

# China to release pollution-fighting fish in lake

23 February 2010



Green and silver carp are released into the Taihu Lake in Suzhou, eastern China's Jiangsu province. Authorities in the region have said they will release 20 million algae-eating fish into one of the nation's most scenic lakes that has been ravaged by pollution.

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Taihu Lake, which straddles Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces, has been severely polluted by sewage as well as industrial and [agricultural waste](#), triggering a blue-green algae plague.

Authorities started using fish to try to clean up the lake in February last year when they released 10 million mostly green and silver carp into the water, after the algae tainted the drinking supply of millions of residents.

Over the next few days, around 20 million more algae-eating fish will be released into the water, the Taihu Lake Fisheries Management Committee

said in a statement Monday.

The campaign, funded by the government and public donations, cost a total of 8.6 million yuan (1.3 million dollars), according to the statement.

A silver carp can consume 50 kilogrammes (110 pounds) of algae and other [plankton](#) in its lifetime while gaining only one kilogramme in weight, authorities have said.

Millions of algae-eating fish have been used in the past to clean up Taihu and other lakes, with previous efforts hailed as a boon for the local [fishing industry](#) despite concerns over consumption of fish that have feasted on toxins.

[Algae blooms](#), which are common on freshwater lakes in China, are chiefly caused by the presence of untreated sewage containing high concentrations of nitrogen, a main ingredient in [detergents](#) and fertilisers.

China's environment has suffered severely amid the nation's breakneck economic growth over the past three decades.

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APA citation: China to release pollution-fighting fish in lake (2010, February 23) retrieved 26 September 2021 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-02-china-pollution-fighting-fish-lake.html>

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