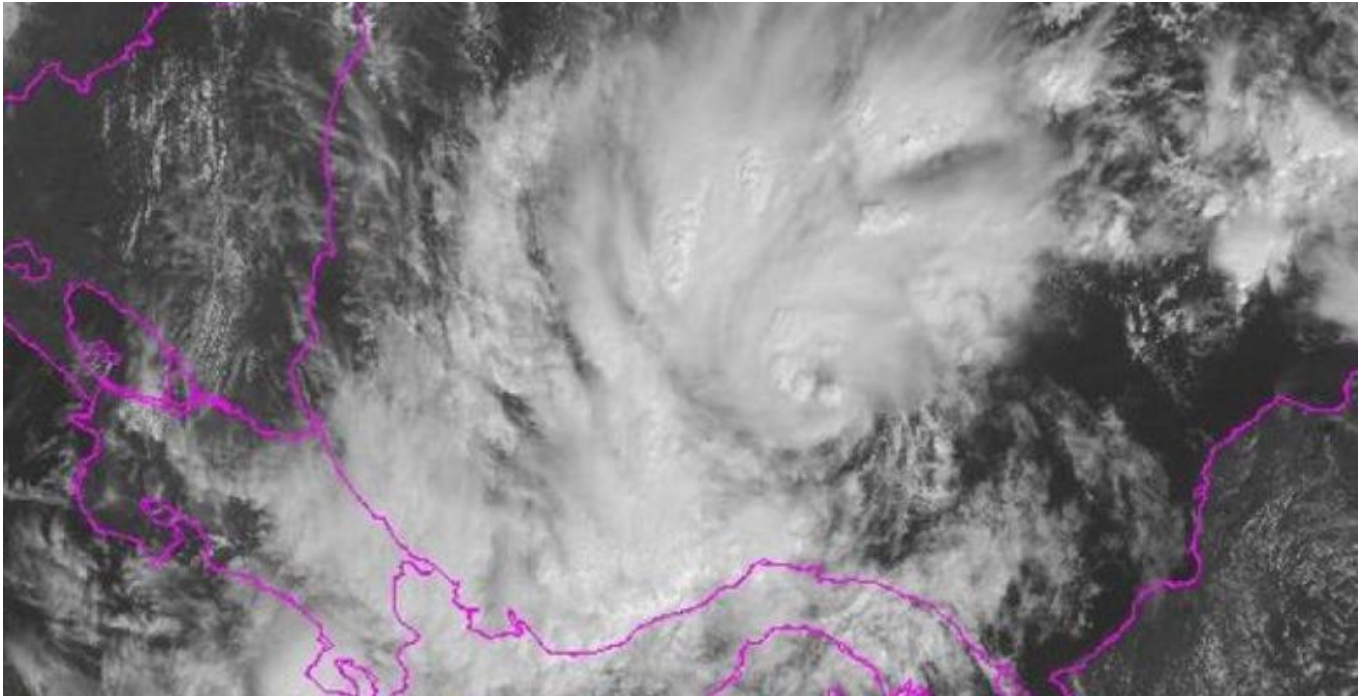


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Tropical depression forms, could hit Central America as a hurricane

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A tropical depression formed in the western Caribbean Sea on Monday morning, the National Hurricane Center said, and it could hit Central America as a hurricane by Thanksgiving.

Dubbed Tropical Depression Sixteen, the system is forecast to strengthen into a tropical storm and then a hurricane over the next few days. If it becomes a tropical storm, it would be named Otto.

As of 10 am ET, the depression had sustained winds of 35 mph and was located about 305 miles east of Bluefields, Nicaragua, the hurricane center said. It becomes a tropical storm when its winds reach 39 mph and a hurricane when winds reach 74 mph.

It's forecast to slowly move to the west and hit Central America as a Category 1 hurricane by Thursday.

Areas from eastern Panama to Honduras and El Salvador will be at risk for flash and urban flooding, mudslides and the possibility of winds strong enough to cause power outages later this week, AccuWeather said.

According to NOAA, there have only been 20 November hurricanes in the Atlantic since 1950.

Officially, the 2016 hurricane season ends Nov. 30.