

Project Update: May 2011

The final survey at Mpenjati and Mlalazi estuary was conducted at the end of May 2011. During this survey, Mpenjati estuary was open to the sea. This estuary closed off to the sea in early April, but it re-opened on May 5th after heavy rains. At the moment, the estuary mouth remains open.

Average Chl *a* concentrations at the Mlalazi estuary during May 2011 were approximately 12 times lower than in February 2011. These values were also lower than the ones recorded in June 2010 (Fig. 1). Chl *a* concentrations at the Mpenjati estuary in May 2011 were the lowest recorded for this study. These values were significantly lower than the ones recorded during the previous dry season (June 2010) (Fig. 1). The unusually low Chl *a* concentrations during the dry season at Mpenjati estuary may be due to the recent estuary opening and dilution effects caused by rain and continuous freshwater flow.

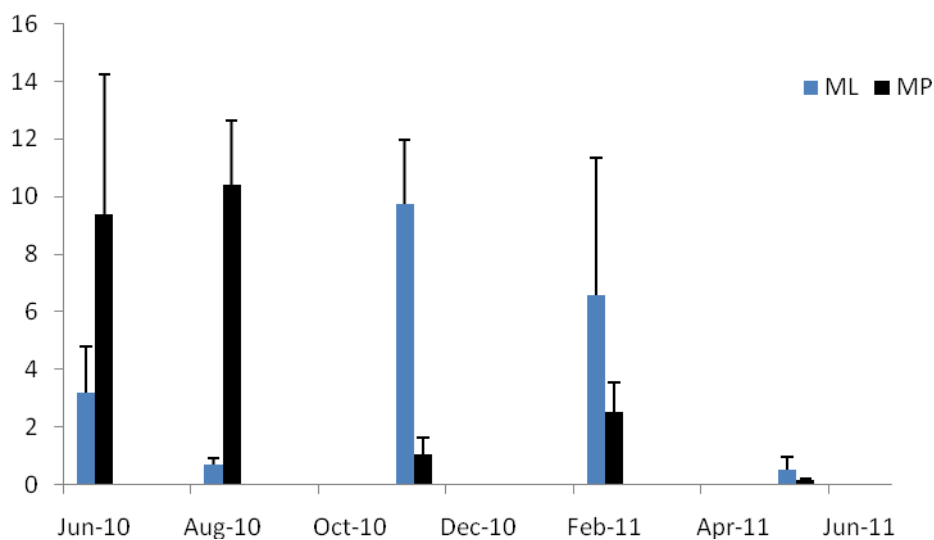


Fig.1. Chlorophyll a concentrations (mean \pm SD) at Mlalazi and Mpenjati estuaries (ML=Mlalazi, MP= Mpenjati) during June 2010- May 2011.