Third National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity

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A. REPORTING PARTY

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Date of submission	September 2005

Information on the preparation of the report

Box I.

Please provide information on the preparation of this report, including information on stakeholders involved and material used as a basis for the report.
Belgium is a federal state, consisting of Communities and Regions. Three **Regional Focal Points** have therefore been designated besides the National Focal Point: For the Flemish Region: Dr Els Martens Nature Division, Ministry of the Flemish Community Koning Albert II-laan 20, B-1000 Brussels Tel.: +32 2 553 76 78, Fax: +32 2 553 76 85, E-mail: els.martens@lin.vlaanderen.be

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For more information on the political situation in Belgium and the distribution of competences, we refer to the Second National Report of Belgium to the CBD as well as to the reports and documents annexed to Box II.

Procedure for the preparation of the report

- 26.07.2004: notification 2004-060 of the CBD Executive Secretary on the Third National Reports was forwarded by email to the Belgian Regional Focal Points to the CBD and the federal Ministries of Environment and Foreign Affairs.
- 14.09.2004: a letter referring to the preparation of the Third National Report was sent out to key biodiversity actors within Belgian administrations.
- Begin February 2005: the Third National Report questionnaire was subdivided into thematic parts and articles, completed as much as possible by the CBD-NFP with information from the Second National Report and thematic reports, and then sent out to the contact group 'National reporting', acting under the Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention', and some other stakeholders.
- The major part of the answers came in during February/March 2005, but many of them were delayed until June/July.
- 09.06.2005: a meeting of the contact group 'National reporting' was held to harmonise the answers and to address the remaining gaps.
- The Third National Report was submitted to the Coordinating Committee for International Environmental Policy and to the Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention' for approval on 01.08.2005. The Third National Report was approved on 19.08.2005.

Contributing experts:

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B. PRIORITY SETTING, TARGETS AND OBSTACLES

Box II.

Please provide an overview of the status and trends of various components of biological diversity in your country based on the information and data available.

A comprehensive description of the status and trends of biological diversity in Belgium can be found in the following publications, annexed to this report:

- Peeters, M., Franklin, A. & Van Goethem, J.L. (eds), 2003. Biodiversity in Belgium. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels: 416 pp.
- Dumortier, M., De Bruyn, L., Peymen, J., Schneiders, A., Van Daele, T., Weyembergh, G., van Straaten, D. & Kuijken, E., 2003. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud, Brussel, nr 21: 352 pp.
- Dumortier, M., De Bruyn, L., Hens, M., Peymen, J., Schneiders, A., Van Daele, T., Van Reeth, W., Weyembergh, G. & Kuijken, E. (red.), 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud, Brussel, nr 24: 496 pp.
- Cellule Etat de l'Environnement Wallon, 2003. Tableau de bord de l'environnement wallon 2003. MRW, DGRNE, Namur: 144 pp.
- Gryseels, M., 2003. Biodiversity in the Brussels Capital Region. *In*: Peeters, M., Franklin, A. & Van Goethem, J. (eds), Biodiversity in Belgium. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences: 259-291.

A summarised overview of the status and trends of biological diversity in Belgium can be found in the following publications, also annexed to this report:

- Peeters, M., Van Goethem, J., Franklin, A., Schlesser, M. & de Koeijer, H., 2004. Biodiversiteit in België: een overzicht. Koninklijk Belgisch Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen, Brussel: 20 pp.
- Peeters, M., Schlesser, M., Réveillon, A., Franklin, A., Collin, C. & Van Goethem, J., 2004. La biodiversité en Belgique: un aperçu. Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique, Bruxelles: 20 pp.
- Dumortier, M., De Bruyn, L., Peymen, J., Schneiders, A., Van Daele, T., Weyembergh, G., van Straaten, D. & Kuijken, E., 2003. Natuurrapport 2003. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Samenvatting / English summary. Instituut voor Natuurbehoud, Brussel: 43 pp.
- Dumortier, M., De Bruyn, L., Hens, M., Peymen, J., Schneiders, A., Van Daele, T., Van Reeth, W., Weyembergh, G. & Kuijken, E. (red.), 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen. Natuurrapport 2005 in vogelvlucht. Instituut voor Natuurbehoud, Brussel: 36 pp.
- Heirman, J.-P. (ed.), 2002. The Flemish Environmental Policy Plan 2003-2007 - Summary. AMINAL, Brussels: 111 pp.
- Cellule Etat de l'environnement wallon, 2004. Scoreboard of the Walloon Environment 2004 – Summary. MRW, DGRNE, Namur: 36 pp.

Priority Setting

1. Please indicate, by marking an "**X**" in the appropriate column below, the level of priority your country accords to the implementation of various articles, provisions and relevant programmes of the work of the Convention.

Article/Provision/Programme of Work	Level of Priority		
	High	Medium	Low
a) Article 5 – Cooperation		X	
b) Article 6 - General measures for conservation and sustainable use	X		

c) Article 7 - Identification and monitoring	X		
d) Article 8 – *In-situ* conservation	X		
e) Article 8(h) - Alien species		X	
f) Article 8(j) - Traditional knowledge and related provisions			X
g) Article 9 – *Ex-situ* conservation		X	
h) Article 10 – Sustainable use of components of biological diversity		X	
i) Article 11 - Incentive measures		X	
j) Article 12 - Research and training	X		
k) Article 13 - Public education and awareness		X	
l) Article 14 - Impact assessment and minimising adverse impacts	X		
m) Article 15 - Access to genetic resources		X	
n) Article 16 - Access to and transfer of technology			X
o) Article 17 - Exchange of information		X	
p) Article 18 – Scientific and technical cooperation		X	
q) Article 19 - Handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits			X
r) Article 20 - Financial resources		X	
s) Article 21 - Financial mechanism		X	
t) Agricultural biodiversity			X
u) Forest biodiversity		X	
v) Inland water biodiversity		X	X
w) Marine and coastal biodiversity		X	
x) Dryland and subhumid land biodiversity			X
y) Mountain biodiversity			X

Challenges and Obstacles to Implementation

2. Please use the scale indicated below to reflect the level of challenges faced by your country in implementing the provisions of the Articles of the Convention (5, 6,7, 8, 8h, 8j, 9, 10, 11,12, 13, 14, 15,16, 17, 18, 19 and 20)

3 = High Challenge	1 = Low Challenge
2 = Medium Challenge	0 = Challenge has been successfully overcome
NA = Not applicable	

Challenges	Articles																	
	5	6	7	8	8h	8j	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
a) Lack of political will and support	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2
b) Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement	2	2	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
c) Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors	2	3	1	1	3	2	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	1
d) Lack of precautionary and proactive measures	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
e) Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weakness	0	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	1
f) Lack of transfer of technology and expertise	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	1
g) Loss of traditional knowledge	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
h) Lack of adequate scientific research capacities to support all the objectives	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
i) Lack of accessible knowledge and information	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
j) Lack of public	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2

education and awareness at all levels																		
k) Existing scientific and traditional knowledge not fully utilised	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
l) Loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2
m) Lack of financial, human, technical resources	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
n) Lack of economic incentive measures	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	3	1
o) Lack of benefit-sharing	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	1	1	3	1
p) Lack of synergies at national and international levels	1	1	3	2	2	2	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
q) Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders	1	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
r) Lack of effective partnerships	0	2	1	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
s) Lack of engagement of scientific community	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
t) Lack of appropriate policies and laws	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
u) Poverty	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
v) Population pressure	1	2	1	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
w) Unsustainable consumption and production patterns	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1
x) Lack of	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

capacities for local communities																		
y) Lack of knowledge and practice of ecosystem-based approaches to management	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
z) Weak law enforcement capacity	1	2	1	3	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	1
aa) Natural disasters and environmental change	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
bb) Others (please specify)																		

2010 Target

The Conference of the Parties, in decision VII/30, annex II, decided to establish a provisional framework for goals and targets in order to clarify the 2010 global target adopted by decision VI/26, help assess the progress towards the target, and promote coherence among the programmes of work of the Convention. Parties and Governments are invited to develop their own targets with this flexible framework. Please provide relevant information by responding to the questions and requests contained in the following tables.

Belgium: although some existing objectives and programmes, developed prior to Target 2010, obviously have similar goals, few or no objectives have been set directly in relation to Target 2010 on (sub)national level. Only since this year, a certain dynamic has been started to establish objectives to meet some of the targets and goals of the 2010 Target. This explains the scarceness of information in some boxes below, and certainly for those asking for information in relation to the follow-up of the targets.

Box III.

Goal 1	**Promote the conservation of the biological diversity of ecosystems, habitats and biomes.**
Target 1.1	**At least ten percent of each of the world's ecological regions effectively conserved**
I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X
Please provide details below.	
Nature and forest reserves only cover some 1.1% of the Belgian territory. The designation of areas in the framework of the Birds and Habitats Directives (Natura 2000) allows or will allow to increase this figure to about 13% of the territory. **Flemish Region**: the surface of nature and forest reserves (strict protected areas IUCN classification I and II) has doubled since 1996: in 2004 there are 882 nature and forest reserves with a total surface of 28,059 ha (2.1% of the surface of the Flemish Region). Of this total surface of protected	

area 16,037 ha has been formally recognised or homologated as a reserve area.

Total surface of Natura 2000 (= Special Protection Areas under Birds Directive + Special Areas for Conservation under Habitats Directive minus the overlap) comes to about 164,000 ha, or 12.5% of the surface of the Flemish Region. Up to now, 649 landscapes received a formal protection status, accounting for about 3% of the Flemish Region. The atlas of traditional landscape relicts has been finalised in 2001 and widely distributed.

The use of pesticides and herbicides by local authorities in public domains or parks is forbidden since January 2004. Farmers receive subsidies through the Rural Development Programme to enlarge and maintain natural borders along their lands and to use manual or mechanised systems instead of chemicals. Compensation for the disappearance of nature and forest areas for development projects or other actions is mandatory in the Decree for Nature Conservation (only by physical compensation: nature development in other area and/or acquisition of land) and in the Forest Decree (physical or financial compensation).

North Sea: Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas are being designated for the moment, totalising 7% of the Belgian North Sea surface. A sustainable master plan is being prepared for the Belgian marine zone, whereof phase 1 and 2 are developed and adopted.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	X

Please provide details below.

Flemish Region: the Flemish Environment and Nature Policy Plan 2003-2007 includes a chapter on the theme 'Loss of biodiversity'.

Walloon Region: the 'Contrat d'Avenir pour la Wallonie Actualisé' (CAWA) was adopted by the Walloon Government on 20.01.2005. The Contract promotes a positive dynamic for the Walloon Region by actively involving the citizens. One of the objectives of the Contract is to increase the efforts to avoid the disappearance of animal and plant species, in line with the 2010 Target. To achieve this, the Contract proposes to mobilise all available human resources and integrate existing activities to create a real network of protected natural environments favourable for the development of fauna and flora (http://contratdavenir.wallonie.be).

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.
VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box IV.

Target 1.2	**Areas of particular importance to biodiversity protected**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Protected areas have been designated in the Regions. The designation of protected areas is ongoing in the Belgian part of the North Sea.

The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will address the issue of protected areas through the development of an integrated and coherent network of protected areas at national and transboundary level. This sub-objective aims to promote the interconnectivity between existing networks of protected areas.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.
VII)Please provide any other relevant information.

Box V.

Goal 2	**Promote the conservation of species diversity**
Target 2.1	**Restore, maintain, or reduce the decline of populations of species of selected taxonomic groups**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?

a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Flemish Region: objectives in relation to this target have been integrated in the Flemish Environment and Nature Policy Plans for 1997-2001 and 2003-2007, as well as in legislation based on Natura 2000.

Walloon Region: one of the objectives of the 'Contrat d'Avenir pour la Wallonie Actualisé' (CAWA) aims to increase the efforts to avoid the disappearance of animal and plant species, in line with the 2010 Target. To achieve this, the Contract proposes to mobilise all available human resources and integrate existing activities to create a real network of protected natural environments favourable for the development of fauna and flora.

The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will address this target by an objective aiming to maintain or rehabilitate to a favorable state of conservation the most threatened species of Belgian fauna and flora.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			

e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box VI.

Target 2.2	**Status of threatened species improved**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.
This target is addressed for migrating species under international conventions.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			

f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box VII.

Goal 3	**Promote the conservation of genetic diversity**
Target 3.1	**Genetic diversity of crops, livestock, and of harvested species of trees, fish and wildlife and other valuable species conserved, and associated indigenous and local knowledge maintained**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

This target is adressed by the programme on fruit orchards, by the promotion of the use of indigenous plants and by organisations such as the 'Boomgaardenstichting'.

Concerning animal genetic resources, national priorities have been determined in relation to the actions responsible authorities have to focus on. These priorities, in a few words, are co-ordination, information and increase of public and stakeholder awareness, follow-up of animal populations, *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation.

The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will also address this topic.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			

b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	X

Please provide details below.

For breeding animals, a document can be considered as a starting point: the Belgian country report sent to the FAO within the framework of the first State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources (SoW-AnGR).

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

The AnGR report was finalised in December 2004 (Direction de l'Agriculture au Ministère de la Région wallonne. Les resources génétiques des animaux d'élevage en Belgique – Rapport national à la FAO: contribution de la Belgique au Premier Rapport sur l'Etat des Ressources Zoogénétiques dans le Monde, 58 pp.).

A project has been developed regarding the development of a cryobank for breeding animals. An actualised inventory has been established for poultry, pigeon and rabbit local breeds. This will allow to update international databases. Breeding and valorisation programmes are developed for animal local breeds such as Ardennais roux (sheep) and Dual-Purpose Belgian Blue (cattle).

A programme on regional fruit tree genetic resources started in January 2005. The main goal is to set up a multilocal network of conservatory orchards.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box VIII.

Goal 4	**Promote sustainable use and consumption.**
Target 4.1	**Biodiversity-based products derived from sources that are sustainably managed, and production areas managed consistent with the conservation of biodiversity**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	

b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

The **Walloon Region** supports the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and the **Flemish Region** supports the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

The **Federal** Governmental Agreement (2003) foresees a public procurement policy to encourage sustainable forest management as well as development cooperation activities to promote sustainable forest management.

First FPSD (2000-2004):

- a market share for organic farming products of 4% between 2000 and 2003. Products from organic farming should represent 4% of all food purchases by public administrations as well, and public authority cafeterias will offer a meal based on organic food on a daily basis;
- conversion to organic farming will be encouraged so as to increase the number of producers using this mode of production (very low at present) by 70% per year from 2000 to 2003. In terms of land area, the objective is to reach, by 2003, a minimum of 4% of total farming area using, or in the process of conversion to, organic farming. By 2010, 10% of total farming area should be set aside for organic farming.

Action 19 of the second FPSD (2004-2008) entitled 'sustainable forestry policy: fight against illegal logging' is aimed at promoting sustanable forest management through development cooperation, promotion of timber issued from sustainably managed forests (public procurement, awareness campaigns) and a multilateral framework.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.
First FPSD (2000-2004): indicators concerning the consumption of goods and services by households and public administrations. In the domain of nutrition: changes in the level of sales of organic farming products, as well as changes in prices of these products.
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.
VII) Please provide any other relevant information.
A promotional week on organic farming products is organised each year.

Box IX.

Target 4.2	**Unsustainable consumption, of biological resources, or that impacts upon biodiversity, reduced**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

The **Federal** Governmental Agreement (2003) states that projects contributing to the destruction of primeval forests will no longer be eligible for export credits and that illegally chopped wood should be barred from the Belgian market.

First FPSD (2000-2004):

- regarding the leaching of organic substances (nitrogen, phosphorus) to the aquatic environment, priority will be given to agriculture's contribution to a 50% reduction in total nutrient load relative to 1985 levels, in compliance with the commitments undertaken at the Third North Sea Conference;
- a plan for reduction in pesticide use will be prepared. It will aim at a substantial reduction in their use and take account of qualitative aspects. This reduction plan will: (i) be designed to fit in with the codes of good practice defined at regional level; (ii) use both economic incentives and regulations; (iii) cover both the sale of pesticides to individuals and their use by public authorities; (iv) aim to eliminate pesticide residues on and in consumer products; (v) emphasise action on the substances considered a priority under international commitments;
- halting declines in fish stocks and developing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, which rules out over-exploitation of fishery resources;
- so far as water is concerned, within the framework of a collective effort to reduce water consumption, Federal public administrations will reduce their water consumption by 6 m3 per civil servant compared with 1999, between now and 2004;
- the policy of simplifying government administration will be speeded up. This policy should have the effect of reducing the consumption of paper due to the Federal administration significantly (25%).

The 'fallowland-fauna' instrument exists in the **Walloon Region** since 2000. It allows for the covering of resting arable lands with vegetation, creating a privileged habitat for fauna. However, the instrument has had only limited success until now probably due to unawareness of many farmers and hunters about the instrument, the severity of the penalty when violations are detected and the heavy administrative burden placed on farmers and hunters. To remedy to this situation, the instrument was reviewed for 2005 and several constraints have been removed to obtain an enhanced network. Examples of adaptations of the instrument are the reduction of the minimal surface for fields to be eligible and a simplification of the procedures.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been

established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).			
Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.	
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.	
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.	
VII)Please provide any other relevant information.	

Box X.

Target 4.3	**No species of wild flora or fauna endangered by international trade**
I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X
Please provide details below.	
Belgium is a Party to CITES. This target is consistent with the main purpose of CITES and the CITES Strategic Plan: 'No species of wild flora subject to unsustainable exploitation because of international trade'. The first FPSD (2000-2004) mentions: 'enforcement of CITES will be strengthened so as to support the policy of biodiversity conservation (training experts, providing inspectors, intensifying controls)'.	

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).			
Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.	
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.	
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.	
VII)Please provide any other relevant information.	

Box XI.

Goal 5	**Pressures from habitat loss, land use change and degradation, and unsustainable water use, reduced.**
Target 5.1	**Rate of loss and degradation of natural habitats decreased**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	X
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	
Please provide details below.	
This target is addressed by the legislation based on Natura 2000 and by the designation of nature	

and forest reserves.

In the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation), a specific target will address the identification of sectoral policies (land use planning, transport, energy) that adversely affect biodiversity and the endorsement of measures to correct these effects.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XII.

Goal 6	**Control threats from invasive alien species.**
Target 6.1	**Pathways for major potential alien invasive species controlled**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?

a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	

c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Walloon Region: this is addressed by the legislation on nature conservation, modified by the Decree on Natura 2000 (art. 5 ter), which forbids the introduction in nature of non-indigenous animals and plants, exception made for those involved in agriculture or sylviculture.

For the **Flemish Region**, the relevant regulation for exotic species is found in the Decision of the Flemish Government of 21.04.1993 on the introduction into the wild of non-native animal species (Belgisch Official Journal of 31.07.1993).

In this Decision, the following are considered to be non-native animal species: animal species which do not occur in Belgium in the wild under natural circumstances and animal species that have started to occur in the wild in Belgium since less than 50 years from the entry into force of the Decision. An exception is made for animal species that have known a natural range expansion. This includes pet species, which fall under the definition above. An example of a pet species that is targeted under these provisions and which is relevant from a risk of introduction point of view is the Asian chipmunk *Tamias sibiricus*.

In this Decision, introduction into the wild has been defined as follows: the deliberate release of animals in all sorts of places and all sorts of sites that have not been shut off by a continuous construction from the adjoining lands, thus making the free access to these lands impossible, no matter what the condition and state of these places and sites are.

The Decision of the Flemish Government of 21.04.1993 prohibits the introduction into the wild of non-native animal species, unless a special permit is being granted. Such a special permit will only be granted after it has been verified what the influence of the requested introduction into the wild would be on the native fauna and ecosystems and after it has been investigated what the chances are of spread into adjoining lands from the introduction site. These introductions cannot be allowed when there would be any expected negative influence on the native fauna and flora.

In order to protect the native flora and fauna, the Flemish minister responsible for nature conservation can take all necesarry measures to control or remove non-native animal species and their offspring which have been introduced into the wild non-deliberately or as a violation of the Decision of the Flemish Government of 21.04.1993.

Federal: action 18 of the second FPSD (2004-2008) addresses the issue of developing a national warning system in relation to IAS. The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will also address goal 6.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	

b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.	
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.	
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.	
VII)Please provide any other relevant information.	

Box XIII.

Target 6.2	**Management plans in place for major alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species**
I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	X
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	
Please provide details below.	
Management plans have been established for the muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), coypu (*Myocastor coypus*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*). Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) are eradicated in some nature reserves and public green spaces. Steps are also taken for the Canada (*Branta canadensis*) and Egyptian goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*). No management plans are available for the Belgian marine environment, although it is flooded by alien species.	
II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).	

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and

strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.	
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.	
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.	
VII)Please provide any other relevant information.	

Box XIV.

Goal 7	**Address challenges to biodiversity from climate change, and pollution.**
Target 7.1	**Maintain and enhance resilience of the components of biodiversity to adapt to climate change**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X
Please provide details below.	

This target is partially taken into account in a recent project on transfrontal areas linking **Flemish**, Dutch, **Walloon** and Luxemburg nature reserves in a North-South direction.

Flemish Region: the estuarine system of the Scheldt river presents a danger of flooding the city of Antwerp and surroundings, as well as zones along the Scheldt river. Because of this, the transboundary Flemish Region-Netherlands project for nature development in and restoration of the estuary of the Scheldt integrates objectives related to the flooding control programme. This includes aspects related to climate change, so as to give more space to the river and its natural dynamics, and to maintain and enhance resilience of the components of biodiversity to adapt to climate change.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			

d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XV.

Target 7.2	**Reduce pollution and its impacts on biodiversity**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Objectives aiming to reduce water pollution have been developed within the Regions based on the EU Water Framework Directive.

Flemish Region: the use of pesticides and herbicides by local authorities in public domains or parks is forbidden since January 2004. Farmers receive subsidies through the Rural Development Programme to enlarge and maintain natural borders along their lands and to use manual or mechanised systems instead of chemicals.

Brussels Capital Region: as an urban region, problems of atmospheric, water, soil and noise pollution are very important in the Brussels Capital Region. Important efforts are made to reduce their impacts. In direct relation to biodiversity, special attention is given to reduce effects of water pollution.

The region is currently developing a more ecological approach to water management and is setting up a project for integrated water management: the blue network. This programme is designed to improve the Regions water basins through the improvement of water quality and the re-establishment of the continuity of the water network. The blue network emphasises on integrated,

durable and ecologically-justified management of the open waterways in the Region, as well as associated wetlands, marshy areas and ponds. Diverting clean water from waste water collectors should re-establish rivers flows, feed the ponds and wetland areas and reduce the quantity of water to be processed in the treatment stations, as well as limit flooding problems. An improvement in the quality of surface waters and the restoration of river banks, ponds and wetlands should make it possible to improve the ecological, landscape and recreational values of the sites.

A zero tolerance policy in relation to oil pollution is conducted in the Belgian part of the **North Sea**. Several control devices, such as small, unmanned airplanes, are used for this purpose.

Federal:

- first FPSD (2000-2004): a continuous reduction in emissions of hazardous and/or radioactive substances, with the ultimate aim of achieving (by 2020) concentrations in the marine environment near background levels for naturally occurring substances and close to zero for man-made synthetic substances;
- second FPSD (2004-2008): action 30 aims to obtain less polluting vehicles.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XVI.

Goal 8	**Maintain capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods.**
Target 8.1	**Capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services maintained**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?

a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Objectives in relation to this target are integrated in the Rain Plan and Water Code of the **Walloon Region** as well as in the Flemisch Environment and Natura Plan and the Decrees on Nature Conservation and Water Policy in the **Flemish Region**. In the **Brussels Capital Region**, the blue network programme is aiming for the protection and restoration of wetlands, and sites of high biological value are protected.

Federal: first FPSD (2000-2004): halting declines in fish stocks and developing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management, which rules out over-exploitation of fishery resources.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XVII.

Target 8.2	**Biological resources that support sustainable livelihoods, local food security and health care, especially of poor people maintained**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	X
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	
Please provide details below.	

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XVIII.

Goal 9	**Maintain socio-cultural diversity of indigenous and local communities.**
Target 9.1	**Protect traditional knowledge, innovations and practices**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?

a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Federal: according to the Law on International Cooperation (25.05.1999), one of the five priority sectors of the Belgian Development Cooperation is the strengthening of the society, including respect to human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedom. Through its policies and programmes, the Belgian Development Cooperation observes a series of quality criteria, among which figures the respect and the promotion of local and indigenous cultures and practices.

First FPSD (2000-2004): actions in support of local and indigenous communities will include: (1) the ratification of ILO Convention 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention); (2) support to the strategies of indigenous peoples for the conservation of their traditional territories and the restoration of their control over the management of their natural heritage; (3) initiatives for the international recognition of the collective intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the framework of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

Some of the ongoing projects supported by the **Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests** are particularly emphasising this aspect.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.
Federal: concerning the actions foreseen in the first FPSD (see above under I): (1) Not realised yet. (2) Belgium, through its development cooperation, finances programmes of different third-party actors that support this target, such as: - the Belgian Survival Fund; - the Royal Museum for Central Africa; - several development NGO's; - UN initiatives such as UNESCO and UNDP; - ICRAF. Actions targeting the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices are, e.g.: - improvement of traditional livestock and promotion of indigenous cattle species in Kenya, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Cameroon; - support to Masaï communities in Tanzania; - support to organisations of indigenous people in Ecuador and Bolivia through a "Fondo Indígena"; - support to indigenous communities in Peru, Guatemala, Philippines; - rescue, inventory and transfer of cultural heritage of African musea; - digitalisation and transfer of information on zoological collections; - support to research on indigenous fruit in Cameroon. (3) Creation of a special organ within the WIPO in charge of the examination of intellectual property questions related to genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore.
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.
VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XIX.

Target 9.2	**Protect the rights of indigenous and local communities over their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, including their rights to benefit sharing**
I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X
Please provide details below.	
Federal: first FPSD (2000-2004): actions in support of local and indigenous communities will include: (1) the ratification of ILO Convention 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention); (2) support to the strategies of indigenous peoples for the conservation of their traditional territories and the restoration of their control over the management of their natural heritage; (3) initiatives for the international recognition of the collective intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the framework of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will address this target.	

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).			
Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.	
See previous target.	
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.	
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.	
VII)Please provide any other relevant information.	

Box XX.

Goal 10	**Ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources.**
Target 10.1	**All transfers of genetic resources are in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and other applicable agreements**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	X
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	
Please provide details below.	

