

# Cyclone Cleo back down to tropical storm status

December 10 2009

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The Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer instrument on NASA's Terra satellite captured this image of Cleo in the southern Indian Ocean on December 8 at 05:35 UTC (12:35 a.m. ET) when it was still a cyclone. Credit: NASA MODIS Rapid Response

Cleo has run into wind shear and it has weakened it from a cyclone to a tropical storm. Cleo's maximum sustained winds are now down to 69 mph, and expected to continue falling. NASA's TRMM satellite noticed

that an opening in the storm's circulation is one of the reasons Cleo has weakened quickly.

On December 10 at 09:00 UTC (4 a.m. ET) Tropical Storm Cleo) was located approximately 380 nm south-southwest of the island of Diego Garcia, near 13.5 degrees South latitude and 70.3 East longitude. Cleo was moving west-southwestward at 7 mph.

NASA and the Japanese Space Agency's Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission or TRMM satellite flew over Cleo early this morning and confirmed that Cleo's low level circulation center is becoming exposed to the north. Open [circulation](#) leads to weakening, and Cleo has weakened more quickly than expected.

TRMM noticed that Cleo's deepest convection has contracted toward its center and has thinned significantly.

An elongated area of low pressure, or a trough located to Cleo's west is impacting the storm, and increased vertical [wind shear](#). Wind shear can weaken and tear a [storm](#) apart. In addition, Cleo continues to move toward cooler waters, another factor that will zap its strength. Over the next several days, Cleo is forecast to become extra-tropical.

Source: NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center ([news](#) : [web](#))

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