



Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, Bau und Reaktorsicherheit, 11055 Berlin

## Statement on the occasion of World Migratory Bird Day 2014

**Dr. Barbara Hendricks**  
Bundesministerin  
Mitglied des Deutschen Bundestages

TEL +49 3018 305-2000

FAX +49 3018 305-2046

maileingang@bmub.bund.de

www.bmub.bund.de

Berlin, 09.05.2014

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank CMS, AEWA and all the other UN organisations involved in organising the World Migratory Bird Day. This year's theme is Destination Flyways - Migratory Birds and Tourism. In cooperation with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), this day will be dedicated to linking the conservation of migratory birds with the promotion of tourism - a topic with many fascinating aspects.

Sustainable tourism in harmony with nature and landscape that takes into consideration resource efficiency and climate action allows us to experience natural wonders in a way that helps preserve our natural heritage for future generations, and it offers an important economic basis for local populations.

The **Destination Flyway Project** aims to contribute to the promotion of sustainable tourism and local added value. Plans for this project include en-



Seite 2

ensuring a high level of protection for sensitive ecosystems along migration routes through several countries. Environmentally friendly tourism options for bird watching will be developed and enhanced in a cooperation of several important international organisations such as CMS, AEWA and UN-WTO, all located in Bonn, and other organisations dealing with the conservation of biodiversity including the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It also makes an active contribution to the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity from 2011 to 2020.

We are experiencing a wonderful spring in our little corner of the world. Listening to the songs of the redstarts, old world warblers and leaf warblers that have returned from their wintering grounds is a particular pleasure for bird lovers this time of year. I am convinced that the many events organised on the occasion of the World Migratory Bird Day will produce many more migratory bird enthusiasts.

One goal of the World Migratory Bird Day is to remind us all that the birds face many hazards and need our help. Our data for Germany paint a mixed picture. There is the good news that the situation of a number of migratory birds species is improving. For example, the chances of being able to observe the colorful bee-eater, a relative of the kingfisher, are getting better in Germany. However, it also is clear that agriculture is changing and that many habitats of bird species have been lost due these changes. We need to counteract this trend. Another area in which we need to take the impacts on birds into account is the promotion of renewable energies and in particular the construction of wind farms and power lines. Many countries are facing similar challenges as birds are unaware of borders. If we want to conserve



Seite 3

biodiversity among migratory birds, we need to cooperate internationally. This is also in the spirit of CMS and AEWA.

The German governing parties want to improve bird conservation along migratory routes together with other countries and I will work to support them in this as well. On the one hand, I am concerned about the excessive hunting of birds in the Mediterranean region which far exceeds sustainable use. On the other hand, I am very pleased that we are discussing this serious issue with our partners. The last Meeting of the Parties to AEWA in 2012 was mainly about supporting African countries in their efforts to protect waterbirds. We are now hoping for the Eleventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS this year to improve the protection of migratory land-birds. At this conference, Germany also wants to contribute to reducing hazards from renewable energies to birds. The topic of Biodiversity and Tourism Development is on the agenda of the Twelfth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in South Korea in October 2014.

I wish the World Migratory Bird Day a large number of active, committed and interested participants and worldwide recognition. I hope that it will reach many people and turn them into ardent admirers of these fascinating birds.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Barbara Hendricks