Victoria Falls thrives reaching highest flow levels in a decade

The Victoria Falls rainforest is closed. As like the rest of the world, Zimbabwe is in lockdown to protect against the coronavirus pandemic. However, from destruction comes Victoria Falls' beauty, which has reached its highest flow in a decade. Zambezi River Authority public relations and communications manager Elizabeth Karonga said the high-water levels were due to a significant increase in both rainfall and run-off in the catchment area upstream of Victoria Falls during the current rainfall season.

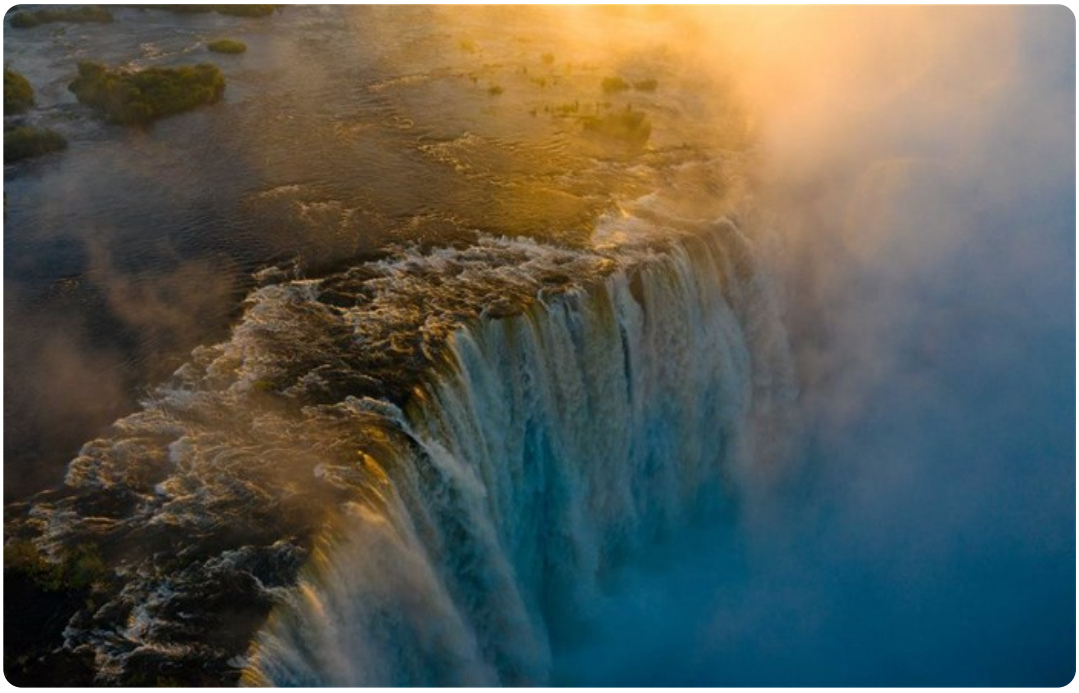

Image Supplied.

Authority data shows four times more water is now flowing over the world's largest waterfall than at this tim last year – on 20 April, 3,922 cubic metres per second was recorded compared to 1,007 cubic metres pe second on 20 April 2019.

"The Zambezi River normally experiences two peaks or floods, which are more evident in the upper catchment area, upstream from Victoria Falls, and depending on their magnitude, their effects are translat downstream," said Karonga.

Flood water data

The first wave of floodwaters was recorded at Victoria Falls on 31 March 2020 with a peak flow of 4,289 cubic metres per second, and the second reached the Victoria Falls on April 14, and water levels were, again, rising, Karonga said.

The flow at the Victoria Falls from the second flood is expected to peak by end of April at more than 4,30 cubic metres per second, she added.
The flows at the Victoria Falls have not been this high since 2010, when they were slightly higher; they wer also higher in 2009 and 1978, but the highest flows ever recorded were in 1958 when the peak flow reach

an incredible 9,436 cubic metres per second, she said.

In coming weeks, the rise in flow at the Victoria Falls will continue until the rainfall upstream subsides, leading to a reduction in the Zambezi River flows, and subsequently reduced flows at the Victoria Falls. Th Falls are expected to peak at the end of May this year.

Beauty under lockdown

Ross Kennedy, chief executive of Zimbabwean hospitality group Africa Albida Tourism, said nature continued to show off her power and influence over our lives! "At a time when the world is in trouble the Zambezi River and the Victoria Falls display immense beauty, rugged power and a glorious snub to the current negatives," said Kennedy.

"It has been quite some time since anyone witnessed the majesty and intensity of this level of water flowin over the Victoria Falls, with the last period of such floods being ten years ago.

"What a sad and disappointing irony it is, that at this time that one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World is at its absolute finest, the world is in lockdown and very few if any will get to witness or experience this iconic destination in all its splendour," he added.

"But, of course, nature being what it is, Victoria Falls will flood again and will be there to impress, enthral ar excite many millions of tourists in the decades ahead."

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