



THE VICTORIA FALLS WATER LEVELS TRADE FAQ

Photo credit @regsmithphotography for 26th September 2024

This document aims to provide accurate information and guidance to help you communicate responsibly with your clients and partners.

What is the current situation at The Victoria Falls?

- The Falls are currently experiencing their annual low-water season, which typically occurs between August and January.
- Water levels are lower than average for this time of year due to reduced rainfall in the catchment area caused by a severe drought influenced by the recent El Niño phenomenon.
- The Zimbabwean side of the Falls continues to have significant water flow, with three main channels visible.
- The Zambian side has reduced flow, which is normal for this time of year.
- Activities such as white water rafting, white water kayaking, swimming under the Falls and the famous Devil's Pool on Livingstone Island are at their best when the water levels are low. This is the adventure season.

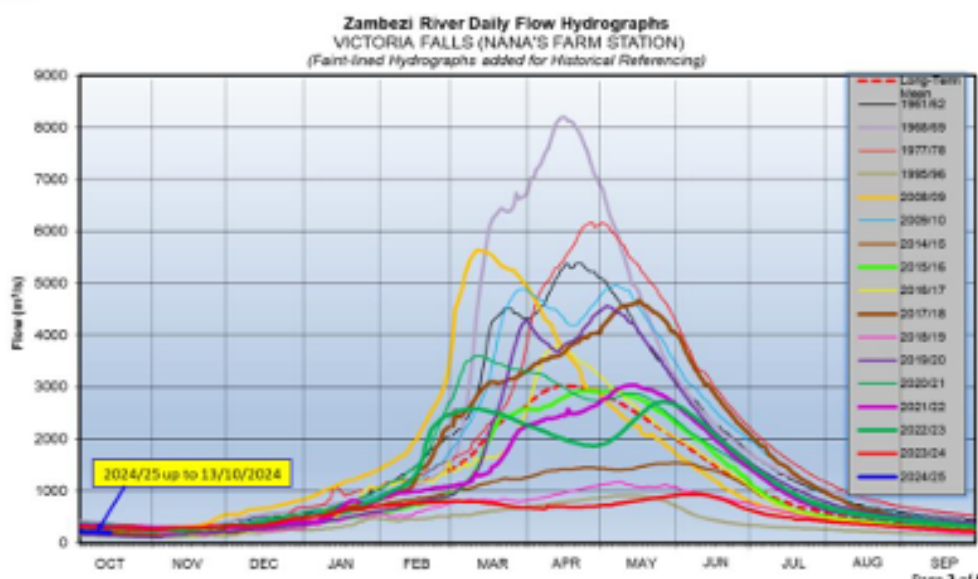
What can tourists expect to see currently at Victoria Falls?

While some viewing points may show thinner layers of water, particularly from viewing points 12 to 16, other areas continue to display spectacular water flows. The beauty of the surrounding environment and the cultural experiences remain undiminished.

Is Victoria Falls still worth visiting during low water seasons?

Absolutely. The unique views offered by lower water levels, particularly from August to January, can provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the falls in a different way. The scenic landscapes and surrounding nature remain captivating throughout the year.





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Will the Falls run dry?

During the dry season, typically August to January, water levels are normally lower, while the high-water season is usually from February to July. This year's El Niño-induced drought has led to lower than usual water levels, but this is a cyclical phenomenon.

El Niño events are typically followed by La Niña, which brings normal or above-average rainfall. In fact, the low water levels during this drought period has offered unique viewing opportunities of the falls.

It's important to note that the mean annual water flow over the falls has been increasing over the past 40 years, despite periodic droughts. While the current drought is severe and causing hardship in the region, the falls will continue to flow, and the rains are expected to return next season.

Tourism plays a crucial role in supporting local communities and conservation efforts during these challenging times. By visiting Victoria Falls and the surrounding areas, tourists can contribute to the region's resilience and help mitigate the drought's impacts. The cyclical nature of these weather patterns and the robust Zambezi River system ensure that Victoria Falls will remain a stunning natural wonder for generations to come.

What about the Zambian side of the Falls?

The natural elevation of the Eastern Cataract on the Zambian side of Victoria Falls is higher than that of the Devil's Cataract in Zimbabwe. As water flows to the lowest point, this difference becomes more noticeable during periods of extremely low water. Additionally, when the Zambian power station operates at full capacity, it can divert up to 20% of the available water, impacting the flow over the falls. Efforts are in place to manage this flow, balancing power generation with tourism and environmental priorities.



Is climate change affecting Victoria Falls?

While long-term climate trends are a concern globally, the current low water levels are primarily due to normal seasonal variations and this year's rainfall patterns. It's important to note that water flow over the Falls has actually been increasing on average over the past 40 years.

What is the outlook for the coming months?

- The rainy season typically begins in November/December, which will gradually increase water levels.
- Meteorological forecasts suggest a potential La Niña event, which could bring above-average rainfall to the region in the coming months. which historically brings higher water levels to the falls.

How can the tourism industry and visitors help manage the impact of water level changes?

The tourism industry and visitors to Victoria Fall can play a significant role in helping to manage the impacts of fluctuating water levels and drought conditions in the region.

Here are some recommendations:

Promote responsible water use: Hotels, lodges, and tour operators should implement and encourage water-saving measures, such as fixing leaks, installing low-flow fixtures, promoting shorter showers, and reducing laundry. Visitors should be made aware of the drought situation and encouraged to use water responsibly during their stay.

Support local drought response efforts: The tourism industry can partner with local organisations and communities to support drought relief and water conservation projects, such as funding for water tanks, boreholes, or irrigation improvements. Visitors can also be given opportunities to contribute to these efforts through donations or voluntourism activities.

Educate visitors about the drought: Providing information to visitors about the causes, impacts, and responses to the drought can help build understanding and empathy. This can be done through guides, displays, or educational materials at lodges and attractions. By learning about the situation, visitors may be more motivated to support conservation efforts and share their experiences with others.

Invest in water-efficient infrastructure: Lodges and tourism facilities should prioritize water-efficient designs and technologies, such as rainwater harvesting systems, greywater recycling, or drought-tolerant landscaping. These investments can help reduce the industry's water footprint and improve resilience to future droughts.

Support sustainable land management: Tourism operators can work with local communities and conservation organisations to promote sustainable land management practices, such as reforestation, erosion control, or wetland protection, which can help regulate water flows and mitigate drought impacts over time.

Contact Information For more detailed information or specific inquiries, tour operators and partners are encouraged to reach out to jillian@africaseden.travel.

Please note: Visual materials and updates are available upon request to aid in communicating current conditions at Victoria Falls.