

Integrated Analysis of Risk

The eagle-eye readers amongst you will notice this bulletin brings news of a ‘forensic’ workshop in St. Vincent where previously there had been no plan to do that!

One of STREVA’s aims is to use recent volcanic histories to analyse what the most important contributors are to changing risk during volcanic activity (‘forensic’ volcanoes); and the consequences of that for affected populations. If we can successfully model that, then the plan is to apply this to analysing risk at some less well known settings (‘trial’ volcanoes). After our first two workshops it became obvious that life was not going to be as straightforward at that! We needed to do some research in the ‘forensic’ settings to find out more about how volcanic risk impacted populations and integrating that with physical information would be a big leap forward but needed some careful thinking. Researchers from across all of the usual work package boundaries are contributing to the integration process; and we need to find a way to bring all these contributions together and think about how we will apply them in the less well known ‘trial’ volcanoes.

St. Vincent is a good place to further work on the integration of information. It has not had an eruption since 1979, but it has several different historical eruptions to draw on, and there is a lot written about them. Before the workshop on island we synthesised some of this data and used that to start working on some new ways to characterise risk, which we tested out at the workshop. Watch this space for some exciting results!

We have also almost completed a series of papers based on our research after the first forensic workshop in Montserrat. The next newsletter will contain links for you to download these papers! We are also starting to analyse the data we collected during our time in Ecuador.

STREVA’s third forensic workshop: St Vincent

Our third, somewhat unforeseen, workshop was held in St Vincent from the 13th-17th January. The title of the workshop was, “Eruption? Not in my lifetime!: Exploring volcanic risk awareness and communication on St Vincent”. As with our other workshops, our aim was to explore the awareness and importance of volcanic risk from the perspective of decision makers, government officials, emergency responders, monitoring agencies and the public of St Vincent. We wanted to focus on the potential impact of and response to future eruptions, explore how risk communication varies between social groups and the mechanisms by which messages and information are transferred.

The approach to the workshop was similar to those we have run in the past, comprising presentations, focus groups, risk ranking activities, and field trips to the volcano and to villages in the north of the island. For the first time we ran a scenario exercise and a paired comparison task with the group as part of our research on integrating different components of risk.



Field trip to the north windward (east) side of the island © Jon Stone

While our aims were clear, what was very uncertain was actually who would be able to attend the workshop given the terrible floods which impacted the island on Christmas Eve. Fortunately, we had overwhelming attendance throughout the week, with 52 delegates from St Vincent (including risk managers, public and officials), 8 attendees from the wider Caribbean region and 15 STREVA's. We were delighted that the workshop caught the attention of so many local people, and the support from NEMO, SRC, UWI, UWI DRRC, MVO and CDEMA was crucial to the success of the workshop.



Some of the scenes of devastation on the leeward side of the island © Jon Stone



Damaged bridge in Georgetown following the Christmas Eve floods © Jon Stone

At the end of the workshop, a brief evaluation form was circulated. Thanks to Roger Few for summarising the following feedback from the Vincentian delegates:

Statements about the workshop were overwhelmingly positive. The activity highlighted by the majority of respondents was the scenario discussion conducted on the third day. People generally felt that this activity had helped them understand potential impacts and critically discuss modes of response to a crisis. It was suggested that such an event can help build awareness of the potential for eruptions and facilitate preparedness and the development of local evacuation plans. It was also suggested that outputs from participatory scenarios planning activities should be tested as components within the national disaster plan. Some people also expressed appreciation of the field visits (by boat and by bus), and the opportunity this provided to aid their understanding of impact and response issues.

Expectations of the workshop generally hinged around the desire to learn and understand more about past eruptions, to identify signs of eruption and improve preparedness to protect lives and property.. None stated that their expectations were not met, although one respondent suggested that the time for the workshop activities was too short. Another called for more similar efforts by NEMO to reach out to people in the villages.

You can find Vicky's write up and some more photos of the event on the STREVA website.



Richie Robertson leading discussion and feedback about potential eruption scenarios © Ian Renfrew



STREVA researcher Peter Simmons and Vincentians taking in the sights of Georgetown © Anna Hicks



Rocks! © Ian Renfrew



Our expert panel: Jenni Barclay; Sir Vincent Beache; Ronald Jackson; Howie Prince; Joan Latchman © David Pyle



One of several interesting focus group sessions © David Pyle



Many of the participants of STREVA's third forensic workshop! © Paul Cole. Taken by Ian Renfrew

Congratulations corner

To Sue Loughlin for being awarded an MBE (Member of the British Empire) in recognition of her services to volcanology! She will be visiting Buckingham Palace later this year to receive her award.

To Richie Robertson for being named a laureate for the Anthony N. Sabga Caribbean Awards for Excellence (ANS SAFE) in Science & Technology. The goal of the ANSA Caribbean Awards for Excellence is "to recognize significant Caribbean achievement, to encourage and to support the pursuit of excellence by Caribbean persons, for the benefit of the region."

To Juliet Biggs, Susi Elliott, Willy Aspinall, Tamsin Mather and Steve Sparks for being very clever... watch out for their news in a few weeks!

To Mark Thomas, who was due to become a PDRA on the project later this year but has just started a Lectureship at the University of Leeds in Engineering Geology. Mark attended the initial workshop in Montserrat and hopes to remain involved in STREVA.

To Jenni Barclay, Anna Hicks, Jonathan Stone, Paul Cole, David Pyle and Iain Stewart (honorary STREVA) for the successful launch of Volcanoes Top Trumps! If you haven't got your hands on a pack, head to:

http://estore.plymouth.ac.uk/browse/extra_info.asp?compid=1&modid=1&deptid=44&catid=346&prodvarid=377&searchresults=1

And check out our website at: volcanoestoptrumps.org

The Window of Welcome

Teresa Armijos joined STREVA on the 1st of October. She is based at UEA working with Roger Few. She has attended the St. Vincent workshop and is already nearing the end of a multi-month field season analysing social vulnerability to risk in and around Tungurahua in collaboration with researchers at IG-EPN. She is heading to St. Vincent for more fieldwork in May.

Mel Rodgers joined STREVA Project on the 1st of December 2013. She will be working with David Pyle and Tamsin Mather on analysing geophysical datasets. She came to the workshop in St. Vincent and has already visited with Rod Stewart at MVO.



Mel at a recent podcast event
(<http://posus.blogspot.co.uk/2014/01/volcano-mel-podcast-now-available.html>)

Emma Lovell, ODI, joined STREVA in December 2013 as a researcher based at ODI. Emma also attended the St Vincent workshop and will be supporting Work Package 4 with ongoing analyses.

STREVA is almost at full strength now; so if you want to remind yourself who is who on the project just head to the website where most researchers are listed under their WP. If you would like an individual biography all about you on the website email us with a photo and a quick statement or two. We particularly keen to include information about our in country partners and their role in the project.

Tungurahua Activity

On February 1st 2014, Tungurahua reactivated, sending pyroclastic flows down several valleys, and generating lahars and ash fall. Check out the details at the IG-EPN, where they have published several special notices, starting with:

<http://www.igepn.edu.ec/recursos/noticias/item/838-informe-especial-del-volc%C3%A1n-tungurahua-no-4.html>



Tungurahua erupting earlier this month © Teresa Armijos

We'll leave you with one final image.....



What a beauty! The glorious crater of Soufriere St Vincent; snapped on an unusually clear day! Well done to Paul Cole for this shot.