

## An Earth scientist in the staff of every Colombian Town, South America.

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The reason behind the proposal of hiring an earth scientist as part of the staff in every town has its roots in the past. Announced catastrophes backed by geological studies were not taken into account in political decision making. Considering those geological studies might have saved lives and money. Examples are the 1985 Armero lahar (25000 casualties), the 2017 Mocoa landslide (500 casualties), flooding (more than 20000 affected per year), also the consequences of earthquakes in the regions of Nariño, Cauca and the Coffee Belt. The economic losses of these events have been estimated by public and private institutions to an important percentage of the Gross Domestic Income.

On the other hand, the growing uncertainties in the development of mining and petroleum projects caused by the opposition of the inhabitants of the regions is in part, a consequence of the lack of knowledge and awareness of the society regarding the activities of these industries and the fact that the base on which human societies are built: natural resources extracted from the surface and subsurface are the building blocks of everything around us. For more than 20 years these extracting industries have been the main source of funding for the government and public spending. Regrettably, these industries are becoming more stigmatized.

Because of the above exposed, from the Geological Society of Colombia, we are making a national campaign in order to create awareness at the governmental level to accomplish the incorporation of an Earth scientist in the staff of every town in the country. The need of a qualified person that knows how to interpret geological or risks maps so as to give early warning at a local level. It is required an Earth sciences professional that is included in the social fabric and contributes to the sustainable development of the country.