



## **Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology to Host Symposium Celebrating 50 Years of Sahara Dust Research on Barbados**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 12, 2015, Bridgetown, Barbados -- This year marks the 50th anniversary of the discovery of Sahara Dust in the atmosphere over Barbados, a historic moment that gave our nation world-wide recognition as a leading site for atmospheric dust research.

The discovery captured the attention of the international atmospheric science community and continues to be relevant as scientists seek to understand the human and environmental health challenges posed by Sahara Dust. Regional research organizations, including the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), are also focused on how these challenges may be affected by changing climatic conditions in the Caribbean and West Africa.

To celebrate this important observation that led to the establishment of a permanent atmospheric dust collection site at Ragged Point, St. Philip, frequent visits to the island by international research teams and a significant body of research, the CIMH is hosting an international symposium themed "**Celebrating 50 Years of Sahara Dust Research on Barbados**" on Friday, October 16<sup>th</sup> from 8:30am to 3:15pm at its [Husbands, St. James campus](#).

"Our hope is that the Symposium will generate greater awareness of atmospheric and climate research in Barbados and lead to future research initiatives that broaden the current understanding of the effects of Sahara Dust on the human and environmental health of the region that will ultimately risk inform future public health and environmental policy locally as well as global policies to combat climate change," said Dr. David Farrell, CIMH Principal.

Original scientists Dr. Tony Delany (National Center for Atmospheric Research, Boulder, Colorado) and Professor Joe Prospero (University of Miami) will be on hand to discuss the original observations. The symposium will also feature renowned atmospheric scientists from the region and around the world who are researching Sahara Dust impacts on weather, climate, public health and public policy. Participating organizations include: NASA, the University of the West Indies, the University of Puerto Rico, the University of Miami, the University of Arizona, University of Bristol (UK), as well as Germany's Max Planck Institute for Meteorology, Leibniz Institute for Tropospheric Research and Institute for Atmospheric Physics.

"The concentration of African dust in Barbados Trade Winds is often so high as to raise concerns about the impact on air quality and human health. We need to understand how dust might impact health on Barbados and also in the Caribbean," explained Professor Prospero. "We also need to anticipate how, with changing climate, concentrations of dust might change with time in the Caribbean region."

Following the Symposium, CIMH will host an evening tour and reception at [Ragged Point](#), beginning at 5pm, which will bring together atmospheric scientists with members of the surrounding community to mark the occasion.

**Background:**

The milestone can be traced back to 1965 when two scientists from the College of Technology in Liverpool, Dr. David Parkin and Dr. Tony Delany, researching cosmic dust at Coles Pasture, St. Phillip discovered that the Barbados Trade Winds actually carried significant quantities of dust from North Africa. In 1966, Professor Joseph Prospero and colleagues from the University of Miami took over the research, eventually moving the operation to Ragged Point, where it remains to this day.

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