

KEY FIGURES

Cases, deaths & vaccines administered (19 Sep)

Cases	44,768,096	+1.8% from 12 Sep
Deaths	1,478,359	+0.8% from 12 Sep
Vaccines	570,071,558	+5.1% from 12 Sep

Sources:

- COVID-19 Data Explorer - <https://bit.ly/3vsHRP9>
- PAHO
- CARICOM

THE CARIBBEAN: COVID-19

PAHO is expressing concern over low COVID-19 vaccination rates and growing deaths and hospitalizations in the Caribbean. Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries and territories recorded more than 100,000 new cases and 1,400 deaths between July and September 2021, numbers that are nearly a third of all cases and just under a fifth of all deaths since March 2020.

Ongoing situations include Grenada, where more than 78 per cent of its 3,030 cumulative cases has come in the past two weeks, leading to fears that half of

the island's population of 113,100 could become infected in the next two weeks, St. Lucia, who are managing a fourth wave of infections that has caused about half of its 10,200 cases to come since June 2021 and Guyana, where active cases have grown by more than 317 per cent over the past month.

CARICOM countries and territories have agreed to share surplus vaccines and other resources and are developing a regional risk communications strategy to urge vaccinations, among other actions.

ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES: VOLCANIC ERUPTION

The Government has lowered their Volcanic Alert level for the La Soufrière volcano from Orange to Yellow, five months after the volcano's April 2021 eruption that prompted the UN to launch a US\$29 million appeal. Evacuees from areas surrounding the volcano are now allowed to return to their homes, with the shelter population, last reported to be at about 1,990 in July, expected to leave by 20 September.

The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) indicates while that La Soufrière's activity levels have declined over the past three months, the volcano is still exhibiting seismic and/or fumarolic activity that are above historical levels prior to the April eruption. Lahars and heavy steaming and degassing will persist for some time during high rains, presenting an added threat during the 2021 hurricane season.

Sources:

- National Emergency Management Organisation - St. Vincent & the Grenadines

REGIONAL: CLIMATE

Per the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), temperatures are rising across the region, with Central America and Mexico and the Caribbean reporting one of their three warmest years ever in 2020, while South America recorded its second warmest year ever.

WMO is especially concerned with 2020 being the year with the highest sea surface temperature in the Caribbean, as warmer temperatures in the Atlantic and the La Niña phenomenon can contribute to above-normal hurricane seasons.

Continuing sea-level rise will lead to corresponding increases in tropical storm intensity, coastal erosion and shoreline retreat and coastal flooding.

Rising temperatures also contributed to widespread drought, with extreme to exceptional drought conditions recorded in one third of Mexico and the most severe droughts in 60 years in the Bolivian Chaco lowlands and the Pantanal wetlands that span parts of Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay.

Sources:

- World Meteorological Organization