The **Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms** (BCCM) has coordinated the concerted action 'MOSAICC, Micro-organisms, Sustainable Use and Access Regulation, International Code of Conduct'. This project has been financed by the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and translates the principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity into practical procedures designed to facilitate access to and transfer of microbial genetic resources. The MOSAICC Code of Conduct can be consulted at www.belspo.be/bccm/mosaicc (see also Articles 15 et 16).

The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGR) for Food and Agriculture was ratified by Belgium in 2004.

In the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation), a strategic objective and related targets will be devoted to access and benefit sharing.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XXI.

Target 10.2	**Benefits arising from the commercial and other utilisation of genetic resources shared with the countries providing such resources**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?

a) No	X
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	

Please provide details below.

In the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation), a strategic objective and related targets will be devoted to access and benefit sharing.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.

IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.

V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.

VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.

VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Box XXII.

Goal 11	**Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical and technological capacity to implement the Convention.**
Target 11.1	**New and additional financial resources are transferred to developing country Parties, to allow for the effective implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with Article 20**

I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?

a) No	
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	X

Please provide details below.

Belgian Development Cooperation: a significant part of the yearly voluntary contribution of Belgium to UNEP is focused on strengthening capacities in four pilot countries (Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda) for the implementation of CBD objectives through their integration into the national poverty reduction strategies (€1,700,000 / year).

Support provided to the management of five 'World Heritage' national parks in the DR Congo through UNESCO has been confirmed and enhanced for the further work programme (from €200,000 / year to €350,000 / year for 2005-2007).

New bilateral cooperation programmes have recently been launched (end 2004) or are about to be launched shortly (mid-2005) to promote sustainable development through the strengthening of agroforestry activities, social infrastructure and local (decentralised) institutions in buffer zones around key protected areas (both Ecuador and Peru: €7,500,000 / 5 years, Tanzania: €2,000,000 / 4 yrs).

The **Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests** supports projects contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of the tropical forest. The projects are executed by local organisations.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	**Yes**	**No**	**Details**
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water	X		Agreement for Belgium-Uganda bilateral cooperation: support to the Wetlands Sector Strategic Plan (€4,000,000 for the period 2003-2006). Agreement for Belgium-Tanzania bilateral cooperation: development and implementation of an integrated management plan of Kilombero Valley Flood Plain Ramsar Site (€2,000,000 for the period 2004-2007).
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest	X		Agreement Belgium-Peru, for a support to the forest sector, including the promotion of sustainable forest management in the Amazon rainforest basin.
f) Mountain	X		Ecuador and Peru: support to the 'Plan Binacional' (€7,500,000 for the period 2004-2008).

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and

strategies?	
a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	
Please provide details below.	
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.	
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.	
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.	
VII) Please provide any other relevant information.	

Box XXIII.

Target 11.2	**Technology is transferred to developing country Parties, to allow for the effective implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with its Article 20, paragraph 4**
I) National target: Has a national target been established corresponding to the global target above?	
a) No	X
b) Yes, the same as the global target	
c) Yes, one or more specific national targets have been established	
Please provide details below.	

Belgian Development Cooperation: there is no specific nor global target with regard to technology transfer to developing countries in the area of biodiversity, nor are there technology transfer projects as such. Most Belgium's cooperation agreements with partner developing countries include a significant capacity building component (training, technical assistance to institutional strengthening, field studies and rural extension, etc.).

In some cases, capacity building encompasses the settlement or the further development of locally adapted technologies for the use of local biodiversity assets: eg, support to the promotion and the improvement of indigenous cattle (Niger, Burkina Faso) or plant (Ecuador, Bolivia) varieties.

Most of the Belgian support to technology transfer in biodiversity occur indirectly, through support to research, either by means of fellowships for PhD candidates from developing countries, or by structural or ear-marked funding to international agronomic research institutes such as the CGIAR family (IITA, ICRISAT, CIMMYT, CIFOR, CIP, IRRI, IPGRI, CIAT, ILRI, ICRAF, INIBAP): around €5,500,000/year.

The Belgian Development Cooperation is funding several other programmes that indirectly work towards the above target: capacity building scholarships to MSc and PhD level at several universities, special capacity building in biotechnology at the Ghent University, etc.

The Belgium **CBD-NFP**, with the financial support of the Belgian Development Cooperation, is providing capacity building opportunities to developing country parties for the establishment of their na-

tional CHM and national website. It also offers capacity building in relation to the GTI. Through this training some developing countries such as Cambodia, Guyana, the DR Congo and the Union of Comoros have been able to establish taxonomic reference collections for specific ecosystems.

Since 1998 the **Flemish Interuniversity Council** (VLIR) is responsible for the management of the funds provided by the Belgian Development Cooperation of the federal government and intended for University Development Cooperation (UDC). With this purpose, the VLIR-UDC-Secretariat was founded. VLIR acts on behalf of the 6 Flemish universities who should use these funds for collaboration with universities, research institutions and institutions for higher education in the South. Recently, the Flemish colleges are included as well.

The activities financed with these funds, comprise among other things research and training projects, long-term collaboration for the benefit of institutional strengthening of universities in the South, scholarship programmes, scientific exchange, policy advisory research and sensitisation activities.

The general objective of VLIR is to support southern institutions of research and higher education such that they are enabled to fulfil their three-pronged role in education, research and social service, through collaboration with Flemish universities. Capacity building of the institutions in the South and maintaining and expanding the expertise and the level of support within society in the North are specific objectives of the collaboration.

La **Coopération Universitaire au Développement** (CUD) est chargée, au sein du Conseil Interuniversitaire de la Communauté française de Belgique (CIUF), de la mise en œuvre de la politique de coopération universitaire au développement.

Elle est un lieu de dialogue et de concertation. Elle s'efforce de mettre en commun les ressources et potentialités des universités francophones de Belgique pour augmenter ainsi l'efficacité de leur contribution à la coopération internationale et rendre possible et réaliser des projets qu'aucune institution n'aurait la capacité de réaliser seule.

The **KULeuven**, supported by IPGRI and the EU, provides training on cryopreservation, *i.e.* fundamentals of cryobiology and plant genetic resources, and more technical information on cryopreservation protocols and anaytical techniques.

II) National targets for specific programmes of work: If such national target(s) ha(s)(ve) been established, please indicate here, and give further details in the box(es).

Programme of work	Yes	No	Details
a) Agricultural			
b) Inland water			
c) Marine and coastal			
d) Dry and subhumid land			
e) Forest			
f) Mountain			

III) Has the global or national target been incorporated into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?

a) No	
b) Yes, into national biodiversity strategy and action plan	
c) Yes, into sectoral strategies, plans and programmes	

Please provide details below.
IV) Please provide information on current status and trends in relation to this target.
V) Please provide information on indicators used in relation to this target.
VI) Please provide information on challenges in implementation of this target.
Some of the people that have participated in capacity building programmes from developing countries parties are not able to fully utilise the technology they learned. There are different reasons for this: - time lags of the programme. For some technologies, material has to be purchased. Quite often the type of material to purchase can only be decided after following a capacity building programme. The time needed for the capacity building, project proposal for purchase, funding decision and actual procurement of the material can take long; - trainees that follow capacity building programmes are sometimes relocated even shortly after the programme to other jobs in which they can not use their new knowledge to full capacity.
VII) Please provide any other relevant information.

Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC)

The Conference of the Parties, in decision VI/9, annex, adopted the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. Parties and Governments are invited to develop their own targets with this flexible framework. The Conference of the Parties considered the Strategy as a pilot approach for the use of outcome oriented targets under the Convention. In decision VII/10, the Conference of the Parties decided to integrate the targets into the reporting framework for the Third National Reports. Please provide relevant information by responding to the questions contained in the following tables.

Box XXIV.

Target 1. A widely accessible working list of known plant species, as a step towards a complete world flora.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
A national target has not been established, but a complete and detailed list has been developed and is very regularly updated. Monitoring of the listed species takes place regularly in the **Flemish** and **Brussels Capital Regions**.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
The National Botanic Garden of Belgium is producing a database with scanned images of all nomenclatorial types for the flora of Africa south of the Sahara (API-project).	

III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)
The project on the African flora (see II) will be extended to all other Belgian herbaria.
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
A project on the Belgian flora, inclusive alien species, should be completed and published within one year. A project on African flora should be completed and consultable on the Internet within three years.
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
VII) Any other relevant information

Box XXV.

Target 2. A preliminary assessment of the conservation status of all known plant species, at national, regional and international levels.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
Flemish Region: to enhance the knowledge base on species, distribution atlases, updates of red lists and monitoring programmes form an important basis for the development of comprehensive species protection plans. The theme 'Biodiversity' in the Flemish Environment Policy Plan includes a species-specific programme with development of updates of red lists and distribution atlases over the planned period. A red list of vascular plants has been developed. The list can be consulted at http://flora.instnat.be/flora. The list is being reviewed and updated for the moment to prepare an 'Atlas of the flora of the Flemish and Brussels Capital Regions', to be published at the end of the year. Within the framework of the **Brussels Capital Region** monitoring programme on flora and fauna, an estimation of the conservation status of plant species of the region has been performed in 1998 on basis of observations from 1991-94. For the moment, a new plant inventory study is going on (2003-2006). These data will provide new information on the conservation status of plant species present in the Brussels Capital Region.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
Legal instruments for the conservation of certain species exist at regional level.	

IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
VII) Any other relevant information
Information on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation will be circulated to relevant stakeholders. A national conference is planned on 21.09.2005.

Box XXVI.

Target 3. Development of models with protocols for plant conservation and sustainable use, based on research and practical experience.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
Flemish Region: the Institute of Nature Conservation is a member of Planta Europa. During the last meeting of Planta Europa (Valencia, 17-20.09.2004), the development of a list of Important Plant Areas was proposed to document and safeguard the floral biodiversity in Europe. This methodology has since then been acknowledged by the CBD. **Walloon Region**: the Nature and Forest Division requested the Research Centre on Nature, Forests and Wood as well as the Gembloux Agricultural University to search for and identify new seed-forming populations, not only of the principal wood essences but also of secundary essences, with the aim to increase the genetic diversity of the Walloon forest. For non-social species, parent plants have been identified for the conservation of plants of local origin. The Walloon Counter of Reproductional Forestry Material is in charge of the harvesting and distribution of this material to public and private plant-breeders and tree nurseries. **Brussels Capital Region**: sustainable management of forests helps to protect specific forest flora. The INIBAP Transit Centre at the **Catholic University of Leuven** (KULeuven) will have cryopreserved the entire FAO designated banana germplasm by 2007. This is the world reference centre for banana.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	

A lot of experience exists within the sector of nature conservation organisations. Specific publications are available. Existing initiatives and knowledge should be listed. Concerning the cryopreservation of the banana germplasm, about 550 accessions are frozen for the moment.
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)
For the cryopreservation of banana germplasm, financial sources are being secured via the World Bank, the Gatsby Charitable Foundation and the Global Crops Diversity Trust.
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
Lack of space and funds.
VII) Any other relevant information
Developed protocols have proven to function also on strawberry, potato and chicorei. These are really crops of importance to Belgium and therefore efforts should be made to start cryocollections of these crops.

Box XXVII.

Target 4. At least ten percent of each of the world's ecological regions effectively conserved.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
Nature and forest reserves only cover some 1.1% of the Belgian territory. The designation of areas in the framework of the Birds and Habitats Directives (Natura 2000) allows / will allow to increase this figure to about 13% of the territory.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
Incorporated in legislation, programmes and strategies among others related to Natura 2000.	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	

VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
VII) Any other relevant information

Box XXVIII.

Target 5. Protection of fifty percent of the most important areas for plant diversity assured.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
Natura 2000 is focusing on some vegetation types important for plant diversity such as peat bogs, alluvial forests, etc.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXIX.

Target 6. At least thirty percent of production lands managed consistent with the conservation of plant diversity.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	

II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?
a) Yes
b) No
Please specify
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
VII) Any other relevant information

Box XXX.

Target 7. Sixty percent of the world's threatened species conserved *in-situ*.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
Natura 2000 and the Bern Convention, among others, are contributing to this objective but cannot be regarded as specific targets for this.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
c) Yes	
d) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	

V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
VII) Any other relevant information

Box XXXI.

Target 8. Sixty percent of threatened plant species in accessible *ex-situ* collections, preferably in the country of origin, and 10 percent of them included in recovery and restoration programmes.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
In April 2001, Botanic Gardens Conservation International launched the Action Plan for Botanic Gardens in the European Union. The goal of this plan is to provide an EU-wide regional framework and to promote the sharing of priorities and strategies in the future. For the time being, the National Botanic Garden of Belgium is running a programme to make the holdings of six major collections accessible on the net.	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
The first phase of the programme concerns woody plants. If the project is prolonged (decision in November 2005), also the herbarium plants and some horticultural and agricultural collections will be taken into account.	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXXII.

Target 9. Seventy percent of the genetic diversity of crops and other major socio-economically valuable plant species conserved, and associated indigenous and local knowledge maintained.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
The National Botanic Garden of Belgium holds a reference collection of wild Phaseolineae. *In-situ* gene banks for some fruit tree species exist and are partly databased.	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
Discussions are ongoing to incorporate these data with the data already available for the *ex-situ* plant collections.	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXXIII.

Target 10. Management plans in place for at least 100 major alien species that threaten plants, plant communities and associated habitats and ecosystems.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
Management plans have been established for black cherry (*Prunus serotina*) and floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*). Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) are eradicated in some nature reserves and public green spaces.	

II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
A complete inventory of alien plant species was established and their status of invasiveness has been monitored.	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
A management plan on *Heracleum mantegazzianum* will be presented to the authorities in September 2005.	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXXIV.

Target 11. No species of wild flora endangered by international trade.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
Belgium is a Party to CITES. This target is consistent with the main purpose of CITES and the CITES Strategic Plan: 'No species of wild flora subject to unsustainable exploitation because of international trade'. The first FPSD (2000-2004) mentions: 'enforcement of CITES will be strengthened so as to support the policy of biodiversity conservation (training experts, providing inspectors, intensifying controls)'.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	

IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
VII) Any other relevant information

Box XXXV.

Target 12. Thirty percent of plant-based products derived from sources that are sustainably managed.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXXVI.

Target 13. The decline of plant resources, and associated indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices that support sustainable livelihoods, local food security and health care, halted.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
The **Belgian Development Cooperation** funds a number of programmes that aim to support indigenous communities in partner developing countries, including the recovery and the promotion of traditional knowledge and practices. Most of those actions though are implemented through third actors such as NGO's, universities or multilateral organisations. Barely little bilateral official cooperation provides direct support to indigenous and local knowledge, since such issue is not often taken up as a priority by the partner countries either in their national development and poverty reduction policies, or in their policy dialog with donor countries. First **Federal** Plan for Sustainable Development (2000-2004): actions in support of local and indigenous communities will include: (1) the ratification of ILO Convention 169 (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention); (2) support to the strategies of indigenous peoples for the conservation of their traditional territories and the restoration of their control over the management of their natural heritage; (3) initiatives for the international recognition of the collective intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples and local communities within the framework of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
Out of 25, three country strategy papers (for Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia) explicitly incorporate the protection and/or the promotion of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices in the priorities for the Belgian cooperation strategy.	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
Belgium provides support to the protection and/or the promotion of indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices through funding NGO programmes and scientific institutes research programmes (e.g. CGIAR and affiliates) and the 'Fondo Indigena' for Andean countries	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
There is no suitable indicator of progress available except spending figures.	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
The rights of indigenous people and communities and the rescue of their traditional knowledge and practices are often overlooked by the countries' national development and poverty reduction strategies, which set the priorities of our cooperation agenda.	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Cooperation through non-state third parties (NGO's, universities) is much more likely to reach this target. There also exists a specific budget line for direct support to local NGO's and communities. So far nonetheless, there is no support provided yet that specifically targets the protection of indigenous traditional knowledge and practice (in biodiversity).

Box XXXVII.

Target 14. The importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation incorporated into communication, educational and public-awareness programmes.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
The importance of plant diversity is incorporated in and addressed by communication, education and public awareness programmes on nature and biodiversity.	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	X
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
The importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation is incorporated into several programmes: - communication via brochures, leaflets, posters etc. (description of semi-natural sites and parks, description of walking tours, with special attention to present biodiversity and its need to protection); - educational programmes: regional centers for environmental and ecological education, green classes, organising training sessions, guided walks, information days or workshops on medicinal and comestible plants, a biodiversity interface on Belgium's natural treasures, plant fairs, etc. for children, adults, naturalists, others.	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXXVIII.

Target 15. The number of trained people working with appropriate facilities in plant conservation increased, according to national needs, to achieve the targets of this Strategy.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	
III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)	
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)	
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)	
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target	
VII) Any other relevant information	

Box XXXIX.

Target 16. Networks for plant conservation activities established or strengthened at national, regional and international levels.	
I) Has your country established national target corresponding to the above global target?	
a) Yes	
b) No	X
Please specify	
II) Has your country incorporated the above global or national target into relevant plans, programmes and strategies?	
a) Yes	
b) No	
Please specify	

III) Current status (please indicate current status related to this target)
The networks for *in-situ* plant conservation activities partly exist at regional level. The **Catholic University of Leuven** has developed a European and intercontinental network on cryopreservation of many crops both in research, training and applications for long term use.
IV) Measures taken to achieve target (please indicate activities, legislative measures and other steps taken with a view to achieve the target)
V) Progress made towards target (please specify indicators used to monitor progress towards the target)
VI) Constraints to achieving progress towards the target
Concerning the cryopreservation activities at the KULeuven, it seems very difficult to find funding within Belgium for these activities.
VII) Any other relevant information

Box XL.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this strategy specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.
In the coming months, an inventory will be made of our knowledge and existing actions in connection to the Global Strategy on Plant Conservation. On the basis of the outcome of the inventory, possible actions will be discussed with the appropriate authorities. In September 2005, an effort will be made (e.g. through press releases) to raise awareness for the GSPC at national and regional level.

Ecosystem Approach

The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. Application of the ecosystem approach will help to reach a balance of the three objectives of the Convention. At its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties has affirmed that the ecosystem approach is the primary framework for action under the Convention (decision II/8). The Conference of the Parties, at its fifth meeting, endorsed the description of the ecosystem approach and operational guidance and recommended the application of the principles and other guidance on the ecosystem approach. The seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties agreed that the priority at this time should be facilitating implementation of the ecosystem approach. Please provide relevant information by responding to the following questions.

3. ◈ [1] Is your country applying the ecosystem approach, taking into account the principles and guidance contained in the annex to decision V/6? (decision V/6)	
a) No	
b) No, but application is under consideration	
c) Yes, some aspects are being applied	X
d) Yes, substantially implemented	X

4. ◈ Is your country developing practical expressions of the ecosystem approach for national policies and legislation and for implementation activities, with adaptation to local, national, and regional conditions? (decision V/6)	
a) No	
b) No, but development is under consideration	
c) Yes, practical expressions have been developed for applying some principles of the ecosystem approach	X
d) Yes, practical expressions have been developed for applying most principles of the ecosystem approach	

5. Is your country strengthening capacities for the application of the ecosystem approach, and providing technical and financial support for capacity-building to apply the ecosystem approach? (decision V/6)	
a) No	
b) Yes, within the country	X
c) Yes, including providing support to other Parties	

6. ◈ Has your country promoted regional cooperation in applying the ecosystem approach across national borders? (decision V/6)	
a) No	
b) Yes, informal cooperation (please provide details below)	
c) Yes, formal cooperation (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on regional cooperation in applying the ecosystem approach across national borders.

The Regions have developed formal interregional as well as formal bilateral cooperations with neighbouring countries on the integrated management of transboundary ecosystems, such as river ecosystems and protected areas.

The 'Plan de Base Ecologique et Paysager Transfrontalier' (PBEPT) **Walloon Region**-Luxembourg and the 'Grensoverschrijdend Ecologisch Basisplan' (GEB) **Flemish Region**-The Netherlands will allow to address more significant areas and to develop joint transboundary actions.

The 'Three Countries Parc - Open space without borders' (Belgium-The Netherlands-Germany) aims to improve transboundary cooperation to maintain and strengthen the functioning of rural zones as well as to conserve open space in an urbanised environment.

[1] Please note that all the questions marked with ◈ have been previously covered in the second national reports and some thematic reports.

7. Is your country facilitating the exchange of experiences, capacity building, technology transfer and awareness raising to assist with the implementation of the ecosystem approach? (decisions VI/12 and VII/11)	
a) No	
b) No, some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are being implemented (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are being implemented (please provide details below)	
Further comments on facilitating the exchange of experiences, capacity building, technology transfer and awareness raising to assist with the implementation of the ecosystem approach.	
Flemish Region: financial and technical support in international cooperation programmes, such as the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests and the Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes programme (under CMS).	

8. Is your country creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the ecosystem approach, including through development of appropriate institutional frameworks? (decision VII/11)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant policies and programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some policies and programmes are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive policies and programmes are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the creation of an enabling environment for the implementation of the ecosystem approach.	
Legislation for nature conservation and water policies include frameworks for the implementation of the ecosystem approach for site-specific management plans or actions.	

C. ARTICLES OF THE CONVENTION

Article 5 – Cooperation

9. ◆ Is your country actively cooperating with other Parties in respect of areas beyond national jurisdiction for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) Yes, bilateral cooperation (please give details below)	X
c) Yes, multilateral cooperation (please give details below)	X
d) Yes, regional and/or subregional cooperation (please give details below)	X
e) Yes, other forms of cooperation (please give details below)	X

Further comments on cooperation with other Parties in respect of areas beyond national jurisdiction for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Projects mentioned below are ongoing, some being in final stage.

The **Flemish Community**: bilateral co-operation

Chile
1996: UGent-KULeuven-Universidad de Concepcion: Reconstruction, monitoring and remediation on freshwater environments based on the use of biological indicator species.
1999: UGent-VIB-University of Chile-Instituto de Ciencias Biomedicas: The use of the micro-array technique as a tool for gene expression analysis in molecular biology.
1999: University Austral de Chile: Comparison of ecosystem functioning and biogeochemical cycles in temperate forests in southern Chile and the Flemish Region.

China
1998: UGent-VIB-Chinese Academy of Sciences-Institute of Botany: Biodiversity, conservation and sustainable use of *Lilium* in China.
1999: KULeuven-UGent-Salt research Institute-Biology Department: Study of the biodiversity of Chinese *Artemia* Strains and their possible application in research and aquaculture.

Costa-Rica
2000: Belgian Landscape Foundation: Eco-model project 'Centro Neotrópico Sarapiquis' – La Virgen de Sarapiquis.

Hungary
1999: KULeuven-UGent-Hungarian Natural History Museum-Department of Zoology: Biodiversity in temporary aquatic habitats: species richness and genetic diversity in branchiopods.
1996: Institute for Forestry and Game Management: 'Selection and improvement of fast growing tree species'.
Poland
1996: KULeuven-UGent-University of Wroclaw: Search for the most potent and protease resistant peptides of particular insect species for eventual exploitation in pest control measures.
1998: UGent-VUB-Agricultural University of Warsaw: Environmental river catchment by natural or artificial wetlands.
2000: UGent-UA-VUB-Agricultural University of Warsaw: Ecological responses to changing hydrological conditions in floodplains.
Institute for Forestry and Game Management: Study of the genetic diversity of the oak. Putting laboratory facilities and means at a PhD-student's disposal.

South-Africa
1995: Ghent University: Marine biology.
1996: KULeuven-LUC-University Potchefstroom: Purification and characterisation of natural toxins

from scorpions living in southern Africa targeting ion channels in humans and insects.
1996: Ghent University: feasibility study: Quality of education at the Botany Department.
1996, 1998: Ghent University: Marine biology and nematology: tuition on biodiversity of species and their habitats.
1996: Ghent University: Bilateral tuition project on plant biotechnology.
1997: UA-VUB-University Zululand: Comparative study of bioaccumulation and effects of metals in mussels between a temperate and subtropical region: the Scheldt estuary (Antwerp harbour) and the Richards Bay Harbour.
1998: KULeuven-LUC-VUB-University of Stellenbosch: Neural networks and advances methods for monitoring and control of flotation plants.
1998: UGent-VUB-University of Cape Town: Biodiversity studies on seaweed and echinoderms in the transition between temperate southern Africa and the tropical western Indian Ocean.
1998: Ghent University: Co-operation between the Ghent University and the University of the North (UNIN) in South-Africa in support of the post-graduate course on biotechnology.

Bolivia
Ethno-botanical research is performed in Bolivia by the Ghent University in co-operation with Ametrac (Bolivia).

The **Flemish Community**: projects under international agreements and programmes, and multilateral co-operation

The Flemish Government Direction for Nature
Bonn Convention: Reintroduction of Sahelo-Saharan antelopes in Northern Africa - pilot project in co-operation with Tunisia.
Under AEWA agreement: Technical and financial support of the publication of the Wader Atlas.
Under EUROBATS agreement: Technical and financial support for the development and publication of brochures for awareness programme on bat conservation in Eastern-European countries.
Bern Convention: Support for the development of the Emerald ecological network in Eastern-European countries.
EU-Birds Directive: Financial support for the Conference Bird Census 2001, especially for participation of Eastern-European delegates.

Institute for Forestry and Game Management
Under COST-action E4: European 'Forest Reserves Research Network' (1996-1999) (± 15 European countries), financing of meetings (2 per year).
Concerted action (PL97-3575): 'Indicators for monitoring and evaluation of forest biodiversity in Europe' (1996-1999), financing of meetings and publications by EU (AIR).
European Commission and ECE-ICP Forests of the UN: Forest Condition in Europe, Pan-European, yearly financing.
ICP Forests: 'Forest Soil Expert Panel' (financing of meetings).
COST-action E12: 'Urban Forests and Trees' (1997-2002), 27 European countries, financing of meetings.
COST-action E6: 'Eurosylva-Tree physiology' (1996-2000), 15 countries, financing of meetings.
EUFORGEN: European Forest Genetic Resources programme. Steering Committee. Financing meetings (every 4 year) (±20 European countries). *Populus nigra* network (1 meeting per year). 'Noble Hardwoods'-network (1 meeting per year). 'Social hardwoods' network (1 meeting per year).
EC-AIR project: Inter-Disciplinary Research for Poplar Improvement (IRPI), 1993-1996 (Italy, France, UK, Luxembourg, Ireland).
'Co-ordination for conservation, characterisation, collection and utilisation of genetic resources of European Elms'. (1997-2001), (France, Sweden, Germany, Italy, Spain, Greece, UK).
EU-FAIR: 'Genetic diversity in river populations of European Black poplar for evaluation of biodiversity, conservation strategies, nature development and genetic improvement.'(1998-2001) (Netherlands, Spain, France, UK, Austria, Germany, Hungary).
FAO: Afforestation, Forestry Research, Planning and Development in the Three North Region (1996-1997), Partner China. Training of technicians and making available the genetic material of the poplar (financing by DGIS).
Afforestation, Forestry Research, Planning and Development in the Three North Region, Phase II (1998-2002), Partner China, consultancy.
FAIR5-QLRT-2000-00631: 'Improving *Fraxinus* (Ash) productivity for European needs by testing, selection, propagation and promotion of improved genetic resources' (2001-2004) (UK, France, Ger-

many, Ireland).
EU-LIFE project: 'Biological Indicator of Pisciculture Integration for the Evaluation of the Ecological Quality of Lotic Systems' (1997–2000) (research programme). This project has the objective to realise the development and the standardisation of a fishing index for the global quality evaluation of all watercourses within the hydrographical basin of the Meuse. Partners are The Netherlands, the Walloon provinces, France.
EU-programme 'Studies in support of the common fisheries policy'. In the framework of this programme, the Institute participates in a concerted action 'Management of European eel: Establishment of a recruitment monitoring system (GLASS EEL)' (1/12/99 till 30/11/2001), in which 12 countries participate. This project concerns the following sub-aspects with regard to the glass eel research: development of a monitoring stations-network; international standardisation of the monitoring methodology; development of data exchange procedures; providing historical data; costs for meetings and publications.

