

Lake Tota

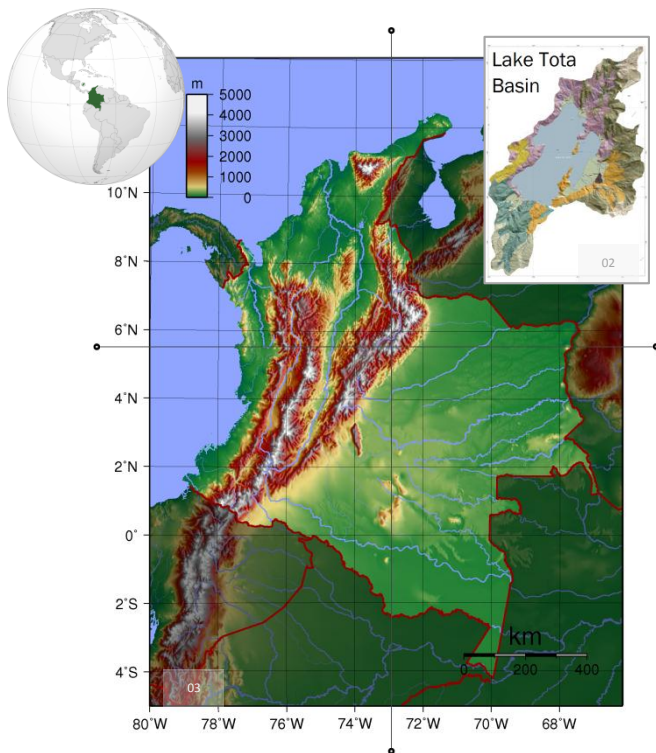
Colombia

– The lake in the clouds –



A tropical high-Andean lake, the biggest in Colombia (6k Ha, with 44% of natural-lakes water volume), its basin goes from 3015 (water level) to 3800 m high. It is water fed from *páramos*, a worldwide unique ecosystem.

Its outflow feeds both Orinoco and Magdalena river basins. It is an IBA (Important Bird Area) site, and easily meets 5 (out of 9) Ramsar criteria to be designated as such (although not a Ramsar site... yet!). 4 towns share its basin; its population is 22k people, and it provides water for consumption of 350k people downstream.



Lake Tota received in 2012 the World Wetland Network (WWN) Grey Globe Award, for being considered a wetland of international importance under threat.



Lake Tota has reports of 145 bird species (30% migratory), in small populations, 12 of them are endemic (3 of these under IUCN red list – like *Cistothorus apolinari* on photo).



Lake Tota's main activity is bulb onion farming (it supplies 70% of country's consumption). It is also related to main factors of lake's threat: unwise use.

A white sand beach is one of Lake Tota's main touristic attractions.



Páramos on Lake Tota basin highest-land are its major water source.



Fundación Montecito
Sogamoso (Colombia)

Working in pro of Andean mounts and wetlands.
We are up front in civil society actions pro Lake Tota, since 2010.
Our contributions to Lake Tota, can be seen here: bit.ly/ft-fm

Website: fundacionmontecito.org

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