

# World Migratory Bird Day 2015

## Energy – make it bird-friendly!



### **Statement from Peter J. Schei Ambassador of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS)**

This year we celebrate the WMBD for the 10<sup>th</sup> time. The theme selected this year is “Energy – make it bird-friendly”, which is a well-chosen and timely theme this year when the governments of the world are again trying to solve the climate change crises by, inter alia, finding new and smarter ways of producing and transporting energy. Changing from fossil-based energy to more nature-friendly alternatives does not, however, seem to be particularly easy to do properly. The COPs of CMS, Bern Convention and other international treaties have decided through recommendations and resolutions over many years that energy production and transportation should be carried out in ways that do not harm birds and biodiversity. But there has been a disappointing lack of practical implementation and horizontal cooperation and coordination between policy-sectors regarding this.

Governments do not seem willing to transform these international obligations into rules and regulations for power production and transportation companies, neither public nor private. Most governments encourage the production of renewable alternative energy, but the so-called “green certificates” we see in, for example, Norway and Sweden can easily turn into subsidized destruction of nature, if the necessary concerns of birds and biodiversity are not worked into the regulation of these activities. It is the same governments that have agreed to the recommendations and resolutions for achieving bird- and biodiversity-friendly energy production and transportation, that also encourage or don't regulate energy-production without these concerns. To miss the opportunity to find a better balance here, will contribute to the degradation of nature and our possibilities of enjoying other ecosystem services in the future.

The community and interest groups promoting conservation of birds and biodiversity and our natural heritage need to change strategy. Governments and decision-makers are to be held accountable for

their international and national commitments and obligations. They cannot any longer get away with empty promises and lack of implementation of “paper-policies”.

We also have sufficient knowledge about how to produce and transport energy without killing birds and biodiversity. Innumerable research results, recommendations and resolutions tell us how to go about this. Governments cannot delay practical follow-up by saying we don't know how to act. It is a matter of political will and responsibility! And it is an absolute necessity for millions of migrating birds!

**Peter J. Schei**

Ambassador for the United Nations Convention on Migratory Species (UNEP/CMS)