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German lakes are considered to be clean with a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Not everywhere, but in many places littoral zones are unspoilt and spared from mass tourism. To draw attention to such natural treasures, in 2011 the Global Nature Fund has, for the first time, nominated a Living Lake of the Year in Germany.

## Lake Plau - first Living Lake of the Year in Germany

Due to its glassy waters and natural condition, the Mecklenburg Lake District is a popular tourist destination. Lake Plau is the third largest lake and widely regarded as the most beautiful lake of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. It has long been home to threatened species such as common otter, warty newt and osprey, almost undisturbed by human activities. Also white-tailed eagle, great grey shrike and bittern still feel at ease at the idyllic lake. In recent times, however, investors became interested in the lake and intend to develop housing projects and establish new ports and holiday parks. Neighbouring communities expect financial advantages. Therefore, site development even in nature reserves and sensitive littoral zones is partly allowed entailing urban sprawl, habitat destruction of threatened animal and plant species as well as increasing water surface agitation.



Over the last decades, the lakeshore building restrictions at Lake Plau were circumvented by exceptional permissions. Recently, the protection standard has been eased: According to a new nature conservation act, the government of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania has reduced the protected shore land buffer width of all lakes within the state from 100 to 50 metres.

Nominating Lake Plau as Living Lake of the Year, the Global Nature Fund wants to draw the attention to this region. The BUND (League for Environment and Nature Conservation, Germany) local group Plau advocates the development of tourism infrastructure in harmony with nature and landscape and calls for preservation of the valuable shore land areas - unspoilt. At many lakes, it is already too late to intervene, but this should not happen at Lake Plau.

Help to protect lakes in Germany and donate to GNF: detailed information on [www.globalnature.org](http://www.globalnature.org)  
Thank you!



Dr. Hendrik Hoek

## Preface

I just came back from Colombia where within a few days I witnessed the early signs of climate change and their consequences.


For almost eleven months La Niña is ravaging there, causing extreme rainfall in the northern regions of South and Central America. Particularly affected is the Colombian Andean region, where it is raining daily, almost without interruption. The plateau of Bogota with its capital of the same name and ten million inhabitants currently goes through very difficult times.

The Bogota River, which in the past years was forced into a narrow river bed, has recovered its original course. Lake Fúquene, nominated as "Threatened Lake of the Year 2011" by the Global Nature Fund, has flooded populated areas and currently its size corresponds to the surface area of the lake 50 years ago.

I often heard the affected people say "el agua no olvida" – water does not forget. This phrase should be taken seriously wherever changes are intended e.g. to reduce the shore protection at the still well preserved Lake Plau in Germany or at Lake Pulicat in India, where the mangrove vegetation needs to be protected, as they are not only important for the shore protection but also as breeding area for many species of

crustaceans, fish and birds. Mangroves also help clean the water.

We should always keep in mind the situation at the Jordan and do our utmost to use and protect intelligently our running waters, lakes and wetlands for the future generations, because "el agua no olvida"!



Dr. Hendrik Hoek is a member of the scientific board of the GNF

## Restoration of Mangrove Forests in South India



*Nataraj Babu coordinates the mangrove restoration projekt at Lake Pulicat.*

Nataraj Babu is working for CRENIEO, a GNF partner organisation in India, and since 2009 is in charge of our joint species protection project at Lake Pulicat, which is supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature

Conservation (Bundesamt für Naturschutz) with resources of Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. The project goal is to contribute to the preservation of biodiversity and to ensure fishing, the most important source of income of the population at Lake Pulicat. Pulicat is India's second largest brackish water lagoon. The lagoon is connected to the sea and rich in fish and crustaceans. For generations, the local people have subsisted on fishing. There are about 30.000 professional fishermen at Lake Pulicat. For centuries, fishing has been regulated by the padu system, a community based fisheries management. Padu defines the fishing quota of the lake villages and thus protects the lake against overfishing. However, the number of people and fishermen living around the lagoon is steadily increasing resulting in overuse of the fishing grounds and increasing conflicts

within the padu system. Babu explains that the dense mangrove root system provides ideal living conditions for larvae and young animals of numerous fresh and salt water species. Mangroves also contribute to mitigate the devastating consequences of storms, tidal waves and tsunamis. During the past months, almost 20.000 trees were planted by Babu and his eight-headed team. As the period between the monsoon seasons can be very dry, the seedlings in the tree nurseries must be watered daily with brackish water from the lagoon, a quite troublesome work. Vital to the success of the project is to convince people that intact mangrove forests ensure their livelihood in the long term. Therefore, Babu and his team organise regularly meetings with the fishermen and their families. Detailed report can be found on: [www.globalnature.org/Indiantravel2011](http://www.globalnature.org/Indiantravel2011)

