

International Waterbird Symposium in The Hague celebrates 15 years of flyway conservation in action

Title

The 15th Anniversary of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) will be celebrated at an International Symposium being hosted by the Government of the Netherlands in The Hague, where AEWA was concluded on 16 June 1995 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. AEWA is a United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) administered international wildlife treaty dedicated to the conservation of migratory waterbird species which migrate along the African-Eurasian Flyways. AEWA provides the framework for up to 118 countries in the region to work together to conserve migratory waterbirds such as ducks, waders, storks, flamingos, geese and terns. The two-day Symposium is being hosted by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) and will provide an opportunity to look back on the achievements made under AEWA as well as at the challenges lying ahead. Six workshops will be carried out, each with a different focus:

- 1) land use developments in the AEWA region with a special focus on Africa;
- 2) management of waterbird site networks on the national level;
- 3) sustainable management of migratory birds and invasive species;
- 4) the wider flyway approach and priorities for each single species;
- 5) establishment of international site networks; the role of the International Waterbird Census; and
- 6) migratory waterbirds and climate change in the light of human interferences.

The outcome of these workshops will result in a declaration, which will be tabled for approval. This statement will be of importance for the development of new ideas on the role of AEWA in the conservation of migratory waterbirds, which will, in turn, provide feedback to the 5th Meeting of the Parties to AEWA, which is scheduled to take place in May 2012 in France. The symposium is being facilitated by Dr. Gerard C. Boere, one of the founding fathers of AEWA. He was involved in drafting the Agreement text, the consultations with all the major stakeholders as well in the final negotiations 15 years ago.