In the framework of dry- and sub-humid lands, the Ghent University had or has co-operation projects with partners in Israel and Egypt (*i.a.* germplasm collection of *Pistacia* spp., Kenya (agroforestry & ethnobotany), Togo (influence of dams on natural environment), Senegal (vegetation modeling, ethnobotany), Morocco and Namibia (both ethnobotany).

Walloon Region: overview of ongoing projects

The Walloon Region contributes to the implementation of Article 5 of the CBD in Europe a.o. through the following instruments: Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy, the Bern Convention, the Bonn Convention, the Ramsar Convention, the Habitats and Birds Directives of the EU, the Benelux Convention.
Bilateral co-operation with neighbouring countries (GD Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands, Germany) does exist for the management of transboundary protected areas, such as the High Fens Eiffel Natural Reserve with Germany and the management of the Our Valley area together with Luxembourg and Germany in the frame of the Benelux Convention and EU framework.
A project plan for the transboundary management of an ecological network between GD Luxembourg and the Walloon Region is being developed. Joint actions are also implemented with The Netherlands in the frame of Salmon reintroduction in the river Meuse basin (project Salmon 2000).
In the frame of the Ramsar Convention, the Walloon Region supports the management of wet zones crossed by the black stork in its migration between Europe and Senegal.

Burkina Faso
- Support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant)
- Rehabilitation of the dams of Barka, Kouzougou and Naggio (SHER grant)
- Scientific valorisation of the Nazinga ranch (Nature+ grant)
- Preservation and protection of the forest gallery in the Sourou valley (FUL & Coprod grants)

Morocco
- Development of an information system and internet server on biodiversity (UMH grant)
- Support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant)
- Establishment of a thematic House of the Cedar

Romania
- Support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant)
- Analysis and protection of pristine forests (UCL grants)

Mauritania
- Extension of the green belt of Nouackchott (FAO grant)

Congo
- Reactivation of the hunting domain of Bombo Lumene (Nature+ grant)

The **French Community**: bilateral and multilateral co-operation projects

Africa (various countries involved)
1993-2004: Ecofac – 'Conservation et utilisation rationnelle des ecosystems forestiers en Afrique

centrale' [the ULB is associated to this project, executed in co-operation with the universities of Yaoundé (Cameroun), Brazzaville (Congo) and Bangui (Central African Republic), the 'Institut de recherché en écologie tropicale' (Gabon), the National Herbarium of Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tomé; financing: EU–DG 8].
2001-2002: Plamenet – 'Les plantes médicinales africaines sur Internet' [ULB in co-operation with the Universities of Monastir (Tunisia), Abomey-Calavi (Benin), Yaoundé (Cameroun) and Bujumbura (Burundi); financing: 'Fonds Francophone des Inforoutes'].
2001-2004: Diveac – 'Diversité végétale en Afrique centrale' [ULB and FUSAGx in co-operation with the universities of Yaoundé (Cameroun) and Bangui (Central African Republic) and the National Herbarium of Equatorial Guinea; financing: 'Conseil Interuniversitaire de la Communauté française' and Belgian Development Cooperation].
2001-2004: 'Assistance technique au Programme de conservation et utilisation rationnelle des aires protégées contigues du Bénin, du Burkina Faso, du Niger et de leurs zones d'influence' [ULB is associated to this project, executed in co-operation with the universities of Benin and Niamey (Niger), and with the 'Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique' (Burkina Faso); financing: EU–DG 8].

Benin
1998-2002: Organisation of a third cycle on the management of natural resources [ULB in co-operation with the 'Université d'Abomey-Calavi' (Benin); financing: 'Coopération Universitaire Institutionnelle'].
1999-2001: Control of fires in Benin [ULB in co-operation with the 'Université d'Abomey-Calavi' (Benin); financing: 'Commissariat Général aux Relations Internationales de la Communauté Wallonie-Bruxelles'].
1999-2005: Study of the avifauna of the wet zones in the southern part of Benin and of the demographical and ethological features of avian species eligible to be domesticated (Anatidae, Galliformes) [ULg in co-operation with the 'Université Nationale du Bénin'].
2001-2002: 'Approche juridico-politique de la gestion des déchets et de la conservation de la biodiversité au Bénin' [IGEAT (ULB) and CEDRE (FUSL) in co-operation with the 'Université Nationale du Bénin'; financing: 'Conseil Interuniversitaire de la Communauté française'].

Costa Rica
1993-2000: *In situ* conservation of populations of *Phaseolus lunatus* [FUSAGx in co-operation with the 'Universidad de Costa Rica' and IPGRI (Italy); financing: Belgian Development Cooperation].

Cuba
2002-2005: Biocomplexity and endemic fungal resources in Cuba [FUL, ULg and UCL in co-operation with the 'Instituto de Ecologia y Sistematica' (Cuba)].

Democratic Republic of Congo
2001-2003: The 'Cuvette Centrale' as reservoir of medicinal plants [ULB is associated to this project, executed in co-operation with the 'Institut Pédagogique National de Kinshasa'].

Ecuador
2000-2003: Use of molecular data for the management of the Galapagos giant tortoise populations [ULB in co-operation with the Charles Darwin Research Station, the 'Parque Nacional Galapagos' (Ecuador) and the Yale University (USA)].

Equatorial Guinea
1997-2002: Curef – 'Conservation et utilisation rationnelle des ecosystems forestiers de Guinée Equatoriale' [ULB is associated to this project, executed in co-operation with the National Herbarium of Equatorial Guinea].

Europe (more general)
1999-2005: Comparative phylogeography of forest rodents; phylogeography of specific parasites [ULg in collaboration with the universities of Montpellier (II) and Perpignan and the 'Museu Nacional de Historia Natural' (Portugal); financing: *i.a.* FNRS].

Madagascar
2000-2001: 'Etude structurelle et fonctionelle du benthos dominant les communautés biotiques associées aux ecosystems coralliens' [UMH in co-operation with the University of Tulear (Madagascar); financing: Fonds de la Recherche Fondamentale Collective – FNRS].

1998-2002: Mariculture of Holothuroidea [UMH in co-operation with the University of Tulear (Madagascar); financing: Belgian Development Cooperation].

Morocco
1995-2005: 'Recherche sur les facteurs explicatifs de la biodiversité des auxiliaires (prédateurs et parasitoïdes) en vergers de pommes, en vue de renforcer le contrôle naturel des ravageurs (acariens phytophages et psylles)' [UCL in co-operation with 'l'Ecole Nationale d'Agriculture' (Morocco)].

Papua New Guinea
1985-ongoing: Systematics and ecology of macro-algae, marine vascular plants, lichens and lignicolous Fungi [ULg in co-operation with the University and the Forest Research Institute of Papua New Guinea; financing: 'Fonds de la Recherche Fondamentale Collective' – FNRS].

Federal level: co-operation projects involving scientific institutions

The **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** published the proceedings of the AETFAT conference held in Meise [Syst. Geogr. Plants 71 (2): 1151 pag]. Cameroonian botanists, the next organisers of the conference in 2007, asked for support of the NBGB.

The project with CECODI (Benin) came to an end, but the collaboration with the different partners went on. Within the region there is a big interest in ethnomycology, especially since the 'Guide des Champignons comestibles du Bénin' was published in 2002. The NBGB continues collaboration with mycologists in the region (Benin, Burkina Faso, etc.).

In 2005 the Garden organised a course on field mycology in Gabon for the Central-African region. The course was made possible trough funding of the CIFOR in collaboration with the Centre National de Recherches Scientifiques ert Technologiques (Libbreville, Gabon).

Since 2005 the Garden is responsible for the rehabilitation of the botanic garden in Kisantu, a project funded by the European Union as part of the programme 'Renforcement des capacités de gestion de l'ICCN et appui à la réhabilitation d'aires protégées en République Démocratique du Congo'. The rehabilitation programme, including renewal of buildings is a two years project. The main fields of interest are institutional capacity building, education, collection management and development and infrastructure.

The department of African Zoology of the **Royal Museum for Central Africa** (RMCA) has bilateral development co-operation projects with African partners in several countries, covering the following fields: ornithology (BirdLife - Cameroon, MUIENR - Uganda, UNIKIS – DR Congo, CNDRS - Comoros, UCT – South Africa), entomology and invertebrates (NMK - Kenya, Ivory Coast, SADC region, BEST – DR Congo), ichthyology (TAFIRI - Tanzania, Fisheries Dept. - Zambia) and mammalogy (UNIKIS – DR Congo). Projects have a general focus on education capacity building (museology) and/or taxonomic expertise support for biodiversity inventories.

Specific projects on freshwater biodiversity resources in Africa and South-East Asia involve active co-operation with institutions in the Ivory Coast, Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Vietnam and Indonesia. These projects are *inter alia* financed by the DGDC, the European Union and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature.

The African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC) is housed at the Royal Museum for Central Africa and funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation. The RMCA has the largest zoological collections from central Africa in the world, and ABIC organises training internships for students from developing countries, with an emphasis on datamining and transfer of collection information. ABIC engages in co-operation agreements with the source institutions of the students to ensure support for the valorisation of the transferred information after the training. Internships are individually adapted to meet the needs and requirements of the applicants.

The **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences** is cooperating in the European Union Project PASCALIS (Protocols for the Assessment and Conservation of Aquatic life in the Subsurface). The objective of the project is the assessment and conservation of groundwater biodiversity in Europe. Partners are universities and museums in France, Spain, Italy and Slovenia.

With respect to the Antarctic Treaty, Belgium co-operates with other parties in the framework of the SCAR programme (Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, working group Biology). URL: www.scar.org. Ant'phipoda, another RBINS project on the Antarctic, is a web reference centre on

marine biodiversity in the Antarctic, and is devoted to amphipod crustaceans.

The RBINS actively participates in the development of the ENBI initiative (European Network of Biodiversity Information), which is the European Union's contribution to GBIF. It is also a member of ENHSIN (European Natural History Specimen Information Network) and is the co-ordinator of the European network of museums CASTEX dealing with the best use of natural specimen in scientific touring exhibition.

The RBINS has obtained the EU label of 'Major European Infrastructure' and participated to ABC (Access to Belgian Collection of interest for biodiversity) from 2001 to 2003, allowing 75 scientists to visit the zoological and palaeontological collections of the institute. From 2004 to 2009, the RBINS is representing Belgium in the SYNTHESYS project, coordinated by the Natural History Museum of London and involving 20 biological collections. Under SYNTHESYS, the RBINS is coordinating the venue of scientific visitors coming to Brussels (RBINS), Tervuren (RMCA) or Meise (NBGB).

The RBINS is also the country representative in the Network of Excellency EDIT (2005-2010) standing for European Distributed Institutes of Taxonomy. RBINS is coordinating the taxonomy training activities of this new large biodiversity-oriented network.

The **Belgian CHM partnership** with developing countries is continuing (see Second National Report for more information) and includes now cooperation with 21 countries and 3 subregional networks. The cooperation with countries includes capacity building of CHM National Focal Points, hosting of the national CHMs, technical advice, scientific cooperation and training of national BCH focal points to use the BCH portal (http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/cooperation/partnership/partner-inf.htm). Furthermore one regional CHM workshop in Burkina Faso, December 2003 (http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/cooperation/partnership/workshopouaga/workbur2003.htm) and a sub-regional CHM training course in Burundi, January 2005 (http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/cooperation/partnership/formregionalburundi/formbur2005.htm) have been organised.

There has been cooperation with Bulgaria on the development of a metadata tool, with the Netherlands on their CHM partnership initiative, with the European Community on their CHM, and with Germany. In June 2003, a meeting has been organised in Belgium on practical cooperation between national CHM's. National focal points from eight European countries participated in the meeting.
Multilateral cooperation on project development and training has been undertaken with the South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), the 'Commission des Ministres en charge des Forêts en Afrique Centrale' (COMIFAC) and the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas in the Mediterranean.

The **Belgian Focal Point to the GTI** has recently (2001) been assigned to the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels, the largest of Belgium's federal natural history institutions. This NFP has, ever since it became fully operational back in 2004, been actively seeking cooperation and benefit sharing with other contracting parties to the CBD and this mainly through a pragmatic capacity building programme. It does so in joint cooperation with other competent Belgian taxonomic bodies (such as the RMCA, the NBGB and the BCCM, a.o.). The Belgian programme operates through two parallel, but complementary approaches (the top-down and the bottom-up; see below) and ensures individual and institutional cooperation that aim at conservation and sustainable use of the fundamental components of biodiversity (from genes to ecosystems), however with as central axis the recognition of the only fundamental unit in nature: the species. More information on Belgium's capacity building programme in taxonomy can be retrieved from the Belgian NFP's website, located at: http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be//belgium/cooperation/projects/gti/eligible.htm

Here it suffices to highlight some of its first results (see also Franklin & Van Goethem 2004, Franklin *et al.*, submitted, Samyn *et al.*, submitted a&b)

Individual support: in 2004, through two open calls, 51 capacity building proposals have been received by the Belgian Focal Point to the GTI (11 following the first and 40 following the second call). These were geographically distributed over the African (24), the Asian (18) and the South and Central American (6) developing regions. Of these 51 projects, the Belgian Focal Point to the GTI selected eighteen projects for direct, individual support (9 from Africa, 6 from Asia and 3 from South & Central America).

To date (June 2005), twelve visitors have benefited from non-taxon specific as well as taxon specific training in taxonomy. One additional candidate will benefit from a capacity building visit to Belgium

later this year (July to mid August) and at least five other selected candidates (together with some ten, largely externally funded, other candidates) will benefit from a regional training workshop in Thailand (on the taxonomy of Rotifera and Echinodermata).

To ensure durability of training received in Belgium, the GTI tutor or equivalent (dependent on the taxon), also has the possibility to carry out follow-up training visits in the developing country. For instance, the Belgian GTI tutor assisted by independently funded colleagues from the RBINS and from the RMCA, carried out two visits (November 2004 and May 2005) to a developing country that actively requested complementary field-training (the Comoros, on Holothuroidea *i.e.* sea cucumbers). The latter support has resulted not only in an increased understanding of the taxonomy of sea cucumbers, but also in the arming of a local Focal Point (Point focal holothuries) that now has the scientific weapons and ammunition to feed forward jurisdiction for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The latter Focal Point has for example succeeded in pushing a strict governemental interdiction of sea cucumber fisheries in the Comoros (decree nr. 0413/MDRPAE/CAB, dated 20.12.2004).

Institutional support: to date (June 2005) institutional support is given mainly through *in-situ* capacity building projects. Three one-year projects have directly been funded by the Belgian GTI in 2004 (Taxonomy of rodents in DR Congo, Entomology in Cambodia and Herpetofauna in Guyana). These projects have been allocated a one-year extension in 2005, exactly to ensure that sustainability of first results be assured for the better and larger benefit of the local scientific, and in the long term economic, community. These projects boost understanding of ecosystem function through transmitting, transforming, increasing and challenging knowledge at the taxo-systematic level. This allows to respond with more vigour to open questions in evolutionary biology (e.g. speciation, extinction), ecology (e.g. carrying capacity, redundancy, biodiversity estimates), conservation biology (e.g. setting conservation priorities), biogeography (e.g. ecological and historical biogeography, consequence of alien, invasive species). In short, by rendering local scientists and their respective institutions more operable in terms of taxonomy *sensu lato*, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity can be more readily obtained.

More information on the capacity building efforts of the Belgian GTI NFP is to be found in:

- Franklin, A. & Van Goethem, J.L. (eds), 2004. Report on Implementation of Programme of Work for the Global Taxonomy Initiative. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels, 25 pp.
- Franklin A., Segers H., Samyn Y., Réveillon A., Van Goethem J.L. 2005 (submitted). Taxonomic capacity and implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative in Belgium. *Proceedings of the Workshop 'Building Capacity for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) in a larger Europe', Vilm, Germany, 21-24.06.2004.*
- Samyn Y., Réveillon A., Franklin A. & Van Goethem J.L. 2005a (submitted). One Year of Taxonomic Capacity Building by the Belgian Focal Point to the Global Taxonomy Initiative. *Proceedings of the 3rd GBIF Science Symposium, Brussels, 18-19.04.2005.*
- Samyn Y., Réveillon A., Franklin A. & Van Goethem J.L. 2005b (submitted). Le renforcement des capacités en taxonomie: résultats obtenus après une année de travail au Point focal belge pour l'Initiative taxonomique mondiale. *Proceedings of the symposium 'Ecosystèmes côtiers de l'Afrique de l'Ouest'.*

Several references in other sections of this national report are made to **Belgian Development Cooperation** support to biodiversity programmes in other countries. In summary these are:

- support to the Wetland strategic plan, Uganda;
- MIKE-UNEP project, (Africa unspecified);
- sustainable management of Kilombero 'Ramsar' site, Tanzania;
- 'Plan Binacional', Ecuador & Peru;
- sustainable management by communities in the buffer zone of Selous game reserve, Tanzania;
- community support to promote biodiversity in the World Heritage Site of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

10. Is your country working with other Parties to develop regional, subregional or bioregional mechanisms and networks to support implementation of the Convention? (decision VI/27 A)	
a) No	
b) No, but consultations are under way	
c) Yes, some mechanisms and networks have been established (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, existing mechanisms have been strengthened (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on development of regional, subregional or bioregional mechanisms and networks to support implementation of the Convention.

Multilateral cooperation on project development and training has been undertaken with the 'South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme', the 'Commission des Ministres en charge des Forêts en Afrique Centrale' (COMIFAC) and the 'Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas in the Mediterranean'.

Participation in regional and sub-regional mechanisms which contribute to the implementation of the Convention involves a variety of mechanisms at a variety of levels. These include activities in the framework of transboundary projects (INTERREG, LIFE-Nature) for area specific nature conservation planning that supports implementation of the CBD. Within the European Union there is the cooperation in the framework of the Habitats and Birds Directives and the Biodiversity Expert Groups involved in the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans.

At the Pan-European regional level, there is a participation in the range of activities of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy process (PEBLDS), which is recognised as a regional implementation of CBD.

In the framework of the Benelux Union:

- the 'Plan de Base Ecologique et Paysager Transfrontalier' and the 'Grensoverschrijdend Ecologisch Basisplan' (see question 6);
- the working group on environmental communication and education;
- the 'Three Countries Parc – Open space without borders' (see question 6).

The Nature Directors of the three Benelux countries regularly meet to agree on joint positions in relation to European and international issues on nature.

11. Is your country taking steps to harmonise national policies and programmes, with a view to optimising policy coherence, synergies and efficiency in the implementation of various multilateral environment agreements (MEAs) and relevant regional initiatives at the national level? (decision VI/20)	
a) No	
b) No, but steps are under consideration	
c) Yes, some steps are being taken (please specify below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive steps are being taken (please specify below)	

Further comments on the harmonisation of policies and programmes at the national level.

Belgian environmental policy coherence is ensured by a strong coordination of international, European and national environmental policy which involves the following structures: Inter-ministerial Conference for Environment (ICE), Coordination Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP), Steering Committees of CCIEP (Biodiversity, Nature, Forests, Agriculture, Water, Soil, Climate, North Sea & Oceans, Atmosphere, Waste, …), Directorate General for Europe, Consultation Committee for Desertification, National Climate Commission, Interdepartmental Commission on Sustainable Deve-

lopment.

One single Focal Point (either one Region or the Federal level) has been designated to coordinate sharing of information for the various global agreements (CITES, CMS, Ramsar, WHC, UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, UNFF, UNCLOS) and regional agreements (Bern, AEWA, ASCOBANS, EUROBATS, OSPAR, LANDSCAPE, MCPFE, PEBLDS (Emerald network), EU Birds directive, EU Habitats directive, EU Regulation on CITES).

Contact points in Belgium for international nature- and biodiversity-related agreements, organisations and programmes are available on the B CHM at the following URL: http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/biodiversity/contactpoints/contact_points.htm.

National efforts to improve synergies among MEA's in general, the biodiversity conventions and the Rio conventions are undertaken:

- although the mechanism for policy coordination is well established in Belgium (partly due to the repartition of environmental competencies between the Federal government and the three Regions), there are no real coordination mechanisms to also ensure coherence in the implementation of projects under the three Rio conventions and the MEA's in general. Only now processes are being developed to ensure coherence in implementation under the three Rio conventions;
- this lack has been identified by the Steering Groups for both biodiversity and climate and a decision was taken by the Steering Group for Greenhouse Effect to investigate possibilities to develop an ad hoc group synergies to ensure the coordination among the Belgian actors involved in implementing the three conventions, in both national and international projects. It should bring together experts from different steering groups. One of the issues that will be looked at by this group will be the development of a list of criteria that can be used by the different actors involved in projects on climate, biodiversity and/or desertification. Screening against these criteria will improve understanding of linkages among these issues and build awareness;
- more specifically, the forest policy in the three regions is based on the principle of multifunctionality of forests. This principle implies that forest policy has to be based on an integrated approach. International commitments are taken into account when forest policy is being developed and implemented. The way in which this is actually carried out can vary according to the issues at hand. Systems of policy planning involve different actors and stakeholders, from official side as well as from major groups and stakeholders. This means that a broad range of views and issues are being tabled and taken on board when policy initiatives are being prepared and implemented.

In 2004, the **Flemish Region** initiated, organised and co-financed a workshop (in Haasrode) for harmonisation and streamlining biodiversity reporting under the MEA's.

Box XLI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this strategy specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 6 - General measures for conservation and sustainable use

12. Has your country put in place effective national strategies, plans and programmes to provide a national framework for implementing the three objectives of the Convention? (Goal 3.1 of the Strategic Plan)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant strategies, plans and programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some strategies, plans and programmes are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive strategies, plans and programmes are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the strategies, plans and programmes for implementing the three objectives of the Convention.

Flemish Region: the Environment and Nature Policy Plan 2003-2007 includes objectives and measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, as well as projects for supporting conservation efforts under international cooperation such as the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests, specific projects under other MEA's.

Walloon Region: a Nature action plan is being developed. Objectives and measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are integrated in the Natura 2000 Decree (modifying the Law on nature conservation), in the Water Code, in a Piscicultural Management Plan for the Semois bassin, in the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification.

The Walloon Region is promoting a closer-to-nature sylviculture and the Pro Silva method, and has reviewed its agri-environmental measures to protect some natural landscapes elements and adopt biodiversity-friendly measures. The development of fallow lands with rich fauna is supported. More information on these initiatives will be given further in this report. Furthermore, wet zones of biological interest, underground cavities of scientific interest, domanial or other nature and forest reserves continue to be designated.

Until now, the **Brussels Capital Region** has not developed a specific nature policy plan or biodiversity strategy plan which provides a framework for implementing the objectives of the convention. However, preservation of biodiversity is integrated in general policy. Two main programmes which are guiding the Brussels Capital Region policy on open green space do include measures an objectives of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity: the green and the blue network programme.

The green network emphasises the cohesion and continuity of green spaces and semi-natural areas in the urban environment. The intention is to integrate the scenic, esthetical, social, recreational and ecological functions of the green spaces and to develop of their interconnectivity by greenways and new green areas. The programme green network also includes the objectives of an ecological network, so as to take the development of ecological corridors, when possible, into account when developing green connexions between green spaces. However, no legal obligations or regulations exist. It should also be emphasised that due to the urban situation, realisation of ecological corridors is very difficult and (political) priority is given to social aspects (e.g. walking and cycling).

Simultaneously, work is being done to implement the blue network. Its purpose is to have an integrated, durable and ecologically-justified management of the open waterways in the Region. This requires active co-operation between the various sectors, in particular between the green spaces managers and the infrastructure department. Much attention is devoted to the increase of natural values and biodiversity in such a way that the public still has access to the areas concerned.

In the land use plan of the Brussels Capital Region (soil zone plan, GBP-PRAS, 2001), within the category of green spaces, a new category has been integrated: sites with high biological value. Most semi-natural sites with high biological value, and not represented in category forest or park, which until this land use plan of 2001 had no protection, have received this value. With the category forests, these sites are legally protected for nature and biodiversity values and have special management plans.

About 240 ha or 1.5% of the Brussels Capital Region territory is nature- and forest reserve. About 14% of the territory or +/- 2,320 ha has been designated as SAC following the Habitats Directive. Most semi-natural sites (forests, humid areas, etc.) has received this special European protection, also sites which until now had no specific natureprotection as nature or forest reserve, forest or site of high biological value. Special management plans to protect and develop biodiversity of these sites are being developed. The total area under protectionhas thus increased. Management plans are under construction for these SAC, and already partially realised. It is very probable that some SAC will receive the status of nature reserve.

Forest management has been oriented to integrate conservation of biodiversity values and sustainable use. The FSC-label has been granted to the largest forest of the Brussels Capital Region, the Sonian forest.

The first and second **Federal** Plans for Sustainable Development list strategic objectives and actions in line with the three objectives of the CBD. Action 18 of the second FPSD is for example devoted to biodiversity and focuses on sectoral integration of biodiversity in federal key sectors (transport, economy, development cooperation, scientific policy).

The National Biodiversity Strategy is expected to be adopted early 2006. The aim of the strategy is to bridge the gap between, at the one hand, the effective integration of biodiversity into relevant sectors of activity, and at the other hand, current activities in Belgium and in Belgium's international relations.

