



Ibaraki Kasumigaura Declaration 2018

Having expressed and exchanged our views on many water issues at various international conferences, including past World Lake Conferences, we have worked to mobilize appropriate actions around the world to address a range of water issues, including water purification, ecosystem recovery and conservation, climate change, and sustainable water use.

Furthermore, with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) having been adopted at the United Nations Summit in 2015, countries around the world have moved to initiate positive efforts aimed at achieving those goals.

Nevertheless, in the SDGs and in water-related global fora, reference to lakes and other lentic waters around the world has been quite limited and very inadequate. The environmental quality of many lakes and other lentic water systems continues to deteriorate, and their aquatic biodiversity is being seriously impaired because of anthropogenic pressures such as increased pollution loads, socioeconomic development of lakes and their basins, and global climate change. Once seriously degraded, restoring a lake environment to its former condition is difficult and, as a result, the range and magnitude of ecosystem services originally provided by lakes diminishes markedly.

Thus, we the participants at the 17th World Lake Conference must reaffirm that lakes and other lentic waters are critically important water environments on our planet, and should be mainstreamed in upcoming United Nations and other major international fora on water. Accordingly, we must strive to provide our experience and wisdom so that humans and lakes may interact in a positive manner in order that humanity will be able to perpetually benefit from the blessings provided by lakes and their ecosystem services, while also maintaining the health of lake environments.

Extensive discussion has taken place at this 17th World Lake Conference on the theme, “*Harmonious Coexistence of Humans and Lakes: Toward Sustainable Ecosystem Services.*” In consideration of these discussions and the views expressed at the satellite venues during side events prior to the Conference, and based on the overriding principles of “sharing the benefits of ecosystem services fairly and equitably” and “utilizing ecosystem services sustainably,” we participants unanimously declare the following:

1. Share the benefits of ecosystem services fairly and equitably

Lake ecosystem services are grouped into four important categories, including *supporting*



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services that include recycling of water and nutrients, as well as maintenance of biodiversity; *provisioning services* that provide water resources necessary for life, agriculture, fisheries, and industrial use; *regulating services* such as flood control and natural purification functions; and *cultural services* that include religious beliefs, art, ethnic historical property, food culture, wild bird habitats, water sports and fishing.

The previous balance among these ecosystem service components is no longer in balance, with a wide range of problems resulting as a consequence of this imbalance.

In order to maintain the balance between ecosystem services, and to ensure these services are shared fairly and equitably, all those involved, including basin residents, farmers and fishermen, and business operators, must understand the impacts their activities have on the environment and also must be aware of their own responsibilities and assume their fair share of the burden and expenses in order to minimize the impacts. Moreover, governments must select and implement measures that are truly effective in cooperation with all parties benefitting from lake ecosystem services, including periodically reviewing and verifying the effects of those measures, before utilizing the outcomes of such reviews in developing or implementing new measures. To this end, it is essential for basin residents, farmers and fishermen, business operators, government employees, citizen groups, researchers and others to build and enhance effective partnerships focusing on this goal.

In regions facing numerous challenges such as population growth, poverty and political instability, it is not easy for ecosystem services to be shared fairly and equitably. Therefore, countries must promote international collaboration, such as strengthening the provision of financial, institutional or technological information and support, while also considering the useful role of indigenous peoples and community residents. In addition, efforts must be directed to ensuring stakeholders from different national governments, local governments and upstream and downstream districts cooperate with each other, and share information on relevant issues and solutions from their respective lake basins.

Particularly in terms of integrated lake basin initiatives, in addition to the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) approaches currently being promoted worldwide, it is important to promote and enhance Integrated Lake Basin Management (ILBM) as a guideline for facilitating the gradual and continuous assessment, restoration and improvement of ecosystem services in lake environments.



2. Utilize ecosystem services sustainably

Recognizing that lake ecosystem services comprise various forms of capital, including natural capital and human capital, and that these forms of capital are organically interconnected and change according to the needs and circumstances of the times, we must endeavor to ensure the health of lakes and other lentic water systems in order to ensure the next generation also can share their ecosystem services.

For natural capital to be handed down, we must first maintain the balance between respective ecosystem services. Accordingly, it is important to sort out the issues and information related to lake environments and for all stakeholders, including basin residents, farmers and fishermen, and business operators, to discuss and develop a common compatible vision for the future of lake basins based on scientific and socioeconomic lake assessments conducted globally. Furthermore, we must also clarify the causes of the declines in natural capital and restore it by making full use of the knowledge and technology learned at this Conference, and by efficiently and scientifically accumulating and analyzing monitoring data regarding the environment and biota of lakes and their basins.

To increase human capital, educational institutions, as well as basin residents, farmers and fishermen, business operators, government employees and other relevant stakeholders, etc., must cooperate and collaborate to nurture competency in solving international problems that is derived from a local perspective, in anticipation of a sustainable society. This includes taking advantage of learning programs that incorporate the traditional wisdom of local communities, which are designed for all generations ranging from children to adults, to learn about lakes and their issues. To this end, sessions devoted solely to children and youth were held at this World Lake Conference. In addition to making presentations on their prolific activities, there was a lively exchange of opinions. A major recommendation was to value “perception” to influence people’s mindset, “collaboration” to expand the network of friends, and “participation” to pursue continuous activities for environmental conservation. Recognizing that children are also an important partner for sharing the benefits of ecosystem services fairly and equitably, we must respect the autonomy and independence of this next generation, paying careful attention to the future they envision, as well as the warnings they give to our present generation.

On the other hand, the risk of natural disasters attributable to global climate change and competition among water users have become urgent issues for lake basins and their stakeholders. Recognizing that adaptation to climate change is an inevitable part of lake



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management, we must endeavor to maximize the inherent ability of lake ecosystems to adapt to climate change.

Recognizing that ecosystem services derived from lakes, including local history and culture, are rare assets of that region, we must take pride in them, and strive to maintain and develop them, and well as maintaining the balance between our use of current ecosystem services, and ensuring the next generations also can fairly and equitably enjoy these services!