

Tropical Storm Oli forms in the southern Pacific

February 1 2010

The twelfth tropical cyclone in the Southern Pacific Ocean has formed today, February 1, 2010, and because of its proximity to the Fiji islands, it has been dubbed "Oli." The GOES-11 satellite passed over Oli early this morning and captured an infrared image of the storm's clouds.

GOES-11, or the [Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite](#), is operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and provides visible and infrared satellite imagery. Some of the imagery is created through the NASA GOES Project at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md. GOES-11 flew over Oli at 11:52 a.m. ET today, February 1, and noticed a well-organized tropical storm.

Oli's name may also be referred to as Tropical Cyclone 12P in the news. The Fiji islands have their own list of tropical cyclone names, which may be confusing, because the Joint Typhoon Warning Center will typically use the number of the storm. The Joint Typhoon Warning Center is currently referring to Oli as "12P" for the twelfth tropical cyclone in the Southern Pacific Ocean.

At 10 a.m. ET, February 1, Tropical Storm Oli (12P) had [maximum sustained winds](#) near 57 mph (50 knots) up from 40 mph from 12 hours ago. Oli is moving east at 23 mph (20 knots). It was located about 540 nautical miles north-northwest of Rarotonga, near 13.5 degrees South and 162.9 degrees West.

Oli is currently in an area of low wind shear. High wind shear can tear a

[storm](#) apart, while low wind shear allows storms to strengthen, if the sea surface temperatures are over 80 degrees Fahrenheit (and they are where Oli is located). Over the next four days, however, Oli will move into those cooler waters and [wind shear](#) is forecast to pick up. So, forecasters expect some strengthening in the short term, but Oli will hit a wall after day four.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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