



# 10 Years Living Lakes

A Success Story

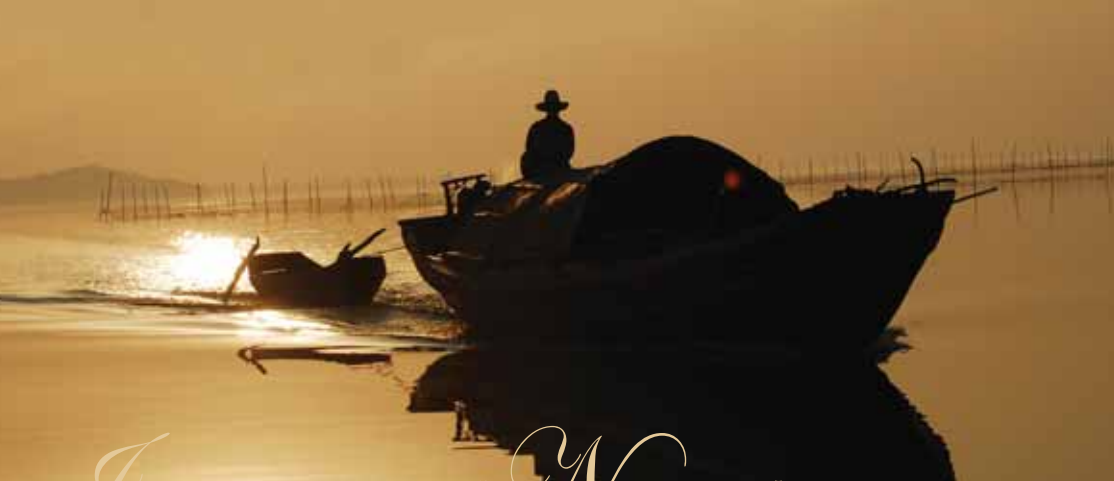




*Each Lake*

that you bring back to life

is a whole world saved



# International Network

This publication commemorates ten years of Living Lakes, the international network for the protection of lakes and wetlands. A ten year anniversary and a long list of successes are reasons to celebrate, but also offer an opportunity to pause, review past achievements and look forward into the future.



# Living Lakes

We thank all colleagues, employees and volunteers from our partner organisations world wide for their devoted contribution. Their dedication and perseverance have made this all possible. The congratulations we have received for this anniversary belong to them.



The creation of the Living Lakes Network a decade ago was an initiative of Global Nature Fund (GNF), an international foundation based at Lake Constance in Germany. By now it is the most important achievement of GNF – and much more than just a project. We started the initiative in 1998 together with four partners: Lake Constance Foundation in Germany, the Mono Lake Committee in California, Lake Biwa Research Institute in Japan and the Wilderness Foundation representing St. Lucia Lake in South Africa. Today, Living Lakes includes 53 lakes represented by more than 70 partners – predominantly non-government organisations (NGOs).



Our living lakes are all very different: big, small, deep, shallow, steppe lakes, tropical lakes, regulated, natural, very densely populated in the catchment or located in remote regions. However, all are highly valuable ecosystems and hotspots of biodiversity, offering important ecosystem services such as drinking water, irrigation for agriculture, fish, reed, recreation, buffer zones against floods and micro climates favourable for all kinds of cultivation as well as for the people living in the watershed.



Why a network for organisations working in lake and wetland protection? Different lakes – but similar problems! Among environmental organisations the necessity for a platform for raising awareness, exchanging of ideas and advice and initiating common projects was obvious. Thanks to the vision and engagement of charismatic people such as our founder Prof. Gerhard Thielcke and the support of business partners, such as Unilever, Lufthansa, Daimler and others, we were able to start a lakes network which belongs to the most active partnerships worldwide.

## Our Mission

Living Lakes is an international network and partnership whose mission is to enhance the protection, restoration and rehabilitation of lakes, wetlands and other freshwater bodies and their catchment all over the world.

## Our Vision

All lakes, wetlands and freshwater bodies should be used in a sustainable, non-damaging way so that healthy ecosystems can persist.

## Our Objectives

- Conserving the biodiversity and the preservation of fresh water resources, lakes and wetland ecosystems.
- Improving the quality of life for the local communities.
- Promoting the use of applied sciences and technologies towards the conservation of these ecosystems.
- Supporting educational programmes and cooperation with local communities towards the conservation of the biodiversity of these ecosystems.
- Disseminating information relevant to these ecosystems.



