COMMUNICATION DURING VOLCANIC EMERGENCIES

AN OPERATIONS MANUAL FOR THE CARIBBEAN

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Abstract

This hanbook provides simple guidelines to the group responsible for communicating key information during a volcanic emergency: scientists, the authorities and the media. The aim is to help these groups interact more easily with each other through a greater understanding of their individual viewpoints, expectations and limits.
Volcanism is a real threat to the Eastern Caribbean. While some volcanoes every few decades (e.g., La Soufrière in Guadeloupe), others erupt after much longer intervals, giving a false sense of security to communities on their slopes. Even though many of the volcanoes do not show any sign of activity now, they could enter into eruption at any time, as shown by the reawakening of Soufrière Hills on Montserrat after 350 years of tranquility.
This handbook is based on the experiences gained by scientists, the authorities and the media during the eruptions of Montserrat, St. Vincent and Guadeloupe.