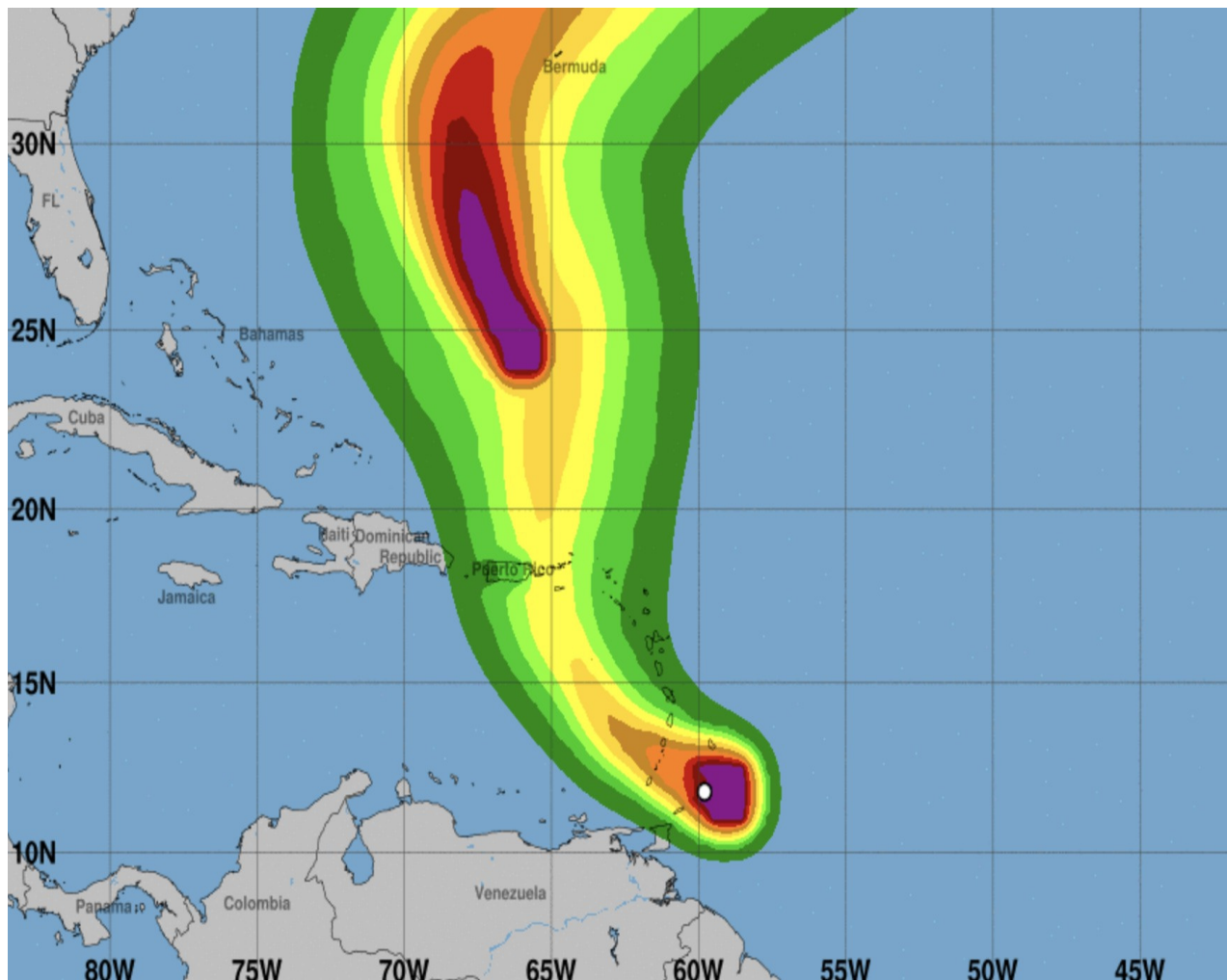


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Tropical Storm Watch Likely To Be Issued For USVI And Puerto Rico Today As Karen Forms In Atlantic

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Tropical Storm Karen formed in the Atlantic this morning, according to the National Hurricane Center's 5:00 a.m. advisory, and the storm is expected to approach the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico on Tuesday.

N.H.C. said a tropical storm watch would likely be issued for the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico later today.

The government of Trinidad and Tobago has issued a tropical storm watch for Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada and its dependencies.

Tropical storm warnings may be issued later today for other portions of the Windward Islands. Elsewhere, interests in the Leeward Islands should monitor the progress of Karen, N.H.C. advised.

According to the National Hurricane Center's 5:00 a.m. advisory, the center of newly formed T.S. Karen was located near latitude 11.9 North, longitude 60.2 West. Karen is moving toward the west-northwest near 9 mph and this general motion is expected to continue today. A turn toward the northwest is forecast to occur on Monday, followed by a turn toward the north on Tuesday.

On the forecast track, Karen will move across the Windward Islands this afternoon and tonight, and emerge over the southeastern Caribbean Sea Monday morning. On Tuesday, Karen is expected to approach Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Maximum sustained winds are near 40 mph with higher gusts. Little change in strength is forecast during the next 48 hours. Tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 125 miles (205 km) from the center. Barbados recently reported a sustained wind of 37 mph and a gust to 45 mph. The estimated minimum central pressure is 1005 mb (29.68 inches).

Wind

Tropical storm conditions are expected to first reach those islands within the warning area later this morning and afternoon, making outside preparations difficult or dangerous, N.H.C. said.

Rainfall

Karen is expected to produce the following rainfall accumulations through Wednesday:

- Windward Islands: 3 to 6 inches, isolated 8 inches.
- Leeward Islands: 1 to 3 inches, isolated.
- Far northeastern Venezuela and Barbados: 1 to 3 inches.

These rains may cause flash flooding and mudslides, especially in mountainous areas, the National Hurricane Center said.