**Prof. Dr. Klaus Töpfer, Vice Secretary-General of the UN (1998 – 2006) and our Living Lakes Patron**

"The Living Lakes Initiative is of highest importance. For all the ten years I was proud to support this exemplary idea. Congratulations to all friends and colleagues who promoted and implemented this great project. My best wishes for another ten years of successful activities for the economic, social and environmental benefits of lakes around the globe."





# Networking

The fundamental idea behind Living Lakes is cooperation and networking of people and organisations all over the world. This network provides a platform that promotes capacity building and awareness raising.

For example



- Creation of national Living Lakes networks in Italy and China and continental networks in Eastern Europe, Latin America and East Africa, thus, promoting exchange between members.
- Raised over 5 million Euros in grants for more than 40 concrete projects with various Living Lakes partners.
- Realisation of 26 international and regional Living Lakes conferences with participation of more than 3,000 multipliers and opinion leaders from NGOs, administrations, scientific institutions and the private sector.
- Continuous exchange of knowledge and transfer of technology within the network such as Green Filter waste water system developed by the Living Lakes partner Fundacion Global Nature, Spain.
- Contribution to the development and promotion of the World Lake Vision, a coordinated effort by ILEC and UNEP.
- Intense cooperation with Ramsar Convention, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP-CMS), BTCV, UNESCO and European Water Partnership (EWP).
- Active participation in other national and international networks such as the Solar Ship Network, the ECOTRANS Network for Sustainable Tourism Development or ECOCAMPING.



**Sigmar Gabriel, German Minister for the Environment**

"The Living Lakes Conference, taking place for the 12<sup>th</sup> time this year, has proved its worth as an international platform for intensive exchange of knowledge and experiences of all Living Lakes partners and additional interesting institutions. Therefore, the federal government deems their activities worth supporting. Over the past years a global network for the protection and conservation of important freshwater lakes has been established. I hope that this initiative shows a globally sustainable impact in the interest of nature, the water reserves and mankind."



# Communication

To save the lakes and wetlands of our world we have to reach the minds and souls of people. Communication and dissemination are crucial instruments in achieving this goal.

For example



- Trilingual Living Lakes book with 3,000 copies published in 2001.
- Four bilingual newsletters and one annual report published and distributed annually to over 5,000 recipients.
- Project information leaflets four times a year to over 20,000 recipients.
- Distribution of more than ten new thematic publications in various languages.
- The Living Lakes exhibition, permanently on show, was among the most visited booths in the Global House on the EXPO 2000 Fair in Hanover.
- Significant Living Lakes side events and exhibitions at several conventions such as the World Summit 2002 in Johannesburg and on the international Convention on Biological Diversity in Bonn 2008.
- Successful media campaigns for the 'Threatened Lake of the Year' since 2004.
- Living Lakes Pantanal Exhibition 2008 shown in seven zoos and botanical gardens around Germany in 2008.
- Living Lakes website and 'Knowledge Pool' in four languages with 500,000 hits per month.



**Publications by GNF**

We depend on many different instruments of communication. In this day and age digital forms of media are of utmost importance. However, printed versions still help to reach more people giving them a better understanding of our work and, thus, supporting us in achieving our goals.



# Protection

The main task for the Living Lakes partners is the protection and management of their lakes, wetlands and catchment areas. We save the beauty and biodiversity of the lakes world wide.

For example



- Columbia River Wetlands, Canada; La Nava, Spain and Lake Chapala, Mexico have been listed as wetlands of international importance under the international Ramsar Convention.
- Enforcement of protected areas for the last remaining 70 – 90 Irrawaddy freshwater dolphins, Mahakam Wetlands, Indonesia.
- Implementation of the Baikal seal protection campaign through ecotourism measures at Lake Baikal, Russia.
- Protection of the natural habitat for wild life at Tengiz Lake, Kazakhstan, declared as World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2008.
- Restriction of the use of motorised boats and other vessels in the Columbia River Wetlands, Canada.
- Implementation of the 'Conservation and Management of Biodiversity in the Baretsh Valley' project including a long-term management plan for 36 water bodies for 50 years, Poland.



**Ulrike Becker, Director, Global Corporate Media & Marketing, Daimler AG**

"For Daimler, success in business and responsibility for people and the environment are two sides of the same coin. Since its very beginning, Daimler has supported the Living Lakes Network by providing vehicles, technological expertise and funding. Congratulations to the Global Nature Fund and all associated organisations for your achievements since 1998 and the best success for your important work in the future."



