



## Water for Life Newsletter

August 2021

### United for nature! — Our Behaviour Change Campaign

It becomes more evident each passing day how important it is to conserve our ecosystems. It has been widely proved how nature degradation is strongly connected to increasingly climate disasters worldwide, and this can scare and overwhelm even the most optimistic of us.

The Lake Tana Watershed is no exception, and even though the region is rich in natural resources, those are being threatened by the uncontrolled expansion of agriculture, unsustainable use of natural resources, invasion of exotic species, deforestation, pollution and erosion. As a result, there is loss of biodiversity, alteration of ecosystem services, siltation, increasing of poverty, loss of soil, among other negative effects. However, this is not the time to give up – it is time to stay strong, and use our power to make changes! Each of us can contribute by making more sustainable choices every day, and the key to conscious decision making is information.

Therefore, NABU has organized a Behaviour Change Campaign, addressed to all LTW stakeholders, from communities to industry, aiming to raise environmental awareness, and provide tools so that each one can make more sustainable decisions.

#### How can I participate in the Behaviour Change Campaign?

By watching our TV programmes

By attending the various workshops that will be organized in the Woredas

By receiving and distributing our printed materials

By listening to our radio broadcastings

#### Getinet Fetene

Communication and Stakeholders Management officer, NABU Project Office

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

Contact: [getinet.fetene.nabu@gmail.com](mailto:getinet.fetene.nabu@gmail.com)



## Behaviour Change: Training to Development Agents

In order to reach an even higher number of participants in the Behaviour Change Campaign, and to bring more quality material to communities and interested stakeholders, NABU has organized in May an extensive training to Development Agents (DAs) and focal persons at Zone and Woreda administration level.

The main objective was to capacitate those professionals further, on matters of natural resources management and introduction to the BC Campaign. In total, 563 experts attended the capacity building event, from which 177 were women.

The impact from those trainings was quite impressive: 20,940 community members attended the events, which were only possible with the support of DAs and woreda level experts.

From those participants, 16,224 were men and 4,266 women, and they were representing households, youth associations, Kebele leaders, religious leaders and watershed committee members.

Although it is not easy and particularly not fast to change behaviour at higher levels, it is clear that being more informed on emerging issues related to their own environment will encourage the individuals to act, in order to act more consciously towards protecting and conserving their natural resources.



**Bayeh Tiruneh**

Advisor for Capacity building, stakeholder dialogues and civil society empowerment, NABU Project Office

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

**Contact:** Bayeh.Tiruneh.NABU@gmail.com





## Striving towards a plastic free environment in LTW

Everyone has used plastic bags at least once to carry groceries from the market. Plastic bags are almost always used, even though customers are becoming increasingly aware of the environmental impact they cause. In many cities plastic bags are a major component of litter, resulting in detrimental environmental effects including animal choking, pollution, blockage of channels, rivers and finally ending up at our beautiful Lake Tana.

Plastic bags are difficult and costly to recycle, and mostly end up on landfills, where they take around 300 years to photodegrade. Unfortunately, they still don't disappear. They break down into tiny toxic particles that contaminate the environment, ground water and in the end, enter the food chain – when unaware animals (and humans!) ingest them.

NABU is currently promoting a pilot intervention at six sites in LTW to promote a Plastic-Free environment, by introducing reusable cloth bags to small retail shops. The shop owner will be supported by NABU, so that he/she can produce the eco-friendly bags, with the help of local seamstresses.

The bags will be distributed to customers at the shops for free\*, together with an informative Flyer. The clients and the shopkeeper will work together: the costumers remember to bring the bags in the next time they go shopping, and the shopkeeper reminds them, in case they forget. And by this cooperation, we will be able to reduce the amount of plastic that is thrown away unnecessarily, and protect our environment from plastic pollution!

Do you have your  
eco-friendly-bag  
already?



### Here are the retail shops participating in the intervention:

1. **Gondar**: Arada sub city consumer's cooperative shop. 09 Kebele.
2. **Kola Diba**: Nega Addis small retail shop. 02 Kebele.
3. **Addis Zemen**: Yizez Gebere small retail shop. 04 Kebele.
4. **Woreta**: kalkidane Ashegere small retail shop. 02 Kebele.
5. **Debre Tabor**: Abdrhamn Ali small retail shop. 03 Kebele.
6. **Dangila**: Mohammed Hamid small retail shop. 05 Kebele.

Wondwosen Bekele

Agriculture and Wetland Management Officer,  
NABU Project Office

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

**Contact:** Wondwosen.Bekele.NABU@gmail.com



## Multiple Actors Partnership for a join sustainable future of the Lake Tana Watershed... how does it work in practice?

### ***A testimonial from one of our partners at the Environment, Forest and Wildlife Protection and Development Authority***

Multiple-actors partnership is the new concept to our region. Thanks to NABU, we are using it to bring different actors of Lake Tana watershed around a table, for achieving sustainable development. Commonly participating actors are civil societies, public sectors, international developmental organizations, media, religious institutes, private sectors and academic or research institutions. Usually my institute, as one of the responsible regional government structure, coordinates various public sectors and some developmental organizations to conserve the natural resources.

