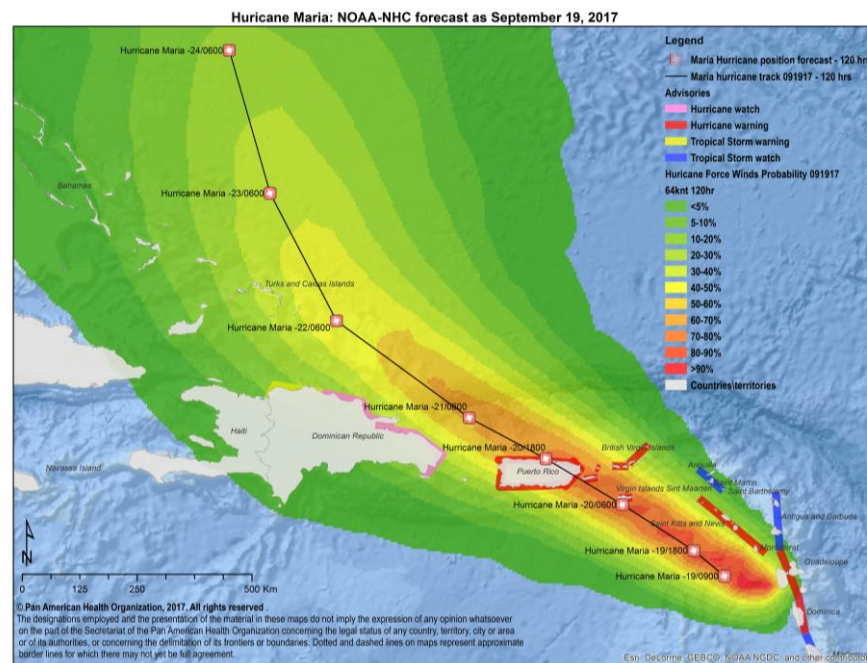


## Update on Hurricane Maria in the Caribbean

September 19, 2017

**Hurricane Maria**, a category 5 hurricane, made landfall on Dominica (evening of September 18, 2017) bringing 260 km/h winds. Preliminary reports from the island have indicated massive destruction, with flooding and infrastructural damage. Communication channels have been completely cut off, and more information will be available as communication is restored and needs and damage assessments begin after the hurricane.

Maria will continue to affect portions of the Leeward Islands today and the core of the hurricane is expected to move near or over Montserrat, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands tonight and Wednesday. Hurricane Maria can be particularly devastating to these islands due to the magnitude of the storm and the population impacted is particularly vulnerable due to the passage of Hurricane Irma last week. Many of these islands in the path of both hurricanes, including British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico have been working to re-establish electricity and water services, rebuild and reopen healthcare services, and respond to the emergency.



### **Dominica (Population: 73,162)**<sup>1</sup>

The eye of the hurricane traversed across the island on September 18, bringing life-threatening wind and rain to the island. Initial reports indicate “widespread devastation” with massive flooding and infrastructure damage throughout the island, including the main hospital. Due to the mountainous

<sup>1</sup> United Nations World Population Prospects 2017; Data estimate to 2015

landscape of the island, many smaller communities are likely isolated due to floods, damage to roads, and landslides. Due to power and communication outages, no further assessments are available.

The Barbados Coast Guard is planning to leave today for Dominica by boat with search and rescue teams. The boat will contain two PAHO experts and medical supplies that are being mobilized through the Regional Response Team. PAHO engineers are already on the island. Generators and other supplies have been identified in the PAHO warehouse in Panama to be sent. Emergency Kits are available to be sent to the affected islands, including Dominica.

### ***British Virgin Islands* (Population: 30,113)<sup>1</sup>**

The British Virgin Islands were heavily impacted by Hurricane Irma and working to restore access to water and electricity. Hurricane Maria is expected to impact the British Virgin Islands this evening. Shelters that are in place have been weakened and many homes have sustained damages by the previous storm. Not all debris have been cleared and may pose danger.

### ***Guadeloupe* (Population: 450,418)<sup>1</sup>**

Preliminary reports indicate that 40 percent is without power. Les Saintes, Marie-Galant, Petit-Bourg and La Desirade have been the hardest hit. As of 12:00 PM press release, communications had not been restored. Preliminary damage assessments indicate 50,000 households without electricity and 10,000 people are without potable water. When all-clear is given, French military will transport equipment and human resources to Guadeloupe.

### ***Puerto Rico* (Population: 3,673,728)<sup>1</sup> and *United States Virgin Islands* (Population: 104,977)<sup>1</sup>**

Hurricane Warning is in effect for Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands. The eye of Maria is forecasted to move over the northeastern Caribbean Sea and approach Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands tonight. The U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) EOC is in full activation.