13. ◆ Has your country set measurable targets within its national strategies and action plans? (decisions II/7 and III/9)

a) No	
b) No, measurable targets are still in early stages of development	X
c) No, but measurable targets are in advanced stages of development	
d) Yes, relevant targets are in place (please provide details below)	
e) Yes, reports on implementation of relevant targets available (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on targets set within national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

b) **Walloon Region**: measurable targets are in early stage of development.

d) **Brussels Capital Region**: specific targets have been developed in the framework of the green and blue network.

e) **Flemish Region**: the Environment and Nature Policy Plan 2003-2007 includes objectives, measures and targets for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. A yearly planning document includes a brief analysis on the implementation of the set targets. A bi-annual Nature Report reviews the status and trends of relevant biodiversity aspects.

14. Has your country identified priority actions in its national biodiversity strategy and action plan? (decision VI/27 A)

a) No	
b) No, but priority actions are being identified	
c) Yes, priority actions identified (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on priority actions identified in the national biodiversity strategy and action plan.

Flemish Region: priority actions are included in the chapter on biodiversity of the Environment and Nature Policy Plan.

Some priority actions have been and are undertaken in the **Walloon** and **Brussels Capital Regions**

but these are not specifically identified and mentioned as such in a strategic document. So far, the Brussels Capital Region has no specific biodiversity strategy plan.

Some priority actions have been identified in the first (2000-2004) and second (2004-2008) **Federal** Plan for Sustainable Development.

The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will also include priority objectives. It is proposed to ensure and promote sustainable use of components of biodiversity through sectoral integration of biodiversity (in agriculture, fishery, forestry, hunting, tourism, transport and energy).

15. Has your country integrated the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as benefit sharing into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies? (decision VI/27 A)	
a) No	
b) Yes, in some sectors (please provide details below)	X
c) Yes, in major sectors (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, in all sectors (please provide details below)	

Further information on integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and benefit-sharing into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is up to some level included in programmes and policies on agriculture, inland waters, forestry and infrastructure.

Action 19 of the second **Federal** Plan for Sustainable Development (2004-2008) is devoted to sectoral integration of biodiversity in four federal key sectors.

The Nationale Biodiversity Strategy will among others focus on sectoral and cross-sectoral integration of biodiversity considerations.

16. Are migratory species and their habitats addressed by your country's national biodiversity strategy or action plan (NBSAP)? (decision VI/20)	
a) Yes	X
b) No	

I) If **YES**, please briefly describe the extent to which it addresses	
a) Conservation, sustainable use and/or restoration of migratory species	Implementation according to the Bonn Convention. Specific attention to migratory water birds within the framework of the AEWA Agreement. Implementation of the EU Birds Directive with reference to migratory bird species.
b) Conservation, sustainable use and/or restoration of migratory species' habitats, including protected areas	Within the framework of the Bonn Convention, Ramsar Convention, EU Habitats and Birds Directives, AEWA, EUROBATS, ASCOBANS and the section on migratory fish species under the Benelux agreements.
c) Minimising or eliminating barriers or obstacles to migration	Scientific institutes are doing research on the impact of wind mill(park)s on migratory birds.
d) Research and monitoring for migratory species	A large-scale network of volunteers to monitor water birds during winter exists. Compilation of data is performed by Wetlands International.

e) Transboundary movement	Participation in international projects, e.g. International Waterbird Census and in relation to marine oil pollution of birds.

Biodiversity and Climate Change

17. Has your country implemented projects aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change that incorporate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use? (decision VII/15)	
a) No	
b) No, but some projects or programmes are under development	X
c) Yes, some projects have been implemented (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the projects aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change that incorporate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

Flemish Region: the Institute of Forestry and Game Management (IBW) investigates the spatial and temporal variations of C-stocks in forest soils, in order to support policy within the framework of the Kyoto Protocol.

For the development of the conservation objectives and measures for rehabilitation and conservation of the Scheldt estuary, aspects relevant to mitigation and adaptation to climate change are being taken into account.

The **Brussels Capital Region** developed a CDM-project: a large scale afforesting in a degraded savanna around Nioki (Democratic Republic of Congo), category (JI/CDM). The afforesting project is using indigenous species and in accordance with the local communities with aim to reach the FSC label. The study started in 2003, the concrete afforesting is expected by the end of 2006. The expected date for the project termination is 60 years. The estimated amount of Certified Emission Reduction generated by the project is 44000 tCO per year during the first CP, not yet estimated for the next CP. The project involves mainly public funds from the Brussels Capital Region.

The **Federal** Government has engaged itself to acquire emission rights from JI (Joint Implementation) and CDM (Clean Development Mechanism) projects. All project activities are eligible, except land use, land use change and forestry projects. Projects must follow approved JI or CDM methodology. The assessment of the contribution of the project to sustainable development will be based on indicators of three broad components of sustainable development: environmental sustainability (which include biodiversity), social sustainability and economic development.

18. Has your country facilitated coordination to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation projects are in line with commitments made under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification? (decision VII/15)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant mechanisms are under development	X
c) Yes, relevant mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the coordination to ensure that climate change mitigation and adaptation projects are in line with commitments made under the UNFCCC and the UNCCD.

The **Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Security and Environment**, responsible for the coordination of UNFCCC, underlines that projects financed by Belgium should respect the objectives of all three conventions. However, as there could be practical limitations to this, the idea is still under discussion and no political decision has been taken yet.

The Strategy for Environment of the **Belgian Development Cooperation** intends to integrate environmental concerns in the development cooperation. As this is not limited to one aspect, this Strategy contributes to ensuring an integrated approach towards the objectives of the UNCBD,

UNFCCC and UNCCD.

In providing financial contributions to UNEP, one of the priorities of Belgium is to improve the coherent implementation of UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD.

Brussels Capital Region: see question 17.

Box XLII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

The 2004 brochure 'Biodiversity in Belgium: an overview' (in French and Dutch) draws the following conclusions:

Comparisons of old and new observations reveal that not less than one third to half of the species are threatened in Belgium. About the entire decline of biodiversity is a result of human activities. Main threats are:

- the destruction and fragmentation of open space for industry, agriculture, roads and housing;
- pollution and more especially eutrophication;
- the rising pressure of tourism and recreation;
- invasive alien species;
- climate change;
- the depletion of natural resources.

But also:

- the lack of ecological and taxonomical knowledge;
- the rising number and often non-concerted feature of meetings, reports, etc.

Flemish Region: the bi-annual Nature Reports describe status and trends of habitats, species, main ecosystem functions, pressures and impacts. Sets of indicators have been developed, based on the indicators listed on regional, international and global level. A first evaluation will be available through the indicator website of the Institute of Nature Conservation (www.instnat.be).

The main causes of biodiversity loss or decline were identified as habitat loss and degradation, fragmentation and pollution. Agriculture was the most important underlying cause of habitat loss/degradation. The biggest constraints to progress were seen as a lack of man-power and finances for proper implementations, political support and public participation, policy supportive research and monitoring.

Walloon Region: at the end of 2003, the Walloon Government has taken note of the orientations of the action programme for the air quality in the framework of the 2010 Objective. These orientations take into account among others the European programme on climate change.

The State of the Walloon Environment mentions climate change as one of the causes of the shift in distribution area of species groups such as the Odonata.

The **Brussels Capital Region** publishes every two years the State of the Environment. It provides essential information on status on trends of habitats and species.

Article 7 - Identification and monitoring

19. ◇ On Article 7(a), does your country have an ongoing programme to identify components of biological diversity at the genetic, species, ecosystem level?

a) No	
b) Yes, selected/partial programmes at the genetic, species and/or ecosystem level only (please specify and provide details below)	X
c) Yes, complete programmes at ecosystem level and selected/partial inventories at the genetic and/or species level (please specify and provide details below)	

Further comments on ongoing programmes to identify components of biodiversity at the genetic, species and ecosystem level.

There are ongoing inventory and monitoring programmes for major species groups indicated for a comprehensive range of species and major ecosystems as well as major programmes in some sectors at the genetic level. Indicators have been developed and are in place. (More information can be found in the thematic report 'Indicators for biological diversity in Belgium' (2001), available on the B CHM website at http://www.naturalsciences.be/bch-cbd/belgium/contribution/documents.htm)

No coherent information system is available in Belgium or in the different regions, although some initiatives, mainly at the regional level, to remedy to this situation are underway. For the moment however, most inventories and monitoring activities are still conducted by separate university laboratories or research institutions in the frame of ongoing research projects or on request of administrations or agencies. No global database is available and each research group holds its own data.

In 2003, the country study 'Biodiversity in Belgium' was published. It constitutes a comprehensive inventory on all groups of animals, plants, fungi and micro-organisms as well as on habitats present in Belgium, being among others a major tool to identify future identification and monitoring needs.

Walloon Region: an Observatory of Fauna, Flora and Habitats (OFFH) has been set up at the Nature, Forests and Wood Research Centre of the Walloon Region. It takes care of collecting and characterising data relating to biological diversity, which is done through the collaboration between a wide range of naturalists, scientists and officials of the Nature and Forestry Division.

The basic assignments of the OFFH are: organising and co-ordinating the collection and analysis of biological data in order to gather information about the state of biodiversity in the Walloon Region; defining the main lines of a strategy for its conservation and assess its effectiveness; standardising, recording and managing biological data collected within the scope of agreements or subsidies by the Walloon Region; disseminating information, encouraging interaction and organising exchanges between specialists, nature lovers, authorities, universities and the general public.

The aim for the years to come is to continue to develop four work programmes:

1) The 'Inventory and Monitoring of Biodiversity – Monitoring of the state of the environment through bio-indicators' (ISB-SURWAL) Programme: the general aim is to describe and monitor the distribution of species belonging to various major biological groups. The regularly monitored biological groups are birds, dragonflies, butterflies, orchids, reptiles, amphibians and bats. Monitoring is organised in collaboration with naturalist associations. This choice allows a wide range of expertise to be maintained (many collaborators, diversity of monitored taxa and widespread coverage of the territory) and enables naturalist associations to be helped in developing their activities. The network of collaborators formed in this way is also regularly questioned by authorities (requests for opinions, expert appraisal of areas, lists of species, etc.).

2) The 'Inventory and Monitoring of Habitats' (ISH) Programme: the general aim is to make an inventory and monitor the distribution of habitats. This programme is in the process of being developed. It will lead, on the one hand, to standardising the way in which habitats are described and mapped out and, on the other hand, to monitoring the evolution of landscapes. An ambitious project for the inventory and monitoring of habitats combining ground plotting and satellite data is being prepared.

3) The 'Inventory of Sites of Great Biological Interest' (SGIB) Programme: the general objective is to

gather information concerning areas that harbour species and habitats of great biological interest and integrate it into a standardised system. After having gathered existing information together, a second phase will be implemented to assess priorities as far as initiatives for the conservation and management of the natural heritage are concerned.

4) The 'System of information on Biodiversity in the Walloon Region' (SIBW) Programme: the aim is to disseminate information collected within the scope of the first three programmes and all available, pertinent 'non-sensitive' information. Information is filed in order to provide a real tool for helping authorities in decision-making and an information tool for the general public, by disseminating raw information or by indicating the sources where detailed information can be obtained (bibliography, experts, associations, etc.). The objective is to continue to integrate all available information into a standardised information processing system and above all to structure information flow to ensure that it is updated.

The programmes define a set of biodiversity state indicators as well as indicators of the situation of the Walloon environment (bio-indicators), and meet the requirements of the Office for Nature and Green Space Conservation, those of the Walloon Senior Nature Conservation Council or of international bodies such as the European Union or the Council of Europe.

Furthermore, the following monitoring is carried out: the permanent inventory of forest resources that include biodiversity parameters, the follow up of trees' health, the follow up of the biological quality of watersheds by the biotic index method, based on macro-invertebrates. More focused studies are carried out to respond on more specific issues.

The indicators used are essentially:

- state indicators: evolution of indicators of their status (IUCN categories) of the above mentioned species, biotic index of watercourses, defoliation % of trees;
- pressure indicators: evolution of the occupation of soils, in particular in urban areas, indicators concerning other compartments of the environment;
- responses indicators: % of protected areas, measure for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use outside protected areas.

The results are available on the biodiversity website of the Walloon Region, in scientific reviews, in naturalist NGO's newsletters and in a widely distributed rapport on the state of the Walloon Environment.

Flemish Region: inventories of the main ecosystems and habitats are included in the Nature Reports 1, 2, 3 and 4 (1999, 2001, 2003 and 2005, www.nara.be). An integrated information system and an overall database on scientific research are under further development.

The Flemish Institute of Nature Conservation (IN) is a research institute of the Flemish Government. It is responsible for reporting on the state of nature in the Flemish Region. It is also in charge of a number of inventories, the Biological Evaluation Map (BEM), and a number of Red Species Lists. The Institute of Nature Conservation and the Institute of Forestry and game Management coordinate a number of inventory and monitoring programmes on invertebrates, plants, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and a number of mammal species; this includes the development of appropriate database systems and web access applications.

Brussels Capital Region: inventory and monitoring of major species groups is going on since 1992 in the framework of the information and monitoring network of the flora and fauna of the Brussels Capital Region. Until now, no specific set of bioindicators has been selected. Red lists are under preparation for some major species groups (avifauna, herpetofauna, higher plants, macrofungi). Investigations are carried out by research institutes, universities and some NGO's. Database systems are under development, distribution atlases in preparation.

Inventories of main ecosystems and habitats, as well as their evaluation and classification, have also been made: inventory of sites of high biological value, the Biological Evaluation Map. An integrated information system has been developed.

North Sea: inventory and monitoring activities of components of the Belgian part of the North Sea are conducted by different actors, such as the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (through the Marine Ecosystem Management Department and some specific projects on the biodiversity of the Hinder Banks and of ship wrecks by the Invertebrates Department), the marine laboratory of the Ghent University and the Flanders Marine Institute.

The **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences**, through the research work of its different departments, participates actively in the inventory and survey of the fauna and habitats of Belgium. Moreover the RBINS regularly organises symposia and conferences and publishes atlases, bulletins, study documents through which information on species inventories, red lists, indicator species and monitoring processes is provided.

The **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** has a long standing tradition in inventory and monitoring activities that are leading to the updating and editing of floras for a number of major groups like phanerogams, fungi, mosses, liverworts and algae, as well as databases assembling distributional data regarding these groups. 'Florabank' (AMINAL, IN, NBGB, UGent) e.g. will allow the publication of an atlas of the flora of the Flemish Region in 2005.

The National Botanic Garden's monitoring produces red lists, mostly in collaboration with the Regions [with(in) the Flemish Region: phanerogams and mosses, with(in) the Brussels Capital Region: Lichenes, some fungal groups at country level]. For ectomycorrhizal Fungi (indicator group for forest quality) a limited number of permanent plots have been followed in the three regions of the country.

The **International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain** (INIBAP), a programme of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), maintains the largest *ex situ in vitro* collection of banana (*Musa*) germplasm in the world. The *Musa* germplasm management project is an inventory programme at genetic level since a major objective of the programme is the identification and characterisation of all components at species and sub-species level of the genus *Musa*. This international collection, which was established in 1985, is housed at the INIBAP Transit Centre, hosted at the Laboratory of Tropical Crop Improvement of the KU Leuven, Belgium (www.agr.kuleuven.ac.be/dtp/tro/itc.htm), where related research activities, mainly at genetic level, are performed.

A major research programme focused, from 1975 onwards, on the **native fruit tree genetic resources** inventory, their conservation (2,600 accessions, mostly landraces), evaluation and characterisation for practical uses (nurseries, fruit processing, etc.) and in a breeding programme.

Wild apple (*Malus sylvestris* subsp*. sylvestris*) is a very rare tree species in the Flemish Region, with only some hundreds of individuals still present. In a forest near Leuven (Meerdaalwoud) and in the most eastern part of the Flemish Region (Voerstreek), apples occur in small populations but most of the trees are individual remnants in a forest. A gene bank will be constructed in order to conserve this endangered species. A study aims at the genetic characterisation of the present individuals and populations and the discrimination of wild genotypes from individuals related to cultivars.

The *Malus* research is part of an ongoing inventory programme of forest tree species at the genetic level [pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur),* sessile oak *(Quercus petraea),* hornbeam *(Carpinus betulus)* and wild apple *(Malus sylvestris subsp. Sylvestris*)], funded by the Flemish Forest and Green Areas Division (AMINAL, Ministry of the Flemish Community). Other related projects at the Department of Plant Genetics and Breeding are the inventory of the genetic diversity of riverbank vegetation [reed (*Phragmites australis*), yellow flag (*Iris pseudacoris*) and cattail (*Typha latifolia*)] and the study of genetic diversity within natural populations of ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*).

20. ◈ On Article 7(b), which components of biological diversity identified in accordance with Annex I of the Convention, have ongoing, systematic monitoring programmes?	
a) at ecosystem level (please provide percentage based on area covered)	X
b) at species level (please provide number of species per taxonomic group and percentage of total known number of species in each group)	X
c) at genetic level (please indicate number and focus of monitoring programmes)	X
Further comments on ongoing monitoring programmes at the genetic, species and ecosystem level.	
See question 19.	

21. ◆ On Article 7(c), does your country have ongoing, systematic monitoring programmes on any of the following key threats to biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) Yes, invasive alien species (please provide details below)	X
c) Yes, climate change (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, pollution/eutrophication (please provide details below)	X
e) Yes, land use change/land degradation (please provide details below)	X
f) Yes, overexploitation or unsustainable use (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on monitoring programmes on key threats to biodiversity.

b) some programmes are ongoing for some species or species groups in some habitats. An enhanced coordination seems necessary.

c) monitoring of emissions of greenhouse gases (see www.climat.be/inventemis/inventaire1.html). Regarding monitoring of climate change effects, information is gathered in national communications on climate (www.environment.fgov.be/Root/tasks/atmosphere/klim/pub/natcom/set_fr.htm).

d) monitoring of the water quality, and thus also of pollution and eutrophication, is conducted throughout the country, often based on a biotic index.

e) information on land use changes are given through the monitoring programmes and actualisation of Biological Evaluation Maps, actualisation of GIS layers for the preparation of changes in land destination plans, project based vegetation mapping, monitoring of contracts under the Ruram Development Programme.

f) the Monitoring Section of the Sea Fisheries Department investigates the effects of man-made perturbations on the bentho-demersal ecosystem (mostly in the Belgian coastal waters and on the Belgian Coastal Shelf), from the community level down to the molecular level of individual organisms.

22. ◆ On Article 7 (d), does your country have a mechanism to maintain and organise data derived from inventories and monitoring programmes and coordinate information collection and management at the national level?	
a) No	
b) No, but some mechanisms or systems are being considered	
c) Yes, some mechanisms or systems are being established	
d) Yes, some mechanisms or systems are in place (please provide details below)	X
e) Yes, a relatively complete system is in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the coordination of data and information collection and management.

No coherent information system exists for the country, but the regions and research institutes de-velop(ed) their own systems. Some examples:

- the **Walloon Region** has launched its own biodiversity website, working as a proper Walloon Clearing-House Mechanism website (mrw.wallonie.be/dgrne/sibw). The site is hosted by the Nature, Forests & Wood Research Centre. This website provides a very wide and complete information on a.o. the status of species and habitats in the Region, protected areas, Walloon and European nature conservation legislation, research institutions and universities, institutional and non institutional stakeholders, public awareness and education. It points to interesting links

at European and Belgian level such as the Belgian CHM, the Biodiversity Resources in Belgium server, etc. The Walloon Region supports the initiative to use the Belgian CHM website to display information on the implementation of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives in Belgium;

- for the **Flemish Region**, the Institute of Nature Conservation, the Institute for Forestry and Game Management and the Flanders Marine Institute develop and maintain a number of database systems, based on the inventory and monitoring programmes they coordinate. Some of these databases are being linked to the centralised Flemish database of environmental data (MMIS);
- the website of the **Belgian Biodiversity Platform** (www.biodiversity.be/bbpf) provides for information about biodiversity research in Belgium and abroad. This site gives also access to thematic forums that promote sustainable ecosystem management and links to the existing national biodiversity websites (the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism, BCCM and Belnet/BIODIV);
- the project BIODIV '**Biodiversity Resources in Belgium**' is an inventory of biodiversity resources in Belgium (www.br.fgov.be/biodiv) containing (meta)data on specialists, research programmes at universities, institutes and elsewhere, collections, botanic gardens, zoos, museums, existing databases and their contents, lists of publications and recommended literature, associations, journals and administrations involved in the study and conservation of the diversity of living organisms in all its aspects;
- the **Brussels Capital Region**: the Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment has developed a database and geographic information system, based on the data collected from the inventory and monitoring programmes.

23. ◆ Does your country use indicators for national-level monitoring of biodiversity? (decision III/10)

a) No	
b) No, but identification of potential indicators is under way (please describe)	
c) Yes, some indicators identified and in use (please describe and, if available, provide website address, where data are summarised and presented)	X
d) Yes, a relatively complete set of indicators identified and in use (please describe and, if available, provide website address, where data are summarised and presented	

Further comments on the indicators identified and in use.

Flemish Region: the most important indicators related to nature that have been used for evaluation of, and reporting about, nature conservation action plan and management activities are:

- % of the country surface designated as nature reserve or nature management site;
- surface for which land uses have been changed into 'nature' or 'forest';
- % of the country surface where critical level of pollution is exceeded;
- surface involved in agro-environmental projects + monitoring of the impact on species and habitats;
- number of projects for rehabilitation or development of natural systems;
- degree of 'intactness' or 'rehabilitation' of the natural structure of water and river systems;
- trends of populations of indicator species;
- % of species groups that is identified as 'red list species';
- number and impact of species management plans.

More indicators for the evaluation of nature policies are being developed. The Flemish Nature Report (2005, www.nara.be) developed a full set of 'nature' indicators (www.natuurindicatoren.be).

Walloon Region: the indicators used are essentially:

- state indicators: evolution of indicators of their status (IUCN categories) of the above mentioned species, biotic index of watercourses, defoliation % of trees;
- pressure indicators: evolution of the occupation of soils, in particular in urban areas, indicators concerning other compartments of the environment;
- response indicators: % of protected areas, measure for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use outside protected areas

The results are available on the biodiversity website of the Walloon Region, in naturalist NGO's news-letters and in a widely distributed rapport on the state of the Walloon Environment.

Brussels Capital Region: the Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment (BIME) collects and analyses environmental data for the Brussels Capital Region. For the BIME, the development and use of sustainable development indicators is one of its priority research projects. Biological diversity indicators are included in the research. Several indicators are thought relevant, and are either being developed or already in use, including:

- status of the flora and fauna, *i.e.* species per group;
- area of green spaces;
- area of ponds and length of rivers;
- influence of economical production on biological diversity;
- protection of the flora and fauna, *i.e.* protected and threatened species, protected areas, areas of high ecological interest, Natura 2000 areas.

More information can be found in the thematic report 'Indicators for biological diversity in Belgium' (2001), on the B CHM:
bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/implementation/documents/thematicreports/indicators/indicators.htm

Box XLIII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Decisions on Taxonomy

24. ◆ Has your country developed a plan to implement the suggested actions as annexed to decision IV/1? (decision IV/1)

a) No	
b) No, but a plan is under development	
c) Yes, a plan is in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, reports on implementation available (please provide details below)	

Further information on a plan to implement the suggested actions as annexed to decision IV/1.

The **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences** (RBINS), being the Belgian National Focal Point to the GTI, in close cooperation with other Belgian Institutes such as the Royal Museum for Central

Africa (RMCA) and the National Botanic Garden of Belgium (NBGB), and funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation, has designed an operative strategy that aims at constructing positive feedback-loops in capacity building for taxonomy and collection management.

The core of the Belgian approach is embedded in building transparent bilateral and multilateral synergies that not only promote scientific partnerships, collection valuations and optimal resources utilisations, but also envisages maximal supply of information and tuition. The modus to attain this goal is twofold:

- the top-down approach builds on the extensive expertise of Belgian taxonomists that have been extensively researching in developing countries. Here Belgian experts with knowledge of local taxonomic impediments are funded by the Belgian GTI NFP to carry out taxonomic research in the developing country on the single condition that their research project has clear-cut capacity building components (e.g. training that enables local people to identify taxa, build and manage a reference collection for the country, etc.);
- the second approach is demand-driven and is based on the taxonomic needs as directly expressed by individuals or institutions from the developing world to the Belgian Focal Point to the GTI. These needs are captured through an internet-based call for proposals that is widely publicised through active participation in key international meetings (e.g. SBSTTA, COP) and complementary international forums (e.g. BioNET INTERNATIONAL, National GTI Focal Points, CITES workshops, etc.). Selected candidates are invited to the RBINS, the RMCA, the NBGB or other competent Belgian taxonomic research units where they receive both taxon-specific and non-taxon specific courses. The former are provided by experts from the above-mentioned scientific institutions while the latter are provided by Belgian GTI NFP team. Non-taxon specific training modules include theoretical introductions to the more relevant biological disciplines as commonly employed by the contemporary taxonomist (*e.g.* components and measurement of biodiversity; species and classification concepts; cladistics; evolution; nomenclature), databasing, as well as on funding bodies, international conventions and writing in taxonomic research (from proposal to taxonomic paper). In addition to training in Belgium, applicants can also request the Belgian GTI NFP to organise a short-term regional training course in developing countries. In this case the non-taxon and taxon specific training is complemented with field trips allowing to teach sampling and inventory techniques.

At the same time, Belgium participates as an observer to the meetings of the 'GTI coordination mechanism', supervised by the Secretariat of the CBD, during which taxonomic needs at the global level are discussed. No assessment has been completed yet in this context.

25. ◆ Is your country investing on a long-term basis in the development of appropriate infrastructure for your national taxonomic collections? (decision IV/1)

a)	No	
b)	Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further information on investment on a long-term basis in the development of appropriate infrastructure for your national taxonomic collections.

The last decades, Belgium's **Federal** scientific institutions have started with the digitisation of their taxonomic collections. Progress is disproportionate over the different institutions. The Belgian Federal Government decided on a multiyear funding for the digitisation of collections belonging to the ten Federal scientific institutions. For 2005, € 2,200,000 has been foreseen. From 2006 to 2014, € 4,300,000 will be available each year. The collections of RBINS and RMCA are part of this huge project.

An overview of Belgium's natural history collections can be found at:
http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be//belgium/biodiversity/faunaflorahabitats/collect.htm

Taxonomic societies, naturalist associations and independent experts are consultable through the database 'Biodiversity resources in Belgium' available under the following link: http://www.br.fgov.be/BIODIV/

Information on Belgium's collections of micro-organisms (bacteria, plasmids, fungi and yeasts) is centralised through the Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms (BCCM), a consortium of

four complementary research-based culture collections. It's holdings can be accessed under the following link: http://bccm.belspo.be/

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform further serves as the Belgian contact node for the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (formally termed Be-BIF). More information available under: http://www.biodiversity.be/

26. ◆ Does your country provide training programmes in taxonomy and work to increase its capacity of taxonomic research? (decision IV/1)		
a)	No	
b)	Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further information on training programmes in taxonomy and efforts to increase the capacity of taxonomic research.

