



RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

SELA SPECIAL SERIES

MINI-GUIDE



LATIN AMERICAN
AND CARIBBEAN
ECONOMIC SYSTEM

TSUNAMIS

KNOWLEDGE FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

Practical recommendations to prevent risks, protect lives, strengthen resilience and promote a safe recovery in

Latin America and the Caribbean.



PREVENTION



PREPAREDNESS



PROTECTION
AND RESPONSE



RECOVERY



REGIONAL
COOPERATION



UNDERSTANDING THE PHENOMENON

WHAT IS A TSUNAMI?

A tsunami is a series of long-wavelength, high-energy waves generated mainly by seismic movements on the seafloor, as well as volcanic eruptions, submarine landslides, or the displacement of large masses of land into the ocean.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS:



LONG WAVELENGTH

They can travel at high speeds across the ocean, with waves that can extend for hundreds of kilometers.



HIGH SPEED

In the open ocean, they can travel between 500 and 800 km/h, faster than an airplane.



RISE IN SEA LEVEL

As they approach the coast, the waves increase in height and can flood low-lying areas within minutes.



SERIES OF WAVES

It is not a single wave. Several waves may arrive over hours, and the first one is not always the largest.





ALERTS AND MONITORING

HOW DO WE KNOW A TSUNAMI MAY OCCUR?

Tsunamis are mainly generated by strong earthquakes beneath the seafloor. Their detection is based on continuous ocean monitoring, seismic activity, and changes in sea level.

WHAT SHOULD WE CHECK?



SEISMIC MONITORING

Records the magnitude, location, and depth of earthquakes beneath the seafloor.



SEA LEVEL MONITORING

Stations and buoys detect abnormal changes in sea level that may indicate the arrival of a tsunami.