# Conservation

St Lucia Wetlands is a creditable example for the variety of concrete conservation projects and activities on the protection of rare fauna and flora. Our global partners have learnt considerably from these projects.

Case Study – South Africa



## Lake Facts

Lake St. Lucia, with a size of 350 km<sup>2</sup>, lies in the centre of the 2,550 km<sup>2</sup> large protected area of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park, the oldest protected area in Africa and a World Heritage Site. The terrestrial, coastal and marine components of the Park comprise estuaries, coral reefs, marine canyons, lakes, wetlands, dunes, forests and woodlands.

## Main Achievements

- Support for the ongoing land restitution process associated with the iSimangaliso Wetlands World Heritage area, and associated consolidation of existing and potential conservation areas.
- Establishment of a co-management support project to guide the development of management partnerships between the iSimangaliso Wetlands Management Authority and the successful claimant communities.
- Establishment of the Indigenous Trees for Life Programme in three communities neighbouring on Lake St Lucia, thereby supporting the livelihood of over 500 treepreneurs and annual propagation of over 100,000 indigenous trees per annum.
- Establishment of a village greening team in Khula village, through which a total of 1,000,000 alien plants have been removed and 10,000 indigenous trees have been planted.
- Establishment of a Rare and Endemic Inventory and Research Programme.
- Support of the Threatened and Rare Species Research Programme by Nature Summer Camp.
- Implementation of a Conservation based Community Development and Entrepreneurship Programme throughout all rural communities at the lake.





# Restoration

Many lakes and wetlands are extremely polluted or have even disappeared completely due to overuse and abuse by man. Therefore an important aspect for many Living Lakes partners is to restore these areas and thereby provide a background for conservation of species and habitats.

For example



- Restoration of 60 hectares of wetlands at Lake Biwa, Japan.
- Reforestation of fragile mangrove forests in Sri Lanka and India.
- Achieving a water level rise of 2.43 meters at Mono Lake, United States of America.
- Installation of green filters on over 20 hectares for the treatment of domestic and agricultural sewage at the Nestos Lagoons, Greece and Villacañas lagoons in Castilla La Mancha, Spain.
- Construction of a bird watching station and elaboration of a management plan for Mar Chiquita, Argentina.
- Protection measure for the endangered Siberian Crane at Lake Poyang, China.



**Dr.-Ing. E.h. Fritz Brickwedde, Secretary General of the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU)**

"Nature conservation is a fundamental challenge in the prospering EU. To protect natural landscapes comprehensible management concepts are required, based on the participation of all main stakeholders. The Global Nature Fund and its partners have an outstanding expertise in this field worldwide. Therefore, it was a pleasure for the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU) to promote the "Living Lakes Eastern Europe Network" being one of the most prominent projects in this context and further activities in wetland conservation. We hope that Living Lakes Network will continue its successful work and wish all the best for the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary."



# Rebirth

Lake Nava and other steppe lakes in Spain were completely destroyed. Thanks to the activities of one of our Living Lakes Partners, these areas are alive today.

Case Study – Spain



## Lake Facts

Originally, Lake Nava was up to 5,000 hectares large, depending on precipitation. In the 1950s, this area was nearly drained to create arable land. In 1990 parts of La Nava were brought back to life by restoring 500 hectares of the steppe lake landscape. After a remarkably short period of time, waders and other waterfowl rediscovered the lagoons. Now the various lakes are classified as one of the most important winter resting places for central and north European greylag geese and other migratory birds.

## Main Achievements

- Restoration of various lagoons within the original La Nava watershed: La Nava, Boada and Pedraza lagoons are today approximately 500 hectares.
- Counting 22,400 water birds in 2007, many of which are on the Red List for endangered species.
- Opening of a bird ringing station with banding of 10,810 birds with over 100 different species.
- Establishing buffer zones around the wetlands to decrease agricultural contamination.
- Realisation of substantial reforestation activities between wetland and agricultural areas with a total of 20,000 trees planted.
- Construction of a bypass pipeline from Canal de Castilla to Boada lagoon for water improvement.
- Controlling vegetation around the steppe lakes through a herd of 12 wild horses.
- Implementation of the EU LIFE project Wetland Restoration and Management: Canal de Castilla Special Protection Area where 35 wetlands around Canal de Castilla are to be restored.
- More than 40 national and international work camps for young people held every year.

