

Severe Weather Advisory: Colombia, Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Turks and Caicos and The Bahamas.

Hurricane Matthew

Issued on Saturday 1st October 2016 at 0600 (all times are based on UK local time)

Headline – Matthew now a Category 5 Hurricane.

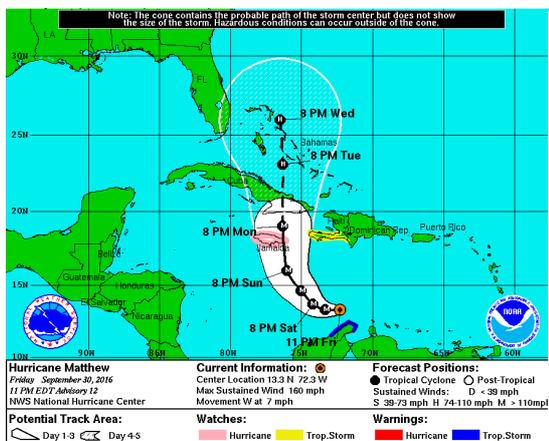
Hurricane Matthew has continued to strengthen rapidly through the past 24 hours, and is now a category 5 storm, the strongest hurricane in the Atlantic basin since Hurricane Felix in 2007. Matthew has sustained winds of 160 mph, with gusts 195 mph. A hurricane watch is in force for the entire island of Jamaica. A tropical storm watch has been raised for parts of western Haiti.

Impacts

- Hurricane force winds bringing damage and destruction to infrastructure, property, utility supply and transportation (including aviation).
- Heavy rainfall, rough seas and storm surge bringing an increased risk of significant flooding, plus land and mudslides.
- Swells generated by the storm will produce life threatening surf and rip-currents on coasts around the Caribbean Sea.

Discussion

Hurricane Matthew is now approximately 80 miles NW west of Punta Gallinas, Colombia and 440 miles SE of Kingston, Jamaica. The storm is moving west at 7 mph. Maximum sustained winds are now 160 mph, with gusts 195 mph making Matthew a category 5 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson scale. Matthew is expected to start to turn to the north-west late on Saturday, then north on Sunday. The storm may undergo some fluctuations in intensity but is likely to be a category 4 storm as it approaches Jamaica late Monday.



Model output on the likely track of Matthew is becoming more consistent. The official track from NHC takes the storm over eastern parts of Jamaica. This has changed little through the past 24 hours and this track is close to the deterministic solutions from yesterday's 12 Z GM and GFS. The latest EC deterministic solution took the centre of the storm just to the east of Jamaica and it is noted that there is still some spread in the ensembles, with some solutions taking the storm as far west as western Jamaica, and some as far east as western Haiti. Thereafter Matthew is likely to cross eastern parts of Cuba, then move north into The Bahamas by Wednesday. Matthew may yet pose a threat to the Turks and Caicos Islands, and parts of Florida, USA.

Hurricane force winds now extend up to 45 miles from the centre of the storm. Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 205 miles. A tropical storm warning remains in force for the northern tip of Colombia. There is an increasing likelihood of hurricane impacts across Jamaica and Cuba. These include destructive winds, 300-600 mm of rainfall, severe flooding, storm surge and coastal floods, landslides and mudslides. Matthew poses a significant risk to life and infrastructure in the affected areas and is likely to lead to significant disruption to travel through the region, including aviation.

Sources: Met Office, ECMWF, NCEP, NHC.

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This forecast may be amended at any time

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