

## Newsletter Topics

### 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2015

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## Preface

### Dear Readers,

In November 2014, the GNF together with their partner, MRLSD, successfully organized the 14th International Living Lakes Conference in Nanchang, China. It was an absolutely fruitful event with more than 350 participants, including 80 Living Lakes delegates who were very pleased to finally meet in person once again. Unfortunately, the conference's topic on the current condition of lakes in densely populated areas offered no reason for celebration: pressures continue to increase, and despite the presence of environmental technologies, lakes are still polluted and overexploited.

As the world's most populous country, China has only 7% of the world's freshwater reserves. With this background, the Chinese government has realized that river and lake pollution can not continue on its current path. To do so would not only have dramatic ecological consequences but also large negative impacts on the economy. "Ecological Civilization" is the concept being promoted by the Chinese government – hopefully with vigor and success.

Ecological civilization is the keyword for the EcoPeace initiative for rescuing the Jordan River on the borders between Israel, Jordan, and Palestine. No other river has such a great importance for several world religions and the history of mankind. Unfortunately, that did not prevent the Jordan River from degenerating to a trickle of effluents and saline water. This example shows how far we still are from an ecological civilization.

The GNF is among the project partners on the Jordan River who have developed the first cross-border Master Plan for its restoration. The plan focuses on practical and realistic measures to restore the Jordan River to an intact ecosystem, thus making a contribution to peace in the region.



Marion Hammerl  
President,  
Global Nature Fund



Marion Hammerl and Nancy Haddaden with the Declaration for the Jordan River.

## Living Lake of the Year 2015

### Lake Schwerin is Home for White-Tailed Eagles & Co.

The romance of Lake Schwerin attracts many recreational users. However, this local retreat should not turn into a huge amusement park. The lake should remain a refuge for nature and people. For this purpose, we have started an action group. With the distinction of "Living Lake of the Year 2015", we draw attention to the necessary conservation measures needed at Lake Schwerin and campaign for Germany's lakes.

Conservation measures include ensuring a sufficient amount of open shorelines. A study of the lake's current nutrient load needs to be conducted. Plans for new water park establishments and the

construction of residential areas near the lake need to be assessed and modified according to their projected environmental impacts. (MU)



Endangered – the White-Tailed Eagle



Wild romance – Schwerin Castle

Please help with a donation to keep Lake Schwerin living!

Donation account:  
GLS-Gemeinschaftsbank Bochum  
Key Word: Lake Schwerin  
IBAN: DE 53 4306 0967 8040 4160 00  
BIC: GENODEM1GLS

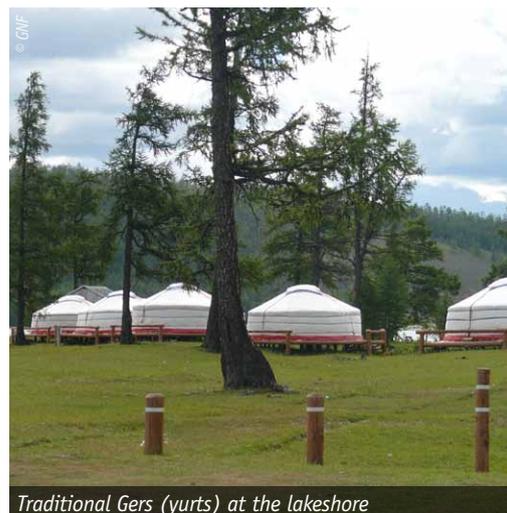


People, rare species, such as the Argali (Giant wild sheep), and the entire ecosystem is threatened by harmful tourists.

## Threatened Lake of the Year 2015 Lake Hovsgol

Lake Hovsgol – also known as “Mother Sea” – is located inside the Hovsgol National Park in Northern Mongolia. It is one of the oldest and most pristine lakes on earth. Nomadic tribes were first attracted to the beauty of the “Blue Pearl” over 4,000 years ago and have left behind many cultural marks. As the world’s 16th largest freshwater lake by volume, it holds 1% of the earth’s fresh water and 70% of all fresh water in Mongolia. It is the only lake completely surrounded by permafrost and the old growth Siberian Larch typical of the original taiga forest.

Its entire watershed is protected in a landscape of interconnected ecosystems that cascade downward from high mountain tundra and alpine forest, through taiga forests and steppe grasslands, streams, wetlands, and ponds. The plant and animal life here is also legendary. Elk, caribou, and the endangered Argali sheep live in the mountains sharing the habitat with wolves and brown bears. The region is home to many ethnic minority groups such as Darkhad, Khotgoid, Uriankhai, Buriad, and Tsaatan.