# Our partners world wide

53 Lakes represented by over 70 organisations



For further information on our partners, please visit the website: [www.globalnature.org](http://www.globalnature.org)

## Living Lakes **Partner Lakes**

- 1 Columbia River Wetlands; Canada
- 2 Mono Lake; USA
- 3 Lake Chapala; Mexico
- 4 Laguna Fúquene; Colombia
- 5 Lake Titicaca; Bolivia and Peru
- 6 Pantanal; Brasil, Bolivia and Paraguay
- 7 Mar Chiquita; Argentina
- 8 Norfolk and Suffolk Broads; Great Britain
- 9 La Nava; Spain
- 10 Lake Constance; Germany, Switzerland and Austria
- 11 Lake Trasimeno; Italy
- 12 Lake Balaton; Hungary
- 13 Milicz Ponds; Poland
- 14 Peipsi Lake; Estonia and Russia
- 15 Lake Võrtsjärv; Estonia
- 16 Nestos Lakes and Lagoons; Greece
- 17 Lake Paliastomi; Georgia
- 18 Lake Uluabat; Turkey
- 19 Lake Victoria; Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda
- 20 Lake St. Lucia; South Africa
- 21 Dead Sea; Israel, Jordan and Palestine
- 22 Lake Tengiz; Kazakhstan
- 23 Lake Maduganga and Madampe; Sri Lanka
- 24 Lake Bolgoda; Sri Lanka
- 25 Lake Baikal; Russia
- 26 Lake Poyang; China
- 27 Lake Biwa; Japan
- 28 Laguna de Bay; Philippines
- 29 Mahakam Wetlands; Indonesia

## Living Lakes **Associate Partner Lakes**

- 1 Laguna Atotonilco; Mexico
- 2 Lake Amatitlan; Guatemala
- 3 Lake Atitlán; Guatemala
- 4 Lago Enriquillo and Lac Azuéli; Dominican Republic and Haiti
- 5 Mar Menor; Spain
- 6 Kolindsund Wetlands; Denmark
- 7 Mindelsee; Germany
- 8 Salobrar de Campos; Majorca; Spain
- 9 Lake Orta; Italy
- 10 Lago Maggiore; Italy
- 11 Lake Garda; Italy
- 12 Lake Bolsena; Italy
- 13 Lake Piediluco; Italy
- 14 Lake Vico; Italy
- 15 Labanoras Regional Park; Lithuania
- 16 Lake Sapanca; Turkey
- 17 Lake Issyk-Kul; Kyrgyzstan
- 18 Lake Uvs; Mongolia
- 19 Lake Wular; India
- 20 Lake Pulicat; India
- 21 Lake Taal; Philippines
- 22 Lake Sambaloc; Philippines
- 23 Wilson Inlet; Australia

## Living Lakes **Honorary Member**

- 1 Wostok; Antarktika





# Sustainability

Poverty alleviation and environmentally friendly economics are key issues that need to be considered when working in the field of freshwater conservation. Living Lakes is continuously searching for creative solutions to provide basic needs combined with environmental protection.

For example



# Mangrove Paradise

Through the devastating Tsunami we learnt that mangroves serve two important functions: protection of coast lines and provision of unique habitats with remarkable biodiversity.



Case Study – Sri Lanka

- Promotion of solar lamps and provision of micro-credits for thousands of fishermen in areas without electricity at Lake Victoria, thereby substituting kerosene lamps.
- Approval of the agro-environmental programme for the harmonisation of agriculture and nature at the lagoons of Villacañas, Spain.
- Implementation of a model project on extensive and environmental agricultural practice using the wild grass Lihao at Lake Poyang, China.
- Launch of the Europe's first solar boat Helio at Lake Constance, Germany.
- Preparation of a management plan for tourism development of the Selenga delta at Lake Baikal, Russia.
- Realisation of land-use planning and socio-economic research for the Jempang Lake in the Mahakam Wetlands, Indonesia.
- Implementation of an Environmental Management System (EMAS) for all strategic aspects of the regional development of the Balaton region, Hungary.

The Global Nature Fund started a prestigious project with the aim of offering new life perspectives to the Tsunami affected people in Sri Lanka. One central objective of the project is the protection and rehabilitation of threatened mangrove forests in the Bolgoda, Maduganga and Madampeganga wetlands. The project is supported by the European Commission, the Swiss company Sika, the Serendib Foundation and the Merz Stiftung.

