



International Conference on Lake Baikal

«Powerful thoughts for the benefit of lake Baikal»

Irkutsk Region, Listvyanka, August 1st, 2024

Situated in south-east Siberia, Russia, the 3.15-million-ha Lake Baikal is the oldest and deepest (1,700 m) lake in the world. Home to more than 2,000 species and animals, Lake Baikal contains 20 percent of the entire planet's fresh water. In 1996, Baikal was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.



In 2010, experienced spiritual teachers of Raja Yoga, Sudha Rani Gupta and Dr. Vijay Kumar, visited Baikal for the first time. At that time, in 2010, after meditating at Baikal, Didi Sudha said: *"When we meditated on the shore of the lake, we felt that even the waves of Baikal became calm. We believe and are deeply convinced that it is human consciousness that influences the state of nature."*

Fourteen years later, the Center for Spiritual Development, Moscow and the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Center", Irkutsk, as part of the Brahma Kumaris environment initiative, held the international conference «Powerful thoughts for the benefit of lake Baikal» at the Baikal Museum of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Listvyanka urban settlement. The conference was led by Tatyana Shakhnovskaya, coordinator of programs.



The conference featured eight presentations from specialists in various fields who came from different cities in Russia, as well as from India and Mongolia. During the conference, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and receive detailed answers. Visitors and museum guests, who had come for a tour, were also able to participate in the discussions held in the museum's auditorium, which barely accommodated all those interested.



Dr. Vijay Kumar welcomed the conference participants. He offered important guidance on our responsibility for nature and the need to improve the world for the better.



The Brahma Kumaris Ecological Initiative, which fully contributes to such changes, was presented by Irina Lemberg, coordinator of the green activities. When asked which three main virtues contribute to fostering a respectful attitude towards nature, she responded that they are purity in all aspects of life, compassion for all living things, and respect for Mother Earth.

As part of the "**Ecology and Spirituality**" initiative, Sudha Rani Gupta, General Director of the Center for Spiritual Development, spoke about the spiritual aspects of the ecology of consciousness. She touched on important questions about our lifestyle and way of thinking, and at the end of her presentation, she offered a practical exercise — meditation — that allowed everyone to experience their spiritual nature and the impact of pure thoughts on the atmosphere.

Didi Sudha also gave an example of research on the power of thought in organic farming, citing the Brahma Kumaris project in Tapovan, India, where alongside eco-friendly farming techniques, meditation is used to help grow high-quality vegetables, fruits, and even medicinal herbs. Her report was illustrated with an inspiring video.

On the scientific side, Elena Kuzevanova, PhD in Biological Sciences, honored ecologist of the Irkutsk region, winner of the All-Russian "Knowledge Society" competition for "Ecology Educator of the Year 2021," and laureate of the National Environmental Award "Eco-World," presented an in-depth report. She focused on Baikal's problems and possible solutions.



Sabid Akhmaturov, PhD in Medicine and a psychiatrist, highlighted the role of nature in healing those with alcohol and drug dependencies. He shared how medical practitioners help patients through eco-practices.

Anna Dudchenko, a specialist in economics and law from Moscow, provided interesting historical facts about the development of ecology as a science and discussed the legal aspects and the role of the state in solving environmental problems.



Among the speakers from the business sector was Pavel Khoroshutin, General Director of "Agra-ra" JSC and Director of the "Ideal Technologies" Center for Scientific Psychology. His presentation emphasized the need to perceive environmental issues objectively, without their catastrophization or euphoria, that is, in a balanced manner, without exaggerating or belittling the role of the human factor, among other things.

From the educational sphere, Inna Kim, an eco-teacher from the "Kirillica" School at the Russian Science and Culture Center in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, gave a motivational and dynamic presentation. She shared her experience in using various teaching methods to foster environmental awareness in children, who later passed on this knowledge to their parents.



All speakers were awarded certificates.



As part of the initiative, special leaflets and bags were developed for spreading information, and each participant received a commemorative gift.



Our contribution to the preservation of Lake Baikal and nature in general may seem insignificant, but the event's participants were convinced of how valuable every thought is in creating a clean atmosphere, pure consciousness, and a pure environment.

Link to photos https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JvKbl8tf0ou_hO_NXx_6ll8s86UvA6zt?usp=share_link