



Water for Life Newsletter

February 2022

Conversion of NABU International to NABU Ethiopia – going local!

The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) has been active in Ethiopia since 2006 G.C. implementing various projects in Southwest Ethiopia, Oromia, and Amhara regions with a focus on biodiversity conservation, rehabilitation of degraded areas, livelihood improvement, biosphere reserve development, and capacity building.

Working with local Civil Society Organizations (CSO) in developing nations is an effective way to increase country ownership and promote sustainable development. It further strengthens local capacities, promotes local leadership, enhances local coordination, and strengthens local partnerships. In addition, these days supporting local CSOs in developing countries has been an important aspect of donors' (including BMZ) way of doing development. Therefore, it is time for the conversion of NABU international in Ethiopia to NABU Ethiopia through sustained capacity building and a long-term and strategic approach. Hence, NABU is devolving into a locally based CSO. To this end, NABU has hired a consultant to undertake internal and external environment analysis and to support the conversion process. The consultant has completed the assignment and submitted the reports.

NABU Ethiopia's local staff has received trainings as an important component of capacity building and the capacity building will continue after the conversion in identified core competencies.

As of this moment, preparatory works have been concluded and the application to the Authority for Civil Society Organizations will be submitted early this year. NABU's local staff has a vast amount of local knowledge, expertise, and capacity to take a project planning and implementation. Holistic capacity building takes time, expertise, and resources. Therefore, NABU international support will continue for the coming 5 to 7 years based on the strategic partnership agreement to be signed with NABU Ethiopia.

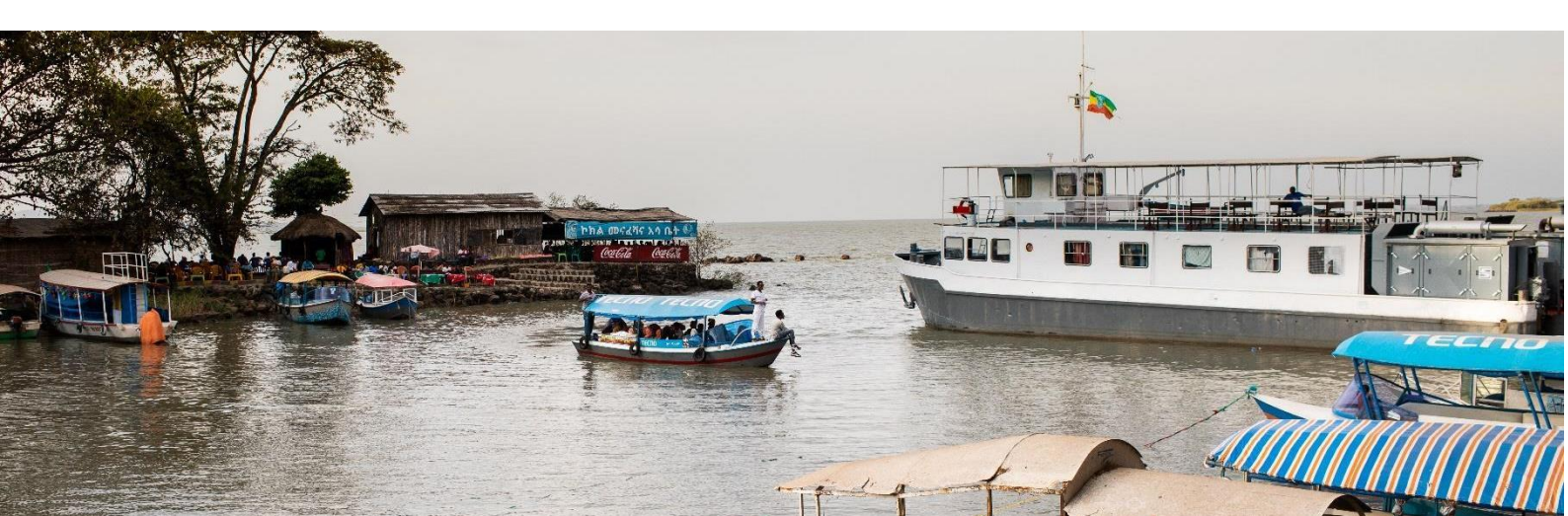
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Sustainable Business

The overall objective of these interventions is to increase the awareness on environmental-friendly business management to business companies along with supporting the implementation of water and environmentally friendly measures in the Lake Tana Watershed.

