



B C C O N



BMS MONTHLY CLIMATE OUTLOOK NEWSLETTER

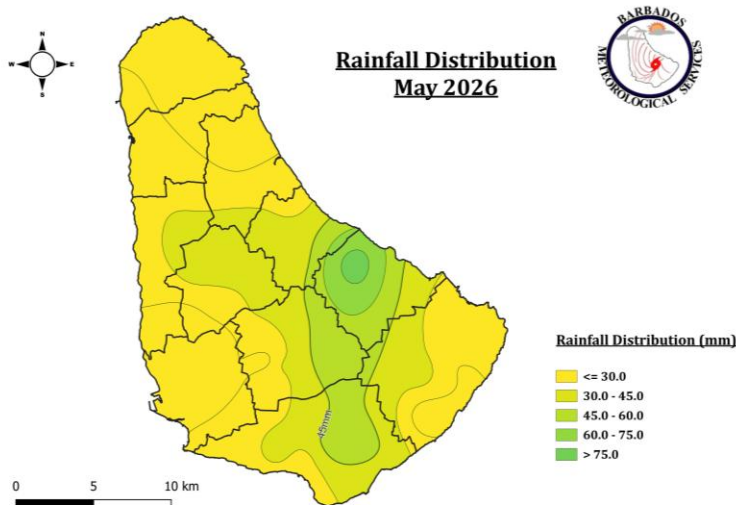
May 2026 | Issue No.76

Key Messages: Below to Near average rainfall is expected for much of the wet season. **Agricultural and Hydrological Drought Warnings are in effect for June and July.** The Annual Heat season has begun and **warmer-than-normal night-time temperatures will persist.** El Niño conditions are expected in the coming months, becoming strong to very strong by the peak of the wet and hurricane seasons. Persons are urged to adhere to the guidance of all relevant agencies and to continue monitoring the BMS forecast and seasonal outlooks for updates.

MAY IN REVIEW

Precipitation

Figure 1: May Rainfall Distribution



May was dry, sunny and hazy this year, with minimal rainfall accumulations recorded during most of the month. These accumulations resulted from showers triggered by convergence within the ridge flow. The relative dryness of May was interrupted by the third Tropical Wave of the season which deposited up to half an inch of rainfall across the island. Later in the month mid to upper-level instability and a low-level trough also contributed some much-needed rainfall across the island this month. In total there was between 12.0mm and 79.8mm recorded across the island; 40.5mm was measured at the BMS in Charcocks, 33.6mm below the climatological average (74.1mm).

The high-pressure system which maintained stable conditions for most of the month, became stronger towards month end, requiring the issuance of Small-Craft Advisories due to high wind. These winds also transported some plumes of dust haze across the region, which prompted the issuance of a Dust Haze Advisory on May 30th.

Temperature

Figure 2: May Average Maximum Temperature Distribution

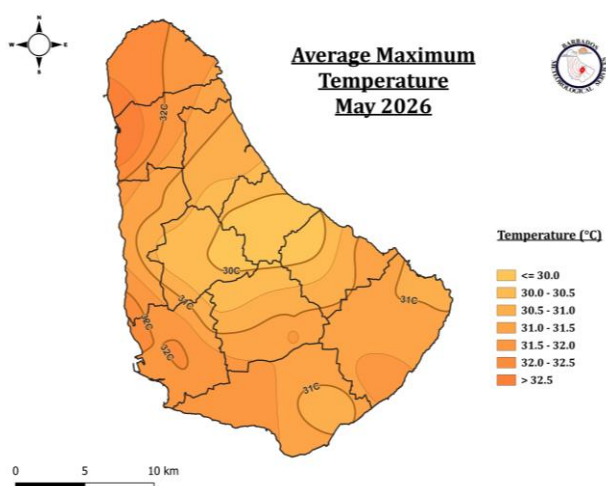
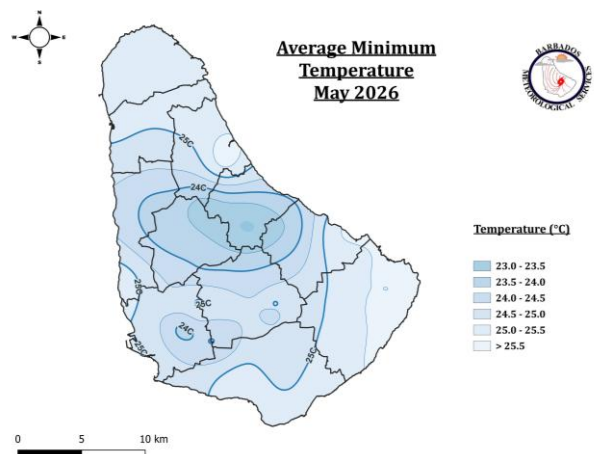


