

## **Situation Report No.2**

5 November 2002

### **Current Situation**

Volcanic activity continues in Ecuador, but the ashfall has decreased significantly as has the environmental risk in the metropolitan area of Quito.

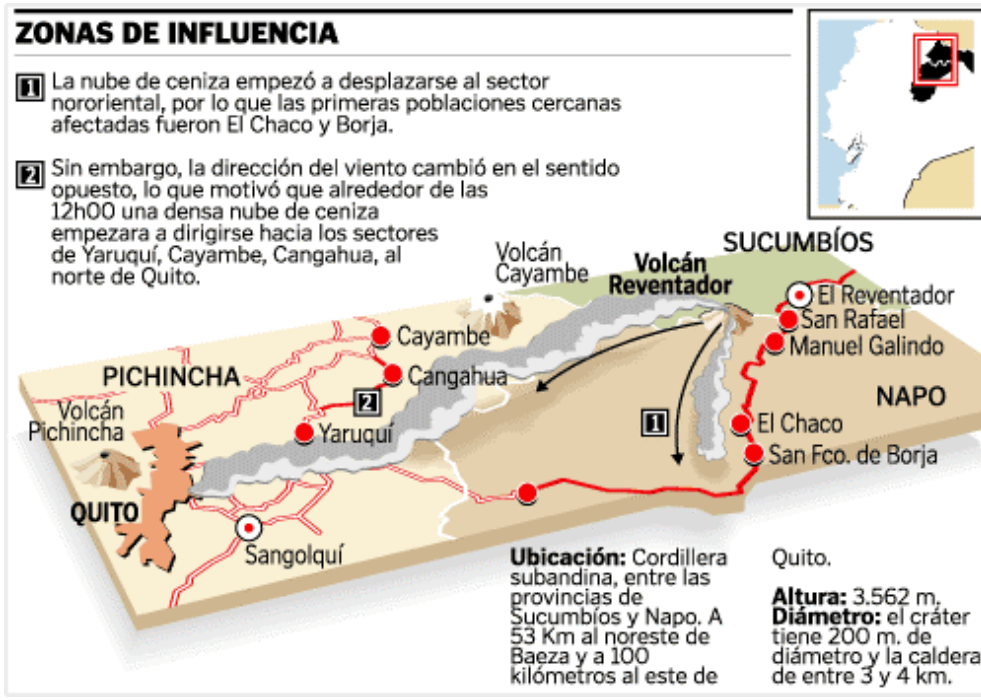
The airport in Quito remains closed and schools have not yet resumed classes, but day-to-day economic and work conditions are returning to normal.

Ecuador's Geophysical Institute reports that a similar level of volcanic activity could continue for the next several days, with limited ashfall.

Health priorities continue to include an in-depth analysis of the drinking water supply, provision of food for the most severely affected areas, and mental health interventions for the affected population.

The following map points out the areas most affected by the eruption:





Diario El Comercio, 4 de noviembre 2002 (www.elcomercio.com)

It must be pointed out that the public has reacted calmly to the volcanic activity of the last several days. This may be due, in part, to the fact that the press has disseminated adequate and appropriate public information materials, such as the diagram shown above from the daily El Comercio, 5 November, which points out the at-risk areas.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross has begun a massive public information campaign to motivate the population about how to react to the threat of another volcanic eruption. They are printing 40,000 flyers for distribution in the affected provinces.

PAHO/WHO and the Ministry of Health carried out an assessment mission in the



province of Napo, particularly in the Cantons of Baeza y Chaco. The team was comprised of the Minister of Health, the General Director of Health, and the Directors of the Disaster, Epidemiology, and Environmental Health Departments of the Ministry, as two PAHO staff members.

Area visited by the PAHO/WHO and Ministry of Health Assessment Team.

## **The Situation in the Province of NAPO**

The area encompassed by the Valle del Quijos and corresponding Cantons of Quijos and Baeza have a population of 13,500. Approximately 6,000 inhabitants of the Cantón Chaco are suffering the effects of falling ash. Following is a review of those suffering a greater direct impact and exposed to greater risk:

A). 1,049 inhabitants of the Parish of Santa Rosa, located along the slopes of the Volcano, are subject to the direct impact of the lava flow and pyroclastic eruptions. Several bridges have been lost due to the direct impact of the mudflows. The situation is critical in the following areas: Alto Coca (20 families); Cascabel (80 families), both located on the slopes of the Volcano. Despite the imminent risk and the heavy ashfall, the majority of the population has not evacuated, as they choose to remain on their land to tend their livestock, which is their principal source of income.

B). The parish of Oyacachi, with 512 inhabitants, is located to the west of the volcano, and falls directly in the path of the ash fall. This population is located in a difficult-to-access area, and although it has not yet been possible to evaluate the situation completely, it is known that they have received one of the highest concentrations of ashfall.

One of the principal problems is the effect on farmland and livestock in the area. This indirectly affects the health of the population, because it affects the production of foodstuffs and is cause for people to refuse to evacuate unsafe areas..

***Shelter.*** Two shelters have been set up in el Chaco where 38 personas, the majority of which are women and children, have access to good facilities and services. Two additional shelters have been set up in Quijos (in a meeting room in the hospital and in a school) and one in the Hospital de Tena.

***Water and Sanitation.*** Some rural drinking water systems in the highly at-risk areas were affected. The reservoirs in Baeza and el Chaco have been protected. The catchment area that supplies Baeza is being closely watched so that contaminated water does not obstruct equipment and leave the system out of service.

Government officials have organized a mission to evaluate drinking water systems in the affected areas, beginning 6 November.

***The Ministry of Health has provided the following priority measures:***

- Support for installing shelters with basic sanitary facilities.
- The Ministry of Health will deliver four mobile units to provide health services to segments of the population without access in the affected areas. These mobile units will be sent Carchi, Sucumbíos, Tena and Pichincha .