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Hunting is popular in autumn and early spring when many thousands of migrant waterbirds visit the Selenga Delta to replenish their body reserves. This probably has an impact on breeding species, including Black-tailed Godwits, mainly because of the disturbance it entails. In the Kabanskyy Zakaznik reserve (Fig. 1), however, hunting, timber cutting and the collection of food plants is prohibited. The reserve covers 12,100 ha (27% of the whole delta), but it is hard for the small staff of conservation officers to control it adequately. A proposed extension of the reserve to include the entire central and outer delta (to 60% of the total delta area) would create a sufficient area for the protection and conservation of a wide variety of bird species including Black-tailed Godwits. However, if this is to be effective, a further expansion of the conservation staff and improvement of their equipment to enforce the rules in the reserve will be needed. Financial support from international institutions like UNEP, UNESCO, WWF and Wetlands International is therefore urgently needed to ensure a sustainable future for the birds of the Selenga Delta and Lake Baikal.

## Conservation

Human induced threats to breeding Black-tailed Godwits in the Selenga Delta are trampling of nests by grazing livestock, destruction of nests during hay harvesting and other agricultural activities. Almost 25% of the delta is used for agricultural purposes like grazing and hay cutting. Hay making is mainly confined to the vicinity of settlements, but grazing of horses is widespread over the inner and central delta. However, our observations indicate that trampling of nests by cattle or horses is only a minor cause of nest failure because of the wet and muddy habitat that most waders prefer and the small numbers of livestock found in these areas. However, we found some Marsh Sandpiper nests on a track that had been trampled. Other human activities in the delta include commercial and sport fishing, Muskrat *Ondatra zibethicus* trapping (in September), and waterbird hunting in spring and autumn and recreation close to settlements, but it is not thought that these have any significant impact on the godwit population.

## THREATS AND CONSERVATION

inconsistent with our observation that there were more nests in the wetter habitat.