## Dramatic Situation at Lake Fúquene

The planned conference to adopt an action plan to save the "Threatened Lake of the Year 2011", Laguna de Fúquene in Colombia, scheduled for 25 May 2011, had to be postponed due to extreme climatic conditions. Continuous rainfall over the past 11 months has led to a rise in water level, currently the lake size corresponds to its peak 50 years ago with dramatic consequences for the population. Houses and farms were flooded, the intensive and highly profitable dairy farming collapsed. Near the lake it smells bad as the polluted water has come to the surface. Suddenly, all ecological errors and sins of the past years become visible. The responsible authority Corporación

Autónoma Ambiental Regional (CAR) is under pressure and must justify its former attitude. There is hope that the government will finally reorganize the partly corrupt and ineffective institution. Due to the difficult socio-economic and ecological situation, the local GNF partner Fundación Humedales has decided to postpone the conference to 25 July 2011. Perhaps it will then be possible to implement the right measures to save this last lake in the high plain of the Eastern Andean Cordilleras, and its unique wetlands.

*An extreme rise in water level causes new conflicts at Lake Fúquene.*



## Kenyan Marathon Winners in Hannover

This year, Kenyans (women and men) have dominated the TUIfly Marathon in Hannover. We wish all Kenyans such energy and perseverance. In Africa, the majority of the rural population has no access to clean drinking water. With the "Drinking water for Africa" initiative, GNF and the German tourism group TUI want to actively support the African population.

At the TUIfly Marathon, organised by Eichels Event, GNF staff informed the visitors about the drinking water supply in rural areas in Africa on this gorgeous sunny day. There was a great crowd at the drinking water booth, not least because of very attractive tombola prizes, donated by many sponsors. The proceeds from the sold tombola tickets directly go to the GNF drinking water projects in Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire. Also the runners were asked to make a donation. The collected amount of money during this weekend in May was 3.627 Euro. We would like to say a big thank you to all our sponsors and ticket buyers.

## Take part in the visitor satisfaction survey at European Living Lakes.

Have you been visiting one of our European Living Lakes in 2011 or are you going to visit a living lake this year? Within the scope of our Sustainable Lake Oriented Walking TOURism in Europa (SLOW TOUR) project, we kindly ask you to answer a few questions concerning your stay at the lake. The visitor survey is an important part of the EU supported project on sustainability and competitiveness of tourism at European lake regions. The questionnaire is available in several languages and should take about 10 minutes. Please follow the link [www.globalnature.org/Visitor-survey](http://www.globalnature.org/Visitor-survey).

### Background:

In Europe, tourism contributes about 10 per cent to the annual GDP. It plays an important economic role also in most European lake regions. SLOW TOUR was launched in 2010 with the objective of promoting sustainability, competitiveness, and "Best Practices" at European lakes in the tourism sector taking into account ecological,

economic and social dimensions. Different sustainability data at 13 European lakes are being collected and analysed. The project takes into account the answers of tourists and tourism companies concerning the customer satisfaction with regard to the lake region as holiday destination. A manual provides recommendations concerning certification and sustainable tourism standards at lakes. The results are destined for public institutions responsible for the touristic development in lake regions as well as the tourism industry, communal administrations and environmental associations.

SLOW TOUR is supported by the European Commission through the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme. GNF Project partners are the Italian municipality association Trasimeno - Medio Tevere, the University of Perugia in Italy as well as the senior technical college of Brede in the Netherlands.



## Nature Family Camp – not recommendable?

An attractive programme was offered to 10 employees of the GNF business partner DAIMLER and their families during the first Nature Family Camp at Lake Constance. After a guided tour through the conservation area of Mettnau, the adults went by E-bike to the island of Reichenau whilst the children went on board of the solar boat Helio and explored the swimming classroom. At Reichenau, the group visited an eco- horticulture society where they got informed about ecological farming methods. The EHEC virus was a matter of debate as well. In the evening, the camp participants reached their accommodation in Horn by solar boat. The next morning the group went back to Radolfzell by solar boat again to head home. To the question if the participants would recommend the Nature Family Camp to their colleagues, a member of the group replied: "No, because I want to take part again and then there might be no room left for me!"

## No Party without Vulture

On the occasion of his birthday, Mr. Walter Geirhos had an idea worth emulating. In reference to his name, he collected 600 Euro under the slogan "No Party without Vulture". This money has been kindly donated to the GNF for the project at Lake Atitlán. Many thanks to all the party guests and Mr. Geirhos for this great mission!



On the photo: Mr. Geirhos at Lake Atitlán in 1988. ("Geier" means in Germ. vulture)

## Apps or Information Boards?

Some develop „Nature Route“ apps for the young and technophile generation, others take into account the demographic change and construct disabled-adapted trails in nature reserves. Environmental education faces a new challenge. To learn from each other is the aim of the EU Lifelong Learning programme Grundtvig. Since 2010, it encourages the exchange between GNF environmental education experts and members in the network Living Lakes Germany as well as Polish experts from the environmental association ETNA and staff of the municipal administration of Villacañas in Spain. Within the scope of the project

get grEEN Environmental Education Network, the experts will meet six times in total. The primary objective is to develop innovative environmental education structures and at the same time boost the added value in the region. Each project partner organises two meetings, while each meeting will focus on a different theme. The third meeting on environmental education for tourists took place at Chiemsee in Bavaria at the beginning of June. This time the participants of get grEEN met the members of the network Living Lakes Germany supported by Reckitt Benckiser and Anton & Petra Ehrmann Foundation.

