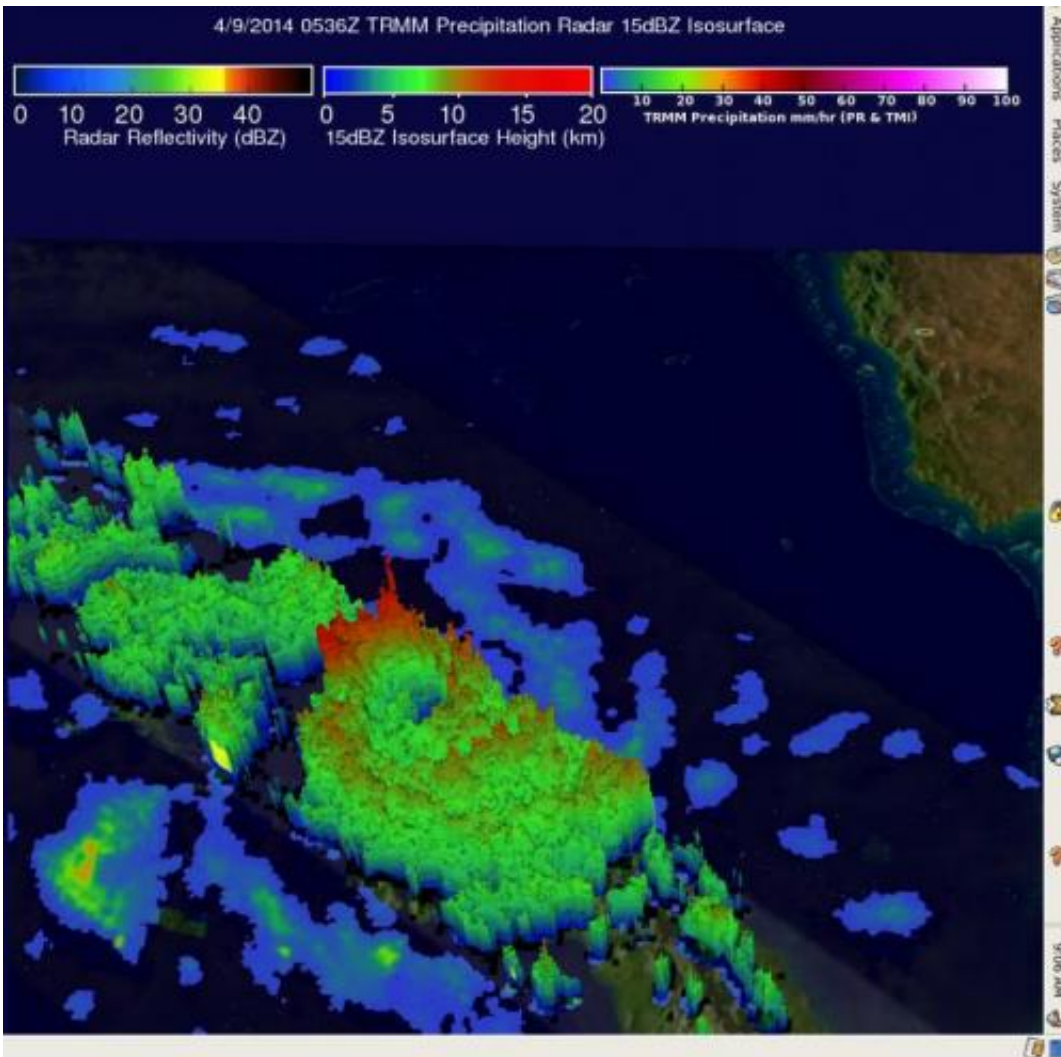


TRMM satellite sees Tropical Cyclone Ita intensifying

April 9 2014



On April 9, the TRMM satellite saw rain falling at a rate of over 99 mm/3.9 inches per hour within Ita's feeder bands over the coast of southeastern Papua New Guinea. Credit: NASA/SSAI, Hal Pierce

Tropical Cyclone Ita has been intensifying as it tracks from Papua New Guinea toward Queensland, Australia, and NASA's TRMM satellite noticed the development of an eye feature.

NASA and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency's Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission (TRMM) satellite flew above intensifying Tropical Cyclone Ita in the Coral Sea near the southeastern tip of Papua New Guinea on April 9, 2014 at 0536 UTC/1:36 a.m. EDT. Tropical cyclone had developed a large but well defined eye and had sustained winds estimated at 65 knots/75 mph. Rainfall derived from TRMM's Microwave Imager (TMI) and Precipitation Radar (PR) data was used to create a rainfall analysis.

TRMM PR data unveiled rain falling at a rate of over 99 mm/3.9 inches per hour within Ita's feeder bands over the coast of southeastern Papua New Guinea. TRMM PR found that tall thunderstorms in Ita's eye wall were reaching heights of over 16 km/9.9 miles and were returning radar reflectivity values of over 57dBZ to the satellite.

On April 9 at 0900 UTC/5 a.m. EDT, Tropical Cyclone Ita's maximum sustained winds had increased to 80 knots/92 mph/148.2 kph. Ita is a Category one hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Scale. According to the scale, a Category 1 hurricane can cause the following: well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding and gutters. Large branches of trees will snap and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days.

Ita was still over 400 miles from Cairns, Australia at 0900 UTC/5 a.m. EDT. It was centered near 11.5 south and 150.2 east and moving to the west at 9 knots/10.3 mph/16.6 kph. The Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) noted that Ita is generating 25-foot/7.6 -meter high waves in the Coral Sea.

On April 9, animated multispectral satellite imagery showed Ita has tightly curved bands of thunderstorms wrapping into a consolidating low level circulation center. TRMM microwave imagery revealed a well-formed eye around that consolidating center.

The Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) is forecasting Ita to strengthen over the next two days with [maximum sustained winds](#) peaking near 105 knots before weakening from interaction with the land. Ita is expected to move southwest through the Coral Sea and reach the eastern Cape York Peninsula, Queensland by Friday, April 11. The Australian Bureau of Meteorology (ABM) noted that Ita is expected to cross the far north Queensland coast between Lockhart River and Cape Flattery late Friday.

ABM has posted a Cyclone Watch for coastal areas from Cape Grenville to Cairns, extending up to 124 miles/200 kilometers inland to areas including Kalinga, Laura, and Palmerville. For updates, visit the ABM website: <http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/index.shtml>.

From April 11 through the 14, JTWC expects an approaching shortwave trough (elongated area of low pressure) to begin pushing Ita away from the coast. Current JWTC forecasts take Ita's center near Cairns and slowly turn Ita in a southeasterly direction causing the storm parallel the Queensland coast to Brisbane.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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