

LA SOUFRIÈRE VOLCANO: INFORMATION NOTE #1 – WEDNESDAY 30TH DECEMBER 2020



La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Source: Loop News, 2020 [<http://www.looptt.com>]

MESSAGE:

La Soufrière Volcano is currently experiencing an effusive eruption, minor seismic activity and the building of magma on its existing dome.

ALERT LEVEL:

Orange

NO EVACUATION ORDERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED

SITUATION:

Increased seismic activity was detected over the past weekend in the dome of the La Soufrière Volcano. Volcanologists Dr. Erouscille Pat Joseph and Professor Richard Robertson of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Seismic Research Centre (SRC) have related that an effusive eruption is happening at La Soufrière, which means that magma is coming slowly out of the earth and building a dome. Professor Robertson has further revealed that minor seismic activity at La Soufrière was noted in November and December 16th and 23rd 2020; however, on December 27th, a NASA Satellite detected a hotspot in the volcano's crater.

Residents have been cautioned to stay away from La Soufrière's vicinity as sulphur-rich gases will be released into the atmosphere during this time. The SRC Team from UWI has been in contact with the Soufrière Monitoring Unit (SMU) and the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and a site visit of the volcano was conducted by NEMO and the SMU yesterday.

Trinidad & Tobago's Minister of National Security, Mr. Stuart Young has given the approval for Professor Robertson and two (2) other scientists from the SRC at UWI to travel to St. Vincent and the Grenadines, to assess the nature and level of this volcanic activity. Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves in a recent address to the nation, indicated that an aircraft from the Barbados based Regional Security System (RSS) will transport the SRC team and their equipment once the team had received negative COVID-19 tests results. Professor Robertson stated that he hoped that the team would be able to inform residents ahead of time if they need to evacuate surrounding areas of the La Soufrière volcano.

Source: National News, 2020 [https://rb.gy/y9p69o]

The following update presents information from the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) participating states or member countries:

ORANGE ALERT LEVEL:

An Orange Level alert means that there is highly elevated seismicity or fumarolic activity, or both, or other highly unusual symptoms. Eruptions may occur with less than 24 hours' notice. Monitoring systems are continuously manned and there is regular visual inspection of potential vent areas as well as continuous ground deformation and hydrothermal monitoring.

NATIONAL ACTIONS:

The National Emergency Council of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was convened on 29th December 2020 to receive updates on the status of the volcano, to inform the continued execution of the national volcano emergency plan. No evacuation order has been given but residents in the surrounding communities have been urged to avoid visiting the volcano and to be prepared to evacuate should it become necessary.

CARIBBEAN DISASTER AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (CDEMA) ACTIONS:

The CDEMA Coordinating Unit (CU) continues to operate in accordance with the standard operating procedures (SOPs) of the Regional Coordination Plan (RCP) which includes maintaining contact with the threatened states and Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) partners.

The CDEMA CU has been in contact with the National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines to provide support as needed. The CU will continue to monitor the situation in collaboration with the UWI Seismic Research Centre, the St. Vincent and the Grenadines NEMO and the national disaster management offices of Participating States in close proximity to the volcano and will provide updates to the RRM partners as necessary.

The CDEMA CU urges all Participating States and members of the RRM to monitor the progress of this volcanic event. The public should continue to monitor the releases from their local national disaster management office.

Visit the [UWI Seismic Research Centre](#) webpage for more information on the La Soufrière volcanic activity.

Source: Regional Coordination Centre, Increased Volcanic Activity, CDEMA Information Note #1, as of 7 p.m. (AST) on December 29, 2020.