

LA SOUFRIÈRE VOLCANO: INFORMATION NOTE #2 – MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2021



New Dome at La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Source: CDEMA Situation Report #3, 2020

MESSAGE:

La Soufrière Volcano continues to experience an effusive eruption, as magma is being exuded on the surface. The volcano also continues to produce visible gas and steam eruption and is forming a new volcanic dome.

ALERT LEVEL:

Orange

NO EVACUATION ORDERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED

SITUATION:

Since our previous information note on Wednesday 30th December 2020, the alert level of the La Soufrière Volcano remains at Orange, due to the ongoing increased activity at the site. The volcano continues to experience an effusive eruption, as magma is being exuded on the surface. It also continues to produce visible gas and steam eruption (which can be seen from the cGPS Station at the Belmont Observatory – approximately nine (9) km away from the volcano) and is forming a new volcanic dome, which continues to increase in size. The small crater has almost completely dried up, while strong, greyish-white gas emissions can be seen above the crater.

The University of the West Indies (UWI) Seismic Research Centre (SRC), comprising of Professor Richard Robertson and two (2) other scientists are currently still in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, to support the monitoring, data collection and analysis processes. Professor Robertson briefed Cabinet on the status of the volcanic activity on Wednesday 6th January 2021.



To date, the UWI SRC team has informed that it is too premature to conclude that the current activity will remain a simple dome extrusion event, based on the complicated patterns of previous eruptions. Therefore, there is still a chance of a volcanic explosion. A conclusive diagnosis will only be provided when further data analysis is completed.

The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) of St. Vincent and the Grenadines continues to caution nearby residents to stay away from La Soufrière's immediate vicinity, as sulphur-rich gases continue to be released into the atmosphere, during this time. Nearby residents should also expect strong sulphur smells for several days to weeks, depending on the changes in the wind direction.

Source: Source: CDEMA Situation Report #3, 2020

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.

UPDATES FROM IMPACTED CDEMA PARTICIPATING STATE:

St. Vincent and the Grenadines:

1. The National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) met with residents of Sandy Bay and surrounding communities on January 7, 2021 at Sandy Bay Government School to update residents on the present situation at the La Soufrière Volcano and to review the Community Volcano Emergency Plan.
2. On Saturday 9th January 2021, NEMO will meet with residents of Georgetown and surrounding areas at the Georgetown Secondary School at 3:00 p.m. to update residents on the present situation at the La Soufrière Volcano and to review the Community Volcano Emergency Plan.
3. The National Emergency Management Organisation is reminding the public that no evacuation order or notice has been issued.
4. NEMO continues to appeal to the public to desist from visiting the La Soufrière Volcano until the scientists advise that it is safe to do so.
5. NEMO will continue to provide regular updates on all activities taking place at La Soufrière.
6. NEMO continues to be in constant communication with the Seismic Research Centre of the University of the West Indies and the SRC scientific team on the ground, regarding activities at the La Soufrière volcano.
7. The Hon. Prime Minister and the Cabinet continue to receive briefings from NEMO and the Seismic Research Centre on the ongoing eruption.
8. The National Volcano Emergency Plan remains activated and the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) partially activated.

9. NEMO will issue an official needs list where necessary upon consultation with the Government of St. Vincent.

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.

1. The CDEMA Coordinating Unit has undertaken technical consultations with the UWI Seismic Research Centre on the status of La Soufrière volcano.
2. The Regional Coordination Plan was activated at 6:00 PM December 29, 2020.
3. The Regional Coordination Centre was activated at 9:30 AM December 30, 2020.
4. The CDEMA Coordinating Unit has also undertaken consultations with the National Disaster Coordinator of the Subregional Focal Point in Barbados which stands ready to provide support.
5. In accordance with the Volcanic Annex of the RCP, the following Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) Teams have been placed on ALERT:
 - I. CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC)
 - II. CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST)
 - III. Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)
 - IV. Caribbean Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU)
6. Emergency telecommunications tests between the CDEMA CU and St. Vincent are being undertaken.
7. The CDEMA Coordinating Unit will provide initial technical assistance to the National Emergency Management Organization in the following areas:
 - I. Evacuation Planning
 - II. Logistics Planning
8. The CDEMA CU has secured a helicopter to assist the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines through the support of the UK FCDO to support the SRC scientists with observations of the volcano and transport of equipment for installation amongst other things.
9. The Core-Coordination Group on Volcanic Hazards (CCG-VH) has been established as a thematic coordinating cell of the Regional Coordination Centre and had its first meeting on January 7 2021. The CCG-VH which comprises key representatives of political, scientific and technical institutions in the region has agreed to undertake the following:
 - I. To work in support of the National Disaster Office of the threatened or impacted State under the scientific guidance of the UWI Seismic Research Centre or other designated scientific entity.
 - II. To provide guidance for the provision of regional and international assistance to affected populations, with a focus on preparedness actions to address possible effects/impacts of the volcanic hazard. X.
10. 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: Effusive Eruption at La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent, CDEMA Situation Report #3, as of 8 p.m. (AST) on January 8, 2021.