Belgium has in recent years developed complementary training programmes in taxonomy. They are here retaken from Franklin & Van Goethem (eds) (2004: 10) and refined where necessary:

- the DGDC-RBINS capacity building project gives grantees from developing countries training in taxonomy and collection management. The following non-taxon specific (*i.e.* good practices in taxonomy) modules have so far been prepared by the **Belgian Focal Point to the GTI**. These didactic modules are best not considered final teaching packages as they are for each training session adjusted *ad hoc* and *ad hominem*. (1. Taxonomic Capacity Building for the Developing World - An Introduction to the Belgian GTI Focal Point, 2. The Diversity of Biodiversity, 3. An Introduction to Species Concepts, 4. Classification, 5. An Introduction to Cladistic Analysis, 6. Evolution - Historical Overview, 7. An Introduction to Zoological Nomenclature, 8. Tools for Taxonomic Researh, 9. An Introduction to Databases, 10. Biodiversity Internationally …Political Context - Funding Opportunities, 11. An Introduction to taxonomic publication);
- ABIC (African Biodiversity Information Centre), developed by the **Royal Museum for Central Africa**. Grants for specialised training sessions (3 months) in various taxonomic groups. Operational start in 2001;
- FishBase by the Royal Museum for Central Africa. Grants for training in the taxonomy of African freshwater fishes and the use of FishBase. Starting from 2005, five trainees for three months each year;
- the **VLIR** and **CIUF** receive funding from the Belgian Development Cooperation to develop international courses (usually 1 year), international training programmes (usually 1 to 6 months) and short training initiatives (5 days to 2 weeks). Some of these training initiatives specifically targets taxonomy. Examples include the Postgraduate International Nematology Course organised by the Ghent University (http://allserv.rug.ac.be/~nsmol/pinc.htm); the MSc in Ecological Marine Management organised by the Free University of Brussels VUB and University of Antwerp (http://www.ecomama.be/); the MSc in Aquaculture organised by the Universities of Liège and Namur (http://www.ulg.ac.be/aacad/prog-cours/sciences/FSCDESIntAqua.html);
- the '**Belgian Coordinated Collection of Micro-organisms**' (BCCM) provides individual and group training sessions on micro-organisms.

27. ◆ Has your country taken steps to ensure that institutions responsible for biological diversity inventories and taxonomic activities are financially and administratively stable? (decision IV/1)		
a)	No	
b)	No, but steps are being considered	
c)	Yes, for some institutions	X
d)	Yes, for all major institutions	

28.* [2] Is your country collaborating with the existing regional, subregional and global initiatives, partnerships and institutions in carrying out the programme of work, including assessing regional taxonomic needs and identifying regional-level priorities? (decision VI/8)	
a) No	
b) No, but collaborative programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some collaborative programmes are being implemented (please provide details about collaborative programmes, including results of regional needs assessments)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive collaborative programmes are being implemented (please provide details about collaborative programmes, including results of regional needs assessment and priority identification)	

Further information on the collaboration your country is carrying out to implement the programme of work for the GTI, including regional needs assessment and priority identification.

Active contribution to the paper called 'Supporting European taxonomy - current state and possible future actions' submitted by the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRS) to the European Commission in December 2003.

Participation in the position paper 'Biodiversity and Europe: the contribution of taxonomy and the European taxonomic facilities' produced by the Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities (CETAF). For this paper, some assessment of taxonomic needs has been undertaken.

Needs of GTI focal points have been discussed during the meeting 'Building Capacity for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) in a larger Europe', organised by Germany on 21-23 June 2004 on the Isle of Vilm. The Belgian GTI focal point took part in this meeting and presented how it developed its own activities.

More information is available in:

- Franklin A., Segers H., Samyn Y., Réveillon A., Van Goethem J.L. 2005 (submitted). Taxonomic capacity and implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative in Belgium. *Proceedings of the Workshop 'Building Capacity for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) in a larger Europe', Vilm, Germany, 21-24.06.2004*;
- Franklin, A. & Van Goethem, J.L. (eds), 2004. Report on Implementation of Programme of Work for the Global Taxonomy Initiative. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels, 25 pp.

29. * Has your country made an assessment of taxonomic needs and capacities at the national level for the implementation of the Convention? (annex to decision VI/8)	
a) No	
b) Yes, basic assessment made (please provide below a list of needs and capacities identified)	X
c) Yes, thorough assessment made (please provide below a list of needs and capacities identified)	

Further comments on national assessment of taxonomic needs and capacities.

[2] The questions marked with * in this section on Taxonomy are similar to some questions contained in the format for a report on the implementation of the programme of work on the Global Taxonomy Initiative. Those countries that have submitted such a report do not need to answer these questions unless they have updated information to provide.

Between 1998 and 2002, questionnaires were sent to Belgian and foreign experts in view of preparing the country study 'Biodiversity in Belgium' (*). There were questions on the number of species (for a given taxon) found in Belgium, the trends in species numbers, the causes for species increase or decrease, the regions with highest species richness, the existence of species lists, the status of taxonomical knowledge, the number of specialists for the given taxon in Belgium and in neighbouring countries, the existence and localisation of collections, etc. If no Belgian expert could be identified for a target group, the questionnaire was sent to experts in neighbouring countries or even to specialists worldwide. For zoological taxa, 316 questionnaires were returned, 194 being completed by Belgian experts and 122 by foreign specialists. A summary, per taxon, of the information gathered via these questionnaires can be found in 'Biodiversity in Belgium'. These questionnaires are not 'taxonomic needs assessments' *per se*, but provide information for the groups for which answers were received.

In October and December 2001, two symposia (**) were organised, one on the Belgian flora and one on the Belgian fauna. Their objectives were to evaluate the status of knowledge, assess the needs in taxonomic research and highlight the priorities for future work.

A short overview of Belgian taxonomic capacity has been carried out by the Belgian Biodiversity Platform (now integrated into Bio-in-Bel) for the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRS). It has been published as part of a paper called 'Supporting European taxonomy - current state and possible future actions' (***).

(*) Peeters, M., Franklin, A. & Van Goethem, J.L. (eds), 2003. Biodiversity in Belgium. Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, Brussels: 416 pp.

(**) Peeters, M & Van Goethem, J.L. (eds), 2002. Proceedings of the Symposium 'Status and trends of the Belgian fauna with particular emphasis on alien species', Brussels, 14.12.2001. Bulletin of the RBINS, Biologie, Vol. 72 – Supplement, 297 pp.

(**) Rappé, G., Busschots, K. & and Robbrecht, E. (eds), 2003. Proceedings of the Symposium 'Botanical Biodiversity and Belgium's expertise', National Botanical Garden of Belgium, Meise, 19-20.10.2001, Scripta Botanica Belgica, 24, 214 pp.

(***) Dimitrova, D. (ed.), 2003. Supporting European taxonomy - current state and possible future actions. EPBRS meeting held under the Italian Presidency in Florence, 20-24 November 2003.

30. * Is your country working on regional or global capacity building to support access to, and generation of, taxonomic information in collaboration with other Parties? (annex to decision VI/8)

a) No	
b) Yes, relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some activities are being undertaken for this purpose (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, many activities are being undertaken for this purpose (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on regional or global capacity-building to support access to, and generation of, taxonomic information in collaboration with other Parties.

1) Regional capacity building (EU-funded):

* support access to taxonomic information/collections:

- European Network for Biodiversity Information (ENBI);
- SYNTHESYS integrates former programmes that granted access to national collections, including ABC (Access to Belgian Collections, 2001-2004) at the RBINS. RMCA and NBGB also contribute to SYNTHESYS;

* support generation of taxonomic information: most EU-funded projects include a capacity-building component.

2) Global capacity building:

* support access to taxonomic information/collections (both projects are funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation. Since 2004, they are developing synergies):

- ABIC (African Biodiversity Information Centre), by the Royal Museum for Central Africa. Grants for scientific study visits, for pre-doctoral candidates and recognised taxonomy experts. Operational start in 2001;
- DGDC-RBINS capacity building project, by the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences. Grants for scientific study visits for professionals ranging from technicians & parataxonomists to experts. Funding also available for visits to the Royal Museum for Central Africa and the National Botanic Garden. Operational start in 2004

* support generation of taxonomic information:

- the Belgian Development Cooperation funds universities, via the Flemish and French Community Interuniversity Councils (VLIR and CIUF), to carry out research projects on biodiversity in developing countries. Some of these research projects include a taxonomic component;
- the VLIR and CIUF offer scholarships to participate in international courses (MSc level) held in Belgium. These scholarships are available for developing country applicants. VLIR also provides PhD scholarships to promising graduates of its international courses. Both VLIR and CIUF offer travel bursaries for Belgian and European students registered at a Flemish and French-speaking universities for travel to a developing country. For all these programmes, topics do not exclude taxonomy but there must be a strong developmental component;
- the Belgian Science Policy Office finances bilateral cooperation projects with Central and Eastern European countries and a few other countries such as China. Some of these projects have a taxonomic component;
- the Belgian Science Policy Office finances the Belgian contribution to GBIF, which includes a capacity-building component;
- the 'Belgian Coordinated Collection of Micro-organisms' (BCCM) provides capacity building for micro-organisms, through bilateral contract agreements and research projects (e.g. with Morocco and China).

31. * Has your country developed taxonomic support for the implementation of the programmes of work under the Convention as called upon in decision VI/8? (annex to decision VI/8)

a) No	
b) Yes, for forest biodiversity (please provide details below)	X
c) Yes, for marine and coastal biodiversity (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, for dry and sub-humid lands (please provide details below)	X
e) Yes, for inland waters biodiversity (please provide details below)	X
f) Yes, for mountain biodiversity (please provide details below)	X
g) Yes, for protected areas (please provide details below)	X
h) Yes, for agricultural biodiversity (please provide details below)	X
i) Yes, for island biodiversity (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the development of taxonomic support for the implementation of the programmes of work under the Convention.

Some research projects in relation to **forest biological diversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Biodiversity of fishes in Gabon rainforest, 1998-2002, RMCA
- Biodiversity of litter ant communities of the Ceará (Brazil), 2001-, ULB
- Botanical biodiversity of inselbergs from continental Equatorial Guinea, Central Africa, 1999-, ULB
- Calculating the biodiversity of regions in tropical Africa by means of the moth fauna (Lepidop-

tera), 1993-, RMCA

- Checklist of forest macrofungi in the Brussels Capital Region
- Development of a red list of macrofungi in the Flemish Region, 1998-, UGent
- Development of a checklist of macrofungi and slime moulds in the Flemish Region, UGent & Vlaamse Mycologen Vereniging
- Chorology, taxonomy and systematics of european native orchidaceae, 1970-, UCL
- Distribution and frequency of bryophytes in the Flemish Region, 2004-2010, NBGB
- Ecology of Acari (Arachnida) and Collembola (Insecta) in soil and canopy in African habitats, ongoing, RMCA
- Ecology of ground beetles (Coleoptera) in forests in the Flemish Region, ongoing, UA, RBINS, IN, IBW, UGent
- Evolutionary biology, taxonomy and biogeography of termites in South America and Papua New Guinea, 1982-, ULB, RBINS
- Ex situ conservation of rare and endangered vascular plant species in Belgium, 2000-, NBGB
- Faunistic study of terrestrial organisms in the Comoro archipelago with emphasis on bird population studies, ongoing, RMCA
- Faunistic, synecological and zoogeographical study of the spiders (Araneae) of Belgium, 1974-, RBINS
- Faunistics of various insect groups and terrestrial molluscs in Belgium, RBINS
- Identification keys to African spider families and subfamilies (1993-1997) and genera (1997-), RMCA
- Identification of lignified tissues by its anatomical characteristics, ongoing, RMCA
- Integrating bryophytes in the forest management plan: lessons from a grid-mapping in the Forest of Soignes (Belgium), ?-2001, ULg
- Levels and dynamics of intra-specific genetic diversity of tropical trees for conservation and sustainable management, 1997-2001, EU project, Flanders Inter-university Institute for biotechnology
- List of arborical lichens in the Brussels Capital Region
- Mycocoenological study of forests in Belgium, 1995-2005, NBGB
- Phylogeny of the flowering plants with special emphasis on asterids and Dioscoreales, 1981-, KU-Leuven
- Revision of Aspleniaceae (Pteridophyta), ongoing, UGent
- Seed bank of wild plants specific for the phytogeographical districts of Belgium, 1989-, NBGB
- Silviculture and biodiversity of Scots pine forests in Europe, 1997-2000, EU project, UGent
- Study of the diversity of various insect communities in tropical environments, rainforests in particular, ongoing, RBINS
- Study of the spider fauna with respect to the restoration of tropical rainforest in Ivory Coast, 1993-, RMCA
- Systematics and ecology of Basidiomycetes, in particular the Gasteromycetes and lignicolous fungi, in Europe and Papua-New Guinea, ongoing, ULg
- Systematics and taxonomy of groups of macrofungi in tropical South-East Asia, 2000-, UGent
- Systematics, taxonomy and ecology of tropical Acanthaceae and Rubiaceae, permanent programme, NBGB
- Systematics, taxonomy, ecology and ethnomycology of macromycetes (Fungi) of tropical Africa, 1997-, NBGB, UGent
- Taxonomic revision and phylogeny of several (20+) genera in the family Cyperaceae, 1974-, UGent
- Taxonomic revision and phylogeny of the genus *Peperomia* worldwide, 2002-, UGent
- Taxonomic revision of the flora of Central and West Africa: Convolvulaceae, Orchidaceae, Poaceae, Marantaceae, Dioscoreaceae, Eriocaulaceae, Burseraceae, Anthericaceae, ongoing, ULB
- Taxonomy and phylogeny of birds in central and West Africa, 1974-, RMCA
- Taxonomy and systematics of reptiles and amphibians of tropical forests, ongoing, RBINS

- Taxonomy of orchids and other monocotyledons in Central Africa, ongoing, NBGB
- Taxonomy of various groups of insects in Africa (Coleoptera, Diptera, Hymenoptera), ongoing, RMCA
- XYLOBIOS: Diversity, ecology and roles of saproxylic organisms in Belgian deciduous forests, 2000-2005, CRNFB, FUSAGx, UCL, RBINS

Some research projects in relation to **marine and coastal biological diversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Belgian shipwrecks: hotspots for marine biodiversity (BEWREMABI project), 2003-2006, UCL, UGent, RBINS, RBINS-MUMM, VLIZ
- Biodiversity and taxonomy of marine alien species, ongoing, RBINS-MUMM
- Biodiversity of 3 representative groups of the Antarctic Zoobenthos (BIANZO), 2002-2006, RBINS, ULB, ULg, UGent
- Biodiversity of brine shrimp Artemia populations: the Laboratory of Aquaculture & Artemia Reference Center is coordinating several international research projects, UGent
- Biodiversity of crustacean taxocoenoses in the Southern Ocean, 1996-2000, RBINS
- Biodiversity of microbial mats in Antarctica, 1998-2001, EU project, ULg
- Biogeography and systematics of Halymeniaceae in the Indian Ocean, 2000-2003, UGent
- Biology of Sponge Natural Products, 1998-2001, EU project, ULB
- Crustacea from the Yucatan Peninsula (Mexico), 1995-, RBINS
- Ecological research on Diptera in the Belgian coastal dunes, ongoing, RBINS
- European Marine Genetic Diversity (EUMAR), 2002-2004, EU project, RBINS
- Implementation and networking of large-scale long-term marine biodiversity research in Europe (BIOMARE), 2000-2002, EU project, UGent
- Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning (MARBEF), 2004-2008, UGent, VLIZ
- Marine ostracods of a coral island in Papua New Guinea, 1999-2002, KULeuven
- Molecular diversity of marine invertebrates, 2000-2004, UGent
- Molecular systematics and phylogeny of holothuroids, 2000-2002, VUB
- Morphology, taxonomy, phylogeny and systematics of marine freeliving Nematoda, ongoing, RBINS
- Systematics and evolutionary biology of marine macro-algae in the Indo-Pacific Region, 2001-2004, UGent
- Taxonomic database of the North Sea meiofauna, 2001-2002, UGent
- Taxonomic, phylogenetic and biogeographic studies of Plantae, Fungi and Protoctista, 1998-2000, UGent
- Taxonomy and sustainable use of Holothuroidea in the Comoros, ongoing, RMCA, RBINS
- Taxonomy and zoogeography of holothuroids, 1985-, RBINS
- Taxonomy of Bacillariophyta, Nematoda, Crustacea, Rotifera, 2000-2003, UGent, RBINS
- Taxonomy, ecology and anatomy of selected Gastropoda in Papua New Guinea, ongoing, RBINS
- Taxonomy, phylogeography, population and eco-genetics of European marine and terrestrial molluscs, ongoing, RBINS
- Use of sclerosponges as biorecorders of environmental changes, ongoing, RBINS

Some research projects in relation to **dry- and subhumid land biological diversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- A world monograph of the lichen genus *Gyalectidium* (Gomphillaceae), published 2001, ULg
- Distribution and frequency of bryophytes in the Flemish Region, 2004-2010, NBGB
- Diversity patterns of organisms in ephemeral rock pools in arid regions in USA, Botswana and Australia, 2003-, KULeuven
- Diversity patterns of organisms in ephemeral wetlands in South Africa, 2003-, KULeuven

- Mycorrhizal symbiosis of trees, mainly in Europe and Africa, 1968-, FUL
- Non-marine Ostracoda (Crustacea) of southern Africa, 1987-, RBINS
- Plant diversity in grassland and on field margins in Tunisia, 1996-2005, UGent
- Seed bank of wild plants specific for the phytogeographical districts of Belgium, 1989-, NBGB
- Systematics, taxonomy and ecology of tropical Acanthaceae and Rubiaceae, permanent programme, NBGB
- Systematics, taxonomy, ecology and ethnomycology of macromycetes (Fungi) of tropical Africa, 1997-, NBGB, UGent
- Taxonomy and cladistics of spiders (Araneae), mainly from Africa, 1984-, independent expert at RMCA
- Taxonomy and eco-geography of lichenised and lichenicolous fungi, ongoing, ULg
- Taxonomy and ecological biogeography of large branchiopods (Crustacea) from ephemeral pools in arid and semi-arid areas, 1987-, KULeuven
- Taxonomy, behaviour and rearing of mites (Acari) associated with stored seeds in northern Iran, 1997-2000, RBINS
- World or regional monographs of selected groups of lichens, 2002-, NBGB

Some research projects in relation to **inland water biological diversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Biodiversity and human impact in shallow lakes, 2000-2003, EU project, KULeuven, UGent
- Biodiversity of fishes in Gabon rainforest, 1998-2002, RMCA
- Biodiversity of microbial mats in Antarctica, 1998-2001, EU project, ULg
- Biodiversity, taxonomy and biogeography of rotifers (Rotifera), ongoing, RBINS
- Biodiversity, taxonomy and phylogeny of catfishes from Africa and SE Asia, 1997-2002, RMCA
- Database of freshwater molluscs in Belgium, 1989-, RBINS
- Diversity and speciation of Ostracoda (Crustacea) in ancient lakes, 1990-, RBINS
- East African fish diversity project, 1999-2004, RMCA
- Ecology and faunistics of Chironomidae (Diptera, Insecta), 1976-, RBINS
- Fish biodiversity in the coastal zone in West Africa, 2000-2002, RMCA
- Fish biodiversity on Mayotte island, 1993-2001, RMCA
- Freshwater algae of Belgium, ongoing, NBGB
- Freshwater algae of tropical regions, ongoing, NBGB
- Lake Baïkal (Chironomidae, Oligochaeta, Amphipoda, etc.), 1990-, RBINS
- Lake Malawi/Nyasa/Niassa Biodiversity Conservation Project, 1996-2000, RMCA
- Morphology and systematics of copepods (Crustacea) of Belgium, 1988-, RBINS
- Multidisciplinary research on the diversity of fishes from the Congo Basin; the fishes of the Lower Congo and the Malebo Pool, 2004-2008, RMCA
- Protocols for the Assessment and Conservation of Aquatic Life In the Subsurface (PASCALIS), 2002-2004, EU project, RBINS
- Structure and functioning of aquatic communities in inland waters in USA, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Bolivia and Australia, ongoing, KULeuven
- Study of aquatic bryophytes for the survey and monitoring of water quality, ongoing, ULg
- Support to the Population Biology Laboratory of the Marien Ngouabi University in Brazaville for the study of biodiversity and conservation of freshwater fishes of Congo-Brazaville, 2002-2006, RMCA
- Taxonomic, phylogenetic and biogeographic studies of Plantae, Fungi and Protoctista, 1998-2000, UGent
- Taxonomy and systematics of cichlids (Pisces) from Lakes Malawi/Niassa, Tanganyika, and Kivu, ongoing, RMCA, RBINS
- Taxonomy, phylogeny and evolution of aquatic mosses, ongoing, ULg, UCL

- Taxonomy, systematics and ecology of aquatic Oligochaeta (Annelida), 1991-, RBINS
- Trophic ecology of the demersal fish community of Lake Malawi/Niassa, Central Africa, 1998-2002, EU project, RMCA, RBINS
- Zoological inventory of the river Meuse (W-Europe) and its tributaries, ongoing, FUNDP

Some research projects in relation to **mountain biological diversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Biodiversity (angiosperms, fungi) of the Mont Doudou, Gabon, Nat. Geogr. Soc., 2004-2007, NBGB
- Biodiversity of Taita Hills in southeastern Kenya, ongoing, UA, RMCA
- Diversity of benthic diatom communities in New Zealand alpine aquatic systems, 2001-, UGent
- Ecology and phytogeography of alpine vegetations (Jura, Alps, Pyrenees, Sierra Nevada, Corsica, Peloponnesos), 1965-, FUNDP
- Myxomycetes (Fungi) in Western Europe, especially Belgium and nivicolous species in the French Alps, 1986-, Royal Antwerp Mycologists Circle
- Taxonomy, phytosociology and phytochorology of the mountainous massif Jebel Uweinat (desert of Libya), 1964-2001, NBGB
- Taxonomy and phylogeny of the Andean scirpoids (Cyperaceae), 1999-2004, UGent

Some research projects in relation to **protected areas** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Conservation biology of Habitat Directive species of plants in Belgium, permanent programme, NBGB
- Conservation of bryophytes in the Flemish Region with special emphasis on Red List, 1990-2010, NBGB
- Diversity and abundance of bryophytes, and applications to the conservation and management of ecosystems, ongoing, ULg
- European crop wild relative diversity assessment & conservation forum, 2002-2005, EU project, FUSAGx
- Inventory of the freshwater and brackish water fish fauna of the protected nature reserve Mayombe in Congo-Brazzaville, 1991-2003, RMCA
- Monitoring of species diversity and vegetation development in strict forest reserves as important reference tools for nature-based forest management, ongoing, IBW
- Phytodiversity in relation with ecological and patrimonial values, 2002-2006, UCL
- SADC/GEF Lake Malawi/Nyasa/Niassa Biodiversity Conservation Project, 1996-2000, RMCA
- Seed bank of wild plants characteristic for the phytogeographical districts of Belgium (seed samples of representative of rare or endangered species of the different phytogeographical regions of Belgium are stored at -20 C. This ex situ conservation is considered to contribute to the global strategy of nature conservation), 1989-, NBGB
- Survey and monitoring of all terrestrial life in the Flemish Region, 2000-, IN
- Survey and monitoring of sites of biological importance (SGIB) in the Walloon Region, ongoing, CRNFB
- Survey of endemic birds in protected areas of Comoro Republic and Mayotte, 1985-, RMCA
- Survey of flora and vegetation of nature reserves in the Brussels Capital Region

Some research projects in relation to **agricultural biological diversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- ACONITE (Association pour la Cartographie d'Organismes Naturels et les Inventaires Taxonomiques et Ecologiques) – Study of the Apoidea in their role of pollinators, 2004-, FUSAGx, UMH, CNRFB

- Biodiversity of wild and semi-domesticated species of Vasconcellea in Ecuador, 1999-2003, UGent
- Diversity patterns of zooplankton communities in pools in an agricultural landscape, 2003-, KU-Leuven
- Ecology of Acari (Arachnida) and Collembola (Insecta) in soil and canopy in African habitats, on-going, RMCA
- European crop wild relative diversity assessment & conservation forum, 2002-2005, EU project, FUSAGx
- Evaluation and use of beneficial entomofauna in vegetable open fields, ongoing, FUSAGx
- Germplasm collection, characterisation and crop development of locally used fruit species in southern Ecuador, ongoing, UGent
- Morphology, taxonomy, phylogeny and systematics of plant parasitic Nematoda, ongoing, RBINS
- Musa germplasm collection for International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain (INIBAP), ongoing, KULeuven
- Pathogenic nematodes (Invertebrata) in arable crops in Belgium, 1987-, CLO
- Phaseoleae - Phaseolinae seed collection - IPGRI reference collection for wild *Phaseolus* and *Vigna* species, 1988-, NBGB
- Systematics and biogeography of bees (Hymenoptera Aculeata, Apoidea), ongoing, UMH
- Systematics and host plant specificity of African fruit flies (Diptera, Tephritidae), ongoing, RMCA
- Taxonomy and identification of Bacillus (Eubacteria) and relatives, 1989-, UGent
- Taxonomy and systematics of Braconidae (Ichneumonoidea, Hymenoptera, Insecta) from tropical and palaearctic areas, 1995-, FUSAGx, RBINS
- Taxonomy, adaptations, habitat and behaviour of oribatid mites (Oribatida); developmental stability in the spider mite Tetranychus urticae (Prostigmata), 1972-, RBINS
- Taxonomy, behaviour and rearing of mites (Acari) associated with stored seeds in northern Iran, 1997-2000, RBINS
- The soil fauna: the other last biotic frontier, ongoing, UCL

Some research projects in relation to **island biodiversity** (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Biogeography of Madagascar: origin and radiation of the Rubiaceae, 2004-, KULeuven, NBGB
- Taxonomic and ecological studies of various zoological and botanical groups on Laing Island, Papua New Guinea, 1976-, RBINS, ULB, UGent, ULg and others
- Taxonomy and faunistics of the Holothuroidea from the Union of Comoros, 2003-2007, RMCA, RBINS.

