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## Lake Fúquene in Colombia is „Threatened Lake of the Year 2011“

important milk supplier for the capital Bogotá with its eight million inhabitants. Because of the shallowness of the lake – the deepest point is five metres – the lake has been continuously dried up and the fertile land on the shores has been used for grazing. Once, the lake had a size of 10,000 hectares, whereas only 3,000 hectares are left today. At the same time, over the last years the lake became more and more polluted due to untreated and polluted water from surrounding communities and due to nutrients of the livestock. This causes invasive plants like water hyacinth and waterweeds to rapidly cover the water surface and extract oxygen from the water. Moreover, tributaries have been regulated and large fields of reed have been cut. This led the two invasive plant species spread even faster. Meanwhile, the lake is so heavily polluted, that it is stinking unbearably and almost all fishes have died. More than 80 fishermen families lost their livelihood and eco-tourism that was starting to flourish is declining again.



authorities and international organisations in May 2011. The conference shall also increase pressure on the Colombian government and the Minister for Environment Beatriz Uribe as well as on the local authorities. If no immediate action is taken, we will experience an environmental disaster in the next ten years .

**Support us and save Lake Fúquene by signing our petition. The petition will be handed out to Mrs. Uribe after the conference from 25-27 May 2011. Petition at: [www.globalnature.org/FuquenePetition](http://www.globalnature.org/FuquenePetition)**

**E**ighty years ago, Lake Fúquene was the largest lake in the Colombia. It is a drinking water resource for 200,000 people that live in the region; most of them work in dairying, agriculture or mining. Due to the good availability of fresh water, the region became the most

As a last desperate measure GNF and its local partner Fundación Humedales nominate the Lake Fúquene as “Threatened Lake of the Year 2011”. In order to raise attention for the critical situation of Lake Fúquene, the Fundación will organise a conference with local

All these projects show positive ways to protect lakes successfully including the economic development of the region. With all these good examples in mind we will travel to Colombia in May, and together with our partner organisation Fundación Humedales, we will fight to save Laguna de Fúquene.

*Harald Kächele*

Prof. Dr. Harald Kächele  
Member of the GNF Board



Prof. Dr. Harald Kächele

### Preface

Dear Reader,

Nearly every day we are confronted with bad news concerning environmental protection and preservation of nature. Meanwhile, we are accustomed to quite a few things. But over and over again there are environmental scandals that shock me. Such a thing is currently happening in Colombia, more precisely at Laguna de Fúquene. At the beginning of the last century Laguna Fúquene was Colombia's largest lake – until a few years ago when the regional government

decided to divert the tributary and to drain the lake bit by bit. From the originally over 100 sq. km large lake, currently three quarters of the lake surface are converted to arable and building land. The lake is silting up and has degenerated into a cesspool. And why? Making a fast buck is alluring, greed and ruthlessness of speculators create irreparable facts. This might work for a few years, but once the lake disappears the region will be on the verge of an economic collapse. Therefore, we have decided to nominate Laguna de Fúquene as Threatened Lake of the Year 2011.

But there is also pleasant news: During the past months several activities around GNF and Living Lakes have been awarded with a prize.

## Biological diversity and (Environmental) Management

Environmental management systems like EMAS identified biodiversity as a significant environmental aspect that should be reported on by certified companies since 2010. The European Business and Biodiversity (B&B) Campaign together with the German association for environmental management professionals (VNU), the Chamber of Commerce Frankfurt and the German Environmental Aid (DUH) organised a workshop for (environmental) consultants, experts, auditors, companies and municipalities. The integration of biodiversity in corporate or municipal management was the main topic of the meeting. Goals – Measures –

Monitoring... for every step benchmarks or indicators will be needed to check if measures had the intended effect and set targets were reached. All participants agreed that the EMAS indicator „land use“ is often not meaningful and might even be confusing. Until now, no indicator set can be used across different sectors – neither is a sector specific approach available. The German partners of the European B&B Campaign work on an indicator set that will be published before this summer. The draft will be discussed with scientific institutions, companies and the German Federal Ministry for Environment. Within their campaign

‘European Capital of Biodiversity’ the DUH developed a challenging questionnaire with biodiversity-indicators that was designated for cities and municipalities. The questionnaire contained a selection of the indicators from the so-called ‘Singapore Index’. Together with its partners, the DUH will use their experiences from the questionnaires to compile an indicator set for municipalities.

