



Lake Tana Alliance Newsletter

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Lake Tana Alliance: a new phase

Since 2019, NABU Ethiopia has been implementing a **Multiple Stakeholder Partnership (MSP)** project called “Water for Life” in the Lake Tana Watershed. Since August 2023, a new phase of the MSP program has been approved by the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU) and the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), in which a new strategy will increase the diversity of participants and beneficiaries will be applied, among other activities.

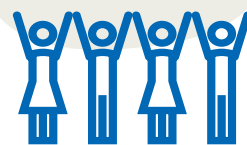
New strategy

NABU Ethiopia is thrilled to announce the new program strategy, designed to enhance the inclusivity and institutional strength of the MSP, formerly known as "Water for Life." This initiative aims to address critical issues such as gender equity, youth involvement, and the representation of disadvantaged sectors within the higher levels of the MSP governance structure. With the new phase, and following a participative meeting with board members, a new name was decided, and the partnership is now known as the “**Lake Tana Alliance.**”

Key elements of the strategy include:

- **Gender and Youth Inclusion:** Ensuring greater participation of women and young people, providing them with opportunities to contribute to decision-making processes and leadership roles.
- **Diversity and Representation:** Making concerted efforts to include minorities and disadvantaged sectors, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued in the MSP.
- **Sustainability and Financing:** Focusing on securing long-term financing and sustainability for the MSP, ensuring its long-term effectiveness and impact.
- **Institutionalisation and Independence:** Strengthening the institutional framework and autonomy of the MSP, fostering a resilient and independent partnership.
- **Identity Development:** Developing a strong identity for the MSP, complete with corresponding visualisation to enhance recognition and unity among stakeholders.

Institutionalised and
inclusive **MSP**



In line with the commitment to inclusivity and sustainability, the strategy aims to enhance the Lake Tana Biosphere Reserve's (LTBR) core functions, conserving biodiversity, promoting sustainable development, and implementing logistical processes for knowledge building and monitoring. The MSP will play a crucial role in integrating all sectors, including agriculture, forestry, wetland management, fisheries, and urban development, ensuring their collaborative efforts contribute to the prosperity of the Lake Tana region. We invite all stakeholders to engage actively in this new phase and contribute to the inclusive and sustainable development of the Lake Tana Watershed. Together, we can make a meaningful impact on the conservation and sustainable use of this vital ecosystem.



New activities of the program

Capacity development and mobilisation

Using the established MSP structure, **dialogue forums** are planned to bring all governance structure actors into regular exchange, ensuring information flow, capacity building, and knowledge sharing. Lectures at the Knowledge Management Centre in Bahir Dar will aim to involve new stakeholders, especially women and youth, fostering discussions on trending topics in a relaxed atmosphere.

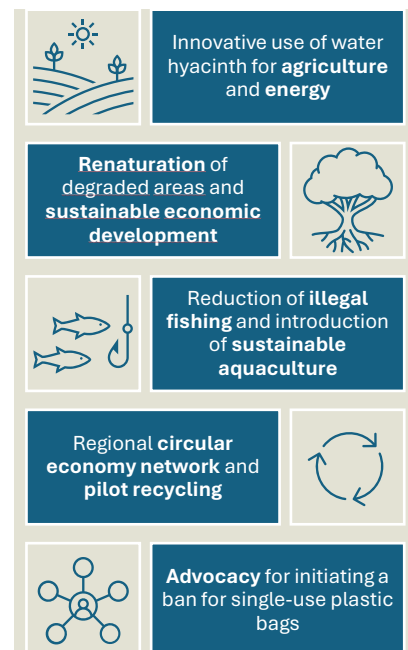
To build trust and foster meaningful participation, thereby increasing project ownership, a series of **People First Impact Method (P-FIM) training sessions for trainers** will be conducted. This will develop the capacities of development agents working directly with the communities, enabling them to listen sensitively to communities and understand how the MSP can contribute to adding value to their lives. The existing network of Kebele representatives will be utilized and strengthened, empowering women, youth, and other disadvantaged groups to take on more significant roles in implementing local activities. Based on this approach results, **tailored trainings** will be offered to these community groups, and an **exchange platform** will be established to consolidate their efforts.

Working Groups

A central element of the MSP are the three Working Groups (WGs), which play a crucial role in developing pilot activities and serve as vital connectors between various local actors. The objectives of implementing these activities are to address the region's most pressing challenges and to achieve tangible, positive change through various initiatives regarding environmental protection and conservation.