During the meeting at Lake Chiemsee, the international and national lake partners participated in the 13th GEO Day of Biodiversity. The host, the Chiemsee Nature Guides, additionally invited two school classes to discover as many different animal and plant species as possible at the estuary of the Prien river. Even the mayor of Prien, Jürgen Seifert, and the district president of Upper Bavaria, Christoph Hillenbrand, were searching diligently. Find out more about the environmental education network on [www.globalnature.org/getgreen](http://www.globalnature.org/getgreen).

## New Exhibition to save the Jordan River

With a photo exhibition in Stockholm, Cologne and Brussels GNF aims to draw the attention of the European public to the situation at the Jordan River. The artful photos document the ecological, cultural and political conflicts and things in common of the people living in the Jordan valley. The exhibition opening will

be carried out together with representatives of Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME) and other high-level speakers. The photographer Eddie Gerald was born in Peru, but grew up in Israel. His documentary photography has received many awards. For the exact dates please see next page.



## Important Dates

### We are the World of Tomorrow – Youth Forum on Development Policy, 7 July 2011

Europa Park Rust near Freiburg, Germany

Udo Gattenlöhner will moderate a workshop on “Global ecological Challenges – Help shape the Future”. The Forum is intended for young people between 15 and 19 years old and will be organized by the Stiftung Entwicklungs-Zusammenarbeit Baden-Württemberg (SEZ).

### Conference “Current Condition, Action Plan and Future Management Scenarios at Lake Fúquene” will probably take place in July 2011

Laguna de Fúquene, Colombia

The conference is destined for local authorities and international organisations and shall contribute to save the threatened shallow Laguna de Fúquene. The meeting will be jointly organised by Fundación Humedales and GNF.

### WaterVent 17-18 October 2011

Leeuwarden, the Netherlands

The international event addresses enterprises, NGOs and scientific facilities searching for investors for the implementation of their ideas as well as investors who like to fund promising approaches in the field of water supply and -disposal. Find out more on: [www.watervent.com](http://www.watervent.com).

### 14th World Lakes Conference “Lakes, Rivers, Groundwater and Coastal Areas: Understanding the Linkages”

31 October – 4 November 2011

Austin, Texas, USA

The conference is organised by the International Lake Environment Committee (ILEC) and the River Systems Institute of the Texas State University. Experts from industrial and developing countries are invited to participate and share experiences in this interactive panel on the most important topics of lake conservation and -management.

## Travelling Exhibitions (in Germany)

### Pantanal – A Nature Paradise in Danger

Wilhelmshaven, Wadden Sea Museum:  
June - August 2011

Forum Bodelshausen Library:  
6 September - 22 October 2011

Zingst, Galerie Schule des Sehens:  
5 November 2011 - 29 January 2012

### Living Lakes Germany

Haus der Demokratie und Menschenrechte (House of Democracy and Human Rights)  
Berlin: 1 June - 6 July 2011

Lake Plau, Nature Park Nossentiner/Schwinzer Heide: 12 July – 26 August 2011

### Exhibition to save the Jordan

Galleri Kontrast, Stockholm:  
23-30 August 2011

Church St. Michael, Cologne:  
17 September – 8 October 2011

## Publications and Online information

### European Business and Biodiversity Campaign

The biodiversity check is an important part of the campaign. It serves as a first impression to identify the impact of diverse sectors on biodiversity and the measures that could be implemented. Find detailed information on the check on:

[www.business-biodiversity.eu/Biodiversitäts-Check](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/Biodiversitäts-Check)


a Video-Spot on the European B&B Campaign can be watched in English on:

[www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=49&News=390](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menu=49&News=390)

### UEBT Biodiversity barometer

The Union for Ethical Bio Trade (UEBT), an independent non-profit organisation, shows with their research that environmental and nature conservation are playing an increasingly important role in the society. Further information as well as more interesting data can be found on the UEBT website. There, you can also download the UEBT Biodiversity barometer.

UEBT Biodiversity barometer for Download [www.ethicalbiotrade.org](http://www.ethicalbiotrade.org)

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 <p><b>Global Nature Fund</b></p> <p>Fritz-Reichle-Ring 4 78315 Radolfzell, Germany Phone +49 (0) 7732 9995-0 Fax +49 (0) 7732 9995-88 E-Mail: <a href="mailto:info@globalnature.org">info@globalnature.org</a> <a href="http://www.globalnature.org">www.globalnature.org</a></p> <p><b>Editor in Charge:</b> Udo Gattenlöhner, GNF</p>	