



EPM prepares for the closing of the locks of the powerhouse

- **This operation is expected to be carried out next week, depending on the progress in a series of additional jobs recommended by the technicians.**
- **Given the discovery of an undermining close to the powerhouse, the technical report on its characteristics and impact on the progress of the project is anticipated to be provided within 72 hours.**
- **For municipalities downstream of the Ituango hydroelectric project, the alert level is maintained as established by the National Disaster Risk Management System in circular 042 of June 14, 2018.**
 - **The priority continues to the protection of the lives of the people downstream from the project.**
- **The steps and the measures that are being adopted were communicated in a joint press conference with the Governor of Antioquia, Luis Pérez Gutiérrez; the Mayor of Medellin, Federico Gutiérrez Zuluaga, and the interim CEO of EPM, John Maya Salazar.**
- **To provide current information about the project, we invite you to a new press conference this afternoon at 4:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room of the EPM Building, 13th floor.**



With steps such as the construction of the dam and the bentonite screen, in addition to the satisfactory operation of the spillway for 47 continuous days, EPM continues to reach important milestones in the development of the Ituango hydroelectric project. Today, based on these achievements, the company has been arranging everything and making the necessary preparations to take a crucial step in the task of achieving control of the project: closing the entry of water into the powerhouse.

To further this operation, with the basic premise of protecting the lives of people downstream of the project, experts recommended the realization of a series of holes be drilled from the upper tunnels to the powerhouse. The purpose of these projects is to aerate the dome at the time of the closing of the floodgates in the water catchment portion.

Although there has been progress with respect to the initial drilling, which must be specifically reinforced, at the end of last December there was a release of water under pressure from one of these drilling areas and a few days later, on January 3, the Project technicians reported that an undermining had been found in the vicinity of the tunnels and, therefore, recommended additional drilling to assess the characteristics of what had been noted and, also, to have more air intake for that area in case of closing the floodgates. The deadline for receipt the technical report from the experts on the nature and possible incidences of the undermining that was found is 72 hours.

EPM informed the National Authority for Environmental Licenses (Autoridad Nacional de Licencias Ambientales, ANLA) of this situation and explained to the



entity the purpose of closing the floodgates that today allow the passage of water through the powerhouse. Likewise, a meeting was held with all the entities of the National Government to determine the way forward.

The purpose is to initially close the first of the two gates. In this case, the discharge of water to the river would be reduced to approximately half of normal, 380 cubic meters per second. In this manner, the level of the reservoir would begin to rise again and, when it reaches the level 403 meters above sea level, the second gate would be closed and the river would continue to circulate what the spillway provides, that is, the natural flow of the Cauca River at the time.

Depending on the progress of the ventilation holes to the powerhouse, closing the floodgates could be done next week. To this end, the communities will be notified widely and all precautionary measures will be adopted. At the moment, alert levels remain the same as now.

The progress

- The dam is built up to the elevation of 418 meters above sea level and the bentonite screen is at a progress level of 96.2%. Infiltrations dropped drastically from 40 liters per second to 5 liters per second with a reservoir level of 402 meters above sea level.
- The spillway was in operation from November 4 to December 21, 2018. The structure was checked and is in very satisfactory condition, as are the berms that surround the bowl where the water is discharged.



- The pre-plugging of the Auxiliary Deviation Gallery tunnel (Galería Auxiliar de Desviación, GAD), which will be implemented with gates to close the flow of water through this tunnel, is progressing satisfactorily and it is estimated that by the end of February these will have been installed to carry out the pre-plugging and then produce the definitive blockage in concrete.
- Pre-plug 1 of the right deflection tunnel is being injected with mortar and the consolidations extracted show good results for the material in that tunnel. For its part, the pre-plug 2 is already designed and progress is underway in furtherance of the acquisition of the materials required for its construction. After performing these two pre-plugs, the permanent one will be produced, from downstream of the right tunnel.

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Journalist information

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