

Tanzania urged to halt logging plans and dam project in Selous Game Reserve, as advised by IUCN

Wed, 27 Jun 2018

Manama, Bahrain – Tanzania has been urged to not proceed with plans to log 143,638 ha in the Selous Game Reserve today at UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee meeting, as recommended by the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The area would be in the same location as the proposed Stiegler’s Gorge dam, which would cause grave damage to the site’s exceptional values.



"Deforestation of such a large area in the core of the reserve, which provides critical habitat for iconic African species, will clearly put the Selous Game Reserve's ecosystem and wildlife in great danger," says Peter Shadie, IUCN Senior Adviser on World Heritage. "This is one of the planet's most biodiversity-rich areas and wise decisions are needed to ensure its protection for future generations."

The Selous Game Reserve – one of the largest World Heritage sites on Earth – was included on the List of World Heritage in Danger in 2014 due to elephant poaching. The logging is planned in the heart of Selous along the Rufiji river in an area containing important habitat for iconic mammals, including the Critically Endangered black rhinoceros. This area coincides with the location of the Stiegler's Gorge dam project, which – should it proceed – could cause irreversible damage to Selous's exceptional values, and could threaten the long-term availability of downstream water resources, affecting the livelihoods of up to 200,000 people.

Following today's decision by the World Heritage Committee, the severe threat of potential deforestation and construction of the Stiegler's Gorge dam is now an additional justification for maintaining in-danger status of the site.

UNESCO's 42nd session of the World Heritage Committee is taking place from 24 June to 4 July in Manama, Bahrain. IUCN is the official advisory body on nature to the Committee and has provided recommendations on 58 sites this year.

Languages

English

Links

www.iucn.org/42whc

Learn more

IUCN at #42WHC