

El Niño-related rains prompt monumental floods in Ecuador



People take refuge on the roof of a house, Esmeraldas, Ecuador, June 4, 2023. | Photo: Twitter/

Quito, June 6 (RHC)-- Over the weekend powerful rains affected four cantons in Esmeraldas, a coastal province located in northwestern Ecuador and bordering Colombia. Twelve continuous hours of rain caused the overflow of six rivers, floods, cut roads, and destroyed infrastructure.

Some 500 people were rescued by means of rubber boats and another thirty citizens by helicopter. The most affected cities are Quinindé, Atacames, Muisne, and Esmeraldas. The authorities deployed 500 soldiers and 110 police officers to support the assistance efforts carried out by the Fire Department, the Ministry of Health, and the municipal services of the affected areas.

The Integrated Security Service ECU-911 confirmed that the overflow of rivers flooded several houses in Atacames and the landslide and the destruction of houses in Muisne.

The authorities also recorded the formation of sinkholes on the highway between Atacames and Tonchigüe and the flooding of houses in the cities of Quinde and Esmeraldas. The possible collapse of bridges is also feared.

Social networks showed dramatic situations such as the dragging of entire houses and cars due to the flooding of the rivers and citizens trying to save another person in a place where the water exceeded 6 feet in height. So far, however, there have been no fatalities in Esmeraldas.

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