

IBA CODE: MN035**IBA NAME:** KHOVSGOL LAKE**Aimag(s):** KHOVSGOL **Criteria:** A1, A4i **Area:** 380,212 ha
Coordinates: 50°32'N 100°20'E **Altitude:** 1,645-2,094 m

Protection status

Fully protected by Khovsgol Lake National Park

Site description

Khovsgol Lake is a beautiful freshwater lake, fed by many in-flowing rivers and drained by a single outlet, Eg River, which flows into the Selenge tributary of Lake Baikal. The lake is frozen from late November until May. The high mountains of Bayan, Khoridol Saridag and Munkh Saridag rise from the northwestern shores of the lake. There are a lot of cliffs, bays, islands and peninsulas along the shore, and the lake also contains a number of islands, such as Dalain Khuis, Modon Khuis, Khadan Khuis and Baga Khuis. Out of these, Dalain Khuis is the largest and is covered by forest. There are forests of Siberian Larch and cedar in the surrounding area. There are two small settlements, Khankh and Khatgal, on the southern and northern shores of the lake, respectively. In recent years, recreation, tourism and sport fishing have increased rapidly, and the lake has become a popular destination for foreign tourists. Pressures include habitat degradation due to overgrazing, and drying out due to a warmer climate. There is also over-fishing, and an accumulation of waste in tourist areas. There are number of motor and jet boats being used for scientific research, tourism, cargo and human transportation purposes, which result in disturbance and water pollution. A phosphorite deposit, discovered in the late 1980s, has led to intensive prospecting, resulting in some damage to the area. Wastewater leakages from wool processing factories and oil tanks are also polluting the lake.

Importance for birds

Globally Threatened species occurring at the site are Swan Goose *Anser cygnoides* (EN), Baikal Teal *Anas formosa* (VU), Pallas's Fish-eagle *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* (VU), Eastern Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* (VU), Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* (VU), Hooded Crane *Grus monacha* (VU) and Great Bustard *Otis tarda* (VU). The site supports at least 1% of the flyway populations of Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*, Bar-headed Goose *Anser indicus*, Ruddy Shelduck *Tadorna ferruginea*, Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* and Common Merganser *Mergus merganser*.

Importance for other fauna and flora

Some mammals can be found in nearby mountains, including European Elk *Alces alces*, Siberian Musk Deer



Moschus moschiferus (VU), Eurasian Lynx *Lynx lynx* and Stone Marten *Martes foina*. Diversity of invertebrates, especially insects, is rich and there are many rare species present in the lake.



Photo: N. Tseveenmyadag