



**Statement by Amy Fraenkel, Executive Secretary of the Convention on the
Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)**

on the

International Day for Biodiversity – 22 May 2025

"Harmony with nature and sustainable development"

Each year, the synchronized journeys of [billions of] wild animals including birds, whales, antelopes, bats and butterflies remind us that life on earth is connected. When Arctic terns cross oceans or saiga antelopes sweep across grasslands, they link ecosystems, economies and cultures across national borders and continents. This year's International Day for Biodiversity, celebrated under the theme "Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development," reminds us that protecting these travelers and the habitats that sustain them, is fundamental to our own future.

Biodiversity is the living fabric that underpins food, fresh water, medicine, climate stability and cultural inspiration. Migratory species travelling along flyways, rivers, oceans and landscapes are its moving parts. They pollinate crops, disperse seeds, regulate insect populations and transport nutrients

When nations conserve migratory species by preventing overexploitation and safeguarding breeding sites, feeding grounds and the corridors that connect them, they strengthen food security, public health, livelihoods, climate resilience and most other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the same time.

The first-ever State of the World's Migratory Species report, released by CMS last year, underscores why decisive action cannot wait. It reveals that one in five CMS-listed migratory species faces extinction, and nearly half have declining populations. The report identifies overexploitation, along with habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, as the two most pervasive threats, magnified by pollution and climate change. Yet the findings also point to clear solutions: protect, connect and restore habitats; tackle unsustainable use; and integrate migratory-species priorities into national strategies.

CMS Parties are acting. Work to protect and restore ecological connectivity is advancing around the world, mapping and safeguarding the networks of sites that migratory animals rely on, and directly contributing to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Targets 1–3 and 12 while accelerating numerous SDGs. Ambitious efforts to address the illegal and unsustainable taking of migratory species are being taken. New Concerted Actions for blue sharks, straw-coloured fruit bats and Eurasian lynx align with the report's call for targeted, science-based measures.

Time is short. With just five years until 2030, the world must accelerate efforts to integrate biodiversity into every sector, from agriculture and fisheries to energy and transport, ensuring that National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans are fully aligned with sustainable-development priorities. It is vital that such plans and actions include migratory species and their habitats, ensuring that they continue to connect us all.

On this International Day for Biodiversity, I invite everyone to see the world through the eyes of a migrating bird or whale: no borders, only shared responsibility. By protecting biodiversity and the migratory species that knit it together, we secure a healthier planet, resilient economies and a hopeful future for all.