Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979) Encyclopedia Article

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Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979)

The first attempt at a global approach to **wildlife management**, the Convention on the **Conservation** of Migratory **Species** of Wild Animals was held in Bonn, Germany in 1979. The purpose of the convention was to reach an agreement on the management of wild animals that migrate "cyclically and predictably" across international boundaries. Egypt, Italy, the United Kingdom, Denmark, and Sweden, among other nations, signed an accord on this issue; the treaty went into effect in 1983, but the United States and Canada, as well as the former Soviet Union, still have not agreed to it.

The challenge facing the convention was how to assist nations that did not have **wildlife** management programs while not disrupting those that had already established them. The United States and Canada did not believe that the agreement reached in Bonn met this challenge. Representatives from both countries argued that the definition of a migratory animal was too broad; it would embrace nearly every game bird or animal in North America, including rabbits, deer, and bear. But both countries were particularly concerned that the agreement did not sufficiently honor national sovereignty, and they believed it threatened the effectiveness of the federal-state and federal-provincial systems that were already in place.

It is widely believed that the principal failure of this convention was its inability to find language dealing with federalist systems that was acceptable to all. The agreement also came into conflict with other laws, particularly laws governing national jurisdictions and territorial boundaries at sea, but it is still considered an important advance in the process of developing international environmental agreements.

See Also

Environmental Law

Resources

Books

Basic Documents of International Environmental Law. Boston: Graham & Trotman, 1992.

Effectiveness of International Environmental Agreements: A Survey of Existing Legal Instruments. Cambridge, England: Grotius, 1992.