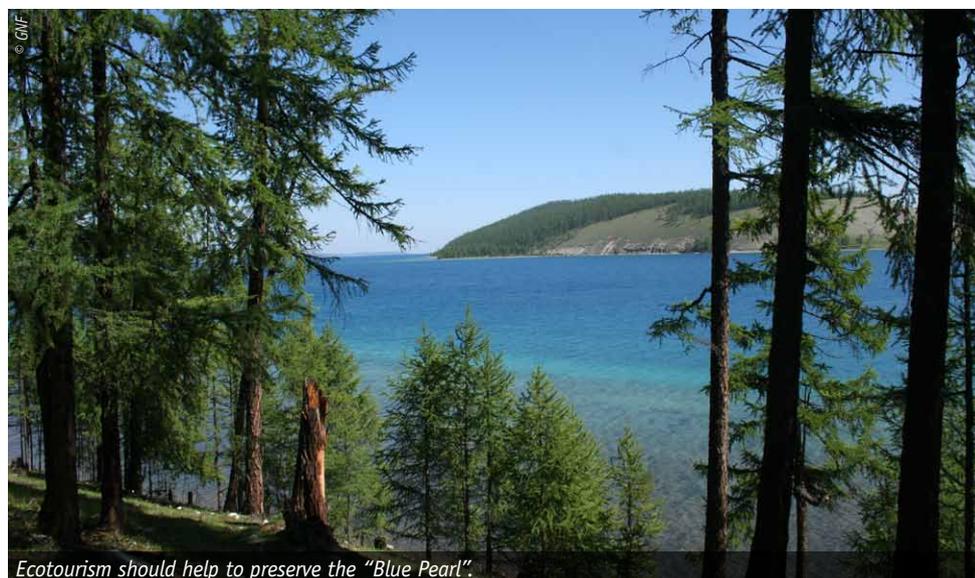


Traditional Gers (yurts) at the lakeshore

Until recently the National Park was relatively inaccessible to travelers but over the next decade, the number of tourists expected will increase multi-fold. Streets, regional airports, and a new boarder crossing to Russia are being constructed with the hopes of giving the local tourist industry a boost.

Unguided groups and their demand for tourist activities are also becoming an increasing burden on the delicate natural balance. Hence the Mongol Ecology Center (MEC) and the Global Nature Fund (GNF) have partnered to bring all stakeholders together in order to form a more sustainable and equitable future for Lake Hovsgol National Park. In order to draw attention to this important issue, the GNF therefore names Lake Hovsgol “Threatened Lake of the Year 2015”.

The negative impacts of these developments include unapproved camps, garbage heaps, and untreated sewage.



Ecotourism should help to preserve the “Blue Pearl”.

### GNF MEC Project Eco Tourism in Mongolia

Mongolian nomadic families are threatened by the increased desertification of their landscape. As a consequence, many are moving towards major cities and villages, hoping to find employment. Increased tourist services around Lake Hovsgol will reverse this trend and stabilize rural populations in the Lake Hovsgol Region. Under the framework of a joint project funded by the European Union, measures are being developed to help both the park and the surrounding communities cope with this inevitable growth of tourism and to ensure that the Hovsgol region might develop in a sustainable manner with minimized impact to the rich environmental and cultural heritage that characterizes this remote area.

[www.globalnature.org/ThreatenedLake2015](http://www.globalnature.org/ThreatenedLake2015)



## 14<sup>th</sup> Living Lakes Conference in Nanchang, China

On the occasion of the 14<sup>th</sup> Living Lakes Conference, more than 300 representatives from 33 states met in Nanchang – the capital of south China’s Jiangxi Province – in November 2014. Among others, the GNF invited the Jiangxi Academy of Sciences and the Chinese non-governmental organization Mountain River Lakes Sustainable Development (MRLSD). The conference’s focus was the protection of threatened lakes in densely populated regions.

As an indication of China’s strong economic growth, many new construction sites and skyscrapers are popping up



Many new construction projects threaten the landscape.

along the Gan River in Nanchang. Despite or perhaps because of this economic success, the environmental situation in China is becoming increasingly serious. Although air pollution in Nanchang is not as bad as in metropolises like Shanghai or Beijing, the sky is still constantly hazy regardless of weather conditions or the regulation placed on motor scooters several years ago that now only allows electrical scooters in the city.

With more than 1.3 billion inhabitants, the People’s Republic of China is the most populous country in the world. Marion Hammerl, President of the GNF, made the challenges of providing a growing

population with enough clean water clear in her opening speech: “More than 22% of the world’s population lives in China, but the country has only about 7% of the water reserves.” Because of the natural, self-cleaning processes of lakes and wetlands, they play a significant role in protecting drinking water. However, their conservation is being ignored in China as in other parts of the world. Chris Percival of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands emphasized that “wetlands are often regarded as wasteland, which accounts for why nearly 70% of them have disappeared over the past hundred years.”

