

## Lake Maggiore has never been so low since 1942

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**40 centimeters and a half below the hydrometric zero:** this is the level of Lake Maggiore registered on Monday morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> December, the lowest ever reached in this period (photo by Luca Leone).

The low-pressure area that had been announced for the weekend, but that never came, made the level of Lake Maggiore even lower, reaching this way **the lowest level of the period registered since 1942**, when the official measurements began.

This is a real emergency for a lake that has been experiencing a period of drought that has been going on for years. This is emblematic as **the average level of the second biggest lake in Italy should be 106 centimeters above zero in this period**. That is to say almost one meter and a half higher than it is now. This is a matter of centimeters that equals billions of liters. In fact, every centimeter of the lake contains 2 billion liters of water, **which means that almost 300 billion are lacking**.

However, in the next days the situation might get even worse, becoming uncontrollable. The regulation system of the water that leaves the lake and enters the river Ticino can only work as long as the level does not decrease below quota -50 centimeters. **Once this limit is reached it will not be possible to regulate in any way the level of the lake, with enormous risks both for the lake and Ticino**. Even today just a third of the normal amount of water is entering the second longest river in Italy, and if this limit is reached the river Ticino will risk becoming completely dry.

di Translated by Carraro & Tremolada (Reviewed by Prof. Robert Clarke)

