



# CARIBBEAN METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

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The Caribbean Meteorological Organization is a specialized institution of the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Caribbean Schools and CMO Lightning Safety Initiative in New Global Children's Book



Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago | 29 June 2026 – Following the observance of International Lightning Safety Day on 28 June, the **Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO)** is pleased to announce that the **2025 Caribbean Lightning Safety Awareness Contest** and its winning schools have received international recognition through their inclusion in the newly released children's disaster preparedness book, *Lightning*, published by **COPE Disaster Champions**.

Developed in collaboration with the **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**, the **Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO)**, and several international partners, the book is freely available online and is designed to help children and families understand lightning hazards, recognize warning signs, and take life-saving actions before, during, and after thunderstorms.

The publication opens in **Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago**, where the COPE Squad arrives to judge a regional lightning awareness competition inspired by the CMO's Caribbean Lightning Safety Awareness Contest. Readers are then taken on a global journey exploring the science of lightning, disaster preparedness, early warning systems, and inclusive disaster risk reduction. Throughout the book, children are reminded of the campaign's central safety message:

**"When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!"**

Implemented under the ***Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems*** (CREWS) *Caribbean Project Phase 2*, the Caribbean Lightning Safety Awareness Contest is part of the CMO's wider efforts to strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems and promote lightning safety awareness across the Caribbean. The inclusion of the contest in this international publication highlights the global recognition of the Caribbean's leadership in disaster risk reduction and public education. Commenting on the international recognition, Dr Arlene Laing, Coordinating Director of the Caribbean Meteorological Organization, stated:

*"We are proud to see the Caribbean-led initiative featured in a global educational resource that will help children around the world better understand lightning hazards and how to stay safe. This recognition reflects the creativity of our students, the commitment of our partners, and the importance of investing in disaster education from an early age."*

The CMO congratulates once more the winning schools, as well as all participating students, teachers, judges, sponsors, and partner organizations whose contributions made the 2025 Caribbean Lightning Safety Awareness Contest a success. Their collective efforts continue to promote lightning safety, inspire other young people, and strengthen disaster resilience across the Caribbean and beyond.

The *Lightning* book is available **free of charge** from the COPE Disaster Champions website: <https://cope-disaster-champions.com/books/>

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**About the CMO**

The Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO) is a specialized agency of the Caribbean Community that coordinates the joint scientific and technical activities in weather, climate and water – related sciences in sixteen English-speaking Caribbean countries (Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands). The Organs of the CMO are: (i) The *Caribbean Meteorological Council* (CMC)-the Supreme, Governing Body, (ii) The *Headquarters Unit* (Secretariat), headed by a Coordinating Director, located in Trinidad and Tobago; (iii) The *Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology* (CIMH) located in Barbados; and (iv) The Caribbean Meteorological Foundation (CMF). The CMO originated from the British Caribbean Meteorological Service, founded in 1951.