How is the activity organized?

The activity is organized in to three categories as follows:

I – Provide training for companies to increase their awareness level of environmental responsibility and sustainability.

A series of trainings will be organized to company owners, business representatives and stakeholders on the concepts of preserving the integrity of natural water bodies, environmentally friendly management, and the importance of sustainability. The training will be divided into 7 sessions and will address the sectors of flower and vegetable producing large-scale farms, hotel and tourism sector, tannery, textile, pipe and soft drinks producing factories, retail shops, farmers training centers, health clinics and living (condominium) sector and garages/car wash sector.

II- Availing micro project funds to institutions to improve their sustainability with environmentally friendly measures.

With the thematic and financial support from NABU, some institutions were selected to receive interventions to improve their environmental sustainability and minimize their impact on the

natural resources of the region.

➤ **Rainwater catchment systems:** To use our water resources consciously, we need to avoid pumping and extracting water from wells. Using rainwater harvesting we can contribute to preserve the natural resource. Therefore, NABU has purchased and installed 5 rainwater catchment tanks of 25.000L each in different institutions within the Lake Tana Watershed. Those are 3 schools, one health clinic and one farmer's training centre. The water collected will be used for toilets and gardening.

➤ **Markets:** It takes approximately 450 years for plastic to naturally decompose. That's why plastic bags should be avoided and replaced by sustainable alternatives. Six small retail shops were identified and supported by NABU to replace their plastic bags for reusable cloth ones. Those were made by local tailors, also supporting the local services. So far, a total of 2,741 reusable cloth bags were produced and distributed to customers.

➤ **Hotels:** Becoming green and sustainable is nowadays in the top priorities of leading hotels in the world. NABU will work together with a consulting company to advise and improve the sustainability of seven hotels in the region.

III- Industry

In 2022, NABU will start working together with three selected companies of the region (textile, pipe factory and tannery) to improve their sustainability and therefore protect the natural resources.

