

PROJECT PROGRESS UPDATE (February 2009)

Demonstration Project: Burdur Gölü, Turkey

Prepared by the WOW Project Coordination Unit (PCU)
February 2009

The project team in Burdur is actively working towards achieving the project's objectives. Since its establishment in 2007 by Doga Dernegi, the project team is attracting more and more volunteers. The foundation for the environmental education programme for children (6-11 ages) around Lake Burdur has been prepared. Several meetings, workshops and field trips have been carried out with teachers, local officers of the Ministry of National Education, volunteers, bird watchers and university staff, generating high levels of interest and support at a local level.

The next step is the implementation of the programme in the four primary schools situated around the lake that have been selected for a pilot project. To support the implementation of the environmental education programme, the project team and its helpful volunteers have developed several activities. One of these is an art exhibition entitled "Lake Burdur and Us", which shows over 200 pictures by students from more than 15 different schools. The accompanying education bag, a special part of the education programme, is also ready to be used. The handy bag includes specially designed educational materials such as a lake Burdur game that illustrates the importance and problems of the lake, 'Species Cards' based on waterbirds that reside in and around the lake, a map of lake Burdur and its surroundings, a guideline for teachers, a CD with information and pictures of the lake and its surroundings, and a story on the White-Headed Duck that explains the importance of wetlands (especially Lake Burdur) for waterbirds.

Local schools around Lake Burdur will, in future, be able to use the current bird watching tower as a nature study centre, and will be equipped as a visitor centre. The newly designed information boards will inform visitors about the lake and its species. In the meantime, implementation of the proposed nature park close to the bird watching tower continues.

Progress on developing a long-term monitoring programme began directly with the start of the demonstration project. The capacity of the Burdur Birdwatching Group was increased by field trips, waterbird counts, meetings, and the initiation of a special online group for birdwatchers in Burdur, which already has 110 active members. A monitoring network of Lake Burdur is now established, and is currently developing a special Lake Burdur Monitoring Committee.

An initial socio-economic survey that was carried out by the lake's inhabitants showed the need for management around Burdur Ramsar site, and in November 2008, national authorities approved a Ramsar management plan. It is wonderful to see how project activities and the team played such an important role in voicing the need for this plan. In addition, the demonstration project has generated considerable media attention. Local television, project news on websites, and a mass of articles in several local newspapers.

Due to all these efforts, and not forgetting festivals like the Lake Burdur festival and World Wetlands Day Burdur celebration, all stakeholders are already showing more interest towards the lake. Local authorities have also begun to organize information panels about the lake and waterside activities, in order to focus greater attention towards the importance of the lake's conservation.

This report was prepared by the WOW Project Coordination Unit (PCU) and is based on project reporting documentation and personal accounts made during visits to the WOW Demonstration Site.

For more information please visit the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) Project Website:
www.wingsoverwetlands.org

Or contact: info@wingsoverwetlands.org