



PRESS STATEMENT

(For Immediate Release)

UPDATE ON INCREASING WATER LEVELS AT KARIBA

Lusaka, 19th January 2021 – The Zambezi River Authority hereby wishes to provide an update to the public regarding the water situation in the Kariba Catchment and lake levels at Kariba Dam. This update is a follow up to that of 22nd December 2020.

Lake Levels Recorded at Kariba

From 22nd December 2020 to 18th January, 2021, the lake levels have increased by a total of 0.40 meters or 0.08% thus pushing the overall lake levels to 3.21 meters above the Minimum Operating Level (MOL) of 475.50m on 18th January 2021. This 3.21 meters above the MOL translates to 14.55 Billion Cubic Meter (BCM) of usable water storage currently in the Lake.

It is very encouraging to note that the Lake levels, which should generally be in a decreasing trend at this time of the year have continued to record a steady rise due to increased rainfall activity on and around the Lake, leading to a lake level of 478.71m with 22.45% live/usable storage on 18th January 2021. Last year on the same date, the Lake level was lower at 476.71m with 8.36% usable storage.

Water Allocation for Power Generation at Kariba

Based on the Meteorological Authorities' projections of normal to above normal rains for the on-going 2020/2021 rainfall season, the Authority will **maintain the 30 BCM of water allocated for power generation operations at Kariba** for the year 2021. This will be shared equally between Kariba North Bank Power Station and Kariba South Bank Power Station.

Performance of the 2020/2021 Rainfall Season to date

In line with the seasonal forecast released by the Twenty-Fourth Annual Southern Africa Regional Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-24) in August 2020, the bulk of the SADC region in general and the Kariba Catchment in particular, is poised to receive normal to above-normal rainfall for the first quarter of 2021. Accordingly, the Zambezi River as monitored at the Authority's gauging stations has continued to record an increase in flows.

Monitoring of River Flows to Inform Reservoir Operations at Kariba

The Authority continues to gather and record daily water level readings at its 14 gauging stations located across the Kariba Catchment area, with the recorded hydrological data utilised in informing reservoir operations at Kariba. The principal gauging stations of Chavuma and Victoria Falls remain pivotal in as far as the gauging of the overall inflows into Lake Kariba is concerned.

Zambezi River Flows as Monitored at Chavuma Gauging Station

Zambezi River flows at Chavuma have continued to show an **upward trend** due to sustained rainfall activity in the catchment, closing the period under review at One Thousand and eighty cubic meters per second (1,080m³/s) on 18th January 2021, while the flow recorded on the same date last year was lower (480m³/s).

Zambezi River Flows as Monitored at Victoria Falls Gauging Station

The Zambezi River flows at Victoria Falls have been **increasing steadily** due to increased local rainfall activity, closing the period under review at 778 m³/s on 13th January 2021. The flow recorded on the same date last year was lower (501 m³/s).

The Authority will continue to monitor the hydrological outlook of the Kariba Catchment and make necessary adjustments in the reservoir operations to ensure continued availability of water for power generation operations at Kariba.

The Zambezi River Authority (Authority) is a Bi-National organization mandated to harness and manage the waters of the stretch of the Zambezi River that forms a common border between Zambia and Zimbabwe for socio-economic development. It is also mandated to maintain the Kariba Complex and the development of any future dams or infrastructure on the same stretch of the River.



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