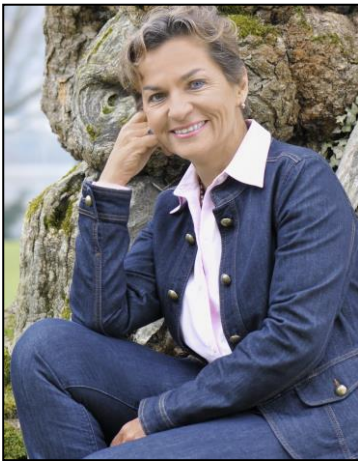




United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

World Migratory Bird Day 2014 Destination Flyways: Migratory Birds and Tourism



Statement by Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary

**United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
(UNFCCC)**

World Migratory Bird Day 2014 is an excellent opportunity to pause and reflect on the value of keeping our planet healthy. The Destination Flyways Project shows quite clearly that birds in particular and the wonders of nature in general provide a direct benefit to local communities and national economies.

In my home country of Costa Rica, I have seen this firsthand as thousands of visitors fly in to spend time exploring the lush countryside. Some of these visitors fly in using their own wings as part of the more than 300 species of migratory birds that winter in Central America. And some of these visitors come to see the birds. It is a virtuous cycle and one that demonstrates how a healthy economy relies on a healthy ecosystem.

We must consider that tourism is just the beginning. Safeguarding migratory birds helps in terms of medicine development, soil nutrients, water purification, and crop hardiness and disease resistance. The deep link between our development and growth and a healthy planet, rich with life in the forests, oceans and skies, is eminently apparent.

The world needs a strong and durable new, universal climate agreement in 2015 to minimize the adverse effects of climate change to the health of our planet and our growth. The good news is that governments have committed to this timeframe and are right now determining their contributions to the new agreement.

This is therefore a great time to speak to leaders, whether in your local area or your national government, and let them know you support action to protect migratory bird species and preserve the wetlands, lakes and wild lands that enable their journeys. It is perhaps the best time to raise awareness of how action to keep our planet's wildlife and climate healthy is action to keep our economic and social growth healthy.

On this World Migratory Bird Day 2014, I voice my support for the UN and its partners' work to protect our planet and its biodiversity. I ask every individual to join me in actively supporting their effort. And I ask you to join me as a vocal advocate for a strong new, universal climate change agreement that sustains our planet and growth for generations to come.

Christiana Figueres, Executive Secretary

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