

**Lake Baikal's Selenga River Delta:
Biodiversity, Conservation, And Sustainable Development**
Abstract

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The Selenga River is the main inflow (50% of the total) of the largest, deepest, and oldest lake in the world – Lake Baikal. The Selenga (or... It) brings 3.662 millions tons of sediment per year into Lake Baikal; as a result, a classic delta has been formed. There are two special features of the Selenga Delta: its intercontinental location and the fact that it flows into a freshwater lake. The sediments at the bottom of Lake Baikal have been accumulating over the past 20-25 million years and reach a depth of 7-8 km; the region also has unusually high seismic activity.

The Selenga Delta harbors a wide variety of landscapes; this creates a unique environment with a very high biological potential. A critical feature is that the Selenga Delta functions as a biological filter for various pollutants.

In our presentation the following topics are highlighted:

- The biodiversity of the delta's wetlands;
- The substances and energy transformation in the delta ecosystems, biological processes which purify the water, and the modeling of different processes in the delta's wetlands;
- General methods which could be used to preserve the ecosystem, including the expansion of protected areas;
- The Maintenance of existing intensive use managed areas and the development of new ones;
- The creation of policies supporting the federal law "On Protection of Lake Baikal";
- The preservation of the ecosystems of Lake Baikal as a World Heritage Site and the sustainable development of the "Baikal Natural Territory".