Figure 3: May Minimum Temperature Distribution



The Annual heat season continued its evolution with warm temperatures observed in May. Daytime temperatures across the island ranged between 29.6°C and 32.9°C, as seen in figure 2. Here at Charcocks, the average maximum temperature was 30.9°C which is 0.3°C warmer than the climatological average for May (30.6°C). Meanwhile, night time temperatures across the island cooled to between 23.0°C and 25.8°C as seen in figure 3. At Charcocks, the average overnight minimum temperature of 25.4°C was recorded and was 0.4°C warmer than the climatological average (25.0°C).



BCON

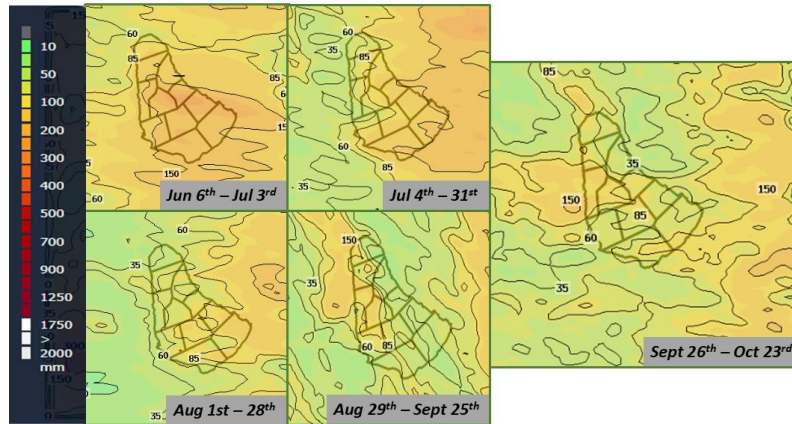


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PRECIPITATION OUTLOOK

Figure 4: BMS Climate rainfall forecast from June to October 2026



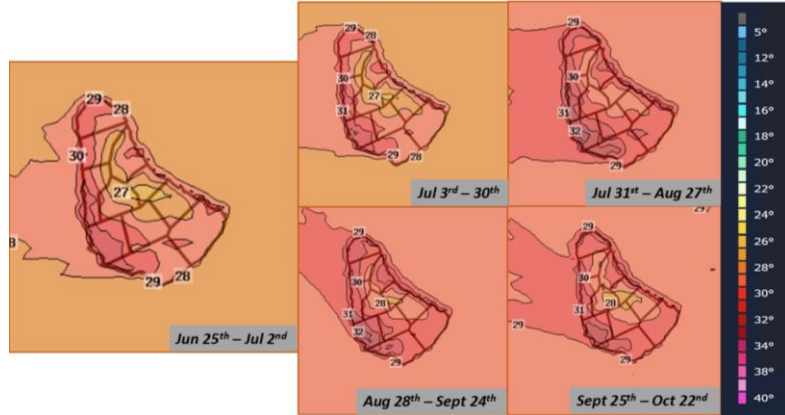
A drier than normal wet season is highly likely given the emergence of El Niño; despite this, the BMS Climate model (Figure 4) suggested periods of intense rainfall around September. However, there was a high bias in rainfall over the last two months, and the latest probabilistic and dynamic global climate models continue to suggest below-average rainfall for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. With the expectation of a moderate to strong El Niño for the first half of the wet season and a strong to very strong El Niño thereafter and periodic intrusions of Saharan dust expected, the number of intense rainfall events will likely be reduced. Therefore, the official forecast calls for below to near average rainfall for much of the wet season. Adjustments to the longer-term rainfall forecast are likely in subsequent issues of BCON therefore the BMS should be closely monitored for updates in the coming months.

Month	Projections (mm)	Deviation from 30-yr Average at Charnocks
June	40 – 120	Below to Near Average
July	30 – 120	Below to Near Average
August	80 – 150	Below to Near Average
September	60 – 150	Below Average
October	60 – 150	Below Average

Table 1: Rainfall Projections for June to October 2026

TEMPERATURE OUTLOOK

Figure 5: BMS Climate peak temperature forecast from June to October 2026



Hotter conditions are expected for Barbados' annual Heat Season. The latest probabilistic and dynamic model forecast continues to favour above-normal temperatures for the duration of the Heat Season (Table 2), likely due to El Niño. The BMS Climate model (Figure 5) paints a similar picture and daytime temperatures should peak between 30°C and 32°C for the higher elevations and less populated areas. Even hotter conditions are expected in the more populated, urban and south-western districts, with daytime temperatures expected to peak between 32°C and 34°C. The general public is advised to adhere to the guidance and recommendations from the Ministry of Health and Wellness during recurrent periods of heat stress and to keep updated with the daily weather forecast from the BMS.