There are two WGs at district level: the **Resource Conservation** and the **Circular Economy Working Group**. These groups focus on preserving natural resources and promoting sustainable economic practices within their respective regions. To achieve that, activities such as sustainable aquaculture development, beekeeping in renatured areas, renaturation of degraded regions, paper and plastic recycling, compost production for organic agriculture and effluent treatment with artificial wetlands will be implemented in project region.

At the regional level, there is the **Advocacy Working Group**, which aims to influence policy and promote an initiative to ban single-use plastic bags. Each working group is dedicated to addressing key issues and spearheading pilot activities that align with their focus areas, but together they convene biannually to discuss progress, share insights, and strategize to form regional action committees with concepts for regional upscaling aiming that the LTBR will be a model region for stakeholder-based sustainability at national level with practical implementation models for the sustainability goals.





MSP new Governance Structure

Institutionalisation – what does this mean?

The MSP process will lead to the establishment of the Lake Tana Alliance (LTA) as an independent institution to support and facilitate the conservation and development related activities of the Lake Tana Biosphere Reserve. Upon completion of the required documents, The FDRE Authority for Civic Society Organization (ACSO) representative in the Amhara region will register the LTA. According to ACSO's guidelines, LTA governance structure will consist of a general assembly, board, auditors, and a manager with staff. The general assembly includes founders, board members, working group members, and honorary members.



Participants of the first Lake Tana Alliance board meeting, 28th June 2024

One of the novelties accompanying the institutionalization is the introduction of **honorary members**. This allows individuals, private sector institutions, academia, public sector organizations, and civil society organizations (CSOs) to contribute to the conservation of the LTBR environment both in kind and monetarily, based on pre-established criteria. Additionally, honorary members will have the opportunity to engage with high-level decision-makers in the regional government, thereby extending their influence to a broader audience. This will be essential for the future development of the MSP, and crucial for the sustainable management of the LTBR.

**Are you interested to
become a member? You
want to know more?**

Please do not hesitate to write us at
Lake.Tana@NABU.de .

We strongly encourage women to
participate and engage in the program and
will be happy to receive your request.

More information about the membership
criteria, possible contributions and future
plans will be available soon in the MSP
Website.

Information about the previous phase of
the program (Water for Life) and contacts:





Program status and next steps

Achievements August 2023 - July 2024

- **MAP Dialogue Structure**
 - A comprehensive strategy for the MSP is being developed.
 - Regular MSP meetings were conducted: two board meetings, district-level working group meetings, and regional-level working group meetings.
- **Capacity Development**
 - Dialogue forum on illegal fishing was held in April 2024, with 42 stakeholders.
 - Dialogue forum on dry waste management was held in June, with 28 participants.
- **Resource Conservation**
 - 5 ecosystem restoration sites were identified for renaturing, covering 150 hectares of degraded land.
 - A study to introduce sustainable pond aquaculture was conducted.
- **Circular Economy and Environmental Protection**
 - The process of establishing organic solid waste composting centres in Bahir Dar commenced.
 - Production of compost, biochar, and biogas from water hyacinth was initiated in Gondar Zuria Woreda, in collaboration with the University of Gondar.
 - A feasibility study for a paper recycling centre in Bahir Dar was conducted by an external consultant.
 - A plastic bottle recycling assessment was undertaken in Gondar City for establishing a recycling centre in partnership with the private sector.



Next steps until February 2025

- **MAP Dialogue Structure**
 - A workshop will be conducted in July 2024 to begin the restructuring of the MSP government structure and to collect input from partners and the local community to further develop the strategy.
 - MSP meetings will be held as scheduled (Board, Working Groups, if possible General assembly).
- **Capacity Development**
 - A series of Trainer of Trainers trainings on People First Impact Method (P-FIM) will take place in 2024.
 - Board members will get capacity development in MSP.
 - A student from a local university will have the opportunity to join the Bahir Dar office to learn about MSP and the environment protection activities done by NABU Ethiopia.
- **Resource Conservation**
 - The remaining ecosystem restoration sites will be selected with the community in 2024.
 - A pond for sustainable aquaculture will be built in 2024 with support from ARARI.
- **Circular Economy and Environmental Protection**
 - Organic waste composting centres will be established in five cities/towns around Bahir Dar.
 - The paper recycling centre in Bahir Dar will start being established.
 - NABU Ethiopia and a private enterprise will initiate the plan for establishing the plastic bottle recycling centre.





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The Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU)

Charitéstraße 3

10117 Berlin

Tel.: +49 (0)30.28 49 84-0

Fax.: +49 (0)30.28 49 84-20 00

NABU@NABU.de

www.NABU.de

Text

Beatriz Waldmann, Getinet Fetene

Design

Beatriz Waldmann

Photo Credits:

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