**Are you interested in more news about the European B&B Campaign? Subscribe for the Newsletter at:**  
[www.business-biodiversity.eu](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu)

## Canadian lakes network

Canadian Living Lakes-partners Wildsight and Lake Winnipeg Foundation created the Living Lakes-network Canada. The network is linked to already existing network structures allowing organisations throughout Canada to share knowledge and experiences thus extending their competences with regard to the improvement, protection and restoration of aquatic eco-systems. The members of Living Lakes Canada are practice-oriented

nature conservation organisations carrying out projects in the fields of science, education and restoration in view of the long-term protection of the precious freshwater resources. The network intends to sensitise the Canadian population to protect their river basins and to draw attention to conscious use of water in Canada. More information at: [www.livinglakes.ca](http://www.livinglakes.ca)



Columbia River Wetlands are located in the Rocky Mountains rift valley. The Rocky Mountains form the boundary in the east and the Purcell Mountains in the west.

## New Living Lakes-partner in Mongolia

Lake Hovsgol in Mongolia contains 70% of Mongolia’s freshwater reserves. The only outlet of the lake is the Egiin River, which enters Lake Baikal, the world’s largest natural freshwater reservoir only 200 km away in Russia. The lake is habitat for 794 species of plants and 369 species of animals, of which about 10% are endemic. Many species are globally threatened. The lake was designated as a National Park in 1992, however, little enforcement of laws and regulations followed. Within Living Lakes Lake Hovsgol will be represented by the Mongol Ecology Centre, which was created in 2009. The NGO’s aim is to implement best practices for protecting and nurturing Lake Hovsgol as well as its natural resources, biodiversity and cultural heritage. Large larch forests surround Lake Hovsgol and act as the southern border of the larger Siberian taiga. The taiga forests are threatened by illegal logging, forest fires and permafrost thaw, caused by increased soil temperatures from climate change and overgrazing of ground cover by livestock. Ground cover is essential to keeping soil temperatures low and controlling evaporation. A dramatic increase in livestock has limited the regeneration of larch trees, as young trees are an excellent food source for sheep and goats. Allowing further loss of these larch forests will expose the southern side of the Siberian taiga, making it even more vulnerable to permafrost thaw, desertification and the release of greenhouse gases. The permafrost soils are globally important as they are a major carbon sink for the entire Northern Hemisphere.

## NASA Study: Earth’s lakes are warming

In the first comprehensive global survey of temperature trends in major lakes, NASA researchers determined Earth’s largest lakes have warmed during the past 25 years in response to climate change. The researchers Philipp Schneider and Simon Hook used satellite data to measure the surface temperatures of 167 large lakes worldwide. They reported an average warming rate of 0.81 degrees Fahrenheit per decade, with

some lakes warming as much as 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit per decade. According to the study, the largest and most consistent area of warming was northern Europe. Already small changes in water temperature can result in algal blooms that can make a lake toxic to fish or result in the introduction of non-native species that change the lake’s natural ecosystem. More information at: [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov)

## President of GNF wins Special Award



f.l.t.r. Marion Hammerl, Jacques Rocher and Michaela Gastiger from the German Embassy in France.