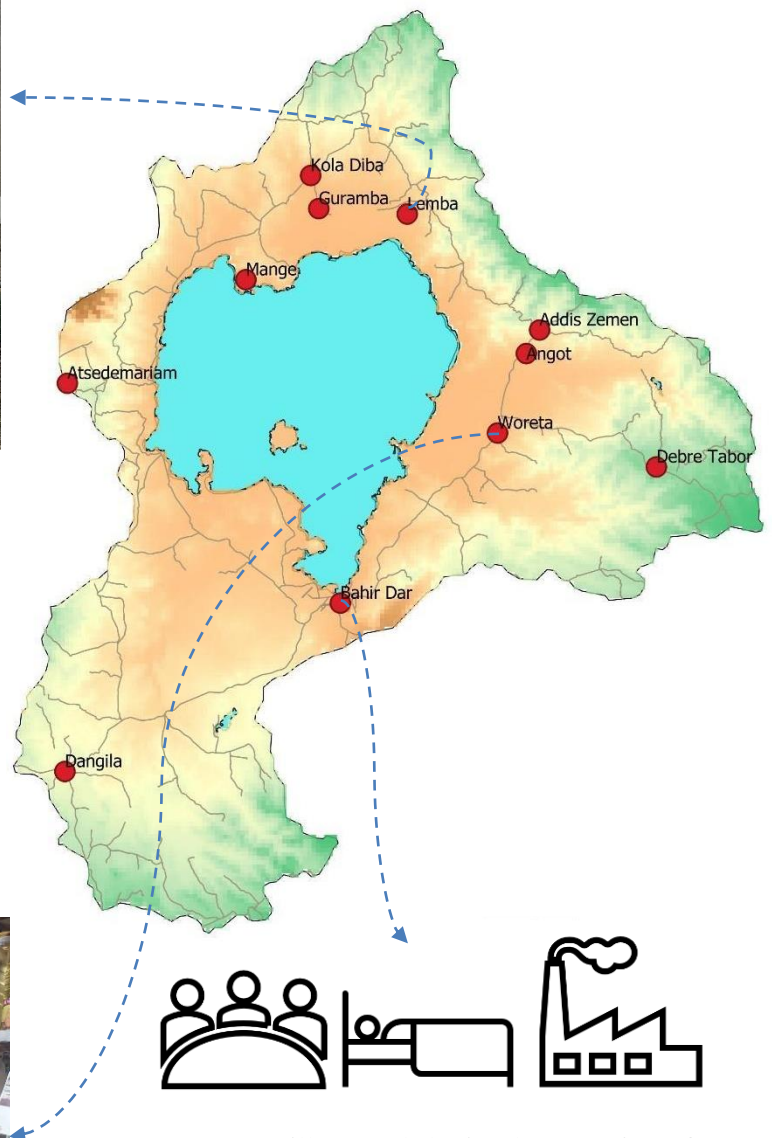


NABU supported the construction of 5 rooftop rainwater harvesting structures to 5 institutions in LTW (two primary schools – Lamba and Atsedemariam, one health centre - Guramba, one high school - Mange and one Farmer training center - Angot).

The picture above is the handover ceremony of one of the five institutes (Lamba primary school, in Gondar Zuria woreda).



The picture above is a retail shop in Woreta which is participating in the plastic bag activity. The blue bag was manufactured by local seamstresses. Other markets participating are in Gondar, Kola Diba, Addis Zemen, Debre Tabor and Dangila.



In 2022 NABU will expand the implementation of this project's activities. With a micro project funding budget, seven hotels and three industries in Bahir Dar will obtain financial and technical support to implement improvements on water and environmentally friendly measures and thereby decrease negative environmental impacts in the natural assets of the Lake Tana Watershed.

Lastly, seven rounds of trainings will be offered for over 138 participants from companies in the most different sectors acting in the region.

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Waste Management in Gondar and Bahir Dar

Waste is becoming one of the most talked about problems on environmental protection and is a worldwide issue. In the Lake Tana Watershed it is not different, and the combination of fast-growing population, the widespread use of plastic and other discardable products, and the lack of sustainable waste management practices in region of Lake Tana Watershed poses a threat to the ecosystem services of the region, and the livelihood of the communities. Therefore, as part of the WfL project, those issues are being tackled by a series of planned activities to link the collection and use concepts, to provide a better handling of the valuable materials, to address the adequate disposal of waste, and aiming to create additional sources of income for the population by the further processing of used materials.

How will NABU contribute with the waste management in the region?

Since the end of 2021 and throughout 2022, together with the Bahir Dar and the Gondar city administration offices and the waste collection associations, NABU has started to implement the selection of waste at the source in households, and the collection of valuable waste materials from the city's surroundings. With the collected materials, NABU will be providing technical and financial support for the further processing as follows:

Organic domestic waste → Compost preparation

The organic waste will be decayed under control, where they will break down naturally into a nutrient-rich fertilizer that helps gardens and crops grow. Not only it is important to transform this waste matter into a useful matter, but the organic fertilizer can replace chemical agricultural inputs, and therefore also preserve the public health.

Plastic Bottles Crushing companies → Recycled into plastic pellets

It takes approximately 450 years for plastic to naturally decompose. That's why plastic bottles shouldn't be disposed in the environment. With this approach, the collected used plastic bottles will be taken to processing companies, which will crush or press them. They will be sent to a recycling centre in Addis Ababa, where plastic shred will be processed, and sold to be used in the construction area, for example.

