- Seasonal climate forecasts and monitoring of actual temperature and rainfall can be used to provide forecasts of when and where vector borne disease outbreaks are likely to occur. The impacts of predicted outbreaks can then be minimized by public awareness campaigns, stocking and shipping medical supplies and vector control programmes such as spraying;

- Climate change projections, which can indicate precipitation patterns in the 30-to-50-year timeframe, can be used to guide major investment decisions relating to long-term water management such as whether and where to build new reservoirs.

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Trinidad & Tobago Meteorological Service

CLIMATE SERVICES

Climate Services

Every day individuals, organizations and governments in highly climate-sensitive sectors like disaster reduction, agriculture, health and water make decisions aimed at reducing the risks and taking advantage of the opportunities associated with climate.

Our Society has always had to deal with climate variability, including extreme weather and climate events, but climate change presents new and greater challenges.

Many normal activities and decision-making processes assume a continuation ***of*** past climatic conditions, but that assumption is no longer valid.

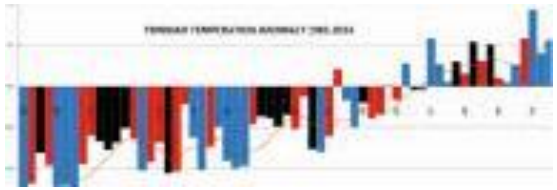
To make better decisions that involve climate, households, communities, businesses and governments need to have access to climate information that is suited to their particular needs as well as practical guidance on how they can use it.

Climate services provide climate information in a way that assists decision making by individuals and organizations. Such services require appropriate engagement along with an effective access mechanism and must respond to user needs.

Such services involve high-quality data from national databases on temperature, rainfall, wind, soil moisture and ocean conditions, as well as maps, risk and vulnerability analyses, assessments, and long-term projections and scenarios.

Depending on the user's needs, these data and information products may be combined with non-meteorological data, such as agricultural production, health trends, population distributions in high-risk areas, road and infrastructure maps for the delivery of goods, and other socio-economic variables.

Climate services therefore include the use of simple information like historical climate data sets as well as more complex products such as predictions of weather elements on monthly, seasonal or decadal timescales, also making use of climate projections according to different greenhouse gas emission scenarios.



Included as well are information and support that help the user choose the right product for the decision they need to make and that explain the uncertainty associated with the information offered while advising on how to best use it in the decision-making process.

Dengue transmitting mosquitoes thrive under certain climatic conditions

Examples of the uses of climate services are as follows:

- Climate predictions can be used by farmers to help them decide, for example, which crops to plant or whether to reduce livestock numbers if a dry spell or drought is forecast. Farmers making such decisions are likely to use monthly or seasonal climate outlooks of rainfall and temperature and would take into account the uncertainty estimates provided with these products in terms of probabilities;

- Statistical assessments of the future frequency of extreme weather and climate events can be used by engineers to help them make decisions, including where to invest in disaster mitigation measures such as dams or retention ponds, where to locate buildings, which construction methods to use and how much cooling is needed for critical infrastructure.