

Cuba to study whether climate change is hurting sugar harvests

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Cuba is studying whether to adjust its sugar-harvest calendar in response to damaging changes in the island's climate, an official newspaper reported Saturday.

Cuban president Miguel Diaz-Canel ordered Azcuba to undertake the climate study in coordination with the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, and to carry out any necessary remedial measures, the newspaper Granma said.

"The seasons are changing and we have to be able to adapt," Diaz-Canel was quoted as saying.

He said the traditional sugar-growing season, lasting from November to April, might have to be adjusted.

The 2017-18 harvest produced "something more than a million tonnes of sugar," an amount lower than expected and far below historic highs, drawing political concern at the highest levels.

Azcuba's new president, Julio Garcia Perez, said the changing climate was

among the "fundamental causes" of lower production, with historically heavy rainfall affecting the quality of sugar cane.

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