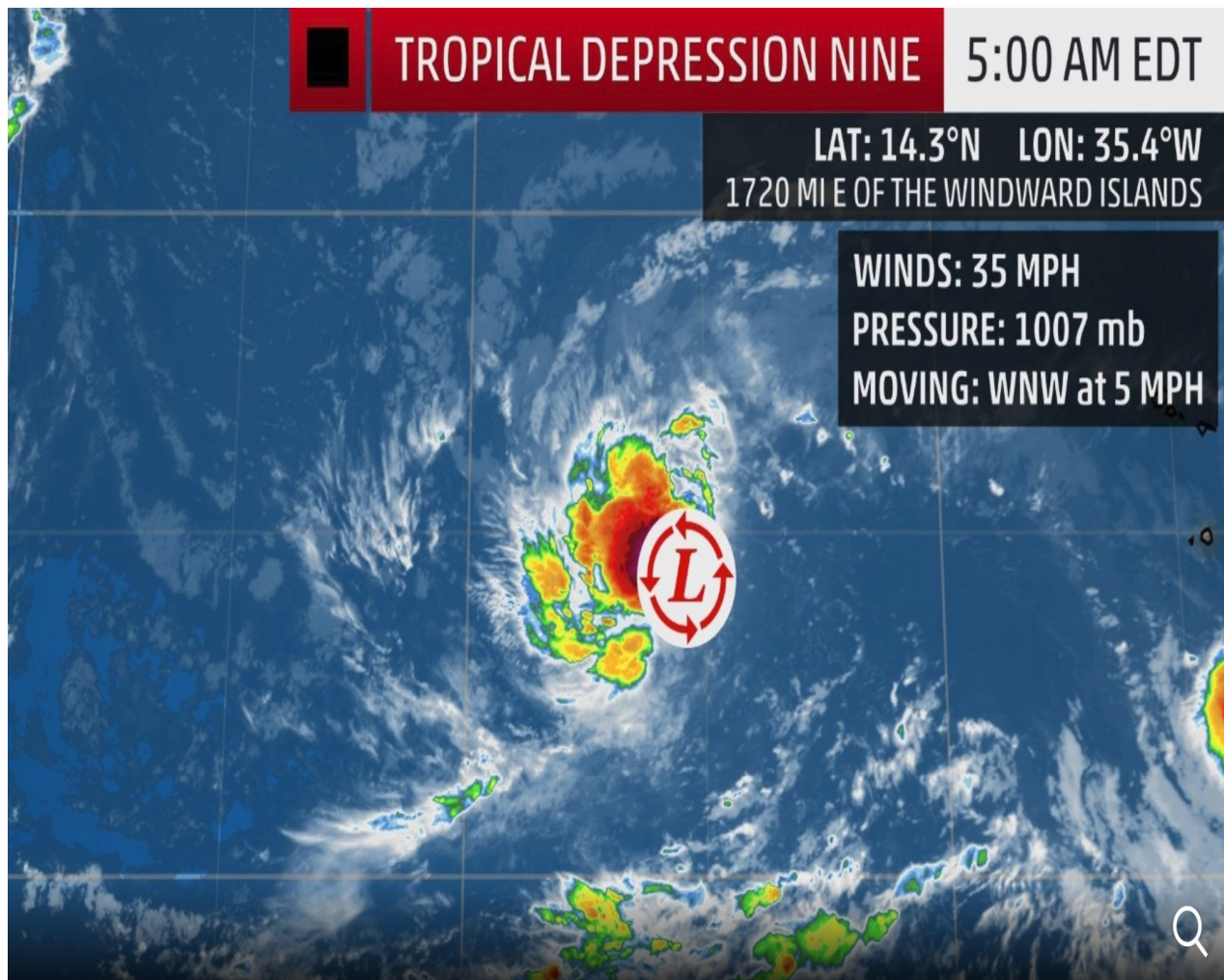


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Storm Headed Towards Leeward Islands Expected To Be Hurricane By Early Next Week; Tropical Storm Helene Tracks West

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Staff **September 08, 2018**



The two weather systems in the Atlantic Ocean have gained strength and both are expected to continue growing even stronger in the coming days. The closest storm to the Leeward islands is what the National Hurricane Center (N.H.C.) is referring to as Tropical Depression 9. This storm is expected to become a tropical storm later today and a hurricane next week.

According to N.H.C., as of 5:00 a.m. Saturday, [Tropical Depression 9](#) was located near latitude 14.3 North, longitude 35.4 West. The depression is moving toward the west-

northwest near 5 mph (7 km/h), however a turn toward the west is expected later today, and that general motion at a slightly faster forward speed is forecast to continue through the weekend and into early next week, N.H.C. said.

If the track forecast by N.H.C. holds, the storm will move just south of the U.S. Virgin Islands. However, residents are urged to monitor the system closely as the track can change quickly. Originally, the depression was expected to head north and not affect land at all. Now it has Leeward islands directly in its sights.

