



10 May 2016

UN calls for end to illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds

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Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*). Photo: World Migratory Bird Day/ Mark Anderson

The head of the [UN Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) has joined a chorus of voices calling for an end to the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds.

Achim Steiner delivered his message ahead of [World Migratory Bird Day](#), observed annually on 10 May.

Bird life is important to our planet, ecosystems and nature, he said.

Jocelyne Sambira has the story.

Birds are small creatures but in their billions across the planet, they are part of our heritage and therefore our responsibility, according to UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

Migratory birds include the red-breasted goose, the northern bald ibis and quail.

The illegal trade in wildlife has become a great preoccupation for conservationists, but also increasingly for nation states and communities, he noted.

"We are aware of the threat to migratory bird species that is beginning to grow exponentially across the planet. Whether it is the 25 million birds that are killed every year as they migrate across the Mediterranean; or whether it is the poisoning or as a result of the food chain, the impact on bird species across the world of modern chemicals and chemical and hazardous waste substances that have also become a threat to many bird species."

Poaching is a particular and growing concern across the Mediterranean region.

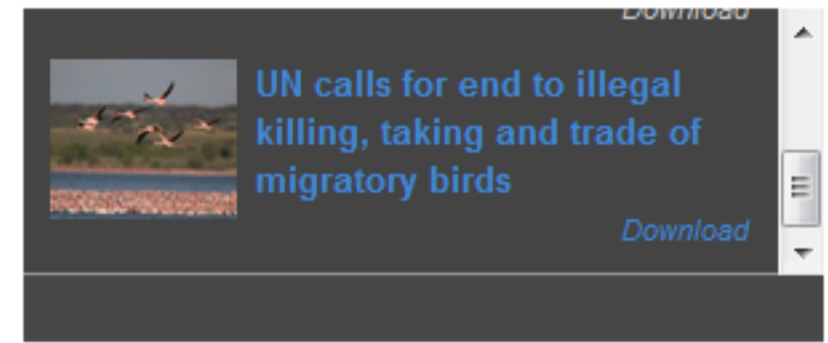
The illegal trade is estimated to affect between two and five million birds per year worldwide.

Jocelyne Sambira, United Nations.

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