Temperature	Season	Forecast Probability (%)		
		Below	Normal	Above
Minimum Temperature	JJA	13	29	58
	SON	3	13	84
Maximum Temperature	JJA	20	34	46
	SON	4	12	84
Mean Temperature	JJA	8	31	61
	SON	10	10	80

Table 2: Temperature Outlook for May to October 2026

DROUGHT OUTLOOK

Given that low rainfall totals were recorded in April and May and the expectation of below to near-average rainfall for much of the wet season, concerns for drought remain elevated. An **Agricultural Drought Warning remains in place for June and July** with an Agricultural Drought Watch thereafter. BWA reports that the current state of available water resources is as expected for the end of the Dry Season, however, the alert level has been elevated to **Hydrological Drought Warning** for the early wet season, given the current rainfall outlooks. Members of the public are urged to conserve water, regardless of the drought alert level and to monitor the BWA, BMS and other local agencies for updates. Below is a table of the forecast drought alert levels based on the forecast rainfall accumulations (Table 3).

Table 3: Drought Outlooks for May to September 2026

MONTH	AGRICULTURAL	HYDROLOGICAL
JUNE	Drought Warning	Drought Warning
JULY	Drought Warning	Drought Warning
AUGUST	Drought Watch	Drought Watch
SEPTEMBER	Drought Watch	Drought Watch
OCTOBER	Drought Watch	Drought Watch

Disclaimer: Drought alert levels are collaborative effort between the BMS, BWA and Ministry of Agriculture; the BMS offers guidance on rainfall and the other agencies make assessment based of the state of the resources under their responsibility.



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Agricultural Drought Warning

Responses to the predicted Drought Alert Level.

Key Messages:

- *Protect resources*
 - *Update and ratify management plans*
 - *Utilize irrigation systems for the best crop yield*
 - *Report impacts.*
- Monitor and repair infrastructure*

- ✓ ***Continue to monitor for updates from the Barbados Water Authority and Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Security.***
- ✓ ***Continue to monitor the BMS Climate Outlook for monthly***

Hydrological Drought Warning

Responses to the predicted Drought Alert Level.

Key Messages:

- *Protect resources and conserve water*
- *Implement management plans*
- *Last minute infrastructural repairs and upgrades*
- *Report the impacts*

- ✓ ***Continue to monitor for updates from the Barbados Water Authority.***
- ✓ ***Continue to monitor the BMS Climate Outlook for monthly updates.***

Likely Impacts for the June to November 2026 Period

What do these forecasts mean for Barbados?

- Little to no recharge in reservoir/aquifer levels.
- Possible dry spells and droughts during the wet season.
- Employ irrigation systems and rainwater harvesting techniques during dry spells.
- No more than usual intense rainfall events that could lead to flash-flooding.
- Uncomfortable temperatures, with recurrent periods of heat stress.
- Increased demand for cooling and hydration.
- Periods of heat stress in farm animals and pets.
- Air quality may be impacted by periodic intrusions of Saharan dust and bush fires.
- Adhere to the advice from all the relevant agencies.
- Keep updated with daily weather as well as seasonal forecasts issued by the BMS.

CLIMATE OUTLOOK

ENSO (El Niño Southern Oscillation)

ENSO is the interaction between the ocean and atmosphere in the equatorial Pacific which results in periodic departures from the expected sea surface temperatures. There are two phases of ENSO, the cold phase of sea surface temperatures, La Niña and the warm phase, El Niño. La Niña conditions usually results in higher rainfall for Barbados. El Niño conditions usually result in lower rainfall for the island. Neutral conditions which are close to average or what is normally expected. These are the general conditions associated with each phase however, there are other factors which influence the rainfall patterns across Barbados which may result in a deviation from the norm.

Current state

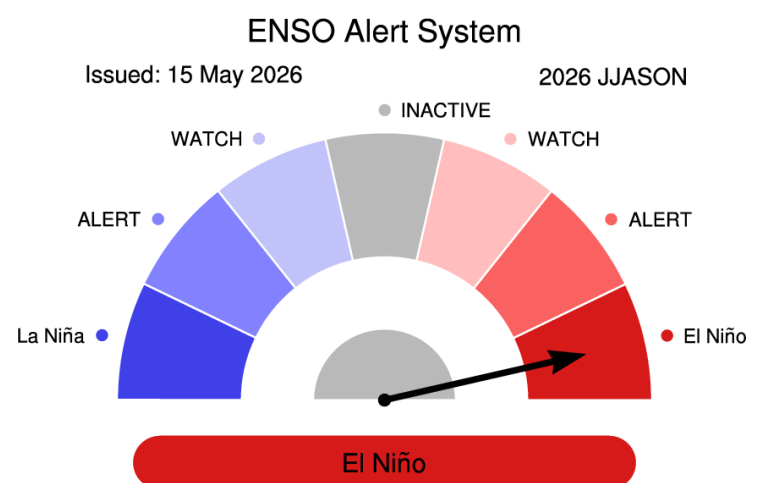
ENSO neutral to weak El Niño conditions are present across the Pacific Ocean.