GNF president Marion Hammerl is the winner of the Special Award "International Press Trophée de femmes 2011". An international jury selected her from among 45 former winners of the award „Trophée de femmes“ by

the Environmental Foundation Yves Rocher. Marion was honoured for her work within Living Lakes. The prize award ceremony took place at the Institut de France in Paris, on March 8th, 2011. This was the third time the French Foundation has awarded a prize to Marion Hammerl. In 2007, she was the first German prize winner of the national „Trophée de femmes“ award. Selected among eleven laureates, she was winning the international environmental award "Trophée de femmes" in March 2008. On occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Foundation Yves Rocher, the special award winner of the International Press Trophée de femmes 2011 was selected among the 45 former "Trophée de femmes" prize winners from 15 countries. The jury was composed of 28 international journalists. Congratulations Marion!

## National Geographic Germany – Vote for our Rhino-project now!

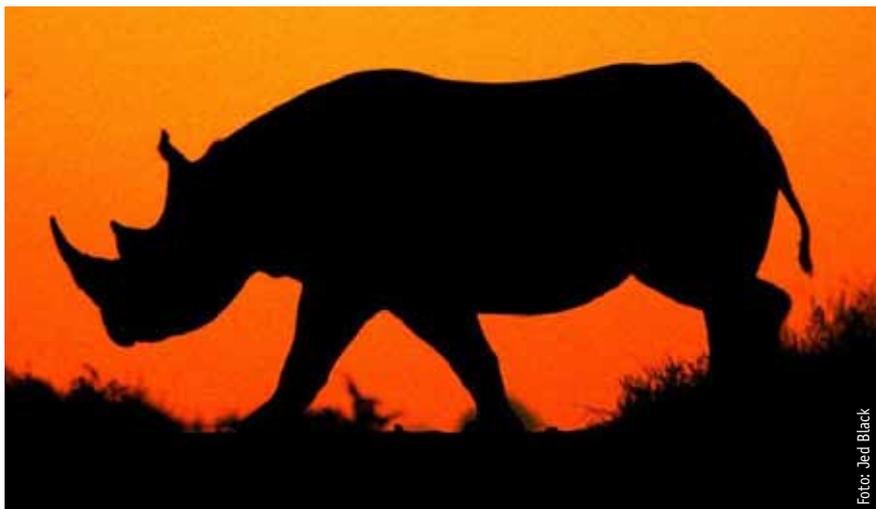


Foto: Jed Black

In its current issue, National Geographic Germany is calling its readers to vote on six environmental initiatives. One of them is the GNF project for the protection of the endangered Black Rhinoceros in Sou-

th Africa. The project that receives most of the votes will be financed in 2011 by the European Outdoor Conservation Association. Vote for us until April, the 20th at: [www.nationalgeographic.de/umweltprojekte](http://www.nationalgeographic.de/umweltprojekte).

## Further Awards for Living Lakes Partners

The **Canadian Living Lakes-partner Wild-sight** has won the Land Award of the prestigious Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia its Lake Windermere Project. The Land Award recognizes forward-thinking people and organizations that make British Columbia a better place to live.

**Australian Living Lakes-partner Green Skills** has been recognized for its environmental program excellence by winning the overall 2010 Western Australia Environment Award as well as the Community Achievement Regional Award.

**Russian Living Lakes partner Baikal Information Centre GRAN** is the winner of the national contest „350 good actions“ for their project „Baikal craftspeople“. Within the project souvenirs made of natural raw materials will be produced.

The **Spanish partner Fundación Global Nature (FGN)** was awarded a prize offered by the Fundación Biodiversidad, in the category „Conservation in Action“ for the renaturation of steppe lakes in Tierra de Campos. The prize will be presented on June 2nd, 2011 by the Spanish Minister of Environment. A month ago, FGN has won a prize offered by the Fundación MAPFRE for its excellent conservation work in Spain. The prize will be presented in summer by the Spanish Queen Sofia.

## Donate and win

Among all donators and supporters of the projects "Help for the Pantanal" and "Drinking water for Africa", GNF draw prizes like entrance cards for the Zoo in Zürich, a beautiful illustrated book about Pantanal wetland as well as two football shirts signed by the football players of the German Bundesliga Club Hannover 96.