The environmental organization MRLSD focuses its efforts on Lake Poyang, the largest lake in China. The lake’s water level is unregulated and varies considerably during the year. In dry summers, the Lake’s Poyang surface area drops to around 1,000 square kilometers. During the rainy season in winter, the surface area of the shallow lake can increase to more than 4,000 square kilometers and provide habitats for around half a million aquatic birds. In 2011, Lake Poyang suffered from the longest drought in over 50 years. After the dry period an unusually strong rainfall lead to serious flooding in the region. A study conducted by MRLSD concluded that strong deforestation in the region and agricultural overuse is affecting the water storage capabilities of the lake. Yan Bangyou from Chinese research team said that climate change also seems to have a negative impact on the lake.

The pressure of environmental issues has started to force a change of mind in China, leading to a growth in efforts to seriously address water protection. Xiaohong Wang, President of the Jiangxi



Agricultural overexploitation is also a problem.



Good water quality is not only important for Siberian Cranes at the Poyang Lake.

Academy of Sciences, stated that the need for better cooperation between politics, administration, science and the emerging NGOs in China is an essential prerequisite for the successful protection of lakes.

Conference delegates agreed that in addition to adequate legislation, expertise, and modern technologies, the political will is crucial for deciding whether lakes and drinking water will be protected worldwide. The conference participants signed a declaration requiring their joint efforts in protecting lakes by rapidly implementing various projects. To this end, working groups were formed on topics such as restoration, water management, climate change, and environmental education. The water conservationists want to reconvene in Africa to report on their successes in two years. (UG)



### 第十四届世界生命湖泊大会 "14<sup>th</sup> International Living Lakes Conference (Nanchang, China 2014)"



The participants of the 14<sup>th</sup> Living Lakes Conference from 33 different countries.

## News

### Publications and Online Information

#### Handbook "Solar Energy for Rural Kenya: WE!Hub – Water-Energy Hubs"

Download: [www.globalnature.org/solar-kenia](http://www.globalnature.org/solar-kenia)

#### Video "Solar Energy for Rural Kenya"

On GNF Website: [www.globalnature.org/solar-kenia](http://www.globalnature.org/solar-kenia)

and on YouTube: <http://youtu.be/sVarEFOqgMk> (Short Version, 4 minutes),

[http://youtu.be/\\_oj\\_zGJeOx0](http://youtu.be/_oj_zGJeOx0) (Long Version, 22 minutes)

#### GNF at Facebook

Visit us at Facebook and tell us your opinion!

[www.facebook.com/globalnature.org](http://www.facebook.com/globalnature.org)



#### The GNF Wishes Manfred Hermsen a Happy Birthday!

Manfred Hermsen is big patron of nature conservation. He has donated large portions of his fortune to a foundation that helps conserve nature around the world. We celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and wish him all the best from the bottom of our hearts.

#### The GNF at the ITB – Berlin

The GNF had an informational booth set up at the ITB from March 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>.

Together with their Mongolian colleagues, they discussed problems and opportunities for Lake Hovsgol National Park. A visit to the Harz National Park and Lake Constance helped the delegation from Mongolia learn about sustainable tourism in Germany.



## Events

### March – June 2015

March 4<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

#### ITB Berlin

Messe Berlin, Germany

[www.itb-berlin.de/en/ITBBerlin/](http://www.itb-berlin.de/en/ITBBerlin/)

FactsFigures

April 20<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>th</sup>, 2015

#### 11<sup>th</sup> German CSR Forum –

"Without CSR no business success?"

Ludwigsburg near Stuttgart, Germany

April 21<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 15:25 - 16:55 pm

#### GNF workshop "Green Business:

Why more and more companies make their sites close to nature"

in the framework of the

11<sup>th</sup> German CSR Forum

Ludwigshafen, Stuttgart, Germany

[http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menue=25&Termin=448)

[default.asp?Menue=25&Termin=448](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menue=25&Termin=448)

June 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015

#### Green Week 2015 Nature –

our health, our wealth

The Egg Conference Centre,

Brussels, Belgium

[www.business-biodiversity.eu/](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menue=25&Termin=465)

[default.asp?Menue=25&Termin=465](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/default.asp?Menue=25&Termin=465)

until June 2015

#### Exhibition to the rescue of

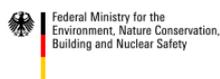
Jordan River

Noah's Ark, Maasstraat 14,

3313 CR Dordrecht, The Netherlands

[www.globalnature.org/Ausstellung-Jordan](http://www.globalnature.org/Ausstellung-Jordan)

## GNF projects are supported by



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