What's the Outlook?

A transition to a moderate to strong El Niño is expected in the June-July-August period, transitioning to a strong to very strong El Niño thereafter.

Impact to the Upcoming Seasons

El Niño conditions tend to favour a decrease in rainfall and higher temperatures across Barbados. As for the upcoming hurricane season; there are typically less Atlantic hurricanes during El Niño events.



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Source: APCC/ Climate Information Services

CLIMATE OUTLOOK

Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs)

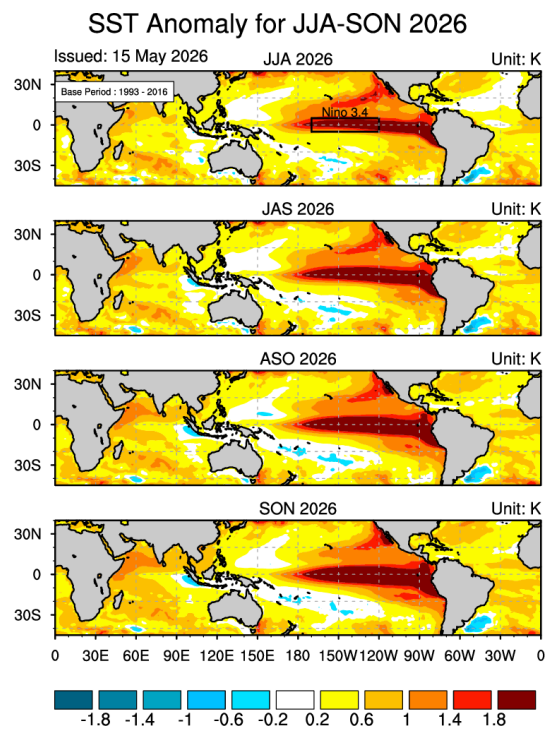
The Multi-Model Ensemble continues to suggest that above-normal sea surface temperatures (SSTs) are expected across the tropical Atlantic. SSTs are forecast to remain near to above normal by 0.2°C to 0.6°C through to November 2026. Across the eastern and central equatorial Pacific, SSTs are expected to be above the climatological average, which is consistent with the transition towards El Niño conditions for JJA are expected to be between 1.0 °C to 1.8°C warmer than average consistent with a moderate to strong El Niño; thereafter increasing to greater than 1.8°C, which is consistent with a strong to very strong El Niño.

Impact on Rainfall

While SSTs in the Atlantic remain above-normal, the low range may not have a significant impact on rainfall. However, with the emergence of an El Niño event, a decrease in rainfall activity is highly likely during the forecast period.

Impact on Temperatures

Warmer-than-normal SSTs across the tropical Atlantic along with an El Niño event, will contribute to warmer-than-normal temperatures during the heat season.



(Source: APCC/ Climate Information Services)

2026 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON OUTLOOK

Forecasts for the 2026 Atlantic Hurricane season from Colorado State University and Tropical Storm Risk indicate a near normal activity for the Hurricane Season. Meanwhile, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration forecasts a higher probability for **below normal activity** in the Atlantic basin, given their forecast for the El Niño conditions to intensify during the Hurricane Season. Although the Atlantic waters are likely to be slightly warmer than normal and trade winds slightly weaker, (which favours hurricane development), it is expected that the El Niño will dominate. The Barbados Meteorological Services has also produced a forecast, a hybrid statistical and deterministic product to predict the activity in the Eastern Atlantic (bounded by 10°W – 65°W, 5°N – 20°N). The below table summarizes these forecasts as compared to Atlantic hurricane season Climatology.

Table 3: 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season Forecast compared to Atlantic Hurricane Season

	Atlantic Basin Climatology (1991-2020)	Cumulative Forecast Ranges for 2026 Hurricane Season	BMS 2026 Eastern Atlantic Outlook
Named Storms	14	8 - 20	5-7
Hurricanes	7	3 - 9	2-3
Major Hurricanes (Category 3 and above)	3	1 - 4	1-2

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