



**SAVE Zambezi**  
**SAFE Zambezi**  
People, Water, Land & Wildlife

## **LARGE COALITION CALLS ON ZEMA TO URGENTLY HALT MINE IN HEART OF LOWER ZAMBEZI NATIONAL PARK**

*Lusaka, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022:* A large coalition of 53 CSOs, traditional leaders, artists, safari operators and other stakeholders has raised serious questions about the approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) study that has allowed the controversial Kangaluwi open-pit copper mine planned in the heart of the area to go ahead.

In an advert published in key media across the country, the Save Zambezi, Safe Zambezi coalition has asked the following questions of the mine owner, Mwembeshi Resources Limited, and the Zambian Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA):

- Why was the addendum to the previously expired EIS approved within **JUST SEVEN WORKING DAYS** of submission without having followed due process of consultation?
- Why is this mine being claimed as a Zambian owned project when the major shareholder—Mwembeshi Resources (Bermuda) Ltd—is **Chinese owned**?
- Has the Government **re-drawn the National Park boundary** to allow for this project to proceed outside of the National Park, without having followed due process?
- Why are documents which form the EIS Addendum submission as well as ZEMA's Decision Letter **not being made public**?
- Why is Mwembeshi Resources claiming that it will create more jobs than tourism in the area? Figures from their own EIS submission clearly indicate that they will have a work force of around 300 jobs in total, of which only a nominal amount of unskilled labour will be employed directly from the area. This is in comparison to **more than 1,000 people** employed by Tourism and subsidiary industries.
- Have subsequent EIA's been conducted for the ZESCO power lines as well as the development of the access road which would have to accommodate the **anticipated 50 x 30-ton trucks** moving through the escarpment to the Copper Belt via Lusaka every day? This poses a major safety and health risk to the public both in the community, Lusaka City and surrounds as well as an additional threat to the environment.
- Why are the people of Zambia being **kept in the dark and being misinformed**?

The Coalition says it is deeply concerned about the process involved in the approval of the EIA, and believes that many Zambians and other concerned people have the same misgivings.

“We, the Save Zambezi, Safe Zambezi coalition of stakeholders - representing the interests of concerned citizens and the people of Zambia - call upon Mwembeshi Resources Limited and ZEMA to avail the public with answers to our questions and to make public all documentation pertaining to the ZEMA approval from May 2021.

“Until such time, we insist that all development relating to the Kangaluwi Open Cast Copper Mine in the heart of the Lower Zambezi National Park be stopped immediately. The mine will have a potentially devastating impact on people, water, the land and the environment in the entire Southern African region.

“The Coalition renews its call on all Zambians, and everyone who cares about the future of this region, to sign a petition to halt the Kangaluwi mine. You will find the petition on the website **change.org**, and you will find the petition under the name SaveZambeziSafeZambezi.”

Sign the petition: <https://www.change.org/SaveZambeziSafeZambezi>

Join the movement <https://www.facebook.com/savezambezi>

## Background

The Lower Zambezi National Park is an integral part of the wider Zambezi basin, which is the most significant shared resource that contributes to the economic, environmental and social development of southern Africa. Sustainable management of this resource is crucial in securing the futures of over 250 million people in the broader region that depend on it.

The Coalition last year launched a hard-hitting social media campaign called #SaveZambeziSafeZambezi to raise awareness of the issue. The campaign reached over 1.2-million people around the world in a short period of six months.

In addition, a dynamic and captivating song was created by some of Zambia's best-known artists, as part of the Save Zambezi, Safe Zambezi campaign to raise awareness around the need to halt a controversial open-pit copper mine in the Lower Zambezi National Park.

Called *Zambezi Niyatu* which means "Zambezi is ours", it is the official song of the Save Zambezi, Safe Zambezi campaign. The song was launched late last year at a landmark event in Lusaka, and became a hit within a few days of being launched. Herewith link to the song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLH5t82sWDs>

ZEMA last year approved a highly controversial Environmental Impact Assessment, opening the way for the mine to go ahead. The approval was done in seven days, and the submission was written by the mine owner, Mwembeshi Resources Limited, rather than an independent environmental agency, which is standard practice.

The Save Zambezi, Safe Zambezi Coalition has expressed deep concern that if the mine goes ahead, it will not only risk contaminating water for communities in Zambia and Zimbabwe but for the whole Zambezi delta, potentially destroying farming and fishing livelihoods and one of the largest tourism destinations for Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique.

River pollution caused by the mine could threaten the Zambezi rivers 2 000-ton subsistence fishery, which directly provides food and protein security to 20 000 people along the river's banks. Eco-tourism in the area depends largely on the renewable wildlife and habitat resources and contributes significantly to the local and national economies around the Lower Zambezi National Park.

Tourism establishments in the park and surrounding areas employ more than 1 000 local people, generating a local wage bill of \$4 million annually that indirectly supports thousands more people at a local community level.

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