

# **Ruaha River Update**

## **November 2020 - June 2021**

**I am starting the update on 13 October 2019** - Ruaha river at ibuguziwa **(below)**  
**I illustrate the river in 2019,** (a similar time period to 2020 ) **because the intensity and volume of rain in the 2019/2020 rainy season, was one that Ruaha has not experienced in living memory. (Dec 2019 - May 2020)**



Just to remind you, - the photo immediately below is the river from the same spot in March 2020 - in just 8 months the river fell from what you see in the picture immediately below to the photo on the bottom of the page.



**30 November 2020** - Ruaha River at Ibuguziwa **(below)**  
But despite this incredible rainfall over the entire region, with all watersheds and springs fully replenished to over flowing, The flow in the Ruaha river on 30 November 2020 **Is the same pitiful level that it was prior to this massive injection of water!**



## **The update continues with 30th January 2021 -**

As you will see from the photo taken in **April 2021, rainfall was good in the catchment area**, at this point it was all from local runoff. Later in March the dark, clear water from the Usangu (Ihefu) wetland began to flow too.

The catchment areas were topped up to overflowing again in most areas. But it was not the massive floods of the 2019/2020 season.



**30 January 2021 Ibuguziwa**

### **30 January 2021 Ibuguziwa** (photo above)

The river was still low but continued to rise until the end of April. It then began to drop daily.

The photo below shows the river at its highest level this year.

### **30th April 2021** (photo below)



**30 April 2021 Ibuguziwa**

## 14 June 2021 - 21 June 2021



### 14 June 2021 Ibuguzia (above) -

I have placed these two photos together as it is a visual demonstration of how much the river drops in 7 days.

Once the rainfall stops (April/May) there is no direct top up to the GRR from the local rivers within the protected areas in Ruaha National Park and the WMA's.

As a result the water starts to drop fast.

So it is very obvious from this point on, how much water is being abstracted by irrigation up stream on a daily basis.

Its rather alarming to watch the river drop at such speed, literally before your eyes.

### 21 June Ibuguziwa (below)



## **SO WHATS GOING ON?**

Where is all this water going?

**Is the water being used responsibly?**

**Is it a good idea to use water as though its a throw-away item?**

**Isn't there a better way to share this valuable resource?**

This is a major river and should nourish everyone along its course of several thousand Kilometres - from the mountains in western Tanzania to the communities in the eastern lowlands.

This dilemma is not unique to the once Great Ruaha River,

**Country wide, rivers are dying:-**

**WATER IS LIFE**

We cannot exist without water.

So why are we not sharing this precious resource?

Tanzania has MORE than enough water to to go around.

**WE JUST NEED TO MANAGE IT.**

**Over abstraction** by large mechanised farms and mismanaged water ways by the small holders.

**Massive wastage**, with water lying idle after harvesting, via evaporation in the major rice farms.

**Lack of integrity**, in the use of water rights,

**Polluted water**, from indiscriminate use of chemicals by farming communities, and mining.

The massive loss of insects due to unnecessary and dangerous use of chemicals, and the poisoning of waterways is criminal.

This not only kills insects but all life forms, including humans.

For the most part, for humans, these chemicals are **slow working poisons**, only becoming apparent after several years, when illnesses such as cancer appears.

**We need to come up with solutions, we need to ACT now.**

**Insects are the main creatures that maintain the Earths equilibrium.**

**Our planet depends on this unique and complex system to keep us, and all of Earths creatures alive and well.**

**The chaos in the world at present has much to do with irresponsible farming practices, world wide and the loss of natures' natural balances.**

Perhaps unknowingly for most people, we are poisoning the Planet .

## **Educate, Inspire and be Grateful**

Education of communities regarding the absolute necessity for:-

- 1. Ensuring safe, uncontaminated water quality in each area.**
- 2. Genuine sharing of water resources**
- 3. Organic farming practices to be introduced and used.**

### **DISSEMINATE:-**

**The hard facts** about how harmful it is to over abstract water and how dangerous it is to use these chemicals that are so liberally utilised without caution.

All these issues need to be on the forefront of all forms of communication.  
eg. **Radio, Tv, Internet, Music for all age groups .**

**We need to witness and hear first hand,**  
the truth about:-

**the drying up, and poisoning of water resources on which we all depend.**

**It impacts all of us, no one community or person can stand alone.**

Farmers and all water users in the western areas, should be taken to visit real people, real farmers after the Usangu wetland (Ihefu) down to Mtera dam to show first hand what the effects are of their mis-guided farming practices.

They also need to visit the Ruaha National Park, to see how tourism and all the jobs therein, rely on the water in the GRR for the volumes of animals to thrive.  
How harmful is it to the ecosystem when it is dry.

**EVERYTHING and EVERYONE is CONNECTED,**  
**none of us can survive alone, we are ALL in this TOGETHER.**

**Us humans, and all of nature, the trees, plants, birds and insects.**  
**The WATER we drink, the AIR we breath and the FOOD we eat.**  
**It is our life force we are destroying.**

**IT IS OUR DUTY TO ENSURE THESE FUNDAMENTAL ECO-SYSTEMS  
CONTINUE TO FUNCTION AS NATURE INTENDED.**

If we persist with our present route, without changing the current mindset  
of :- **“ME FIRST RATHER THAN US TOGETHER”**  
we will render Tanzania a barren desert.

Rivers will dry up totally and land will become a contaminated wasteland.  
The health of the entire nation will be at stake.

**Is this the ‘gift’ we want to leave for our children?**