## Lake Facts

- The Bolgoda lake and wetland measures close to 400 km<sup>2</sup> and is situated 20 km south of Colombo.
- The Maduganga and Madampe lakes are located in the south-west of Sri Lanka. According to an IUCN study in 2000, Maduganga is one of the most unique environments in terms of biodiversity.

## Main Achievements

- More than 20 mangrove nurseries were set up and over 100,000 plants have been grown to restore a total area of over 40 hectares.
- Two Environmental Education Centres were built providing long-term training programmes to Tsunami affected people.
- More than 1,000 people were trained in organic farming, sustainable fishing practices and traditional handicraft skills in order to generate income and employment opportunities in the rural areas.
- Over 150 fishermen families were given fishing equipment or solar lamps to replace kerosene lamps which pollute the water.
- Environment Education Workshops for more than 300 students have been carried out.
- Over 30 sets of coir yarn machines were donated to Tsunami affected families.
- A campaign to reduce the pollution caused by gasoline leakages from boats was carried out.
- A programme to clean up the lake and protect it from further pollution was started.
- Lal Emmanuel, founder of the Nagenahiru Foundation, won the first international "One World Award" in 2008.

Peter Maher, Chargé d'affaires

Delegation of the European Commission to Sri Lanka and the Maldives

"The European Commission is happy to have worked in close co-operation with the Global Nature Fund in implementing our joint project for the restoration of mangroves in Sri Lanka. This three year Post Tsunami Asia Pro Eco project has been a great success, contributing to several aspects of environmental restoration. We take this opportunity in extending our congratulations to the Global Nature Fund in celebrating the 10-year anniversary of the Living Lakes and organising the 12<sup>th</sup> Living Lakes Conference"





# Environmental

Environmental education and sensitisation are key tools in convincing people to appreciate their natural surroundings and in finding approaches to achieve sustainable development goals for the local homes. Especially young people learn more on the importance of climate protection, biodiversity and clean freshwater.

For example



# Education

Environmental education needs a home. The centre at Laguna Fúquene offers training sessions, workshops and awareness programmes for the people living in the area.



## Case Study – Colombia

- Construction of a nature information centres at Lake Võrtsjärv, Estonia; Lake Baikal, Russia and Bolgoda Lake and Maduganga Wetland, Sri Lanka.
- Information campaign on impacts of DDT on human health and the environment in Selenga region at Lake Baikal, Russia.
- 20 national and international Nature Summer Camps carried out – a volunteering programme for employees of companies supporting the Living Lakes network worldwide.
- Ten environmental campaigns such as 'Water for Life' at Lake Baikal and 'Big Jump' along the Jordan River.
- 'Kids for Birds' project with participation of more than 300 children from Poland, Germany, Estonia and Russia.
- Kids for Dolphins – an interactive programme between German and Indonesian school children for the protection of the Irrawaddy Dolphin.

## Lake Facts

The shallow lagoon with a size of 30 km<sup>2</sup> is located in the east of the Colombian Andes, at an altitude of 2,540 metres. The rich biodiversity of the lagoon is threatened by massive water withdrawal for irrigation, by sedimentation, and introduction of invasive species. Lake Fúquene has no formal conservation status yet.

## Main Achievements

- Construction and launch of an information centre at Laguna de Fúquene for environmental education, capacity building, and promotion of traditional handcrafts.
- Training of staff for the information centre.
- Conducting school programmes to educate children on the importance of nature conservation and lagoon ecology.
- Brochures, comics and DVDs for children, depicting and commenting on Laguna de Fúquene through the eyes of a bird.
- Publishing 1,000 posters to promote water conservation.
- Foundation of the 'Alliance Sustainable Tourism for Lake Fúquene' in collaboration with local fishermen.
- Regional support for the protection and restoration of native forests in the catchment area.
- Implementation of a monitoring system involving the local communities who collect data on the state of the lake and the flora and fauna.



Ernst Bärtschi (right), CEO Sika AG, together with his daughter Stephanie and the mountain guide Henzen Pius climbing the Dom, Switzerland's highest mountain.

"Sika's long tradition is closely linked to the protection of water. The first product of Sika's founder, Kaspar Winkler, Sika-1, was a water-sealing mortar additive. Since then Sika's products protect buildings from penetrating water. At the same time, Sika technology provides means for safely storing clean drinking water, for example in reservoirs. Since 2005 Sika has been expressing their ambition to simultaneously protect buildings and the environment through supporting the Living Lakes projects, which contribute to the preservation of important fresh water resources in our world."

