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USVI, Puerto Rico Among Lesser Antilles Islands Cautioned as Tropical Storm Bret Forms in Atlantic

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Tropical Storm Bret has formed in the Atlantic, and the National Hurricane Center is issuing advisories as the system, which is projected to strengthen, draws near the Lesser Antilles. By. WEATHER CHANNEL

A new tropical storm, dubbed Bret, has taken form over the central Atlantic in the early weeks of the 2023 Hurricane Season, as announced by the National Hurricane Center Monday. Residents and authorities of the Lesser Antilles — including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico — have been urged to keep a close eye on the progress of this tropical storm.

The storm's current location is around 11.3N latitude and 42.2W longitude, placing it roughly 1295 miles (2085 kilometers) east of the southern Windward Islands. At present, Tropical Storm

Bret is moving westward, with an estimated speed of about 21 miles per hour (33 kilometers per hour).

According to Mariangelis Marrero-Colón, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Puerto Rico, the current track has the system moving just south of the local islands by the end of the workweek into the weekend. "However, uncertainty is really high with this system, and adjustments are likely with future advisories," she added.

With maximum sustained winds currently clocking in at about 40 miles per hour (65 kilometers per hour) and gusts reaching higher speeds, the storm is showing signs of increasing strength. Weather forecasts indicate that Bret might intensify enough to be categorized as a hurricane within the next few days.

Despite the storm's intensity, it has a relatively small radius of impact, with tropical storm-force winds extending only up to 45 miles (75 kilometers) from its center. The system's estimated minimum central pressure is measured to be 1008 millibars (29.77 inches).

As of now, there are no coastal watches or warnings in effect. However, given the unpredictability of such weather systems, interests in the Lesser Antilles have been advised to stay vigilant, continually monitor the storm's progress, and be prepared to take necessary action should the system pose a threat to the area.

Stay tuned for further updates and developments regarding Tropical Storm Bret.