



World Migratory Bird Day 2014

Destination Flyways: Migratory Birds and Tourism



Statement from Bert Lenten

Acting Executive Secretary of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (UNEP/AEWA)

2014 is the 9th year in succession that AEWA and CMS have organized World Migratory Bird Day. It is very satisfying that a campaign that was born from the need to counter the scare-stories and misinformation that arose after the first avian influenza outbreaks in Europe back in 2005 is now an established feature of the international calendar. It is satisfying too that WMBD serves to bring a global community together to celebrate the beauty of birds and the wonder of the phenomenon of migration, while highlighting the ecological, cultural and social importance of wildlife and the threats that it faces.

From the initial event- WINGS - hosted by CMS Ambassador Kuki Gallmann at the Ol Ari Nyiro Conservancy in Lakipia, Kenya, WMBD has gone from strength to strength. Over the years individuals and organizations have run campaigns, seminars, bird-watching groups, education programmes - just to name a few of the inspiring ways people celebrate World Migratory Bird Day each year – in over 130 countries all over the world from Germany to Colombia, Kenya to China, the United Arab Emirates to the United States of America

I am delighted to be joining forces with UNWTO for the 2014 campaign under the theme *Destination Flyways: Migratory Birds and Tourism*. UNWTO's project *Destination Flyways* aims to emphasize the potential of eight key sites on the migration routes of birds in Europe, Africa and Asia for development as destinations for sustainable tourism. The end result hopefully will be a classic win-win situation – good for the birds' habitats and the birds themselves and advantageous also for the tourists, the tour operators and local communities.

Fostering goodwill across frontiers and encouraging travellers to learn about other countries and cultures are just extensions of the everyday activities of organizations such as CMS, AEWA and the UNWTO as forums created to allow the exchange of ideas and experiences to seek mutually constructive solutions to common problems and to ensure the long-term survival of migratory birds.

What makes World Migratory Bird Day truly great is that no matter how small the effort, individuals can participate knowing that they are connected with like-minded passionate people all over the world who also recognize and celebrate the value of migratory birds. When these individual efforts from the corners of the world are combined, they make a powerful global message that migratory birds are important to people environmentally, economically and culturally.

I would like to thank the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) for their kind contribution to World Migratory Bird Day 2014, without which the campaign would not have been possible.

Please join me and the AEWA Secretariat 10-11 May 2014 to celebrate migratory birds - our shared natural heritage - on World Migratory Bird Day.

Yours sincerely,



Bert Lenten
Acting Executive Secretary
UNEP/AEWA