# Business Partners

From the beginning the Living Lakes Network has successfully integrated the business sector to implement practical solutions for the conservation of the lakes. Our partnership with business is based on dialogue and long term cooperation. We will continue with this approach – learning from each other.



# Collaborations

The visions and goals of Living Lakes are shared by international institutions and conventions. Therefore GNF seeks close co-operations with these partners.



The economic value of biodiversity is huge. About 40 percent of the world economy is based on biological products or processes. For the private sector the loss of species diversity means a loss of a large pool of instruction manuals and formulae made by nature which might provide valuable solutions for innovative products and services. GNF and the Living Lakes Network count on ten years of successful cooperation with companies that face their responsibility and develop practical solutions for the protection of water resources, biodiversity and climate. The scope of the activities range from CO<sub>2</sub>-sequestration projects in South Africa to volunteer camps in India. In the name of all Living Lakes Partners, GNF would like to thank all supporters for their confidence in our work and the long and fruitful partnerships.

## Global Supporters

Over the last decade, the Living Lakes network received support from

- Daimler
- Unilever
- Lufthansa

Long-term partners supporting concrete projects

- A. Ziemann
- Sika
- Osram
- T-Mobile

Further supporters

- EthikBank
- natur+kosmos
- GLS Bank
- SCA
- Kärcher



## International Partners

- Ramsar Convention
- UNEP-Convention on Migratory Species
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- BTCV
- German League for Nature Conservation and Environmental Protection (DNR)
- German Environmental Aid (DUH)
- Association of German Foundations (Bundesverband Deutscher Stiftung)
- Future e.V.
- ECOCAMPING – Network for Environmental Quality at Camping Sites
- ECOTRANS – European Network for Sustainable Tourism
- FUNGAP – Fundación para la Gestión Ambiental Participativa

## Further Supporters

- European Union (EU)
- German Ministry of Environment (BMU)
- German Federal Nature Conservation Agency (BfN)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH.
- Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU)
- Foundation Ursula Merz
- Anton Ehrmann Foundation
- Serendib Foundation
- City of Friedrichshafen





# The Future



# of Living Lakes



## Water, Biodiversity and Climate Change

Water – the essence of life! Almost all relevant aspects of our lives are directly linked to water quality and availability. There is clear evidence that our world is faced with a severe water crisis. Only a small percentage of all the earth's water is accessible freshwater. Lakes are essential in the water cycle, providing water to many people.

Biodiversity – Species diversity is disappearing at an alarming pace. Lakes and wetlands are ecosystems with striking biodiversity and all Living Lakes projects seek to conserve these treasures for the future.

Climate change – Freshwater bodies are extremely vulnerable to climate change, however wetlands especially store CO<sub>2</sub>. Thus, Living Lakes sets a clear focus on protecting these habitats, on mitigation and adaptation measures and aims at developing a Living Lakes 'Climate Protection' programme.

Biodiversity, climate change mitigation and water & lake management are our main topics for the next years. In addition to concrete projects in these fields, we will increase the number of Living Lakes partners and maintain the quality of the network. During the next years we will create further national and continental Living Lakes Networks, strengthen capacity building and develop more joint projects among the partners.

To launch a network is not the main difficulty, but to develop it, fill it with life and to maintain a good quality of partnerships over many years, this is the real challenge! The success of Living Lakes is a success of its partners and the people behind it all. Our intense collaboration is based on a common vision, reliability, dedication and trust. There is positive ambience within the 'Living Lakes family' and we are confident to maintain and even increase this spirit for the coming years!



Dr Tobias Salathé, Senior Advisor, Ramsar Convention Secretariat

"The first modern multilateral environmental agreement, signed in 1971 in the town of Ramsar at the Caspian Lake, focuses on wetlands. Lakes are wetlands. And we are happy to see that many of the Living Lakes are listed under the Ramsar Convention. By supporting specific environmental projects in the catchment basins of the Living Lakes, GNF is actively implementing the wise use principles of the Ramsar Convention. We congratulate you for this and are looking forward to see the Living Lakes become showcases for the development of sustainable societies."



Lutz Laemmerhold, Manager, Public Relations, Lufthansa AG

"Lufthansa's basic concept is to maintain balance. Therefore, our corporate responsibility towards the environment is one of the most important goals of our business. Our fascination with Living Lakes is that it successfully demonstrates how resources are preserved, the environment is protected and simultaneously through sustainable management the needs of the people can be addressed."

## Imprint



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