

## Sammanfattning

I januari och februari orsakade häftiga regn i norra Chile kraftiga översvämningar i andra regionen. I en damm i Loa-floden ökade vattennivån med två meter och en omfattande fiskdöd observerades. Stora mängder skum iaktogs från Calama till Stilla havet, liksom mörkfärgning av vattnet.

I april begärde Chiles myndigheter hjälp hos UNEP/DHA Environment Unit i Geneve.

Sverige utsåg genom Räddningsverket två experter som å UNDHA:s och Joint UNEP/DHA Environment Units vägnar skulle genomföra uppdraget.

Uppdraget bestod av två delar; dels bedöma orsaken till föroreningen av floden, dels föreslå åtgärder på kort och lång sikt. Dessa åtgärder skulle omfatta både tekniska åtgärder med direkt avseende på föroreningen och organisatoriska åtgärder med avseende på hantering av händelserna.

## Summary

In January and February heavy rains in the mountain area of Northern Chile caused a serious flooding situation in the Second Region. In a man-made dam along the Loa River, the Sloman Trunque, the water-level rose with two meter and dead fishes were found. Large amounts of foam was visible all the way from Calama to the Pacific and brownish water was observed as well.

In April The Joint UNEP/DHA Environment Unit in Geneva was requested by the Chilean National Authorities of assistance in connection with the acute pollution of the Loa River. The

Swedish Government nominated two national experts that should carry out the required assessment on behalf of UNDHA Relief Co-ordination Branch and Joint UNEP/DHA Environment Unit.

The mission was an assessment and fact-finding mission and the main objective was to make recommendations on both short- and long-term measures to be taken with regard to the consequences of the incident. The mission was carried out within two weeks and most of the time was spent in different meetings with national and regional authorities, experts and representatives from private companies. Also a field-visit to one area was included in the mission.

A large set of data from analyses and statements have resulted in a number of reports aiming at describing and explaining the Loa River incident. However, the generated information does not explain the colour, the foam or what has caused the death of the fishes. An anthropogenic explanation has not been demonstrated and it is not unlikely that the observed and measured situation has a natural explanation.

During the incident itself, and later on, neither the authorities, the public or the scientific representatives have reached a consensus in what has caused the incident, or how this or future similar events should be detected. The immediate phase of the incident also showed a lack of co-ordination between different organisations and levels which delayed the processing of information on the incident.