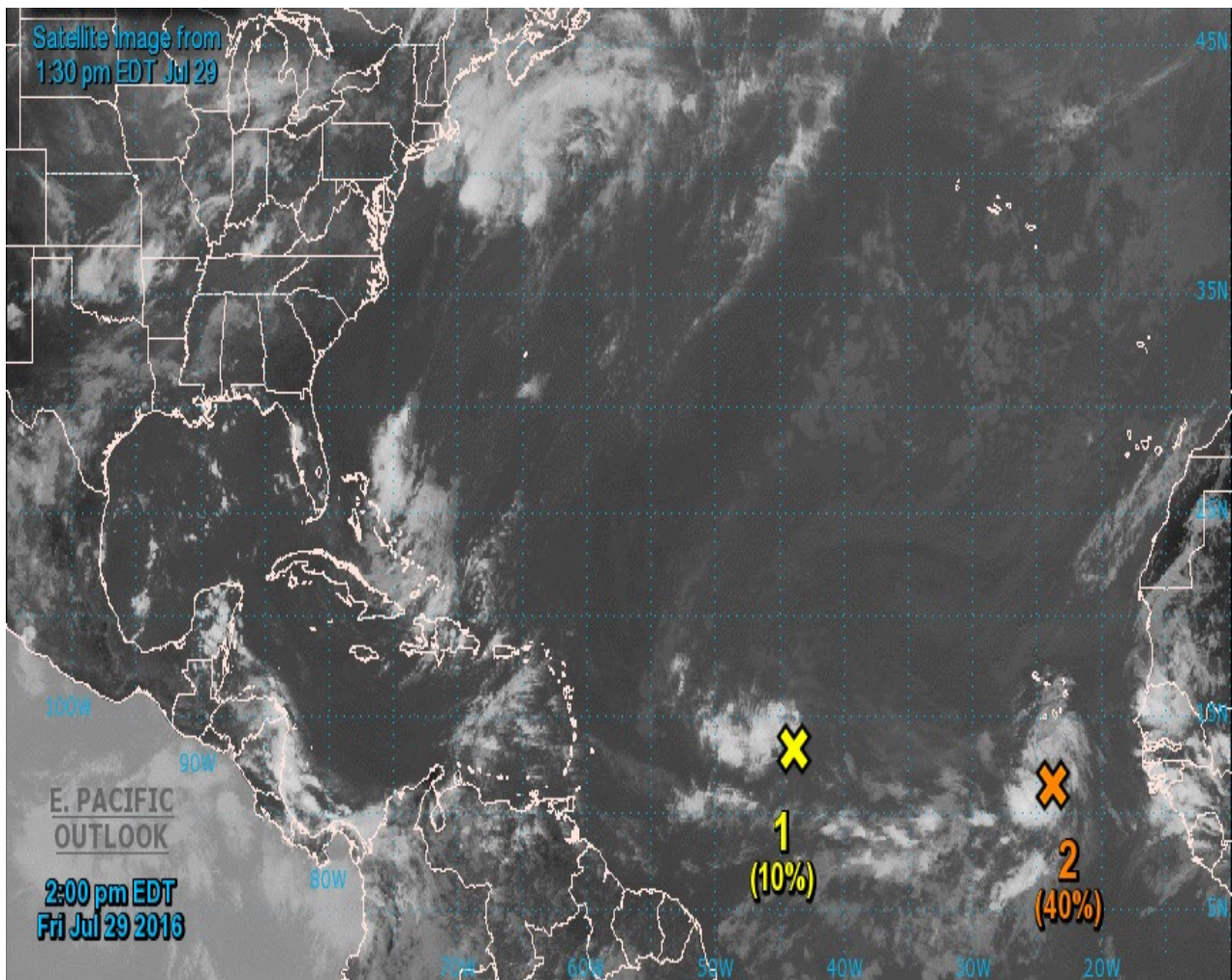


The Virgin Islands Consortium

VITEMA Encouraging Public To Monitor Weather Reports As Strong Tropical Wave Approaches USVI

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Virgin Islands Territorial Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) Director Mona Barnes is encouraging the public to monitor weather reports this weekend as a strong tropical wave continues its westward motion toward the region.

The tropical wave is forecasted to reach the USVI by Saturday night.

Earlier today, Ms. Barnes received a briefing from the US National Weather Service-San Juan Forecast Office on the two areas of disturbance in the Atlantic, according to a press release VITEMA issued this afternoon.

According to the Ernesto Morales, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, a strong tropical wave, designated as 97 L, is forecast to impact the region from Saturday night through Sunday night. The tropical wave will bring unstable conditions and significantly enhance the development of showers and thunderstorms across the region. Periods of heavy rainfall, gusty winds, and lightning activity can be expected as the tropical wave moves through the area. Flooding and mudslides as well as hazardous marine conditions can also be expected, Morales stated.

"I'm asking the public to monitor weather and be mindful that the tropical wave is forecasted to produce heavy rains and strong winds across the territory this weekend," Ms. Barnes said. "If you plan to be on the road this weekend or live in a flood prone zone, be aware that we may also experience flooding in some areas. VITEMA will continue to provide the community with updates and we will issue safety alerts as needed."

At 2 p.m. today, Invest 97 L was located about 1100 miles east of the Lesser Antilles is moving westward at 20 to 25 miles per hour. The National Hurricane Center has given Invest 97 L a low chance, 30 percent, of forming in the next five days.

Shower activity associated with a second tropical wave and a low pressure system, designated as Invest 96 L, is centered a couple of hundred miles south of the Cabo Verde Islands. Invest 96 L continues to show signs of organization, according to the National Hurricane Center. However, recent satellite wind data indicate that the low does not have a well-defined circulation. Some development is possible during the next day or two before the disturbance encounters a less favorable environment over the central tropical Atlantic early next week. Formation chance through the next five 5 days is medium.

The National Hurricane Center will issue updates at 5 p.m. today and at 8 p.m. and 11 p.m. tonight.