

Flyways for the Future
The Nairobi Flyways Declaration
11 September 2026

We unite in celebrating the wonder of migration. Every year, billions of birds, made up of one in six of all bird species, travel across countries, continents and oceans. Yet, migratory species are particularly susceptible to human impacts because they are exposed to threats on both breeding and non-breeding grounds as well as during migration.

It is why we commit to share ideas, listen to one another, and learn how to better protect migratory birds and the sites and landscapes they depend on along their flyways, the ancient routes they have followed for thousands of years.

We come from many different backgrounds, governments, businesses, finance, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, scientists, artists and civil society.

Together, we recognise our shared responsibility to protect flyways. Birds do not recognise national borders, so protecting them requires countries and organisations to work together at local, national, and global levels.

Flyways connect our world and migratory birds depend on thousands of places along these routes to breed, rest, and feed. These sites and landscapes are interconnected and every one of these is important. Loss of any of these sites affects the entire flyway.

These places also benefit people.

Healthy forests, grasslands, wetlands, coasts and oceans store large amounts of carbon, helping to slow climate change and arrest wider biodiversity loss. They provide clean water, food, jobs, and other benefits that support communities and local economies. There is growing evidence that these habitats also boost national resilience and contribute to global security.

There are several global and regional agreements to protect nature, including the United Nations (UN) Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement, the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership as well as the all-encompassing Sustainable Development Goals. Crucially, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework sets clear goals to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030.

Whilst these agreements have been instrumental in advancing the conservation of migratory birds, nearly half (45%) of migratory bird species continue to decline, and one in nine species – around 200 in total – is threatened with extinction. These declines are occurring across all continents.

Migratory birds are in trouble because they face threats throughout their annual life cycles, especially on their breeding grounds and during migration. These include habitat loss (especially from unsustainable agriculture), Invasive Alien Species, overexploitation (especially through illegal killing), climate change, and impacts of human infrastructure, especially buildings and energy (resulting in the deaths of hundreds of millions of birds each year through collision or electrocution).

While protecting individual species and sites remains important, we need a broader, more coordinated approach that protects entire flyways.

Flyways not only represent the beauty and wonder of migration; they also provide an organising framework to help meet global biodiversity conservation and climate change commitments.

The time to seize this opportunity is now.

Call to Action

We, the signatories of the *Flyways for the Future: Nairobi Flyways Declaration*, call for:

- A commitment to **promote understanding of the importance of flyways to people and nature**, recognising that conserving healthy flyways supports biodiversity while delivering environmental, cultural, social and economic benefits to communities worldwide.
- **Stronger cooperation** among inter-governmental agreements and institutions, regional flyway partnerships and site networks, global and regional banks, governments, civil society, businesses, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, scientists, and other partners to protect migratory birds and their sites across terrestrial, coastal, and marine flyways. International and cross-border cooperation is essential to secure the future of the world's flyways.
- All existing **international environmental commitments to be translated into national actions** that help stop and reverse biodiversity loss and tackle climate change. These actions should involve all parts of society to protect migratory birds and the places they need, ensuring the birds fly free from harm.
- Immediate **action to secure funding for flyway conservation**. Governments, businesses, development banks, private investors, and other partners should implement new financing approaches that support practical conservation action for migratory birds and their sites, while contributing to wider goals for nature and climate.

GLOBAL FLYWAYS



