



Organization of
American States

Executive Secretariat for
Integral Development

ENHANCING WILDLIFE SUSTAINABILITY: FEATURE PRESENTATION OF FLIGHT OF THE BUTTERFLIES

Introductory remarks by

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Executive Secretary for Integral Development,
Organization of American States**

**Embassy of Canada Auditorium - 501 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001
April 22, 2014 - 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm**

Permanent Representative of Canada to the OAS, Ambassador Allan Culham,
Permanent Representative of Mexico to the OAS, Ambassador Emilio Rabasa,
Permanent Representative of the United States to the OAS, Ambassador Carmen Lomelin,
Cletus Springer, Director Department of Sustainable Development of the OAS,
Staff members, Permanent and Alternate Representatives of member States to the OAS,
Permanent Observers,
Distinguished Panelists and special guests,

In 1940, member States of this Organization shared a very modern vision that resulted in one of the largest regional legal instruments within the scope of the environment: the Western Hemisphere Convention on Nature Protection and Wild life Preservation.

Nowadays, this Convention is the basis for national efforts and hemispheric cooperation that supports the implementation of many multilateral instruments.

Some examples of these efforts include the recent creation of the second marine protected area of Haiti; as well as the partnerships that we have built through our Sustainable Development Department to support the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at the hemispheric level.

Our hemisphere contains the most exuberant scenic beauty, the most bio-diverse regions and unique natural resources on the planet, as well as being the paradise to thousands of migratory species, such as the monarch butterfly and the hummingbird, symbol of our most recent Summit of the Americas, which begin and end their days in the gardens of our neighborhoods, of our parks, in the protected areas, and natural monuments that exist thanks to the Pan American vision of more than six decades ago of building peace through environmental cooperation.



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In observance of this Earth day, I would like us to reflect on the role of the OAS in guaranteeing a healthy life in harmony with nature for all the citizens of the Americas, through its legal patrimony, its democratic values, through dialogue and cooperation.

I am glad you are all here to Join the OAS and all of the Inter-American and the UN system family in celebrating the natural wealth with which the Americas has been endowed, the challenges we face in its conservation and sustainable use and the lessons we learn every day as we try to address them in a spirit of dialogue, cooperation, and solidarity.

I hope you enjoy this special program and thank the Ambassador of Canada for his hospitality, as well as the Ambassadors of Mexico, the US and the experts in our panel for showing us the OAS that we want: working together in common challenges and for the natural and cultural patrimony that unites the peoples of our hemisphere.