



METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES & ARUBA

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PRESS RELEASE

HURRICANE SEASON 2009: PLANNING IS ESSENTIAL!

The 2009 hurricane season for the Atlantic Basin (North Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico) will start officially next Monday, June 1. The season will end officially on November 30.

The amount of tropical cyclones that developed last year in this region was, with sixteen tropical storms, eight hurricanes and five major hurricanes, 64% above the long term average (eleven tropical storms, six hurricanes and two major hurricanes).

The most significant system to affect in both the ABC Islands as the SSS Islands in 2008 was **Omar**. The shortest distance between its center and the ABC Islands was about 180 kilometers and the SSS Islands was about 105 kilometers. *Omar* had an unusually large wind field to the south of its center and that resulted in strong southwesterly surface winds with gusts to tropical storm force, which caused rough seas that battered especially the south and west facing shores of the ABC Islands on October 14 and 15. Heavy rains related to *Omar* were reported on all our six islands and locally significant flooding occurred. Nevertheless, only sustained tropical storm force winds were observed in the SSS Islands with a couple of gusts to hurricane strength.

The [World Meteorological Organization](#)'s Region IV Hurricane Committee, consisting of representatives of Meteorological Services from Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central American and Caribbean countries, Colombia and Venezuela during their annual meeting decided to retire the names of three hurricanes which caused a significant amount of deaths and material damage in 2008. Because of this, the names of *Gustav*, *Ike* and *Paloma* will be replaced in 2014 by respectively *Gonzalo*, *Isaias* and *Paulette*.

The names for tropical cyclones in the Atlantic Basin in 2009 will be: *Ana*, *Bill*, *Claudette*, *Danny*, *Erika*, *Fred*, *Grace*, *Henri*, *Ida*, *Joaquin*, *Kate*, *Larry*, *Mindy*, *Nicholas*, *Odetta*, *Peter*, *Rose*, *Sam*, *Teresa*, *Victor* and *Wanda*. These names will be identical to the ones used in 2003 with the exception of *Fred*, *Ida* and *Joaquin*. *Fred* replaces *Fabian*, which devastated Bermuda in September 2003 and *Ida* will replace *Isabel* which caused significant damage and sixteen casualties in parts of North Carolina a few days after *Fabian*. At the end of September 2003, hurricane *Juan* made landfall in Nova Scotia, Canada and was responsible for four deaths, damaged homes, power outages and fallen trees.

Forecasters are expecting a hurricane season with an about average amount of tropical storms and hurricanes. These forecasts from both the [Colorado State University](#) and the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#) in the United States are based on parameters like the sea water temperature in the tropical Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the state of El Niño, the atmospheric pressure distribution and the related trade winds over the Atlantic. These forecasts by no means indicate when and where the expected systems will develop nor how these will move. Local authorities and the local populations of our islands are therefore urged to make a plan in advance and to take the necessary precautions in case watches and warnings are issued.

New services:

- * Starting this year, the Meteorological Service will issue Special Bulletins for weather events that are unusual, cause general inconvenience or public concern (requiring the attention and action of fire department and police authorities) and cannot adequately be described in a weather forecast.
- * Owners of mobile phones will be able to retrieve the latest weather forecast and radar images on their gadgets through <http://www.weather.an/mobile>.
- * The Meteorological Service will issue a Monthly Summary about tropical cyclone activity in the Atlantic Basin during the season.

As usual, the Meteorological Service of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba (MDNAA) will monitor the development of these systems and other inclement weather situations which threaten both the ABC and the SSS Islands, closely. In case it's necessary, we will issue watches or warnings in close coordination with the [National Hurricane Center](#) in Miami, Florida, which is a so-called Regional Specialized Meteorological Center of the World Meteorological Organization. On a national scale, we will issue advisories containing information about the local effects caused by a threatening tropical cyclone. Furthermore, we will coordinate with island disaster management authorities to make the general public aware of the hazards connected to these systems, so they can prepare themselves for a possible hurricane strike. Read more about tropical cyclones in our islands in the brochures called Guide on the Tropical Cyclone Early Warning System for the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba and [Hurricanes and Tropical Storms in the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba](#) which can be found on our web site (<http://www.meteo.an>).

Good planning is essential to limit loss of lives and property!
