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Peixe Vivo Program: community involvement in its actions

One of the pillars of the Peixe Vivo Program is community involvement in its actions. In order to establish a relationship of trust, the results generated are disclosed and communication channels are maintained with the various segments of society, which reinforces Cemig's reputation as a company committed to sustainable development.

The first actions of Peixe Vivo Program defined together with various stakeholders during integrated workshops that helped to develop the most important guidelines for the improvement and protection of the native fish fauna in the state, in addition to defining strategies to avoid and prevent the death of fish in Cemig's hydropower plants. The workshops counted with representatives of NGOs, researchers, fishermen, environmental agencies and various segments of the Três Marias community, Cemig's professionals and national and international experts.

The premises of transparency and partnership are the basis to implement the strategy of periodic disclosure of information for the external and internal public of the Company. For Cemig employees, communication takes place through meetings, seminars, workshops and reports. One of the ways used to make information about the Program available to Cemig's internal public is the publication of a monthly report with a summary of the actions carried out. Employees who receive the report follow information on the numbers of dead and rescued fish at the Company's plants, and the main causes of the impacts observed. The main news of the month are also reported, so that employees know about operational procedures carried out and news about the Program

As for the external public, the program seeks to meet local demands, building partnerships and multiplying the applied concepts. In order to maintain this relationship with the external public and regulatory authorities, various communication tools are used, such as newsletters, releases, campaigns, events, seminars, workshops, among others. The Program also supports and carries out projects focused on sports and environmental education.

Considering the partnerships for the development of research projects, the involvement of its collaborators is a way of bringing the company closer to the Academy and society. The partnerships with research institutions, over time, have had more than 300 collaborators (analysts, researchers, post-doctoral students, undergraduate, master's and doctoral students). The training of human resources is part of the relationship with society since these students who are developing the projects may, in the future, be professionals responsible for matters in environmental agencies, NGOs and other companies. With well-trained professionals, actions to preserve fish species will certainly be more effective over time and will help the Company to disseminate its actions in other spheres.

Also related to partnerships for the development of research projects, its publications are relevant to increase the knowledge available promoted by Cemig. Scientific production is an important indicator, as it reflects the results of Peixe Vivo's technical achievements by its team and by the projects developed in partnership with research institutions. In the last fifteen years, more than 690 technical-scientific products have been published bringing new and important information on topics such as the behavior of Neotropical fish species. Many of these publications, due to their scientific nature, help to improve the Company's acceptance in the Academic sphere. The 156 published scientific articles already accumulate more than 2400 citations, according to a survey carried out on the Google Scholar platform in February/2022, with an h index equal to 27 (at least 27 articles cited 28 or more times). Furthermore, also aiming to make scientific knowledge more palatable for a general public, we highlight the creation of the Peixe Vivo Series of books, which already has eight volumes bringing results from several of the projects developed, aiming to disseminate the results in a more accessible language in Portuguese (and two volumes translated into English). The books are freely distributed and electronic versions can be accessed and downloaded through the Peixe Vivo Program page on the Company's website: www.cemig.com.br. Other initiative for the dissemination of project results and discussion of relevant topics for the electric sector is the promotion of a big Seminar, with the participation of representatives of academy, regulatory agencies, other companies in the electric sector and community in general. In the last 15 years, five editions of the Seminar took place in Minas Gerais, with talks of national and international researchers and experts to contribute to the discussion of fish conservation strategies.

Another way to bring knowledge to the community in the vicinity of the Company's plants is through the Proximity Program. This Program annually promotes meetings with the community to highlight the operational aspects of the reservoirs, environmental actions and points of regional interest in the municipalities neighboring the plants. Developed from the joint action between Cemig's planning, engineering, sustainability, environment and communication areas, this Program aims to strengthen relations between Cemig and the community. Peixe Vivo participates by presenting the environmental actions developed in the area, bringing more knowledge about the local fish fauna and their interaction with hydropower plants.

As mentioned, an important aspect in relation to communication is the transparency of the information presented, gaining reliability and credibility. Peixe Vivo Program experience showed that recognizing the problem of fish deaths, for example, in a broad and integrated manner within the Company and with transparency to the community and environmental agencies, led Cemig to be recognized as a respected Company and a reference in fish death mitigation.

Considering the 15 years of the Program, the results of Peixe Vivo's performance were quite satisfactory in the environmental, social and economic aspects, bringing a return on investments made in projects and technological innovations. It is worth noting that the Program team has already been invited by other companies in the electric sector to present and discuss the results of the project and actions, for replication in their companies. In addition, since 2009, the Program has been awarded at technical-scientific events and by entities of great respect and recognition in society. This recognition is positive for the Company's image and helps to maintain good relationships with stakeholders.