



## **CIMH to Officially Announce 2016 Wet / Hurricane Season Forecasts Next Week in Dominica**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 25, 2016, Roseau, Dominica – Caribbean meteorologists and international climate researchers will meet here next week to officially announce the forecasts for the Caribbean’s wet / hurricane season and discuss their implications for the region with many national and regional stakeholders in climate-sensitive sectors. They will also discuss how Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) can build resilience to extreme weather and climate events, with a focus on the pivotal role that national and regional health and disaster risk management agencies play in building a climate resilient Caribbean.

Officially named the **2016 Wet / Hurricane Season Caribbean Climate Outlook Forum (CariCOF)**, the event is organised by the regional climate services provider, the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), in collaboration with the Dominica Meteorological Service, and its many development partners including United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Environment Canada, The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI), and the University of Arizona. It will take place on **Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup> (9:00am to 5:00pm) at the Fort Young Hotel in Roseau.**

Participants at the 2016 Wet / Hurricane Season CariCOF will include representatives from 20 Caribbean National Meteorological Services, government officials and practitioners from the climate-sensitive sectors, particularly health and disaster risk management. Also expected to attend are representatives from development partners, including the Department of Health Canada, the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO), key regional development and sector agencies, and the Ministry of Health in Dominica.

They will all gather to discuss the climate forecasts for the highly anticipated Wet / Hurricane Season, which will be announced on **Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup> at 9:30am at the Fort Young Hotel.** Climate experts, from CIMH particularly, and the IRI will also be available to discuss expected implications for Caribbean nations.

The disaster risk reduction and health themes of this year’s Wet / Hurricane Season CariCOF are significant following last year’s Tropical Storm Erika, which caused significant infrastructural losses, multiple injuries and deaths in Dominica. Erika’s passage also led to a lack of access to solid waste disposal and water for many in Dominica, which posed significant public health threats.

Are more “Erika’s” than normal expected in 2016? Will the wet season be wetter than normal? This is the place to find out, suggests Mr. Adrian Trotman (Chief of Applied Meteorology and Climatology at CIMH). Mr. Trotman also explained that it would also be important to be updated on the anticipated end of current drought conditions plaguing the Caribbean, and the possibility of the formation of a La Niña later in the year.

“Early warning information systems are critical for development agencies and governments in the region to make informed decisions that allow them to effectively prepare for and adapt to hazardous weather and climate events such as heatwaves, droughts, floods and tropical cyclones, which continue to pose significant threats to people and communities across the Caribbean,” explains Mr. Trotman.

The meeting will showcase and discuss how early warning information systems can help Caribbean development agencies and government ministries, particularly those that deal with health and disaster risk reduction. On the

afternoon of May 30<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Health of Dominica will launch its Assessment of Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation. There will also be assessments of the impacts of national and regional climate products on decision making processes, led by a social sciences team from University of Arizona and CIMH.

All this comes at a time when many Caribbean nations are developing their vector-borne disease strategies to control and eradicate viruses like Zika and Chikungunya by determining how higher temperatures, drought and increased rainfall affect their proliferation.

Prior to this two-day meeting, CIMH will host a four-day training event to help improve the way meteorologists understand, use and disseminate information from seasonal forecasts and other products. The training will begin focus on developing forecast products related to heat stress, which affects both human and animal health.

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