32. * Has your country developed taxonomic support for the implementation of the cross-cutting issues under the Convention as called upon in decision VI/8?	
a) No	
b) Yes, for access and benefit-sharing (please provide details below)	
c) Yes, for Article 8(j) (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, for the ecosystem approach (please provide details below)	
e) Yes, for impact assessment, monitoring and indicators (please provide details below)	X
f) Yes, for invasive alien species (please provide details below)	X
g) Yes, for others (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the development of taxonomic support for the implementation of the cross-cutting issues under the Convention.

Article 8(j): some research projects (listed alphabetically by titles, non exhaustive list):

- Database concerning traditional veterinary medicinal plants in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1994-, UCL
- Ethnobotany (medicinal plants, vernacular names) and tropical horticulture in Central Africa, on-going, NBGB
- Ethnomycology in Africa, UGent
- Ethnomycology, especially of West and Central Africa, 1973-, FUL
- Germplasm collection, characterisation and crop development of locally used fruit species in southern Ecuador, ongoing, UGent
- Inventory of wild edible fruits in the savanna of northern Ivory Coast, 1996-2002, FUSAGx
- Medical ethnobotany of Quechua farmers and Yuki-indians in Cochabamba, Bolivia: medicinal plant diversity, medicinal plant use and indigenous classification, UGent
- Medicinal plants from the forest region of Dja as suspected malaria antagonists (Cameroun, Central Africa), 1999-, ULB
- Systematics, taxonomy, ecology and ethnomycology of macromycetes (Fungi) of tropical Africa, 1997-, NBGB
- Valorisation of medicinal plants in Africa, 1986-, ULB

Monitoring programmes in place for various groups of organisms. This monitoring is carried out at the regional level. In addition, research projects target the use of specific taxa as bio-indicators. Some research projects (alphabetical, non exhaustive list):

- Ants in leaf-litter as bio-indicators, 1998-, RBINS
- Biodiversity in shallow lakes (taxon diversity, genetic diversity, resting egg banks), 2000-2003, KULeuven
- Biometry of seabirds and bio-monitoring of seabird mortality as an indicator of oil pollution, on-going, IN, RBINS-MUMM
- Biomonitoring, faunistics, population genetics, bio-indicator research on carabid beetles (Carabidae, Coleoptera) in Belgium, with implications for nature conservation, ongoing, RBINS
- Birds as bioindicators in Albertine Rift, Comoros, and other African Countries, 1985-, RMCA
- Butterflies (Lepidoptera) as indicators for evolution in the tropical rainforest of East and West Africa, 1993-, RMCA
- Development of indicators and indices for forest plant species diversity and the consequences of fragmentation on forest plant species in Flemish forests (Belgium), 1998-2001, KULeuven
- Diatom indices in water quality assessment and biomonitoring of lotic freshwaters, 1980-, UCL
- Dolichopodidae (Diptera) as bio-indicators in nature conservation, 1990-, RBINS
- Forest parasitoids as biodiversity indicators in spruce plantations, 1998-, ULB
- Inventarisation and identification of invertebrates as ecological indicators in Flemish forest reserves, 2000-2002, RBINS
- Invertebrate animals as bio-indicators in the Flemish Region, ongoing, IN
- Sclerosponges (Porifera) as biorecorders of environmental changes, ongoing, RBINS
- Spiders as bio-indicators within the framework of nature conservation in the Flemish Region, 1986-, IN
- Structural and functional biodiversity of copepod (Crustacea) communities on the Belgian Continental Shelf (North Sea), 1998-2003, UGent
- Study of aquatic bryophytes for the survey and monitoring of water quality, ongoing, ULg
- Taxonomy and phylogeny of birds in central and West Africa, 1974-, RMCA
- Trophic ecology of the demersal fish community of Lake Malawi/Nyassa, Central Africa. INCO-DC project 1998-2002, RMCA, RBINS

Alien species: research programmes mainly. Some examples:

- Alien crustacean and molluscan species in Belgium, ongoing, RBINS
- Alien fruit fly species (Diptera, Tephritidae) in East Africa, ongoing, RMCA
- Floristics of non-indigenous vascular plants (especially weeds and invasive taxa) in Europe, ongoing, UGent
- Freshwater macrozoobenthos biodiversity and assessment of the biological quality of watercourses in the Walloon Region, 1990-, CRNFB
- INPLANBEL, invasive plants in Belgium: patterns, processes and monitoring, NBGB, UA, ULB, FUSAGx, 2003-2006
- Invasive bryophytes in Belgium, 1998-2010, NBGB
- Invasive species of freshwater molluscs in Belgium, 1996-, RBINS
- Marine invertebrate fauna of W-Europe, especially Cirripedia and Molluscs; alien species, 1973-, RBINS-MUMM
- Phylogeography, population and eco-genetics of European marine and terrestrial molluscs, ongoing, UA
- Taxonomy and ecology of weeds, especially Polygonaceae, 1987-, ULB

Article 8 - *In-situ* conservation [excluding paragraphs (a) to (e), (h) and (j)]

33. ◈ On Article 8(i), has your country endeavored to provide the conditions needed for compatibility between present uses and the conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are being identified	
c) Yes, some measures undertaken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures undertaken (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the measures taken to provide the conditions needed for compatibility between present uses and the conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components.

c) **Walloon** & **Brussels Capital Regions**: fragile habitat types such as wet vegetation habitats, dunes, heaths, forests and alike are protected by law. A specific permit is needed if someone wants to change the vegetation of these habitats and compensation measures are foreseen. Enforcement should however be enhanced for a proper implementation.

North Sea: protection status is foreseen in the law on the marine environment (so-called MMM law - 1999). A Royal Decree is related to the protection of species in marine waters (21.12.2001, Official Journal of 14.02.2002), another Royal Decree on marine protected areas is being finalised.

d) **Flemish Region**: comprehensive measures are undertaken here such as area-specific regulations under the Manure Action Programme as well as actions under the Rural Development Programme, under the Integrated Water Policy and under the EIA regulations. With the following sectors or key stakeholders specific agreements for cooperation for nature conservation have been or are being developed: energy sector, defence and military areas, tourism and recreation, sports, youth, drinking water companies, wind mill companies, infrastructure and railways, water courses and roads departments, agriculture, forestry, inland fisheries, etc.

34. ◈ On Article 8(k), has your country developed or maintained the necessary legislation and/or other regulatory provisions for the protection of threatened species and populations?

a) No	
b) No, but legislation is being developed	
c) Yes, legislation or other measures are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the legislation and/or regulations for the protection of threatened species and populations.

Walloon Region: the Decree on the conservation of Natura 2000 sites as well as the wild fauna and flora of 06.12.2001, amending the law on the conservation of nature of 12.07.1973, entered into force on 22.01.2002. Furthermore, the designation of Natura 2000 sites for the protection of priority species and habitats in the framework of the Birds and Habitats Directives covers 220 940 ha and 240 sites.

Brussels Capital Region: there is a specific legislation transposing the Habitats Directive (26.10.2000) and providing special protection to threatened species and populations of habitats mentioned in the Directive.

Flemish Region:
Royal Decree of 16.02.1976 on the protection of some species of native plants. This decision contains three annexes: species in annex A have full protection, except in gardens, parks and agricultural land; species in annex B have protection for their underground parts and species in annex C can not be plucked or harvested for commercial or industrial activities. Exceptions to this Decree can be granted for scientific motives as well as for health purposes.

Royal Decree of 22.09.1980 on the protection of native wild animals that are not included in the legislation on hunting, inland fisheries and bird protection. Species mentioned in the annex to this Decree are fully protected. This protection is aimed directly at the animals and indirectly at their sites and shelters. Exceptions can be granted for purposes with a clear scientific or educational character.

Royal Decree of 09.09.1981 on the protection of birds in the Flemish Region. This Decree offers protection for all bird species occuring in the member states of the European Union, except for species that are included in the legislation on hunting. Six other species, mentioned in the Decree, have only partial protection since they can be controled for a limited number of reasons.

The protection of all other species is limited by specific rules on birds that were born in captivity. The legislation contains a set of conditions under which captive birds have to be marked and registered to be kept legally. Wild specimens of these other species have full protection, although some exceptions exist. These exceptions can be based on reasons of:
- public health and public safety;
- air traffic safety;
- prevention of important damage to crops, cattle, forests, fisheries and surface waters;
- protection of fauna and flora;
- science and education.

Decision of the Flemish Government of 20.05.1992 on the execution of the Law of 01.07.1954 on river fisheries. This Decision contains rules on the protection of fresh water fish, including the strict protection of a number of species.

Decision of the Flemish Government of 21.04.1993 on the introduction into the wild of non-native animal species. This Decision prohibits the introduction of non-native animal species into the wild, unless a special permit is granted.

Decree of 21.10.1997 on nature conservation (Nature Conservation Decree). The decree has a large chapter on site protection (articles 17-50), which indirectly supports the protection of (threatened) species. This Decree also contains a chapter on direct species protection (articles 51-52 and additional article 56). It should be considered as the frame legislation for species protection in the Flemish Region.

North Sea: see under question 33.

35. ◇ On Article 8(l), does your country regulate or manage processes and categories of activities identified under Article 7 as having significant adverse effects on biological diversity?

a) No	
b) No, but relevant processes and categories of activities being identified	
c) Yes, to a limited extent (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, to a significant extent (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the regulation or management of the processes and categories of activities identified by Article 7 as having significant adverse effects on biodiversity.

North Sea: sand and gravel extraction, dredging and dumping of dredge spoil are subject to licences. The areas where these activities take place are intensely monitored. Further, the Royal Decree of 20.12.2000 (Official Journal of 25.01.2001) establishing the rules related to the environmental impact assessment in pursuance of the Law of 20.01.1999 for the protection of the marine areas under Belgian jurisdiction (MMM law), imposes a procedure of environmental impact assessment for a number of activities with an impact to the marine environment (civil engineering, activities changing the water depth, deposition of wrecks, etc.).

Flemish Region: sand and gravel extraction, dredging and dumping of dredge spoil, development of infrastructure are subject to licences and to EIA procedures. In nature and forest areas, and sites of the ecological network, alteration of bottom relief or vegetation are subjected to licences.

Walloon Region: following an Order of the Walloon Government on the protected zones of the 'Code wallon de l'Aménagement du Territoire, de l'Urbanisme et du Patrimoine' (CWATUP, published in the Belgian Official Journal on 23.09.2003), such as hedges, tree rows, habitats of community importance, forest reserves, wetlands of biological interest and underground cavities of scientific interest, these may not be changed anymore without an urban permit.

Furthermore, the Walloon Region developed legislative instruments and adequat techniques through the Water Code, which has *i.a.* following objectives: strengthen the protection of the aquatic environment, improve the water quality through measures aiming to reduce progressively the discharge, emission and leaking of priority substances and to stop or suppress progressively the discharge, emissions and leaking of priority dangerous substances.

Brussels Capital Region: EIA-procedures are imposed for disturbing activities, large building activities, development of infrastructure, etc. Licenses are also needed for every impact such as alteration of bottom relief and vegetation for sites declared as having biological valueon the zoning plan and sites belonging to the green network.

Box XLIV.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation

Programme of Work on Protected Areas (Article 8 (a) to (e))

36. Has your country established suitable time bound and measurable national-level protected areas targets and indicators? (decision VII/28)

a) No (please specify reasons)	
b) No, but relevant work is under way	

c) Yes, some targets and indicators established (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive targets and indicators established (please provide details below)	

Further comments on targets and indicators for protected areas.

Flemish Region:

- designation of the ecological network (125,000 ha) and interweaving area (150,000 ha) and elaboration of Nature Objectives Plans (NOP's) for these sites by 2008 (indicators: surface designated, surface with and number of NOP's developed);
- development of the conservation objectives and NOP's for the Natura 2000 sites designated by 2008 (about 164,000 ha including overlap between Birds and Habitats Directive sites, some overlap with the above);
- acquisition of 3,000 ha/year of nature and forest areas to be recognised as reserves, by the Flemish Community and NGO's together (indicator: yearly increase of surface of nature and forest reserves); a site specific management plan has to be submitted together with the proposal for recognition as reserve.

Assessment of the biological value with cross reference to the relevant habitat types is carried out for the Natura 2000 sites to enable the evaluation of the actual conservation status; for the pSCI to be finalised by 2006.

The Decree on Integrated Water Policy transposes the EU Water Framework Directive into Flemish Law. The Decree goes further than the Directive by featuring a number of extra provisions such as:

- a stronger link between water quality and water quantity;
- a stronger link between water policy and environmental planning;
- a planning on subbasin level.

With reference to the management planning of river basins importance is given to the conservation and restoration of the natural structure of water systems, improvement of the structure quality of the riverbanks and protection of an extra 200 ha riparian buffer zone / bank area of which at least 50% is acquired.

Walloon Region: the major part of the designation of Natura 2000 sites took place in 2002. Actually, the network encompasses about 220,000 ha, equalling 13% of the surface (above European average). The Natura 2000 network was based on the oro-hydrographical network to obtain a functional ecological network.

For each hydrographical basin, the Water Code requires the elaboration of one or more registers of protected zones in that basin. This register contains the zones designated for the collection of water for human consumption, zones designated for the protection of aquatic species with economic importance, water bodies designated for sports or recreation, zones sensitive to nutrients and the protected zones for habitats and species. The Water Code Decree was adopted on 27.05.2004 and the measures in relation to the protected zones still have to be elaborated.

Furthermore, the Nature Direction continues the designation of wetlands of biological interest, underground cavities of scientific interest, forest reserves, domanial and private nature reserves to protect areas important for specific habitats and species (see description of the different protection statutes in the second national report) and the sites of high biological interest.

Brussels Capital Region: a plan of an ecological green network, defined as an objective in the regional development plan of 2001. However, no targets have been defined. Conservation objectives and nature management plans are developed by 2008 for the Natura 2000 sites designated in 2002 (14% of the Brussels Capital Region surface) and accepted by the EC in 2004.

About 240 ha or 1.5% of the Brussels Capital Region territory is designated as nature or forest reserve. About 14% of the territory or +/- 2,320 ha has been designated as SAC. The total area under protection has thus increased. Management plans are under construction for these SAC, and already partially realised. It is very probable that some SAC will receive the status of nature reserve.

North Sea: the establishment of marine protected areas is underway and takes place within the framework of the Law on the marine environment (so-called MMM law). Two Habitats Directive and three Birds Directive zones are under designation.

37. Has your country taken action to establish or expand protected areas in any large or relatively unfragmented natural area or areas under high threat, including securing threatened species? (decision VII/28)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, limited actions taken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, significant actions taken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on actions taken to establish or expand protected areas.

Flemish Region: actions are taken to expand the surface of 'green destination' and 'forest areas' on the land use planning and maps and to extent the surface of natural areas in the ecological network with the aim to counter further fragmentation of open areas. See also above for more information.

Walloon Region: the Natura 2000 network aims to preserve habitats and species threatened within the European Union. The Walloon Region houses 44 habitat types, of which 10 priority types, 101 bird species and 31 other animal and plant species listed in the annexes of the directives. This network contributes to Target 2010 to halt the loss of biodiversity. See also above for more information.

Not really applied in the **Brussels Capital Region**. However, some protected areas have been expanded in the framework of the Habitats Directive.

North Sea: the Royal Decree establishing MPA's is being finalised. The Decree foresees the establisment of five marine areas in application of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

38. Has your country taken any action to address the under representation of marine and inland water ecosystems in the existing national or regional systems of protected areas? (decision VII/28)	
a) No	
b) Not applicable	
c) No, but relevant actions are being considered	
d) Yes, limited actions taken (please provide details below)	X
e) Yes, significant actions taken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on actions taken to address the under representation of marine and inland water ecosystems in the existing national or regional systems of protected areas.

North Sea: Belgium is an active party in fora such as OSPAR (implementation of Annex V). There was a time lag in the implementation of the Birds Directive in the marine areas, but studies are being undertaken to address this problem. Criteria have been identified for the identification of species and habitats in need of protection (OSPAR/HELCOM 2003). The establishment of marine protected areas is foreseen in the Law on the Marine Environment (so-called MMM law). A Royal Decree is in preparation. The Royal Decree on the protection of species in the Belgian marine waters (21.12.2001, Official Journal of 14.02.2002) better protects seabirds and other species, in general.

Flemish Region: inland water systems such as river valleys form the backbone of the development of the ecological network. Dunes as well as coastal and inland wetland systems are protected by law.

Brussels Capital Region: there is no special nature legislation on wetland conservation, but most

wetlands (relict marshy areas or alluvial forests) are legally protected (nature reserve, forest, site of high biological value and/or Natura 2000 site). In the legislation on land use planning, open water zones are specifically protected.

The programme blue network, which is guiding the Brussels Capital Region policy on small open water systems, has as main objective: the restoration and valorisation of small rivers and marshy areas and humid sites in an ecological way. Most humid ecosystems are also part of Natura 2000 sites.

Walloon Region:

- several wetlands were designated as Natura 2000 site. The Natura 2000 network is partly based on the hydrographical network;
- in application of the Orders of the Walloon Government on the protection of wetlands of biological interest (09.06.1989) and on the protection of underground cavities of scientific interest (18.03.1995), the Region continues the designation of these;
- furthermore, three new sites have been added to the Ramsar list of wetlands of international importance: the emotions cave at My-Ferrières, the valley of the Haute-Sûre and the Hautes Fagnes; they represent an underground cavity, a transboundary river and a peat zone.

39. Has your country identified and implemented practical steps for improving the integration of protected areas into broader land and seascapes, including policy, planning and other measures? (decision VII/28)

a) No	
b) No, but some programmes are under development	X
c) Yes, some steps identified and implemented (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, many steps identified and implemented (please provide details below)	

Further comments on practical steps for improving integration of protected areas into broader land and seascapes, including policy, planning and other measures.

See question 36.

40. Is your country applying environmental impact assessment guidelines to projects or plans for evaluating effects on protected areas? (decision VII/28)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant EIA guidelines are under development	
c) Yes, EIA guidelines are applied to some projects or plans (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, EIA guidelines are applied to all relevant projects or plans (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on application of environmental impact assessment guidelines to projects or plans for evaluating effects on protected areas.

North Sea: the Royal Decree of 09.09.2003 on the assessment of environmental effects (Belgian Official Journal of 17.09.2003) related to the Law on the protection of the marine areas under Belgian jurisdiction (MMM law) imposes a procedure of environmental impact assessment.

Flemish Region: a new Decree on EIA, that includes transposition of EC regulations, was published in December 2004. The Decree on Nature Conservation of 1997 was revised in 2002 for transposition of the EU Habitats and Birds Directive Specific including the procedure of art. 6 of the Habitats Directive that requires that an appropriate assessment is to be undertaken in respect of any plan or project which either alone or in combination with other plans or projects would be likely to have a

significant effect on a European site, and is not directly connected with the management of the site for nature conservation. Under this procedure an advice of the Nature Devision on the assessment is required.

A regulation of the Department of Environment & Infrastructure on EIA for projects or plans in Natura 2000 sites was developed in 2001 and revised in 2003. This regulation describes the specific steps to be taken for implementing the procedure mentioned above. Training sessions were organised for all relevant institutions under this Department.

Brussels Capital Region: EIA guidelines are applied for projects that have possible effects on protected areas (in general). The Brussels Capital Region transposition of the Habitats Directive includes also the procedure of art. 6 of the Habitats Directive: an appropriate assessment has to be undertaken in respect of any plan or project (not directly connected with the management of the site for nature conservation) which either alone or in combination with other plans or projects could have an significant effect on a Habitatsite.

Walloon Region:

- the Environment Code identifies the projects requiring an impact assessment and the format and minimal elements of the assessment (articles 55 & 56). The articles 57 to 61 define the agreement procedure;
- the Decree in relation to the Environment Permit of 11.03.1999, which entered into force on 01.10.2002, reforms the regime on the environmental impact assessment and on the approval of exploitation (replacing it by the Environment Permit). Objective is to integrate in just one permit all former authorisations required in relation to the environment, such as on exploitation, water collection, discharge of used water, explosifs, etc.;
- furthermore, the Decree on the conservation of Natura 2000 sites and wild fauna and flora foresees, in his article 29 §2, that each plan or project subject to licensing […] which is not directly linked to or necessary for the management of the site, but susceptible to affect the site significantly […] is subject to an impact assessment as foreseen in the legislation.

41. Has your country identified legislative and institutional gaps and barriers that impede effective establishment and management of protected areas? (decision VII/28)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant work is under way	
c) Yes, some gaps and barriers identified (please provide details below))	X
d) Yes, many gaps and barriers identified (please provide details below)	
Further comments on identification of legislative and institutional gaps and barriers that impede effective establishment and management of protected areas.	
Pressure on open areas is very high due to the high population density, the important economic and agricultural development and the recreational needs.	

42. Has your country undertaken national protected-area capacity needs assessments and established capacity building programmes? (decision VII/28)	
a) No	
b) No, but assessments are under way	X
c) Yes, a basic assessment undertaken and some programmes established (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, a thorough assessment undertaken and comprehensive programmes established (please provide details below)	

Further comments on protected-area capacity needs assessment and establishment of capacity building programmes.

43. Is your country implementing country-level sustainable financing plans that support national systems of protected areas? (decision VII/28)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant plan is under development	
c) Yes, relevant plan is in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, relevant plan is being implemented (please provide details below)	

Further comments on implementation of country-level sustainable financing plans that support national systems of protected areas.
Flemish Region: management and protection of Natura 2000 sites and the implementation of the Habitats Directive includes thorough use of the existing Community co-financing instruments, including agri-environment measures under the Flemish rural development programme and management packages. Nature and forest reserves acquired or managed by NGO's are subsidised. Local authorities are subsidised for projects including nature and water protection. **Walloon Region**: a budget is foreseen to elaborate management plans for the Natura 2000 sites and other protected areas. The Nature Direction disposes of a budget for the acquisition of protected zones. **Brussels Capital Region**: the Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment is responsible for the management and protection of most Natura 2000 sites. For the other, not regional sites, the BIME has foreseen a budget for the elaboration of management plans. Probably, subsidies for management contracts will be foreseen.

44. Is your country implementing appropriate methods, standards, criteria and indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of protected areas management and governance? (decision VII/28)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant methods, standards, criteria and indicators are under development	
c) Yes, some national methods, standards, criteria and indicators developed and in use (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, some national methods, standards, criteria and indicators developed and in use and some international methods, standards, criteria and indicators in use (please provide details below)	

Further comments on methods, standards, criteria and indicators for evaluating the effectiveness of protected areas management and governance.
Methodology for monitoring and evaluation of management effectiveness in nature reserves has been developed and testing in pilot areas is ongoing. The nature conservation institutes of the Regions have developed and manage databases on protected areas. Monitoring data from protected areas (a compulsory measure for NGO's) are being sent to the nature conservation institutes to be included in the databases and to be analysed. **North Sea**: the Royal Decree on Marine Protected Areas will be published together with management plans of human activites for those areas. Monitoring and follow-up are foreseen.

Box XLV.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.
The project 'Système de Gestion d'Information pour les Aires Protégées' (SYGIAP) aims to establish an information and cartography system to protect World Heritage sites in the DR Congo. In close collaboration with the World Heritage Center of the UNESCO, the Belgian Science Policy establishes a network of Belgian scientific institutions (universities of Louvain-la-Neuve and Ghent, in collaboration with the Royal Museum for Central Africa, the National Botanic Garden of Belgium and the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences) ready to combine their efforts to assist the 'Institut Congolais de la Conservation de la Nature' (ICCN) towards the establishment of a real information system on the World Heritage sites and its implementation through the production of reference maps. See also http://geoweb.ugent.be/sygiap/index.asp.

Article 8(h) - Alien species

45. Has your country identified alien species introduced into its territory and established a system for tracking the introduction of alien species?	
a) No	
b) Yes, some alien species identified but a tracking system not yet established	
c) Yes, some alien species identified and tracking system in place	X
d) Yes, alien species of major concern identified and tracking system in place	

46. ◆ Has your country assessed the risks posed to ecosystems, habitats or species by the introduction of these alien species?	
a) No	
b) Yes, but only for some alien species of concern (please provide details below)	X
c) Yes, for most alien species (please provide details below)	

Further information on the assessment of the risks posed to ecosystems, habitats or species by the introduction of these alien species.

The project 'Invasive plants in Belgium: patterns, processes and monitoring' (INPLANBEL) performs a multifunctional and multi-scale analysis of alien plant invasion in Belgium. The general aim is to provide a framework for the evaluation of the threat, for the development of policies and management strategy and for the elaboration of further research programmes. This project is the first multidisciplinary approach dealing with invasive plant topics in Belgium (*Fallopia japonica*, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, *Impatiens glandulifera*, *Impatiens parviflora*, *Prunus serotina*, *Rosa rugosa*, *Senecio inaequidens*, *Solidago gigantea*).

The specific aims of the project are to:
- provide a synthesis on plant invasion in Belgium in the form of a structured list of exotic species;
- identify universally valid principles of biological invasion through a combined analysis of eco-physiological species and community traits;

- provide a detailed analysis of the spreading of a set of invasive species at the landscape level linked to their dispersal capacities;
- analyse the consequences of a set of invasive species on ecosystems.