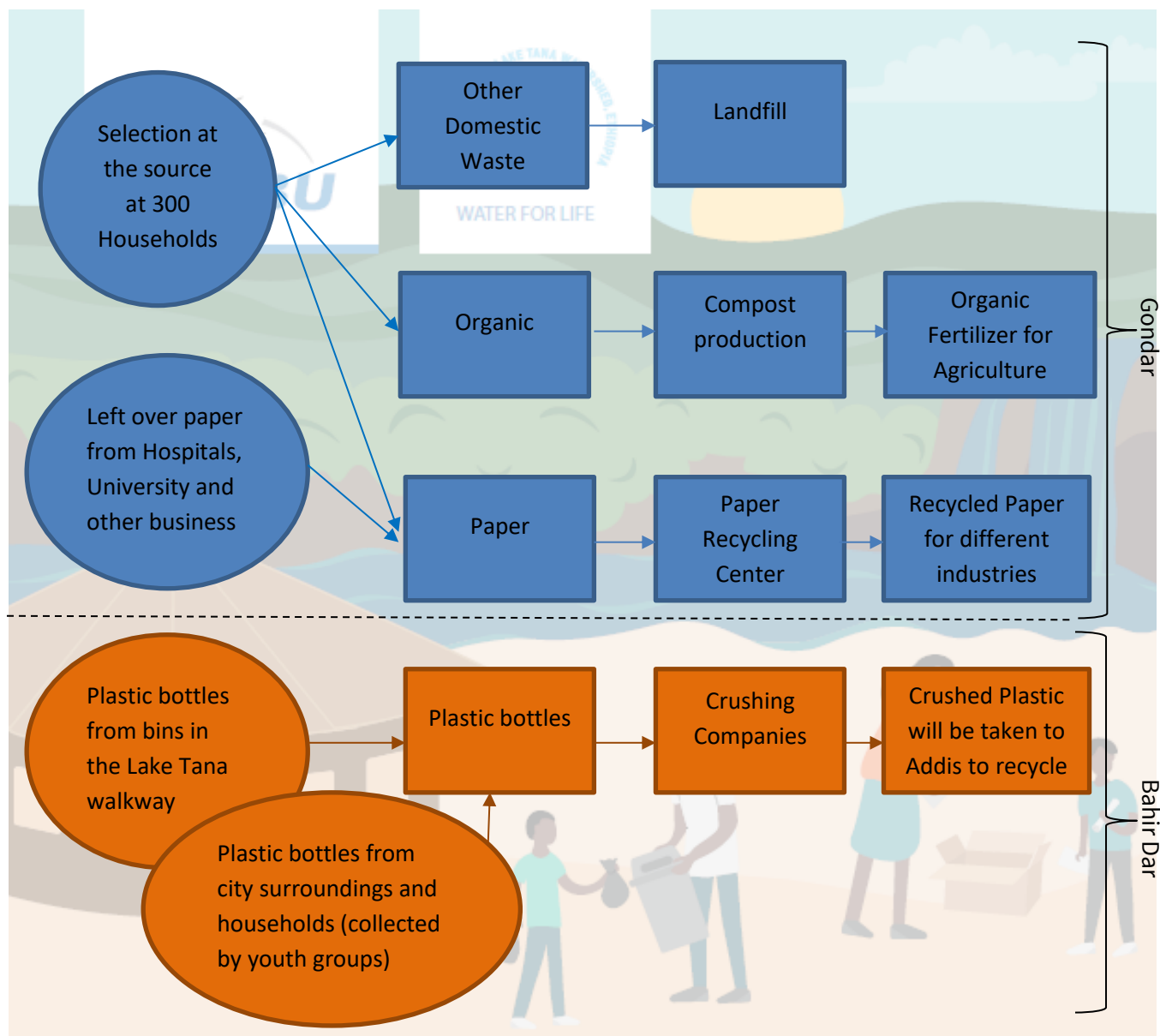
Used paper → New paper / handicrafts / products for catering industry

Paper is just as valuable as trees. The paper collected from the households, offices, university, and hospital will be processed into new products, such as bags, book markers, notebooks, products for the catering industry, among others, in the brand-new recycling centre in Gondar. This activity will support the creation of additional jobs in collection, separation, transport, processing, and marketing of recycled paper, and will prioritize the participation of women in the whole system.

Apart from those advantages, since there is no local production of paper goods for the catering industry in Gondar, the recycled products will replace those being imported and transported from other cities – increasing even more the sustainability of the product and generating new opportunities for the region!

The activities presented here are part of the Water for Life project, but the lessons learned from them shall enrich the knowledge of the communities not only in the present, but hopefully for many generations. The main goal behind this action is to show how valuable waste can be, and to provide knowledge and tools to turn something undesirable into a new source of income – while protecting the environment.

