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"The Slow Death of an Ethiopian Lake"

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I first had the opportunity to visit Lake Ziway when I studied biology as an undergraduate at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, in the mid-1990s. Locals fished the lake, and it served as a source of water for the residents of the nearby town, Batu, formerly known as Ziway. Back then, no investment projects had begun in the lake area. The waterfront was covered in acacia vegetation, making it nearly impossible to see from a distance.

When I returned to the area in 2012, the vegetation around the lake had disappeared. The Meki River, which feeds into Lake Ziway, had experienced a drastically reduced flow and occasionally ran dry. The lake had receded from where it was in the 1990s, and the retreated area had been turned into farmland. Fifteen years after my first visit, Ziway was ringed by flower farms, resort hotels, and irrigated land. (From the article)

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