In 2021, the Water for life MAP structure was established, and different stakeholders are being involved in implementing the partnership structure. My institute, as a member of Water for life-MAP structure of LTW, recognized the major advantages to have this partnership in order to speed up Lake Tana watershed sustainable development, and they are:



- It gives chance to discuss regularly among major stakeholders of the watershed
- It helps to minimize the duplication efforts among different stakeholders of LTW
- It increases the involvements of Regional higher officials and conservation of Lake Tana is becoming priority agenda of the regional government
- It helps to motivate the private sectors to conserve the natural resources
- It helps to share the experiences and information among major stakeholders
- It helps to develop agreed vision among stakeholders
- Kebele level partners are actively participating in conserving the resources
- It helps to avoid conflict of interest among different actors due to overlapping of duties and responsibilities



However, bringing those different stakeholders together is not easy, and sometimes it is not possible to meet regularly. The major reasons affecting the implementation of MAP is the current COVID-19 pandemic, and the political situation on the Northern parts of Ethiopia.



Finally, I would like thank you NABU for bring this new approach to save LTW, and to support the implementation of this new approach.



Mr. Belste Fetene

Deputy-Head of Environment, Forest and  
Wildlife Protection and Development Authority –  
MAP Board

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia





## Project's progress and updates

Since August 2019, NABU in collaboration with Regional State is implementing the project entitled “Water for Life - Partnership for a sustainable future of Lake Tana watershed, Ethiopia” funded by BMZ. The major components of this project are:

- Stakeholder mapping and capacity building to initiation committee
- Water for Life MAP – structure development,
- Capacity building to MAP actors (community, NGOs, CBO, scientific institutions),
- Establish working group & implement pilot activities,
- Support the current legislative processes for secure access to water resource,
- Establishment of a local NGO,
- Public relations and communication.

Due to the global COVID 19 pandemic and political instability in the northern part of the country, it was difficult at the beginning to implement project activities as per the project's schedule. Despite of all these, we have achieved the followings:

- MAP initiation committee established, committee members trained for 7 days, MAP structure including six working groups established and members in each structure are discussing regularly in different issues,
- 123 major Lake Tana Watershed stakeholders identified and mapped,
- 21339 MAP actors such community members, developmental and community based organization representatives, environment school club and scientific institution members were trained on project management, watershed management, invasive weed control and other issues related to natural resources conservation
- 410 hectares in 29 pilot degraded ecosystem sites in 27 Woredas of LTW have been rehabilitated,
- Water quality and areal spread and distribution of water hyacinth in Lake Tana Watershed have been monitored annually,
- The study to improve water treatment on the selected factories (Bahir Dar textile factory, Bahir Dar Tannery, Bahir Dar pipe factory) is started,
- Construction on roof water harvesting is under construction in 4 public institutes,
- Six retail shop owners are participating to promote reusable bags as one method of dry waste management to reduce plastic pollution
- To protect the resources of LTW, behaviour change campaign started such as distribution of printed materials, organize ToT training organized to 563 trainees and 16,224 male and 4266 female local community members attained awareness creation training at kebele level.



- Gap assessment was done on 9 proclamation & regulations Regional Legislative related in NRM and Livestock Development Agency drafted to amend the old fishery regulation,
- The process of fulfilling necessary documents to establish local developmental organization is started,
- To publicize project activity to wider stakeholders' project poster and leaflet in Amharic and English was printed and distributed. Project web page and logo were designed and used for project activity promotion. And also social media such as Facebook and Telegram are actively used for promotion.

In general, even though we are challenged with COVID-19 and political instability in the northern parts of the country, we have got very encouraging achievements as per project agreement and as per project implementation schedule.

Tadesse Adgo

Project coordinator, NABU Project Office

Bahir Dar, Ethiopia


**Contact:** Tadesse.Adgo.NABU@gmail.com




**We hope you have enjoyed this edition. For further contact, don't hesitate to write us on:**

✉ [Lake.Tana@NABU.de](mailto:Lake.Tana@NABU.de)

**Visit us on social media:**

 [Lake Tana Biosphere Reserve](#)

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**More information about the project:**

Water for Life Website: <https://en.nabu.de/topics/regional-development/water-for-life/index.html>

Lake Tana Biosphere Reserve Website: <https://www.laketana-biosphere.com/>



# WATER FOR LIFE

## **NABU – The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union**

Charitéstr. 3

10117 Berlin, Germany

International@NABU.de

www.en.NABU.de

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