

Jochen Flasbarth: Next President of the Federal Environment Agency visits CMS Secretariat



Bonn 11th August 2009 - The recently appointed President of the Federal Environment Agency (Umweltbundesamt - UBA), Jochen Flasbarth, paid a visit to the CMS Secretariat and addressed staff of the CMS Family. The main purpose of his visit was to reconfirm Germany's commitment to the work of CMS and its Agreements.

Last week Jochen Flasbarth was appointed as head of the UBA by the Federal Cabinet on the recommendation of Federal Environment Minister, Sigmar Gabriel. He succeeds Prof. Dr. Andreas Troge, who had been President of the UBA for 14 years.

Jochen Flasbarth has served seven years as the Head of the Directorate for Nature Conservation of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). Previously he had been the president of the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (NABU), one of Germany's largest associations for nature conservation. Jochen Flasbarth has been involved in a voluntary capacity in a number of different environmental organisations throughout his life.

The newly appointed Acting Executive Secretary of CMS, Elizabeth Mrema said: "The Secretariat of UNEP/CMS would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Flasbarth personally and the Government of Germany for the continuous support received to the work of implementing the Convention including all the initiatives undertaken to promote accession of the new parties. The related Agreements have benefited similarly.

The support of Mr. Flasbarth and BMU for several projects, including the CMS Year of the Dolphin (YoD) and Year of the Gorilla (YoG), provided the vital seed funding to allow our dolphin and gorilla work to flourish." As President of the COP9 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2008, Germany had played a leading role in addressing the challenges posed by biodiversity loss. In this context, Mr. Flasbarth particularly welcomed the contribution that the CMS initiative to conclude a global agreement on the conservation of sharks would make.

In his speech Mr. Flasbarth described CMS as a jewel among the biodiversity-related Conventions saying that it worked particularly effectively on the ground. Through its ambassadors - migratory species - the Convention acted as a pathfinder for the general public to understand international biodiversity policy.

In this spirit the Secretariat of the CMS and its co-located Agreements, thanked Mr. Flasbarth for his commitment towards the Convention Family and their common objectives and wished him all the best in his new position at the UBA in Dessau.