

Heavy rain in eastern Cuba causes severe destruction



The Bayamo River (Granma Province) overflows its banks (Source: [Radio Bayamo](#))

Heavy rains are currently causing severe flooding in central and eastern Cuba. Cuban media report that one person died in the province of Granma on Friday as a result of the floods, thousands had to be evacuated. Heavy damage is reported from agriculture and residential buildings, in some areas the power supply was interrupted. In the meantime, the Civil Defense has intervened. The population and travelers are urged to follow the instructions of local authorities, keep an eye on weather forecasts, "and do not become careless," according to the [warning issued](#) last Saturday.

"Damage to homes, roads and agriculture is extensive. Work to protect and evacuate families continues. We urge our citizens to be careful and responsible. The rains and the danger are still continuing. The first thing to be saved is human lives," Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel wrote on Twitter yesterday ahead of an emergency meeting of his cabinet. Train and bus services in and out of the east of the island are currently suspended.

As a result of the rains, 7,259 people have been evacuated, most of whom have been able to find shelter with friends and families, while 211 are in state institutions. As reported by local television in the hardest-hit province of Granma in the east of the island, more than 10,000 buildings there suffered damage. In addition, damage to agriculture, destroyed bridges and roads, damaged dams, and difficulties with electricity and drinking water supplies were reported. The full extent of the destruction is not expected to become visible until next week, after the rains have ended.

At least the rains brought one piece of good news: the critical levels of many freshwater reservoirs as a result of years of drought are now a thing of the past. In Granma province,

the dams are now 98 percent full. In Santiago, the level rose from 33 to 57 percent due to the rains, while in Camagüey the levels rose from 21 to 69 percent.

Update 14.06: According to the latest information from Cuban authorities, the death toll has risen to six. President Díaz-Canel spoke of the "locally heaviest rains in the past 30 years" and announced a strategy to prepare for such extreme weather events that are "directly related to the consequences of climate change." ([Cubaheute](#))