The project website can be found via www.fsagx.ac.be/ec/inplanbel

Some other research projects:
- Alien crustaceans and molluscs in Belgium, ongoing, 1996-ongoing, RBINS-MUMM.
- Freshwater macrozoobenthos biodiversity and assessment of the biological quality of watercourses in the Walloon Region, 1990-, CRNFB.
- The CRNFB is currently monitoring invasive species in the Walloon watercourses.
- Alien species are identified through inventories of species for some groups (e.g. mosses and liverworts, vascular plants, crustaceans, birds, mammals) in the Walloon Region.
- The Asiatic ground squirrel (*Eutamias sibiricus*) and the coypu (*Myocastor coypus*) are studied in the Flemish Region to investigate the necessity of monitoring. Based on foreign research, the Flemish Region has assessed the risks posed by the muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) and coypu (*Myocastor coypus*) not only to dikes, crops, and alike, but also to elements of indigenous ecosystems such as freshwater mussels, fish, amphibians, breeding birds.
- There is a programme in which rare, colonial and introduced breeding bird species are being monitored in the Flemish Region. Among them, alien breeding bird species as the white fronted goose (*Anser erythropus*), the Canada goose (*Branta canadensis*), the barnacle goose (*Branta leucopsis*), the Nile (Egyptian) goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*), the mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*), the ring-necked parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) and the monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*) are being monitored. This programme is called the 'Bijzondere Broedvogels Vlaanderen Project' (Flemish Special Breeding Bird Project).
- In the Flemish Region, counts of wintering waterfowl are conducted six times every winter. During these counts, non-native waterfowl species, including IAS, are also counted. The counts are organised by the Institute of Nature Conservation. The international coordination of these counts is in the hands of Wetlands International.
- In the Flemish Region, the Institute of Nature Conservation conducts a research project on the distribution and numbers of Canada geese. This includes holding counts of wintering birds and catching a number of birds to mark them in order to be able to track their movements.
- Through the monitoring and inventory of fish occurring in the Flemish inland waters, alien fish species are also being monitored.
- Invasive bryophytes, their spread in Belgium and impact on the indigenous bryophytes, 1990-2010, NBGB.
- Gathering of data on the current introduction and spread of alien species (e.g. C4-grasses (e.g. *Setaria macrocarpa*, *S. verticilliformis*, *Panicum dichotomiflorum*)), especially in and along maize fields in the area between Ghent and Bruges is being done by the NBGB.
- The alien species issue (invasion mechanism understanding, impact assessment methods, etc.) is part of the research priorities of the Second Plan for a Sustainable Research Programme (2000-2004) of the Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs, both on terrestrial ecosystems (one project: 'invasion and biodiversity in grasslands and field borders'; 2000-2005, University of Antwerp) and on marine and freshwater ecosystems (www.belspo.be).
- Taxonomy and ecology of weeds, especially *Polygonum aviculare* (Polygonaceae), 1987, University of Brussels.
- Dispersion of several IAS populations encountered in the Brussels Capital Region is monitored in the framework of a study on the Brussels Capital Region biodiversity.
- In the Brussels Capital Region, special attention is dedicated to exotich species in the monitoring programme on flora and fauna. Several detailed studies have been made on some exotic birds (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*, *Branta canadensis*, *Psittacula krameri*, *Myiopsitta monachus*), exotic herpetofauna species (*Rana ridibunda*), mammals (such as *Eutamias sibericus*). The extension of exotic plant species is also followed with much attention.

The '**Belgian Forum on Invasive Alien Species** (BFIS)' acts as the Belgian node of the IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group. It aims to provide and gather scientific knowledge about invasive alien species in order to reduce threats to natural ecosystems and to build action plans for preventing or controlling these organisms.

This forum works in close relation with the expert contact groups on alien species depending from the CCIEP nature and biodiversity steering committees, in order to ensure a scientific background to political decisions and to provide an adequate feedback from the international decision-making scene to the scientific community. The steering committees focus on administrative and political aspects in

order to prepare Belgian positions for international meetings, to write thematic reports and elaborate programmes related to Belgian international obligations (www.biodiversity.be/bbpf).

47. ◇ Has your country undertaken measures to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate, those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under consideration	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species.

The Regions try to eradicate both the muskrat and coypu (especially in the **Flemish Region** for the coypu), not directly to safeguard indigenous ecosystems but mainly to protect dikes. For this purpose, two international projects were set up to combat the muskrat: one between East- and West-Flanders and Zeeland, another between West-Flanders, the North of France and the **Walloon Region**. A third international project, aimed at the coypu this time, is being set up for the moment involving the Belgian and Dutch provinces of Limburg, and Germany.

Flemish Region: in both public forests and forest reserves, it is prohibited to introduce animals and plants without a permit (Forest Decree). A Decision prohibits the introduction of non-native animal species in the Flemish Region, and is also the legal base for measures to control and eradicate these animal species.

The Flemish Government can take measures to control or prohibit the introduction of animal and plant species or other organisms, as far as these are a threat to nature or the natural environment. Measures can also be taken to control or prohibit the transport of animal species and their carcasses (Decree on nature conservation). A Decision describes what species of fish can be used as fish bait. Only native fish species are allowed.

As of 2005, a programme will be launched to remove floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*) from the Flemish watercourses.

Walloon Region: the introduction of non-indigenous species or indigenous species of non-indigenous origin in nature is forbidden except for species used for agriculture and forestry. It is foreseen to integrate the notion of combating invasive alien species in all River Contracts, 'Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature' and Natural Parcs.

A brochure on *Fallopia japonica*, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, *Impatiens glandulifera* et *Senecio inaequidens* is available at the Ministry of the Walloon Region. It contains recommendations for the eradication or control of these species.

Brussels Capital Region: it is forbidden to introduce non-indigenous species of birds into the wild. The intentional introduction of non-indigenous species is reglemented in order to insure that no damage is caused to natural habitats and indigenous flora and fauna, otherwise the introduction is forbidden.

There is a limited monitoring programme on invasive alien species. For a few species, some control programmes are already in place, to protect valuable ecosystems and protected areas, e.g. control of *Fallopia japonica* and *Heracleum mantegazzianum* in nature reserves. The populations of exotic birds (*Psitaculla* sp., Nile goose, Canadian goose, etc.) are intensively followed and preventing management measures are taken (e.g. certain management rules on grassland vegetation which limits the attraction for those birds).

Federal: measures related to importation, exportation and transit of non-indigenous wild bird species are taken (exception made for birds bred in captivity).

North Sea: the Belgian Law of 20.01.1999 on the protection of the marine Environment in marine areas under Belgian jurisdiction (MMM law) forbids the intentional introduction of non-indigenous species in the marine environment without special license (Art. 11, §1). This provision mirrors those

included in international instruments like the CBD.

The unintentional introduction of non-indigenous species via ballast water of ships can be prohibited by Royal Decree (Art. 11, §2). But since this is a very specific and rather international issue, the new Belgian framework Law did not specifically address this issue. Belgium therefore takes part in related IMO discussions/instruments (like the one on ballast water).

For the protection of the marine biota, measures can be taken (by Royal Decree and after scientific consultation) for the extermination of non-indigenous nuisance species (Art. 11, §3). The new Law also prohibits the intentional introduction of genetically modified organisms into marine areas (Art. 11, §4).

48. ◈ In dealing with the issue of invasive species, has your country developed, or involved itself in, mechanisms for international cooperation, including the exchange of best practices? (decision V/8)	
a) No	
b) Yes, bilateral cooperation	X
c) Yes, regional and/or subregional cooperation	X
d) Yes, multilateral cooperation	

49. ◈ Is your country using the ecosystem approach and precautionary and bio-geographical approaches as appropriate in its work on alien invasive species? (decision V/8)	
a) No	X
b) Yes (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the use of the ecosystem approach and precautionary and bio-geographical approaches in work on alien invasive species.	
See under question 47.	

50. Has your country identified national needs and priorities for the implementation of the Guiding Principles? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	X
b) No, but needs and priorities are being identified	
c) Yes, national needs and priorities have been identified (please provide below a list of needs and priorities identified)	
Further comments on the identification of national needs and priorities for the implementation of the Guiding Principles.	
National needs and priorities in relation to the Guiding Principles have not been identified for the moment, but the Belgian Forum on Invasive Alien Species will address this issue in the future.	

51. Has your country created mechanisms to coordinate national programmes for applying the Guiding Principles? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	
b) No, but mechanisms are under development	X
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the mechanisms created to coordinate national programmes for implementing the Guiding Principles.	

Although a joined contact group on alien species is acting under the Steering Committees Nature and Biodiversity Convention, there is no effective coordination of national and regional programmes at the moment.

The National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) foresees to address the threats IAS pose to the components of biodiversity in Belgium.

52. Has your country reviewed relevant policies, legislation and institutions in the light of the Guiding Principles, and adjusted or developed policies, legislation and institutions? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	
b) No, but review under way	X
c) Yes, review completed and adjustment proposed (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, adjustment and development ongoing	
e) Yes, some adjustments and development completed (please provide details below)	

Further information on the review, adjustment or development of policies, legislation and institutions in light of the Guiding Principles.

Early 2006, a workshop on legislation and policy in relation to IAS is planned. One of the recommendations of this workshop could be to develop a national action plan on IAS taking these Guiding Principles into account.

53. Is your country enhancing cooperation between various sectors in order to improve prevention, early detection, eradication and/or control of invasive alien species? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	
b) No, but potential coordination mechanisms are under consideration	X
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on cooperation between various sectors.

The **Belgian Forum on Invasive Alien Species** (BFIS) acts as the Belgian node of the IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group. It aims to provide and gather scientific knowledge about invasive alien species in order to reduce threats to natural ecosystems and to build action plans for preventing or controlling these organisms. The forum works in close relation with the expert contact groups on alien species depending from the CCIEP nature and biodiversity steering committees, in order to ensure a scientific background to political decisions and to provide an adequate feedback from the international decision-making scene to the scientific community. The forum is open to any people interested by scientific aspects linked to invasive alien species. It gathers about 60 people, mainly from Belgian universities and research centers.

In addition to the debates animated on the discussion list, workshops are organised by the forum at regular time intervals. These aim at improving the Belgian expertise in specific fields through scientific communications and roundtable discussions gathering the different stakeholders concerned by biological invasions.

Action 18 of the 2nd FPSD is devoted to biodiversity and focuses on sectoral integration of biodiversity in **Federal** key sectors (transport, economy, development cooperation, scientific policy). One of the proposed actions for the integration of biodiversity considerations into the transport sector is the development of a national warning system for IAS.

54. Is your country collaborating with trading partners and neighboring countries to address threats of invasive alien species to biodiversity in ecosystems that cross international boundaries? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	
b) Yes, relevant collaborative programmes are under development	X
c) Yes, relevant programmes are in place (please specify below the measures taken for this purpose)	X

Further comments on collaboration with trading partners and neighboring countries.

Some collaborations have been developed with neighbouring countries on a number of species, but not with more distant trading partners.

The Regions try to eradicate both the muskrat and coypu (especially in the **Flemish Region** for the coypu), not directly to safeguard indigenous ecosystems but mainly to protect dikes. For this purpose, two international projects were set up to combat the muskrat: one between East- and West-Flanders and Zeeland, another between West-Flanders, the North of France and the **Walloon Region** (muskrat control, infestation norms definition, internet publication of results for exchange of information purpose). A third international project, aimed at the coypu this time, is being set up for the moment involving the Belgian and Dutch provinces of Limburg, and Germany.

55. Is your country developing capacity to use risk assessment to address threats of invasive alien species to biodiversity and incorporate such methodologies in environmental impact assessment (EIA) and strategic environmental assessment (SEA)? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	
b) No, but programmes for this purpose are under development	X
c) Yes, some activities for developing capacity in this field are being undertaken (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive activities are being undertaken (please provide details below)	

Further information on capacity development to address threats of invasive alien species.

It is foreseen in the proximity of Natura 2000 areas.

56. Has your country developed financial measures and other policies and tools to promote activities to reduce the threats of invasive species? (decision VI/23)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant measures and policies are under development	
c) Yes, some measures, policies and tools are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures and tools are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the development of financial measures and other policies and tools for the promotion of activities to reduce the threats of invasive species.

In the **Flemish** and **Walloon Regions**, subsidies are delivered to land owners and local authorities for using endemic scrub and tree species instead of exotic ones in re-afforestation projects. Removal of exotic tree species, especially *Prunus*, is carried out using several methods together: manual removal for younger stands or machinal for the older trees, grazing programmes to maintain 'cleared' areas.

The **Brussels Capital Region** has so far not developed specific financial measures to reduce threats of invasive species. However, financial efforts have already been made to develop a policy of information, sensibilisation and education: publication of several brochures for the public.

Box XLVI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 8(j) - Traditional knowledge and related provisions

GURTS

57. Has your country created and developed capacity-building programmes to involve and enable smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities, and other relevant stakeholders to effectively participate in decision-making processes related to genetic use restriction technologies?	
a) No	X
b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on capacity-building programmes to involve and enable smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities and other relevant stakeholders to effectively participate in decision-making processes related to GURTs.	
No relevant action of the Development Cooperation stakeholders from partner developing countries in this area.	

Status and Trends

58. Has your country supported indigenous and local communities in undertaking field studies to determine the status, trends and threats related to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities? (decision VII/16)	
a) No	
b) No, but support to relevant studies is being considered	
c) Yes (please provide information on the studies undertaken)	X
Further information on the studies undertaken to determine the status, trends and threats related to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, and priority actions identified.	
The Plant Production Department of the **Ghent University** is doing some research on ethnobotany. Ethnobotany is the study of the traditional use of plants by traditional people living in subtropical and tropical areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America. A next step is the local domestication of promising	

plants. Activities in tropical agriculture aim at an increase of efficiency under systems of low external input.

No relevant action of the **Belgian Development Cooperation** stakeholders from partner developing countries in this area. Some support to indigenous and local communities exists, mainly through NGO development cooperation, but essentially in education and institutional strengthening of local organisations.

Some of the ongoing projects supported by the **Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests** are particularly emphasising this aspect.

Akwé:Kon Guidelines

59. Has your country initiated a legal and institutional review of matters related to cultural, environmental and social impact assessment, with a view to incorporating the Akwé:Kon Guidelines into national legislation, policies, and procedures?	
a) No	X
b) No, but review is under way	
c) Yes, a review undertaken (please provide details on the review)	
Further information on the review.	

60. Has your country used the Akwé:Kon Guidelines in any project proposed to take place on sacred sites and/or land and waters traditionally occupied by indigenous and local communities? (decision VII/16)	
a) No	X
b) No, but a review of the Akwé: Kon guidelines is under way	
c) Yes, to some extent (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, to a significant extent (please provide details below)	
Further information on the projects where the Akwé:Kon Guidelines are applied.	

Capacity Building and Participation of Indigenous and Local Communities

61. Has your country undertaken any measures to enhance and strengthen the capacity of indigenous and local communities to be effectively involved in decision-making related to the use of their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity? (decision V/16)	
a) No	
b) No, but some programmes being developed	
c) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures taken (please provide details below)	
Further information on the measures to enhance and strengthen the capacity of indigenous and local communities.	
Flemish Region: this is being addressed in the framework of international cooperation projects such as the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests and the Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes programme.	

Potential actions foreseen in the Global Programme (2003-2007) for Biological Diversity and Development Cooperation at the **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences** for example include the valorisation of orally transmitted knowledge.

Involvement of local communities in decision-making is targeted in two biodiversity protection and sustainable use programmes in Tanzania which receive support from the **Belgian Development Cooperation**: Selous game reserve and Kilombero Ramsar Site.

In the framework of the 'Plan Binacional' involving Ecuador and Peru, the Belgian cooperation supports a natural resources sustainable management programme in either country. These include a significant component targeting the participation of local communities (either indigenous or 'mestizos') to decision-making processes and the valorisation of their traditional knowledge.

62. Has your country developed appropriate mechanisms, guidelines, legislation or other initiatives to foster and promote the effective participation of indigenous and local communities in decision making, policy planning and development and implementation of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at international, regional, subregional, national and local levels? (decision V/16)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant mechanisms, guidelines and legislation are under development	
c) Yes, some mechanisms, guidelines and legislation are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the mechanisms, guidelines and legislation developed.

Belgian Development Cooperation: ownership by the host country is one of the most relevant criteria of pertinence for assessing the viability of any new development cooperation programme proposal. Within this ownership criteria, the participation of indigenous or local communities in decision-making and planning processes is considered with attention. As well at the identification stage as at the mid- or end of term evaluation stages, this aspect is assessed, so that in case of insufficient fulfilment, recommendations may be formulated for further improvement.

The more local the level is, the more the participation of local and indigenous communities is ensured. At higher levels nonetheless (distrital, national, etc.) this is more difficult due to the competition with more powerful interests. It also depends from one partner country to the other.

See also under question 61.

63. Has your country developed mechanisms for promoting the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities with specific provisions for the full, active and effective participation of women in all elements of the programme of work? (decision V/16, annex)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant mechanisms are being developed	
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the mechanisms for promoting the full and effective participation of women of indigenous and local communities in all elements of the programme of work.

Belgian Development Cooperation: for any development cooperation programme at its identification stage, a quality control include assessing the proposal towards a number of criteria of pertinence, among which the gender aspect, *i.e.* promoting the equality of rights between men and women. Insufficient fulfillment of this criteria may lead to recommendations to reformulate the proposal or, in few cases, to rejecting the proposal.

See also under question 61. Women are not explicitly mentioned, but are most certainly fully eligible.

Support to implementation

64. Has your country established national, subregional and/or regional indigenous and local community biodiversity advisory committees?	
a) No	NA
b) No, but relevant work is under way	
c) Yes	

65. Has your country assisted indigenous and local community organisations to hold regional meetings to discuss the outcomes of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties and to prepare for meetings under the Convention?	
a) No	X
b) Yes (please provide details about the outcome of meetings)	
Further information on the outcome of regional meetings.	

66. Has your country supported, financially and otherwise, indigenous and local communities in formulating their own community development and biodiversity conservation plans that will enable such communities to adopt a culturally appropriate strategic, integrated and phased approach to their development needs in line with community goals and objectives?	
a) No	
b) Yes, to some extent (please provide details below)	X
c) Yes, to a significant extent (please provide details below)	
Further information on the support provided.	
The **Belgian Development Cooperation** directly supports the 'Fondo Indígena' for Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia. Nonetheless, its actions are not specifically steered to biodiversity conservation or sustainable use, but rather to the promotion and the rescue of indigenous culture and language (e.g. through bilingual education) and the socio-political rights. The Belgian Development Cooperation indirectly supports, through NGO's, a large number of local associations (peasants, indigenous, youth organisations, etc.) in several countries. Here too, there is hardly any focus on biodiversity issues, but rather on socio-cultural, economic and political aspects. Biodiversity-related issues might be underlying in some of these, but this would need a finer analysis.	

Box XLVII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 9 - *Ex-situ* conservation

67. ◆ On Article 9(a) and (b), has your country adopted measures for the *ex-situ* conservation of components of biological diversity native to your country and originating outside your country?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures adopted for the *ex-situ* conservation of components of biodiversity native to your country and originating outside your country.

The **Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms** (BCCM) holds about 34,700 filamentous fungus or yeast strains, 18,000 bacterial strains, 1,900 plasmids (as pure DNA) and 14 unique cDNA libraries (www.belspo.be/bccm). The BCCM consortium consists of four complementary culture collections at the service of the scientific and industrial communities:

- BCCM/IHEM at Brussels holds 7,700 strains, representing 336 genera and 1,007 species of filamentous and yeast-like fungi of public health and related environmental interest;
- BCCM/MUCL at Louvain-la-Neuve holds over 27,000 strains, representing 1,094 genera and 3,627 species of filamentous and yeast-like fungi of all major taxonomic groups, mainly of biotechnological and agro-industrial importance. The herbarium contains about 40,000 species;
- BCCM/LMG at Ghent holds over 18,000 bacterial strains, representing 260 genera and 1,508 species, encompassing plant-associated and phytopathogenic bacteria, bacteria of medical and veterinary importance, marine bacteria and various groups of biotechnological importance;
- BCCM/LMBP at Ghent holds over 1,900 plasmids and 14 unique cDNA libraries derived from a variety of organisms.

The collections contain micro-organisms native to Belgium as well as organisms originating from other countries. In the latter case, the cultures are often exchanged in the framework of a scientific co-operation project with (an) institute(s) of the country of origin.

The BCCM has co-ordinated the concerted action 'MOSAICC, Micro-organisms, Sustainable Use and Access Regulation, International Code of Conduct'. This project has been financed by the European Commission's Directorate General for Research and translates the principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity into practical procedures designed to facilitate access to and transfer of microbial genetic resources. The MOSAICC Code of Conduct can be consulted at www.belspo.be/bccm/mosaicc (see also Articles 15 et 16).

In the framework of a bilateral agreement with the Kingdom of Morocco, BCCM has launched a project with a network of Moroccan laboratories and the Moroccan Centre of Co-ordination and Planning of Scientific and Technical Research, and with the support of the Belgian Development Cooperation. This project aims to establish a national Moroccan culture collections network, with a view to the *ex-situ* preservation of the Moroccan microbial diversity and the sustainable development of the country in fields like public health, agriculture, etc.

Fruit tree *ex-situ* collections are very important in Belgium both at the formal and informal (NGO's) level. Total amount of accessions at national level: *Malus* – 4,300; *Pyrus* – 3,600; *Prunus* – 1,600. Other important collections of plant genetic resources used for agriculture are held e.g. for *Rosa sp.*, *Azalea sp.*, *Triticum spelta*, *Phaseolus sp.*, forage plants, etc.

The **International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain** (INIBAP), a programme of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), maintains the largest *ex-situ in vitro* collection of banana (*Musa*) germplasm in the world. This international collection, which was established in 1985, is housed at the INIBAP Transit Centre, hosted at the Laboratory of Tropical Crop Improvement, KULeuven (www.agr.kuleuven.ac.be/dtp/tro/itc.htm). The collection holds 1,136 accessions, consisting of wild relatives (15%), landraces and natural cultivars (75%) and improved materials (10%). In 1994, this collection was placed under the auspices of FAO within the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections and is held in trust by INIBAP for the benefit of the international community.

The **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** manages a wild Phaseoleae/Phaseolinae germplasm collection. It has been designated by the 'International Plant Genetic Resources Institute' (IPGRI), as a reference collection for wild species of *Phaseolus* (in 1979) and of *Vigna* (in 1983). The main objective is to secure long-term conservation in the form of seed samples. The collection contains 1,687 accessions representing 205 taxa. *Phaseolus* and *Vigna* are the most highly represented genera with respectively 33 species (695 accessions) and 61 species (818 accessions). Most accessions are made for the consultation of wild or weedy materials (79%).

The National Botanic Garden of Belgium collected seeds from characteristic and endangered species in the different phytogeographical districts of Belgium. The ongoing long-term conservation of about 600 seed samples is assured by the storage at –20°C.

Plants of 18,000 taxa are cultivated in the open air collections or in the greenhouses. Even if most of them are only represented by a few specimens, they are sometimes the last representatives of rare and endangered species.

The Antwerp Zoo and Wild Animal Park Planckendael of the **Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp** (RZSA) contribute to the *ex-situ* conservation of wild animal species, through their coordination of and participation in conservation breeding programmes. They coordinate the programmes for the okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*), bonobo (*Pan paniscus*), golden-headed lion tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysomelas*), Congo peafowl (*Afropavo congensis*), European black vulture (*Aegypius monachus*), Mexican military macaw (*Ara militaris mexicana*) and Fisher's tourako (*Tauraco fischeri*), and participate in many more programmes. In addition, the Centre for Research and Conservation of the RZSA performs scientific research in the fields of conservation biology, ethology, veterinary medicine and functional morphology with among others a strong focus on solving problems in the fields of *ex-situ* conservation of biodiversity. Planckendael also participated in the reproduction programme of Sahelo-Saharan antelopes for a reintroduction project under CMS.

68. ◆ On Article 9(c), has your country adopted measures for the reintroduction of threatened species into their natural habitats under appropriate conditions?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	X
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the measures for the reintroduction of threatened species into their natural habitats under appropriate conditions.

Flemish Region: the Flemish legislation on species conservation includes measures to be taken into account for the reintroduction of species, such as impact assessment on ecology and on other species in the introduction area and careful preparation through breeding programmes to avoid releasing specimens from in-breeding population.

Technical and financial support is provided to the Sahelo-Saharan antelopes programme under CMS for reintroduction and rehabilitation of antilopes in northern African countries.

69. ◆ On Article 9(d), has your country taken measures to regulate and manage the collection of biological resources from natural habitats for *ex-situ* conservation purposes so as not to threaten ecosystems and *in-situ* populations of species?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X

d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures to regulate and manage the collection of biological resources from natural habitats for *ex-situ* conservation purposes so as not to threaten ecosystems and *in-situ* populations of species.

Flemish Region: a specific permit has to be requested from the Nature Divison. One of the conditions to obtain a permit is that *in-situ* biodiversity is not endangered in any way by the collection of biological resources.

Box XLVIII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 10 - Sustainable use of components of biological diversity

70. ◆ On Article 10(a), has your country integrated consideration of the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making?

a) No	
b) No, but steps are being taken	
c) Yes, in some relevant sectors (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, in most relevant sectors (please provide details below)	

Further information on integrating consideration of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making.

Flemish Region: the forest policy is part of the Environment Policy Plan 1997-2002 and the Environmental Policy Plan 2003-2008 under the theme Biodiversity. In general, policy planning is part of a more generic and specific strategic planning process. The forest policy is described in:

- the Flemish Government Act on Forests (13.06.1990);
- the Long Term Forestry Plan (draft) describes the strategy for a sustainable forest policy up to the year 2100;
- the Forestry Action Plan (draft) defines 33 actions for the next five years.

The Flemish Forest decree created the basis for a more plan-oriented forest policy. A background study 'Long Term Forestry Plan' describes the strategy for forest policy up to the year 2100. The first step towards realisation of this strategy is formulated in the document 'Forestry Action Plan' which is now being finalised. This plan defines more than 30 key-actions for the next five years. There are three levels of implementation of the Flemish forest policy:

- forests owned by the Flemish Region: forest management is carried out by the Division of Forests and Green Spaces and an exhaustive management plan has to be made;
- other public forests: the technical forest management is carried out by the Division of Forests and Green Spaces and an exhaustive management plan has to be made;
- private forests: for forest grouping, grants awarded, management plan (limited or extended version) needed, licenses and permits for all activities not included in the management plan, (subject to) advice.

Every forest must be managed in a way that the permanent fulfilment of the different forest func-

tions is accomplished. The forest owner has to prove this by submitting a forest management plan, drawn up according to a model established by the Flemish Government. Forest reserves and shelter-forests are appointed by the Flemish Government and must be primarily managed according to their special role.

Public forest owners must pay special attention to the ecological forest function and the forest management must fulfil some regional guidelines:
- conservation or restoration of the natural flora and fauna;
- stimulating the indigenous or site-adapted species;
- stimulating the natural regeneration;
- stimulating uneven-aged and irregular formed forest stands;
- advancing the ecological balance.

The grants which can be provided to private forest owners disposing of an agreed forest management plan and wanting to afforest or reforest in a natural or an artificial way are higher if indigenous species are used. Integration of several forest properties in order to make a common integrated management plan is encouraged by providing grants. Integration of forest management and other forms of land use (agriculture, nature conservation) is stimulated by means of the Municipal Nature Development Plans and rural land use management plans.

The keywords of the Flemish forest policy are a multifunctional and sustainable forestry. To apply this forest policy, a management vision is being worked out, in a first phase for the forest owned by the Flemish Region. This vision consists of:
- specific and concrete guidelines for a close-to-nature forest management;
- a framework to assess the forest functions;
- a method for quality control.

The guidelines are based on the principles of the Flemish Pro Silva working group. The aims are: attaining a reasonable production of high quality wood, reaching an attractive forest with sufficient variation for recreational uses able to withstand a certain level of disturbance, giving the indigenous flora and fauna chances and obtaining a forest that can fulfil the shelter function. The Flemish Forest Service supports the principles of Pro Silva Flanders as a means, together with the principle of multifunctional forestry, to obtain a sustainable forestry.

