



EPM closed the second gate of the Auxiliary Diversion Gallery (GAD) in the Ituango hydroelectric project

- This closure ensures pre-plugging of the GAD, and enables conditions for definite plugging
- With the two gates properly closed, the risks to communities downstream of the works are reduced
- The Company continues to make progress in reducing risks to the populations downstream of the hydroelectric project

This Wednesday, December 18, EPM successfully carried out the final maneuver to close the second gate of the Auxiliary Diversion Gallery, GAD, after more than nine months of preparation and having closed the first gate on May 29.

With its two gates duly closed, the pre-plugging of the GAD reduces the risks for the communities downstream of the works. It also means the continuation of the recovery process of the Ituango Hydroelectric Project, since it allows entry of personnel, machinery and other necessary resources from downstream through discharge No. 4, in order to build the definite concrete plug during the first half of 2020. The plug will be 22 meters long and 14 meters high by 14 meters wide. This is a very valuable advance for protecting the people of the Lower Cauca in Antioquia, since it prevents a sudden unplugging of the tunnel and a rising flow of the Cauca River downstream.



The procedure, which commenced at 10:08 a.m., lasted roughly 28 minutes, and was conducted from the intermediate discharge tunnel, where the right tunnel was also plugged. As you will recall, the GAD was the tunnel that served as a diversion of the Cauca River and collapsed on April 28, 2018, originating the contingency.

During the preparation of this maneuver that required the highest level of engineering, we stress the importance of the work with specialized equipment and cranes that allowed the coupling of the gate to the servomotor. This was how its descent and final seating was guaranteed.

We stress the work of a team of Colombian Navy divers who performed underwater tasks consisting of dredging and removing sediment, rocks and metalwork to facilitate the process of settling the gate, which weighs 300 tons.

Project recovery continues

Similarly, EPM is advancing in the pre-plugging of the right-hand diversion tunnel, which is also collapsed in an area of about 400 meters. These works are being carried out by installing a series of micropiles and spheres that will guarantee the conduction through a "bypass", a flow close to 10 cubic meters per second (m^3/s) that currently circulates in this tunnel. Thus, personnel and machinery from downstream will be able to enter to carry out the work of the final concrete plug, which will also be 22 meters long. This work on the right-hand diversion tunnel is expected to be completed by the end of the first half of the year.

Once the GAD and the right-hand diversion tunnel are technically blocked, by mid-2020, any risk of uncovering will be reduced and the National Disaster Risk Management Unit (*Unidad Nacional de Gestión de Riesgo de Desastres*, UNGRD) will be asked to change the orange alert currently in operation for the Puerto Valdivia district.



EPM, aware of its responsibility to the communities, is working on the recovery of the Ituango project under the following priorities: the protection of the lives of the people living in the municipalities downstream of the Ituango project and of the workers on the site; care for the environment and progress on the schedule of the various technical milestones needed for the recovery of the project. Thus, by the end of 2021, Ituango will generate the energy that the country needs and thus contribute to the progress of Colombians and the growth of their competitiveness and productivity.

Related Media Content

Photographs. Images of the site where the maneuver was performed. Download

Link: <https://bit.ly/2rZCg7e>

Video. Explanation of the maneuver performed. William Giraldo Jiménez, Engineer, Vice President, Power Generation Projects. Download Link: <https://bit.ly/35zgy8A>

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