Maximum sustained winds of Tropical Depression 9 are near 35 mph (55 km/h) with higher gusts. Gradual strengthening is forecast during the next few days, and the depression is expected to become a tropical storm later today and a hurricane by early next week. The estimated minimum central pressure is 1007 mb (29.74 inches)

Tropical Storm Helene

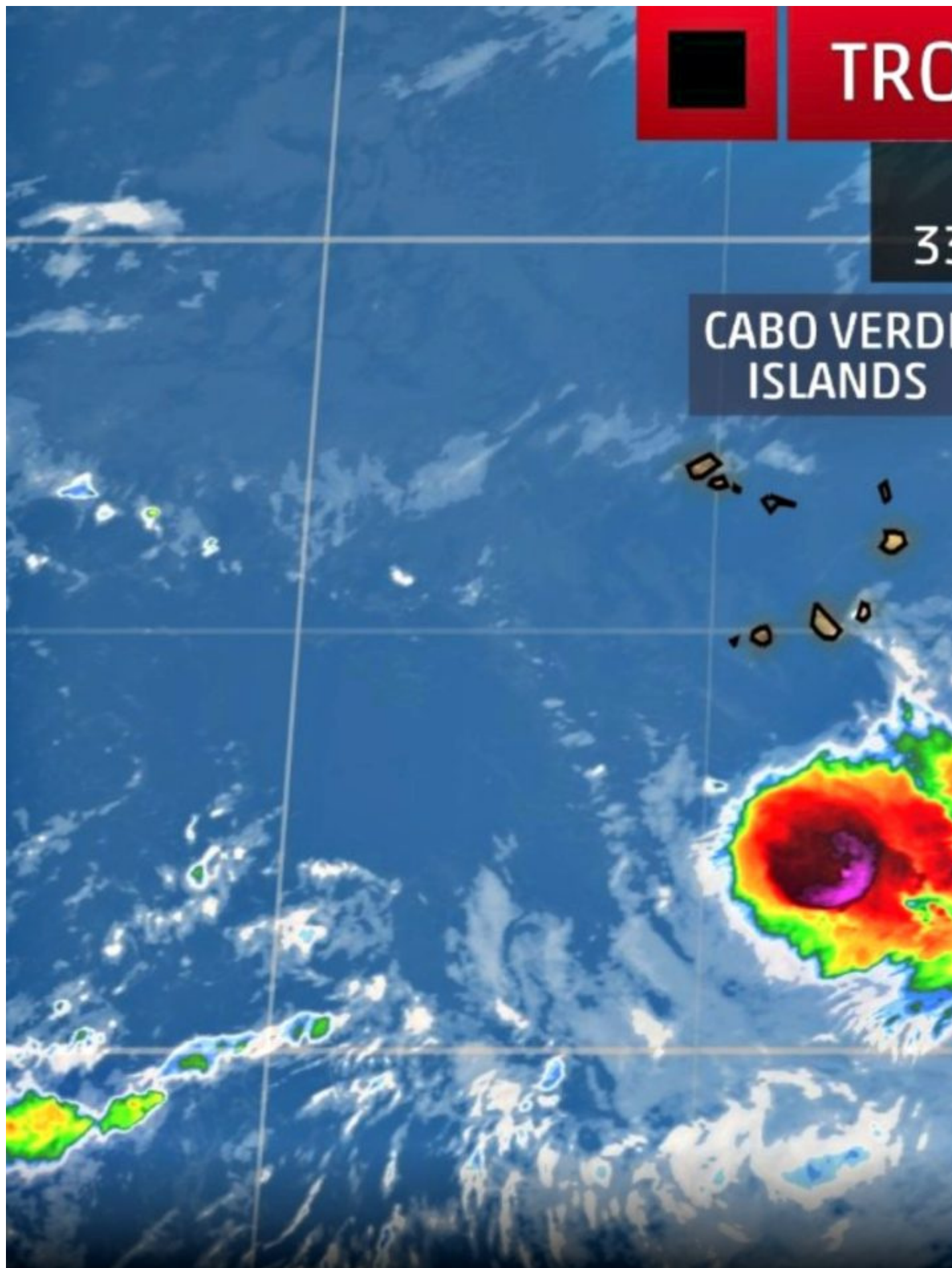
[Tropical Storm Helene](#) was formed after Tropical Depression 9, however it has rapidly gained strength and is expected to become a hurricane by Sunday, according to N.H.C. A tropical storm warning has been issued for Santiago, Fogo, and Brava in Cape Verde.



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N.H.C. said Helene was located near latitude 13.7 North, longitude 19.6 West at 5:00 a.m. today. The tropical storm is moving toward the west near 13 mph (20 km/h), and this general motion will likely continue through the weekend. The storm is expected to make a gradual turn toward the west-northwest with an increase in forward speed is expected early next week.

On the forecast track, Helene will pass very close to the southern Cabo Verde Islands tonight and early Sunday.

Maximum sustained winds have increased to near 45 mph (75 km/h) with higher gusts. Additional strengthening is forecast for the next couple of days and Helene is expected to become a hurricane on Sunday. Tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 80 miles (130 km) from the center. The estimated minimum central pressure is 1001 mb (29.56 inches), N.H.C. said.

The storm's extended track has it moving north and far away from the Caribbean islands, but again, the public should continue monitoring the system as the track could change.