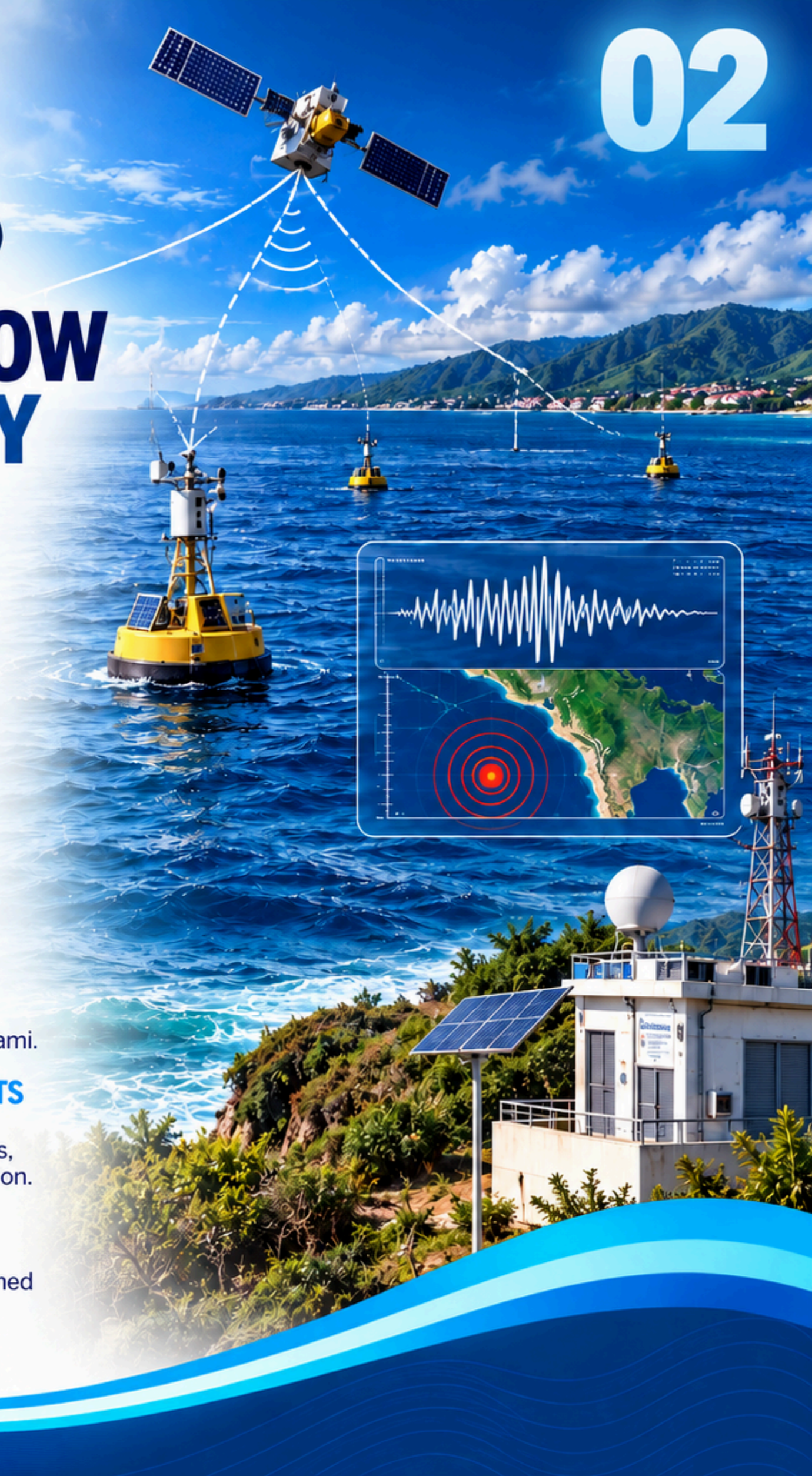
OFFICIAL WARNINGS AND ALERTS

Issued by national authorities and regional tsunami warning systems, providing timely and reliable information.



LOCAL INFORMATION

Follow the recommendations of civil protection authorities and stay informed through official channels.





PREVENTION

HOW CAN WE REDUCE THE RISK OF A TSUNAMI?

Prevention helps reduce the exposure of people and communities to tsunamis. Understanding the risk, planning land use, and strengthening infrastructure are key actions to save lives.

KEY ACTIONS:



UNDERSTAND THE RISK

Identify tsunami hazard zones through maps and technical studies.



LAND-USE PLANNING

Avoid new construction in high-risk areas and strengthen critical infrastructure in safer locations.



SIGNAGE AND EVACUATION ROUTES

Ensure clearly marked routes to safe areas and higher ground.



AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Inform the public about the risk, promote a culture of prevention, and conduct regular drills.





HOW DO WE PREPARE FOR A TSUNAMI?

Preparedness allows us to act calmly and quickly. Having a family plan, an emergency kit, and knowing evacuation routes increases everyone's safety.

KEY ACTIONS:



CREATE A FAMILY PLAN

Define meeting points, roles, and ways to communicate when a tsunami warning is issued.



PREPARE AN EMERGENCY KIT

Include water, non-perishable food, a radio, flashlight, documents, a first-aid kit, and basic supplies.



KNOW AND PRACTICE EVACUATION ROUTES

Identify marked routes to safe areas and conduct regular drills.



STAY INFORMED

Follow official information from authorities and keep a battery-powered radio available in case of emergencies.





PROTECTION AND RESPONSE

WHAT TO DO DURING A TSUNAMI?

When a tsunami warning is issued, it is essential to act quickly and remain calm. Following the instructions of authorities and moving to safe areas can save lives.

KEY ACTIONS:



EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY

After feeling a strong and prolonged earthquake or receiving a warning, move immediately to higher ground or safe areas, away from the coast.



FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF AUTHORITIES

Pay attention to official warnings and evacuation signs. Do not return to the risk area until authorities indicate that it is safe.



STAY AWAY FROM THE COAST

Do not approach the shoreline to watch the sea. The first waves are not always the largest.



SUPPORT PEOPLE IN SITUATIONS OF GREATER VULNERABILITY

Provide support to children, older adults, and people with disabilities.





RECOVERY

HOW DO WE RECOVER AFTER A TSUNAMI?

Recovery allows us to restore daily life in a safer and more resilient way. Learning from experience and strengthening communities reduces the risk from future tsunamis.

KEY ACTIONS:



ASSESS DAMAGE AND RISKS

Check the condition of homes, infrastructure, and basic services before returning to affected areas.



FOLLOW OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

Follow authorities' recommendations regarding safe return and conditions in the area.



RESTORE ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Prioritize access to safe drinking water, sanitation, health, education, and communications.



BUILD MORE RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Incorporate risk-reduction measures into reconstruction and strengthen preparedness for future events.





WHY IS REGIONAL COOPERATION IMPORTANT FOR TSUNAMIS?

Tsunamis can affect several countries simultaneously. Regional cooperation makes it possible to share information, strengthen capacities, coordinate response efforts, and support recovery, protecting more people and communities across Latin America and the Caribbean.

KEY ACTIONS:



INFORMATION SHARING

Share data and alerts among countries through regional monitoring and early warning systems.



CAPACITY BUILDING

Promote training, drills, and the exchange of good practices among countries.



RESPONSE COORDINATION

Facilitate technical and humanitarian assistance when needed, with a focus on solidarity and complementarity.



BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT FUTURE

Work together to reduce disaster risk and protect people and coastal ecosystems across the region.





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MINI-GUIDE

PREVENT, PREPARE AND ACT **SAVE LIVES**

Knowledge and cooperation
strengthen our ability to anticipate
tsunamis and build more
resilient communities.



LATIN AMERICAN
AND CARIBBEAN
ECONOMIC SYSTEM

More and Better Integration

