



CBD

# Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

## PRESS RELEASE

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International Day for Biological Diversity



Biodiversity and Climate Change

### MESSAGE BY DR. AHMED DJOGHLAF EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

on the occasion of

#### WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY 2007 Migratory Birds in a Changing Climate 12-13 May 2007

This year's World Migratory Bird Day draws attention to the plight of birds as our climate changes. The main impacts of climate change will be on water, with extensive loss of coastal wetlands, retreat of glaciers, decreased sea-ice extent, thawing of some permafrost, longer ice-free seasons on rivers and lakes, amplified effects on water quality, significantly increased flood damage and drought events. These changes will impact both the biodiversity that ecosystems support, the services that they provide and in particular the livelihoods of indigenous and local communities that rely upon them.

These impacts are already being revealed dramatically through birds—firstly in Arctic regions, where climate-change scenarios indicate the potential for widespread changes in populations of Arctic breeding waterbirds. More than two thirds of all geese and almost 95 per cent of all Calidrid sandpipers breed there. Changes to waterbird populations should also be expected in less severely affected areas. We can expect a further general decline in bird species richness and distributions. Species with restricted distributions and specialized species of particular biomes are likely to suffer the greatest impacts. Migrant species are likely to suffer especially large impacts as climatic change alters both their breeding and wintering areas, as well as critical stopover sites, and also potentially increases the distances they must migrate seasonally. Without implementation of new conservation measures, these impacts will be severe and are likely to be exacerbated by land-use change and associated habitat fragmentation. Unless strenuous efforts are made to address the root causes of climatic change, much current effort to conserve biodiversity will be in vain.

Birds are not necessarily more vulnerable to climate change. The worrying trends in birds are a warning sign for many other species groups. We need to wake up to these messages that nature provides. The theme for the International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2007, "Biodiversity and Climate Change" will draw attention to this broader issue.

On this World Migratory Bird Day, I commit to further strengthening efforts to work together with the organizers, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement ([UNEP/AEWA](#)) and the Convention on Migratory Species, and all our other partners on migratory species, towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target.

#### Information for Journalists:

Further information on World Migratory Bird Day is available at [www.worldmigratorybirdday.org](http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org).

#### The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Convention on Biological Diversity is one of the most broadly subscribed international environmental treaties in the world. Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro Brazil in 1992, it currently has 189 Parties—188 States and the European Community—who have committed themselves to its three main goals: the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of



its components and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Secretariat of the Convention is located in Montreal.

For more information, please contact Marie Aminata Khan at +1 514 287 8701; email: [marie.khan@biodiv.org](mailto:marie.khan@biodiv.org)