



Lower Kihansi Environmental Management Project (LKEMP) Fact Sheet

The Lower Kihansi Environment Management Project (LKEMP) was approved in 2001 for an initial IDA amount of US\$6.3 million. IDA provided additional financing of US\$3.5 million in 2007 to continue the work of the LKEMP. The LKEMP was developed in response to habitat loss caused by the construction of a hydroelectric dam in the Lower Kihansi Gorge in central Tanzania. This deep and narrow gorge, which is part of the landscape of the Eastern Arc Mountains, contains an ecologically important patch of moist forest and a spray wetland rich in biodiversity and rare endemic species. One such rare and endemic species is the Kihansi Spray Toad (KST), which was only discovered after the construction of the dam began. A small, yellowish amphibian, the KST is unusual among toads in that females bear live young, rather than laying eggs that hatch into tadpoles.

Objectives of the LKEMP: LKEMP's development objective is to ensure the long-term conservation of the Kihansi gorge ecosystem and upstream catchment through the development of a coordinated and consistent legal and institutional framework for environmental and water resources management. The project has four components:

Component 1 - Habitat and Species Conservation and Management – for financing and follow-up on the KST captive breeding efforts, developing monitoring protocols for the Kihansi Gorge ecosystem, and reintroduction of KST in Tanzania, and strengthening the capacity of institutions to teach and carry out research in conservation biology.

Component 2 - Establishment of the Final Water Right for Tanzania National Electricity Supply Company (TANESCO) - for monitoring and enforcement of final water right, establish bypass releases, and support data collection for hydrological model to support operations of the power facility

Component 3 - Development and Implementation of an Updated Environmental Management Plan (EMP) - to specify conditions which bind TANESCO to operate the hydropower facility and to ensure compliance; and

Component 4 - Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening – to build local capacity for environment and water resource management.

The Kihansi Spray Toad has been preserved in a captive breeding program in zoos in the United States for several years. One hundred KST were recently moved from the US to a specially designed captive facility at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). These first few toads will be evaluated to determine their suitability for reintroduction into the wild and to determine if further steps are necessary before releasing them into the wild. Implementation of the mitigation measures and continued monitoring of the gorge ecosystem has led to the recovery of the gorge habitat to its near original state. An international scientific team plans to transfer an initial group of toads to the Kihansi gorge in December, 2010.

The reintroduction marks the first such initiative of an amphibian in Africa. This exceptional reintroduction is being done in close collaboration with national and international experts including the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Amphibian Survival Group, and WCS-Toledo Zoo, Universities of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine, Syracuse, and North West Universities.