## Network Living Lakes Germany: Lake Plau is Living Lake 2011

On March 22nd, the World Water Day, the GNF announced, for the first time, the choice of Lake Plau as Living Lake 2011 in Germany. In this year Lake Plau will carry out interesting activities and events for grown-ups and children, experts and laypeople. The seventh largest German lake with its

large natural shores and calm bays is home to numerous bird species such as osprey, white-tailed eagle, kingfisher, and crane.

GNF intends to use the World Water Day as an opportunity to choose a German Living Lake every year. This action is designed to attract the attention of different actors

to our lakes as precious eco-systems and unique natural treasures.

[www.globalnature.org/LebendigerSee2011](http://www.globalnature.org/LebendigerSee2011)



## Events

### 7th German CSR Forum, 5- 6 April 2011

Stuttgart, Germany

How businesses can identify their impacts on nature and biodiversity, is the theme of a GNF workshop, which will be held on 5th April at the CSR-Forum in Stuttgart. Businessmen will speak about corporate practices and GNF will explain how investments in climate protection can also help preserve biodiversity. Programme and Registration at : [www.csrforum.eu/2011/](http://www.csrforum.eu/2011/)

### WaterVent, 12 April 2011

Zürich, Switzerland

WaterVent brings together ideas and investments. The international event is addressed at NGOs and scientists who seek for investors to realise the implementation of their ideas, but also at companies who look for invest in successful projects with regards to water alleviation and wastewater disposal. More at: [www.watervent.com](http://www.watervent.com)

### Biodiversity Workshop for the European Food Producing and Processing Industry, 11 - 12 May 2011

Hamburg, Germany

Unilever, Global Nature Fund and Lake Constance Foundation. Registration at: [www.business-biodiversity.eu](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu) -> Events

### 11th International Conference on Salt Lake Research, 8 - 16 May 2011

Miramar, Argentina

Since 1979, a series of triennial conferences foster scientific exchange of saline lakes. The conference shall establish effective liaison between persons interested in inland saline waters and educate the public in the scientific use, management, and conservation of salt lakes. The 11th International Conference will be hosted by GNF Partners Enrique Bucher and Erio Curto from the Centro de Zoología Aplicada Argentina in Miramar, Cordoba, Argentina on the shore of Mar Chiquita. More information at: [www.isslr.org](http://www.isslr.org)

### Conference "Current situation, line of action and future management scenarios at Lake Fúquene", 25. - 27. May 2011

Laguna de Fúquene, Colombia

With the conference, GNF and Fundación Humedales seeks to rise the attention for the critical situation of Lake Fúquene and therefore invites local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

## Travelling Exhibitions (in Germany)

### Pantanal – A Nature Paradise in Danger

International Nature photography Days in Fürstentfeld: 15 May 2011

Wilhemshaven, Wattenmeer Museum:  
June - August 2011

### Living Lakes Germany

Lembruch, Dümmer Museum:  
16.03. - 25.04.2011

## Publications and Online information

### Guidelines for investing in Forest Climate projects

In the frame of the project „Forest and Climate protection for the private sector“, guidelines have been developed and can now be downloaded. The guidelines shall inform investors, companies and the public when choosing to invest in forest climate projects. The guidelines want to pay attention on ecological and social aspects that has to be considered within this choice. Download of the guidelines in German at: [www.globalnature.org/waldklima](http://www.globalnature.org/waldklima).

### Tour Operators and Biodiversity

In September, GNF and TUI organise a workshop on the importance of the biological diversity for tour operators. The English workshop documentation „Tour Operators and Biodiversity“ can be downloaded free of charge at [www.business-biodiversity.eu/publications](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/publications)

### Climate Alliance Germany

The Climate Alliance Germany has a new English website to extend information on climate campaigns and climate policy in Germany to European and international institutions. The new website of the NGO also provides publications of Members in English. [www.climate-alliance-germany.de/](http://www.climate-alliance-germany.de/)

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