OUTLINE OF THE ACTIVITY:



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Project's progress and updates

Since the last newsletter, some major project's achievements that can be listed are the following:

- Over 410 Ha of degraded community lands were recovered
- Capacity building training for wider community is conducted in 429 Kebeles and 46,916 community members trained in natural resources management
- To evaluate the water quality and containment of water hyacinth, two annual studies of water quality and water hyacinth coverage on superficial water bodies were conducted and the results were shared with our project partners and during the annual assembly in April 2021
- A paper recycling centre is being established in Gondar city and will be managed by mostly women
- The plastic bottle crushing association is being assisted at Bahir Dar city in association with the city waste collection associations
- Reusable bags were introduced to avoid use of plastic bags in six towns in collaboration with local traders and Woreda office of Environment protection
- Five water tanks with 25 thousand litre each were installed to collect rainwater from the roof in five local institutions
- We assessed the current rules and regulations of natural resource management in the region to understand gaps and opportunities, and are currently working on improving the fisheries proclamation and introducing guidelines for the use of biosphere reserves in the region
- Exclusive flyers and booklets have been developed for the behaviour change and the waste management campaigns

Upcoming in 2022....

Besides the continuation of the activities that have already started in 2019, there are still some new ones that will start being implemented in 2022. Here is a short preview:

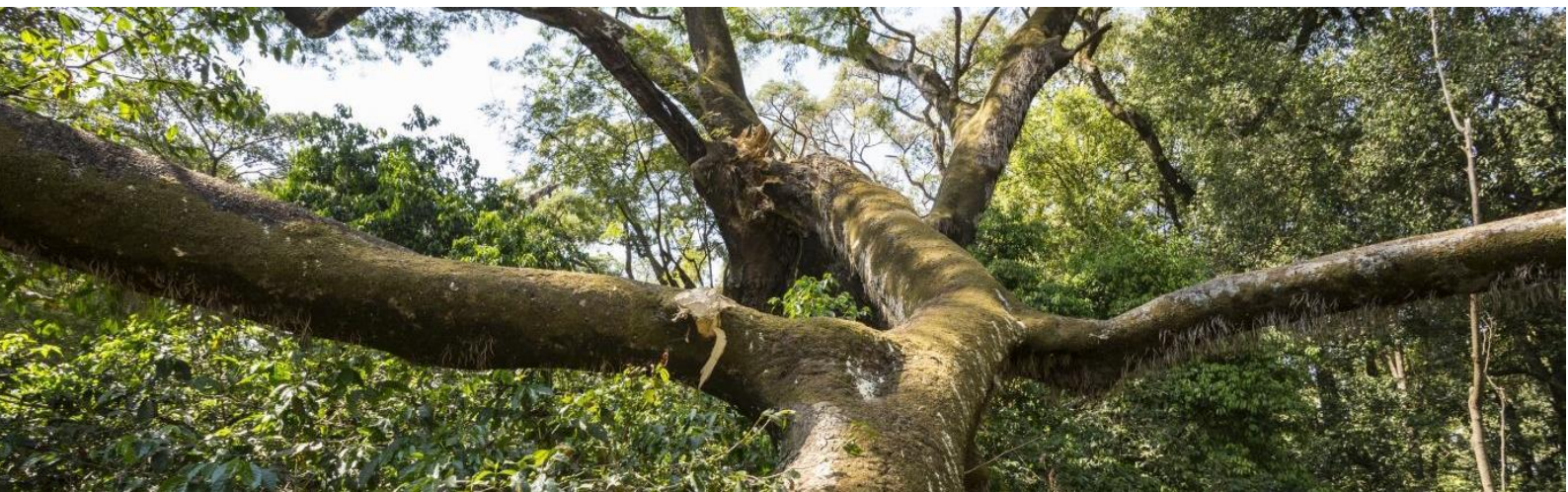
- Water hyacinth use as compost, as substrate for production of biogas and biochar and as source of material for recycled paper
- Upscaling of the waste management activities
- Television and radio broadcasting of the behaviour change campaign and other project's information
- Joint work with industries and university to improve sustainability of industrial processes
- Annual assembly in April

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

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Visit us on social media:

 [Lake Tana Biosphere Reserve](#)

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More information about the project and download of all project's newsletters in English and Amharic:

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

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