

**Global Nature Fund Press Release:**

**“Trasimeno Declaration“ bids farewell to the 12<sup>th</sup> international Living Lakes Conference. First Lakes Academy founded in Italy.**

**The consideration of culture and tradition in lake regions can contribute to the rescue of threatened lakes and their catchment areas.**

Radolfzell, 30. September 2008: The continuing worldwide destruction of lakes and wetlands can only be stopped through the combined efforts of politics, science and society. Here, cultural values and the importance of water bodies play a crucial role. Due to their historical, spiritual and aesthetic characteristics, lakes and their catchment areas are extremely important for the culture and future of mankind. The massive environmental problems caused over centuries by the incorrect management of lakes and the aftermath of climate change must be addressed urgently. The participants pointed this out in the **Trasimeno Declaration** at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> Living Lakes Conference. From the 22 to 26 September around 250 participants from 30 nations discussed the cultural and spiritual relevance of lakes and wetlands and how these values can be incorporated in the protection of lakes. As an example some statements from the participants:

- The combination of traditional knowledge of indigenous people with new technologies can contribute to maintain the cultural values of lakes.
- Water is the source of life for humans and nature and is the main focus of many cultural traditions. The religious and spiritual relevance of water bodies contributes decisively to the conservation of lake landscapes and must be represented more.

The complete Trasimeno Declaration has been posted on the Global Nature Fund's website: [www.globalnature.org/12LL-Conference](http://www.globalnature.org/12LL-Conference). At the 12<sup>th</sup> Living Lakes Conference, Laguna de Rocha, the 55<sup>th</sup> member of the international Living Lakes Network was accepted. The 7,200 ha large lake situated in Uruguay is an important nature reserve for birds and shares the problem of many other lakes globally. Amongst other things, the relatively shallow lake suffers from a lack of water, pollution and over-fertilisation.

During the conference the initiative of founding a Living Lakes Academy was presented to the public – a collective project of the region Umbria, the Province Perugia, the Association of the Local Governments of Comunità Montana

Trasimeno-Teveré and the Italian organization for the protection of the environment Legambiente in collaboration with Living Lakes and the Global Nature Fund.

The idea of the academy is to form an intersection between science and practical applications in lake protection. The main focus of the programmes and training courses will be the utilisation of research results, innovative environmental technologies and management methods. The offer addresses all groups that are directly involved in the development of lake regions, amongst others local and regional authorities, farmers, fishermen, tourism officers and environmental organisations.

Marion Hammerl, president of the Global Nature Fund, said: "The Lakes Academy should encourage action, as time is running out! The practical work on the ground is the strength of the Living Lakes Partners and via the international network we have been able to realize diverse approaches, but also halt activities that have not proven their worth. Scientific and technical insights will form the fundamental background for the programmes. However, also the social and historical values shall contribute to the improved management of the lake regions." Fiorello Primi, coordinator of Living Lakes Italy, ended the announcement with the words: "Let us finally move from slow reactions to the problems of the lake regions to anticipatory actions for the well-being of lakes and the inhabitants their cultural landscapes."

The Living Lakes Network was founded in 1998 by the environmental foundation Global Nature Fund. In the tenth year since its establishment, over 70 environmental organizations work together at 55 lakes worldwide. The Living Lakes Network is supported by global enterprises such as C&A, Daimler, Lufthansa, T-Mobile, Ziemann, Sika and Osram.

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