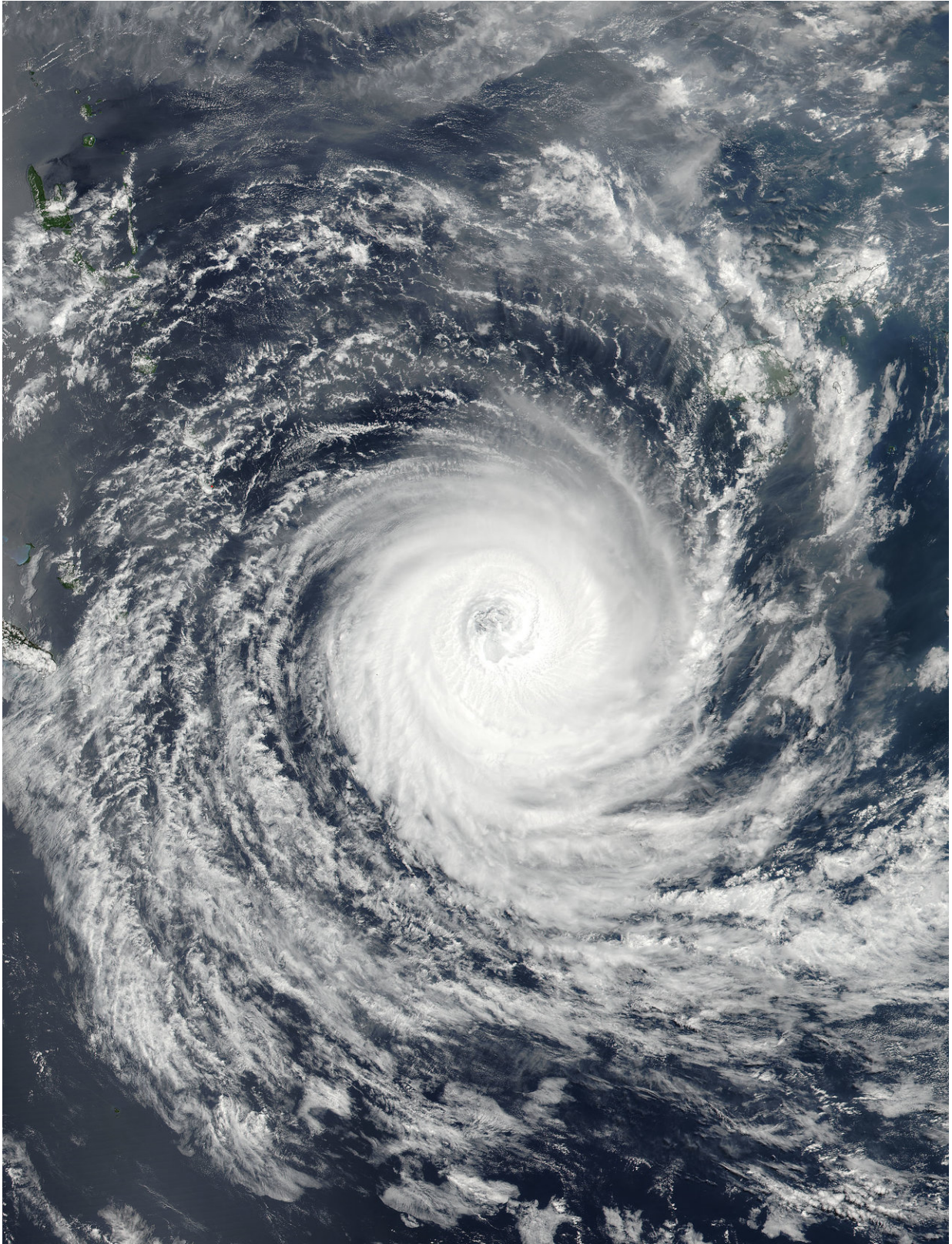


Suomi NPP satellite tracking Tropical Cyclone Gita

February 15 2018



On Feb. 15 at 0224 UTC (Feb. 14 at 9:24 p.m. EST) NASA-NOAA's Suomi

NPP satellite captured a visible image of Tropical Cyclone Gita in the South Pacific Ocean. Credit: NOAA/NASA Goddard Rapid Response Team

Tropical Cyclone Gita remained a powerful hurricane in the Southern Pacific Ocean when NASA-NOAA's Suomi NPP satellite passed overhead and captured a visible image of the storm.

On Feb. 15 at 0224 UTC (Feb. 14 at 9:24 p.m. EST) the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) instrument aboard NASA-NOAA's Suomi NPP satellite showed well-rounded circulation center with bands of powerful thunderstorms wrapping into the eye. The VIIRS image showed a symmetrical system with a well-defined 40 nautical mile-wide eye. Infrared imagery revealed that cloud tops were warming, so the uplift within the storm was weakening.

At 10 a.m. EST (1500 UTC) on Feb. 15 Gita's maximum sustained winds were 115 mph (100 knots/185 kph). Gita is still a [major hurricane](#) and a Category 3 [hurricane](#) on the Saffir-Simpson hurricane wind scale. It was centered near 22.5 degrees south latitude and 171.1 degrees east longitude. That's about 339 nautical miles east of Noumea, New Caledonia. Gita was moving to the west-southwest at ~14 mph (12 knots/22 kph).

New Caledonia is on pre-alert for Gita. The North Island of New Zealand looks likely to be affected by Gita on February 19 and 20. Residents should monitor output from Met New Zealand: <http://www.metservice.com/warnings/tropical-cyclone-activity>.

The Joint Typhoon Warning Center forecast calls for Gita to gradually turn southwestward then southeastward after 24 hours. The extended forecast out 5 days calls for Gita to weaken to a tropical storm after it

crosses New Zealand near Wellington.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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