



A fire-induced dust storm in Paraguay

Juliane Fenner (1), G. Houben (1), S. Kaufhold (1), H. Lechner-Wiens (2), J. Baez (3), and F. Adam (4)

(1) BGR, Hannover, Germany (Juliane.Fenner@bgr.de), (2) Consulting, Asuncion, Paraguay, (3) Universidad Catolica, Asuncion, Paraguay, (4) DINAC-Meteorological Survey of Paraguay, Asuncion, Paraguay

On April 4th a black, ca. 100m high dust cloud rolled into Asunción, Paraguay, and was precipitated there by rain from overlying clouds. Sedimentological and micropalaeontological analysis showed that it was not dust from a volcanic eruption, but dust from the generally swampy environment of the Ypoa National Park ca. 90km se of Asunción.

Because of the very dry last summer large areas around lake Ypoa had fallen dry. Either natural ignition by flash or fires ignited by the farmers to clear for new agriculturally usable land must have caused a fire-storm that lifted the thin loose cover of fresh sediment and transported it as a dust cloud towards the nw. A black sediment consisting practically exclusively of diatoms, phytoliths and burned organic mater resulted over the whole city area of Asunción.