as streams, small rivers and ponds is highly likely in the ABC Islands, Barbados, Grenada and Trinidad & Tobago. Other parts of the region such as Antigua, southern and central Belize, Cayman Islands, northern and southern French Guiana, Guyana, Hispaniola, Martinique, NE Puerto Rico, St. Kitts, St. Vincent and Suriname should monitor these water resources.

Long term drought that can impact ground water supplies and large rivers is evolving in Antigua, Cayman Islands, Dominica, northern Dominican Republic, southern French Guiana, Grenada, eastern Jamaica, Martinique, Saint Kitts, Saint Lucia and Tobago. Other areas in the Caribbean should monitor these water resources. Visit <https://rcc.cimh.edu.bb/long-range-forecasts/caricofclimate-outlooks/>.

CLIMATE-SMART ADVISORIES

With the decrease in water availability likely to continue, irrigation systems should be ready and employed along with other water conservation techniques such as mulching. Other methods such as planting drought tolerant varieties and managing planting areas (according to available water supply) should be considered. Farmers should also ensure that adequate water and shade are provided for livestock.



In places where flash flooding might be likely, particularly in April in parts of the Greater Antilles 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 away from moisture and water sources
- Please also take into consideration your local weather and climate advisories.

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.

We wish to apologize for the absence of Volume 2 Issue 8 and for any inconvenience that this might have caused.

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