



Volcanic risk increasing due to the inaction of public institutions. The case of Tenerife, Canary Island. Spain.

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From 2000 there was a change in the volcanic system of the island of Tenerife. This change was not perceived by the society until 2004 when many felt earthquakes created alarm among the population of the island and especially on the people located on the northern slope of the Teide volcano (3717m). Aware of the serious problem that arose due to the lack of education about the volcanic phenomenon the Learning Guide to Volcanic Risk was prepared and published at the request of the Spanish Civil Defence. The initial goal was to have present day documentation, specific and adapted to elementary education levels that could provide adequate training to teachers and allow him to include this knowledge in the Didactics Units of the General Schedule of Teaching and not as something to be given sporadically. The final goal was to educate the population through children and youth so that they passed down the information in their family environment. At the same time, it was possible to educate and prepare these children for what might happen in the future.

The Learning Guide to Volcanic Risk has been released through the National Civil Defense official website and the volcanesdecanarias.com website. The Learning Guide to Volcanic Risk was valued and appreciated by local teachers who, as an individual task, have used it for the preparation of their programmes. One of the problems that currently exist in teaching about natural phenomena is not addressed from the point of view of the threat they pose to the person. In addition, specifically the volcanic textbooks relating to the Canary Island have serious shortcomings.

In 2004 we proposed to the Cultural Regional Minister organizing courses to train schoolteachers using the Learning Guide to Volcanic Risk as a textbook. At the same time, the volcanic risk knowledge should be included in the Didactics Units of the General Schedule of Teaching. Until now, 6 years later, there has been no response from the competent authorities. The Cultural Regional Minister keep on confusing educating with informing citizens and it doesn't think they are necessary actions in this regard despite of availability of appropriate free learning materials. Fear the possibility of a tourism reduction in the island, also made from government institutions close any option to talk about volcanic risk.