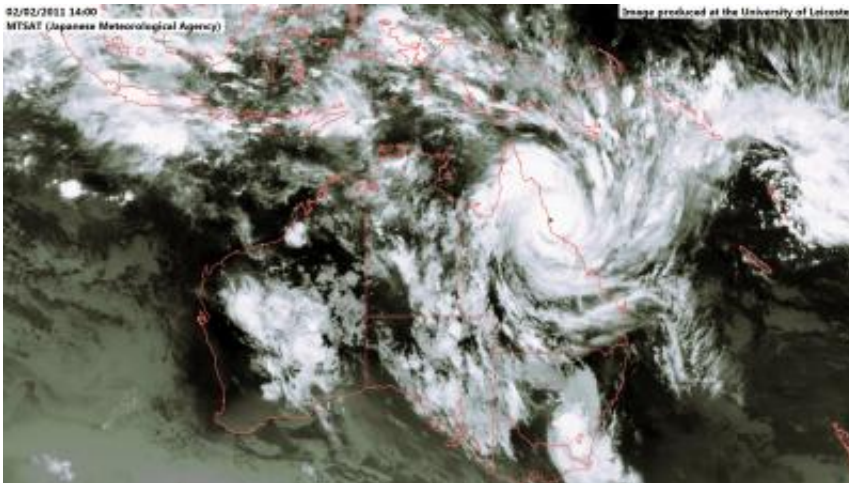


# Scientists release stunning satellite imagery of cyclone Yasi from space (w/ Video)

February 3 2011

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This image was taken by MTSAT on Feb. 2 at 2 p.m. Credit: MTSAT (Japanese Meteorological Agency), image produced by University of Leicester.

Earth observation scientists at the University of Leicester have recorded stunning images of tropical cyclone Yasi by orbiting satellites.

Japanese Meteorological Agency and European Space Agency [satellite instruments](#) have been observing the intense storm over Australia from their vantage points in space.

University of Leicester scientists have used two instruments, MTSAT-2 and MERIS, which have enabled the scientists to follow the progress of the storm as it headed towards and then struck the Australian coast. They

have provided unique views from space of a storm system which is larger than the UK.

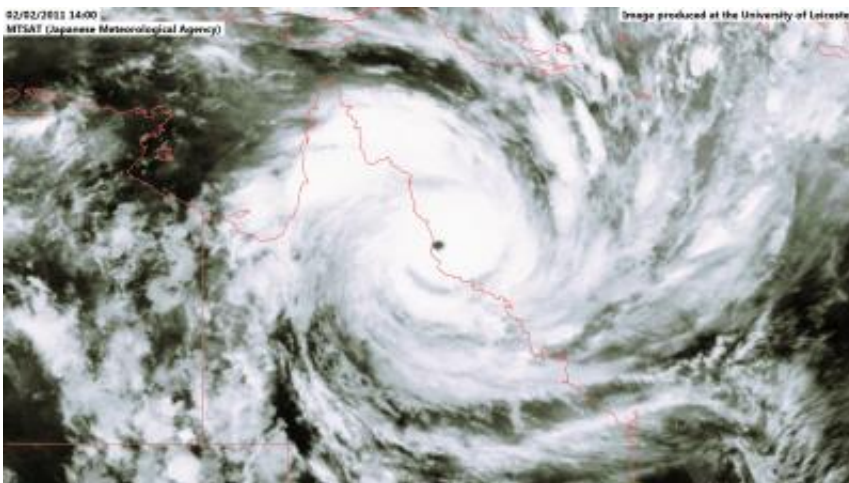
The newly operational MTSAT-2 images from February 2nd are particularly striking. The images, showing the coldest [clouds](#) as white, reveal the extent of swirling white cloud and the deep eye of the storm which is clearly visible just off the coast of Northern Australia. The MERIS images taken on February 1st, shows the cloud system in greater detail (the colour scale runs from white clouds to green vegetation); MERIS on Envisat was recently placed in a new operational orbit to extend its mission lifetime. A movie of MTSAT-2 data shows the rapid approach of the storm and the real strengthening of the cyclone as it nears the coast.



These are MERIS images taken on Feb. 1. Credit: MERIS data @ESA, University of Leicester

Dr David Moore from the University's Space Research Centre in the Department of Physics and Astronomy said "What these images reveal is the sheer scale of tropical cyclone Yasi. This particular storm system has intensified over the past several days into a system larger than the UK. Indeed, the size of the storm's eye is itself larger than the Isle of Anglesey!"

Professor John Remedios, Head of Earth Observation Science at the University of Leicester, said, "The strength of the [storm](#) and the clarity of the eye are quite remarkable. Satellite systems allow us to monitor and improve the forecast for the areas at risk. They also really show us the immense energy of natural systems which still have a profound effect on our daily lives. In Australia, it really has been a most difficult few months with the combination of a number of intense weather events."



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The MTSAT-2 is a dual mission satellite for the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport and the Japan Meteorological Agency and is part of a series of geostationary satellites centred over the Pacific Ocean. The instrument became operational in July 2010 and is capable of measuring over visible and infrared wavelengths in five channels.

The MERIS instrument is flown on the European Space Agency (ESA) satellite, Envisat, launched in 2002. The MERIS instrument is able to observe vegetation greenness and ocean colour, and their change over the seasons. The Envisat recently underwent a controlled orbit change to extend its lifetime to 2013. The images show that the instrument is working very well.

Provided by University of Leicester

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