Walloon Region:
1) The Environment Code contains a Water Code. This Water Code was adopted as a Decree on 27.05.2004. The basic principle of the Water Code is: « water is part of the common heritage of the Walloon Region. The water cycle is managed in a global and integrated way, as to assure water quality and perennity, in the framework of sustainable development ». The objectives of the Water Code are:
- to prevent all additional degradation, and to preserve and improve the situation of the quatic ecosystems, as well as, for what concerns their need of water, of the terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on them;
- to promote the sustainable consumption of water, based on the long term protection of available water resources;
- to strengthen the protection and improve the quality of the aquatic environment, among others by specific measures aiming to progressively reduce the discharge, emission and leaking of priority substances as well as the progressively halting or suppression of the discharge, emission or leaking of dangerous priority substances;
- to assure the progressive reduction of groundwater and surface water pollution, and to prevent the worsening of the pollution;
- to contribute to the reduction of the impacts of flood and drought;
- to protect peoples' health from the noxious effects of the contamination of drinking water by assuring its salubrity and cleanliness.

2) Piscicultural Management Plan for a Sustainable Management of the Semois Basin, its environment and species. Objectives of this plan are: connect the different piscicultural actors, preserve the aquatic environments and fish fauna, protect the natural ecological processes, develop recreational hangling in a sustainable way, preserve the natural genetic diversity of the species. This type of plan will be expanded to other subbasins in the Walloon Region.

3) Concerning forest certification, the Walloon Region is member of the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). This system involves the implementation of a progressive plan containing a chapter on biodiversity as well as a charter which owners must subscribe if they want to beneficiate from the certification. This two tools enable a sustainable management of the forest (see

also the part on forests).

4) In its strategic plan, one of the orientations of the Nature and Forest Division is to reduce the investments through a reduction of interventions in the field. The Division pleads for the use of closer-to-nature sylvicultural techniques as well as the testing of the Pro Silva method. In several areas, tests of the Pro Silva sylviculture have been launched (Habay-la-Neuve, Bouillon, Nassogne, Bièvre, Paliseul). An INTERREG has been set up in collaboration with the non-profit organisation 'Forêt Wallonne' to gather a maximum of information on this method and the necessary instruments for his application.

5) A revision of the agri-environmental measures took place in the Walloon Region. A new Order of the Walloon Government (28.10.2004) foresees incentive agri-environmental measures for: the conservation of ecological network and landscape elements (hadges, tree rows, trees, isolated shrubs, long-stemmed fruit trees, groves, ponds), natural grasslands, verges, grasslands of high biological value, etc.

6) The management plans of forests subject to the circular of 1997 (see also thematic part on forests below: 'objectives of the management measures developed in the circular on biodiversity in forests') are reviewed. It involves the principle of multifunctionality aiming towards an optimal equilibrium between production, protection of soil and water, conservation of biodiversity and social functions. Up to now, almost half of the forested surfaces have been reassigned.

7) The 'fallowland-fauna' instrument exists in the Walloon Region since 2000. It allows for the covering of resting arable lands with vegetation, creating a privileged habitat for fauna. However, the instrument has had only limited succes until now probably due to unawareness of many farmers and hunters about the instrument, the severity of the penalty when violations are detected and the heavy administrative burden placed on farmers and hunters. To remedy to this situation, the instrument was reviewed for 2005 and several constraints have been removed to obtain an enhanced network. Examples of adaptations of the instrument are the reduction of the minimal surface for fields to be eligible and a simplification of the procedures.

Brussels Capital Region: sustainable forestry management is the major guideline for the development and implementation of forest management plans (e.g. management plan of the Sonian Forest, the Brussels Capital Region most important forest, covering 10% of the Brussels Capital Region surface). This forest received the FSC certificate.

The **Federal** Government Agreement 2003 addresses specifically the issue of forests. In this document, the government makes a commitment to promote timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way and to tackle illegal logging. Action 19 of the 2nd Federal Plan for Sustainable Development indicates how the federal level can contribute to those commitments.

71. ◈ On Article 10(b), has your country adopted measures relating to the use of biological resources that avoid or minimise adverse impacts on biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	
Further information on the measures adopted relating to the use of biological resources that avoid or minimise adverse impacts on biological diversity.	
See under question 70.	

72. ◈ On Article 10(c), has your country put in place measures that protect and encourage customary use of biological resources that is compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements?	
a) No	

b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures that protect and encourage customary use of biological resources that is compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements.

Brussels Capital Region: following traditional forest legislation, use of biological resources such as mushrooms is forbidden. Recent legislation (transposition of Habitats Directive, which concerns all forests) has integrated the prohibition of use of biological resources such as picking of mushrooms, collecting of mosses, cutting flowers etc. Hunting is prohibited by law. Only recreational fishing is allowed.

Flemish Region: one example is the promotion of organised hunting in Wildlife Management Units (WMU) so that they can act as joint manager of the open space. The Flemish Parliament Act on Hunting (24.07.1991), art. 12 is the foundation for the integral management of hunting grounds by defining that the Government of the Flemish Region can determine conditions under which separate hunting grounds are to be joined voluntarily into larger units of management tot facilitate game management, nature conservation and supervision. On 01.12.1998 a Flemish Government Decree was adopted laying down the conditions under which separate hunting grounds can be amalgamated voluntarily into larger management units and the criteria by which management units can be recognised, making the recognition and subsidising of game management units possible. At the end of 2004, 162 game management units were recognised, which cover approximately 60% of the huntable space of the Flemish Region. This can be considered as a huge success. The wildlife management units have to submit a game hunting plan, monitoring scheme and overview of data to receive their subsidies.

73. ◈ On Article 10(d), has your country put in place measures that help local populations develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas where biological diversity has been reduced?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the measures that help local populations develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas where biodiversity has been reduced.

Subsidies are available to local people for nature restoration and management purposes.

74. ◈ Has your country identified indicators and incentive measures for sectors relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity? (decision V/24)

a) No	
b) No, but assessment of potential indicators and incentive measures is under way	
c) Yes, indicators and incentive measures identified (please describe below)	X

Further comments on the identification of indicators and incentive measures for sectors relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Indicators have been identified and are in place. Incentive measures however are lacking in most cases.

Information on indicators relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity can be found in the thematic report 'Indicators for biological diversity in Belgium' compiled by the National Focal Point:

bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/implementation/documents/thematicreports/indicators/indicators.htm

75. ◈ Has your country implemented sustainable use practices, programmes and policies for the sustainable use of biological diversity, especially in pursuit of poverty alleviation? (decision V/24)	
a) No	
b) No, but potential practices, programmes and policies are under review	
c) Yes, some policies and programmes are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive policies and programmes are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on sustainable use programmes and policies.

See all other questions related to article 10, mainly question 70. In Belgium, there is no real connection between biodiversity considerations and poverty, thus practices, programmes and policies are generally not linking this two objectives.

76. ◈ Has your country developed or explored mechanisms to involve the private sector in initiatives on the sustainable use of biodiversity? (decision V/24)	
a) No	
b) No, but mechanisms are under development	
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please describe below)	X

Further comments on the development of mechanisms to involve the private sector in initiatives on the sustainable use of biodiversity.

Representatives of the private sector participate in coordination and concertation mechanisms such as meetings of the Belgian Federal Council for Sustainable Development, in the development of programmes and plans, etc. Nevertheless, it remains difficult to convince the private sector of the need to conserve and sustainably use components of biological diversity.

77. Has your country initiated a process to apply the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity? (decision VII/12)	
a) No	X
b) No, but the principles and guidelines are under review	
c) Yes, a process is being planned	
d) Yes, a process has been initiated (please provide detailed information)	

Further information on the process to apply the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity.

Several actions are undertaken to enhance and ensure sustainable use of natural resources, however no specific reference is made to the Addis Ababa Principles or Guidelines.

78. Has your country taken any initiative or action to develop and transfer technologies and provide financial resources to assist in the application of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity? (decision VII/12)

a) No	X
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some technologies developed and transferred and limited financial resources provided (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, many technologies developed and transferred and significant financial resources provided (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the development and transfer of technologies and provision of financial resources to assist in the application of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity.	

Biodiversity and Tourism

79. Has your country established mechanisms to assess, monitor and measure the impact of tourism on biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but mechanisms are under development	
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please specify below)	X
d) Yes, existing mechanisms are under review	
Further comments on the establishment of mechanisms to assess, monitor and measure the impact of tourism on biodiversity.	
Selected tourism infrastuctures such as hotels, marina's, riverside embarkment structures for canoe and kayak, etc. are subject to EIA. On the basis of such EIA reports, some activities have been cancelled in some zones, such as kayak in some 'fragile' zones of a river system, (seasonally) closed zones on beaches. In the framework of EIA and specific assessments for Natura 2000 sites, extensions or development of tourism infrastructure are subject to impact assessment. Few studies have been undertaken to assess the impact of tourism on beaches and their biodiversity, and more research is needed.	

80. Has your country provided educational and training programmes to the tourism operators so as to increase their awareness of the impacts of tourism on biodiversity and upgrade the technical capacity at the local level to minimise the impacts? (decision V/25)	
a) No	
b) No, but programmes are under development	X
c) Yes, programmes are in place (please describe below)	
Further comments on educational and training programmes provided to tourism operators.	
Flemish Region: the responsibility for tourism development lies at provincial level as part of their overall duty to promote sustainable economic development and to develop provincial tourism strategies. They are required to consult with stakeholders in this process, such as the Regional Landscape Organisations under the Nature Division. Educational programmes are included in the training system but can certainly be enhanced. **Walloon Region**: this is taken care of within the Natural Parcs. A Natural Parc is a rural territory with high biological and geographical interest, subject to measures to protect the environment in	

harmony with the needs of the population and the socio-economic development. To reach this ambitious objective, the regional actors (persons in charge at municipal and regional level, farmers, tourism sector, forestry sector, nature protection associations, etc.) gather to look for solutions satisfying all partners. The management plan among others tries to integrate biodiversity considerations into the tourism sector.

81. Does your country provide indigenous and local communities with capacity-building and financial resources to support their participation in tourism policy-making, development planning, product development and management? (decision VII/14)	
a) No	X
b) No, but relevant programmes are being considered	
c) Yes, some programmes are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments in the capacity-building and financial resources provided to indigenous and local communities to support their participation in tourism policy-making, development planning, product development and management.

Belgian Development Cooperation: limited development cooperation support to:

- training for communities and villagers in tourism policy and marketing (bilateral cooperation in Tanzania; ended in 2001);
- awareness raising in Belgium on ethical and sustainable tourism overseas (not country-specific);
- UNV/UNESCO natural resource management programme, including sustainable tourism, in Cambodia.

Some aspects were taken into account in the following two research projects, initiated following a call for proposals of the **Belgian GTI-NFP** and funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation:

- biodiversity assessment at three protected areas in Northwest Cambodia;
- herpetological species richness and community structure on the Kaieteur National Park Tepui.

82. Has your country integrated the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development in the development or review of national strategies and plans for tourism development, national biodiversity strategies and actions plans, and other related sectoral strategies? (decision VII/14)	
a) No, but the guidelines are under review	
b) No, but a plan is under consideration to integrate some principles of the guidelines into relevant strategies	X
c) Yes, a few principles of the guidelines are integrated into some sectoral plans and NBSAPs (please specify which principle and sector)	
d) Yes, many principles of the guidelines are integrated into some sectoral plans and NBSAPs (please specify which principle and sector)	

Further information on the sectors where the principles of the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development are integrated.

Some guiding principles will be included in the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation).

Box XLIX.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;

b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Walloon Region: the Decree on Touristic Accommodations (18.12.2003) and the Order of the Walloon Government (09.12.2004) executing this Decree foresee measures specifically for camping sites:
- encourage the camping owners to foresee vegetation and to use indigenous species for this;
- for the zones with increased inundation risks, it is systematically imposed to allow only short camping stays in a way to respect the river features and to let it play its regulational role;
- all officially recognised touristic campings and caravan parks receive financial aids to meet their obligation to build a wastewater treatment installation;
- caravan parks are financially aided to put in place a system for the selective collection of waste.

Flemish Region: with the following sectors or key stakeholders specific agreements for cooperation on nature conservation have been or are being developed: energy sector, defence and military areas, tourism and recreation, sports, youth, drinking water companies, wind mill companies, infrastructure and railways, water courses and roads departments, agriculture, forestry, inland fisheries, etc.

Coastal dunes are fragile habitat types, but also under very high pressure from tourism development and are therefor protected by law (Dune Decree of 1993). During revision of land use and land destination maps all efforts are done to implement this protection scheme and extent the fully protected and rehabilitated surface of dune areas. Under this programme thorough soil sanitation works have been carried out and dunes restored in an abandoned military domein, and extraction of infrastructure and rehabilitation of vegetation of camping sites for which the exploitation permission was not extended.

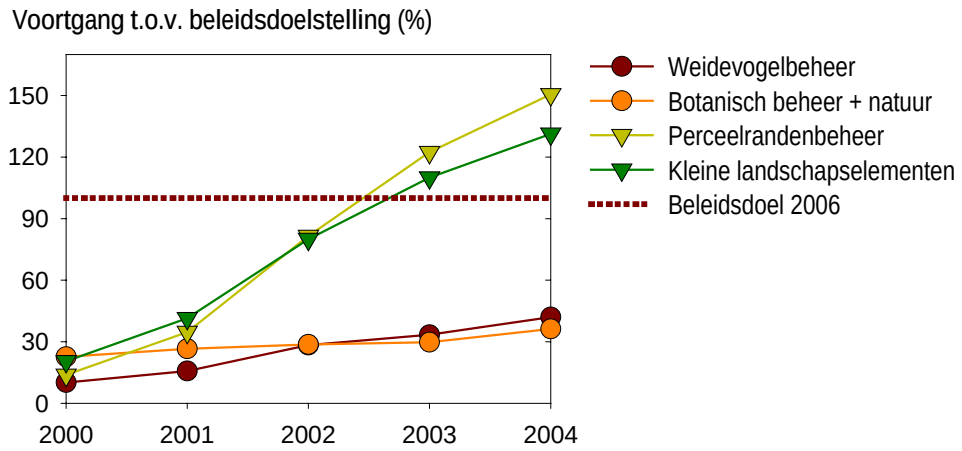
Article 11 - Incentive measures

83. ◈ Has your country established programmes to identify and adopt economically and socially sound measures that act as incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity?

a) No	
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the programmes to identify and adopt incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Flemish Region: management agreements for seven aspects were included: pasture bird management, management of the borders of premises, small-scale landscape elements, buffer management, botanical management, reduced fertilisation with a fertilisation standard for water, zero fertilisation for nature. For the development of new management agreements, quantifiable objectives have been drawn up concerning pasture bird management, management of the borders of premises, small-scale landscape elements and botanical management. There are also a few additional points of interest for the future. A re-orientation of management agreements to the level of enterprise makes it possible to respond better to the individuality and working conditions of every agricultural enterprise. An interactive portal for management agreements on the internet is being developed. The services involved are working out a method to make recommendations for the adjustment of management agreements, and which can also take care of the reporting to Europe. The trend in the use of management agreements as shown in the graph below indicates that agreements for larger surfaces are not so popular.



Graph explanation/legend from top: meadow birds management, botanical management + nature, parcel border management, small landscape elements, policy objective 2006.

For the cultivated lands in vulnerable nature zones and the vulnerable zones in agricultural areas with ecological importance, botanical management is possible in anticipation of a Nature directive plan and as measure (not as compensation) compatible with the measure in areas with specific environmental restrictions and this under the following conditions:

- within the destinations mentioned in Article 20 of the Nature Conservation Decree, areas are demarcated in advance on the basis of a number of criteria, determined by the Flemish government on the proposal of the authorised Minister for Environment;
- the expansion perimeters of Flemish or acknowledged nature reserves are excluded;
- the management packages concerning botanical management are linked to a management vision, approved in the implementation of the Nature Conservation Decree;
- the management packages concerning botanical management include clearly accessible result commitments, defined under the form of conservation and/or development or recovery of nature (target) types or nature target images;
- only for cultivated lands which are known at the registration of the manure bank;
- if, for the cultivated land in question, no Nature directive plan becomes effective towards the end of 2004, the management agreement will expire;
- if, for the cultivated land in question, no Nature directive plan becomes effective towards the end of 2004, Nature directive plan needs to include a pronouncement about the termination or proceeding, if possible under which additional boundary conditions, of the current management agreement.

Nature conservation organisations receive government subsidies for the acquisition of land and for management and monitoring activities in the recognised reserves. Local authorities receive government subsidies for the implementation of projects for conservation, rehabilitation and management of habitats or species within their area. The agri-environment and forestry sectors and hunter groups support schemes which include important incentives for the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity. Evaluations are undertaken to assess the impact of such schemes.

Walloon Region:

1) A revision of the agri-environmental measures took place in the Walloon Region. A new order of the Walloon Government (28.10.2004) foresees incentive agri-environmental measures for: the conservation of ecological network and landscape elements (hadges, tree rows, trees, isolated shrubs, long-stemmed fruit trees, groves, ponds), natural grasslands, verges, grasslands of high biological value, etc.

2) The 'fallowland-fauna' instrument exists in the Walloon Region since 2000. It allows for the covering of resting arable lands with vegetation, creating a privileged habitat for fauna. However, the instrument has had only limited succes until now probably due to unawareness of many farmers and hunters about the instrument, the severity of the penalty when violations are detected and the heavy administrative burden placed on farmers and hunters. To remedy to this situation, the instrument was reviewed for 2005 and several constraints have been removed to obtain an enhanced network. Examples of adaptations of the instrument are the reduction of the minimal surface for fields to be eligible and a simplification of the procedures.

3) A new allowance to promote the planting of hedges will soon be available and will replace the previous one. New features are:
- higher grants for the planting of hedges;
- grants for the maintenance of hedges;
- the integration of more elements such as tree rows and orchards;
- a reduction of the administrative burden.

4) The Walloon Region provides grants to the River Contracts and 'Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature' when they propose concrete nature restoration and maintenance projects.

5) Furthermore, incentive measures are foreseen within the following resolutions:
- grants for appropriate sylvicultural practices (Walloon Government Resolution, 17.11.1994);
- grants when acquiring land for nature reserve purposes (Walloon Executive Resolution, 17.07.1986);
- grants for the plantation of hedges (Walloon Government Resolution, 09.02.1995).

Brussels Capital Region: subsidies are granted for the management of recognised nature reserves (resolution of the Brussels Capital Region Executive, 25.10.1990). However, until now, there are no recognised private nature reserves. Nature volunteer organisations receive grants and subsidies to manage natural sites and even nature reserves, in collaboration with the regional authority.

84. ◈ Has your country developed the mechanisms or approaches to ensure adequate incorporation of both market and non-market values of biological diversity into relevant plans, policies and programmes and other relevant areas? (decisions III/18 and IV/10)	
a) No	X
b) No, but relevant mechanisms are under development	
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, review of impact of mechanisms available (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the mechanism or approaches to incorporate market and non-market values of biodiversity into relevant plans, policies and programmes.	

85. ◈ Has your country developed training and capacity-building programmes to implement incentive measures and promote private-sector initiatives? (decision III/18)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are in place	X
d) Yes, many programmes are in place	

86. Does your country take into consideration the proposals for the design and implementation of incentive measures as contained in Annex I to decision VI/15 when designing and implementing incentive measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity? (decision VI/15)	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X
Further information on the proposals considered when designing and implementing the incentive measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.	
Flemish Region: there are a number of different schemes providing incentives for the conservation	

and sustainable use of biodiversity. Many of these offer incentives to enhance the biodiversity value of agricultural land and have focused on the protection and restoration of semi-natural habitats and reversing the loss of farmland features of value to wildlife, such as the contracts under the agri-environment measures. These contracts are now receiving a form of enforcement through the introduction of cross-compliance control. Additional schemes provide incentives to protect and enhance forestry land, and manage designated sites. Initiatives are taken for waving land taxes for land owners located in the Flemish Ecological Network areas.

Walloon and **Brussels Capital Regions**: see incentive measures mentioned under question 83.

87. Has your country made any progress in removing or mitigating policies or practices that generate perverse incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity? (decision VII/18)	
a) No	
b) No, but identification of such policies and practices is under way	X
c) Yes, relevant policies and practices identified but not entirely removed or mitigated (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, relevant policies and practices identified and removed or mitigated (please provide details below)	
Further information on perverse incentives identified and/or removed or mitigated.	
Foreseen through the introduction of a cross-compliance system.	

Box L.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 12 - Research and training

88. ◆ On Article 12(a), has your country established programmes for scientific and technical education and training in measures for the identification, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components?	
a) No	
b) No, but programmes are under development	
c) Yes, programmes are in place (please provide details below)	X
Further information on the programmes for scientific and technical education and training in the measures for identification, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.	
Biodiversity-related courses such as taxonomy, systematics, ecology and alike are commonly teached at universities. Numerous administrations and non-governmental organisations organise courses for nature guides.	

The **KULeuven**, supported by IPGRI and the EU, provides training on cryopreservation, *i.e.* fundamentals of cryobiology and plant genetic resources, and more technical information on cryopreservation protocols and anaytical techniques.

The **Institute of Nature Conservatio**n participates in the EU FP6 Network of Excellence 'ALTER-Net'. It has the leadership of a work package on dissemination of knowledge.

Walloon Region:
- biodiversity training for officers of the Nature and Forest Division (among others on species and habitats of community importance due to the Birds and Habitats Directives);
- the 'Réseau Idée' tries to connect all the actors involved with environmental education: teachers, animators, trainers, parents, éco-councellers, etc. The network enables frequent contacts between this actors and a better distribution of the information. It tries to valorise existing pedagogical projects and instruments, training possibilities and the centres for environmental education;
- the Regional Centres for Environmental Education (CRIE) provide a public service on environmental information, sensibilisation and training, in a sustainable development perspective. The activities of the CRIE are also directed towards adults such as teachers, animators, nature guides, officers or foresters;
- training provided by nature associations such as Natagora, for example on ornithology.

Brussels Capital Region: officers and technical agents (forest and nature technical agents) of the BIME receive regularly courses and training sessions in relation to biodiversity and management of natural sites.

Several nature information and education centers are given information sessions and training courses to a large public (children and adults) for sensitisation on sustainable attitudes and management and use of biological resources.

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** supports:
- the African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC) housed at the Royal Museum for Central Africa which organises training internships with a focus on taxonomy and biodiversity for students from developing countries (started in 1991);
- the DGDC-RBINS capacity building project which provides grantees from developing countries with training in taxonomy and collection management (started in 2004);
- FishBase by the Royal Museum for Central Africa. Grants for training in the taxonomy of African freshwater fishes and the use of FishBase. Starting from 2005, five trainees for three months each year.

The Belgian Development Cooperation also supports, through an UNESCO programme, the Regional Post-Graduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests (ERAIFT), based in DRC (± €200,000/year). The ERAIFT aims at providing an education that will allow graduates to contribute to human development that is sustainable and respective of the environment, particularly tropical forests.

The VLIR and CIUF receive funding from the Belgian Development Cooperation to develop international courses (usually 1 year), international training programmes (usually 1 to 6 months) and short training initiatives (5 days to 2 weeks). Some of these training initiatives specifically targets taxonomy. Examples include the Postgraduate International Nematology Course organised by the Ghent University (http://allserv.rug.ac.be/~nsmol/pinc.htm); the MSc in Ecological Marine Management organised by the Free University of Brussels and University of Antwerp (http://www.ecomama.be/); the MSc in Aquaculture organised by the Universities of Liège and Namur (http://www.ulg.ac.be/aacad/prog-cours/sciences/FSCDESIntAqua.html).

The '**Belgian Coordinated Collection of Micro-organisms**' (BCCM) provides individual and group training sessions on micro-organisms.

89. ◆ On Article 12(b), does your country promote and encourage research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

The second Scientific Plan for a Sustainable Development Policy (2000-2005), supported by the **Federal Science Policy**, devotes about 15% of its total budget (~ €10,000,000) to biodiversity research. Research projects contribute to the conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems of temperate regions, the North Sea and the Austral Ocean.

The main objectives of the programme are:
- to better understand the links between biological diversity, the structure and the functioning of ecosystems and the impacts of human and environmental threats on biodiversity;
- to develop decision/management support tools for the monitoring and assessment of biodiversity and methods for conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Fifteen network projects are supported (involving 60 research teams in a multidisciplinary context):
1) Climate variability as recorded in Lake Tanganyika (CLIMLAKE), 01.12.2000-28.02.2005.
2) Invasion and biodiversity in grasslands and field borders, 01.12.2000-28.02.2005.
3) XYLOBIOS: Diversity, ecology and roles of saproxylic organisms in Belgian deciduous forests, 01.12.2000-28.02.2005.
4) Linking dispersal, connectivity, and landscape structure to produce habitat evaluation/restoration guidelines, 01.12.2000-28.02.2005.
5) Biodiversity of 3 representative groups of the Antarctic Zoobenthos (BIANZO), 01.02.2002-30.04.2006.
6) Higher trophic levels in the Southern North Sea (TROPHOS).
7) Conservation and restoration of fragmented biodiversity hot spots: Calcareous grasslands of South-Belgium (BIOCORE).
8) Invasive Plants in Belgium: Patterns, Processes and Monitoring (INPLANBEL), 01.01.2003-30.04.2006.
9) Studying apple biodiversity: opportunities for conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources (APPLE), 01.01.2003-30.04.2006.
10) Integrated management tools for water bodies in agricultural landscapes (MANSCAPE), 01.01.2003-30.04.2006.
11) Status, Control and Role of the Pelagic Diversity of the Austral Ocean (PELAGANT), 01.02.2002-30.04.2006.
12) Impact assessment and remediation of anthropogenic interventions on fish populations (FISHGUARD), 01.01.2003-30.04.2006.
13) Belgian shipwrecks: hotspots for marine biodiversity (BEWREMABI).
14) The Hinder banks: yet an important region for the Belgian marine biodiversity.
15) Feasibility study of ecological networks: ecological, economic, social and legal aspects (ECONET), 01.01.2003-31.12.2004.
Website: www.belspo.be/belspo/fedra/prog.asp?l=en&COD=EV

The **Federal Ministry of Environment** started to finance, in 2004, a project on environmental biosafety related to GMO's, managed by the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, and entitled: 'Methodology elaboration for studies on environmental risk evaluation of hybridisation between GMO's cultures and indigeneous flora, and feasibility evaluation of the methodology in the case of colza'.

The **Walloon Region** collaborates with associations and research institutes among others on the following projects:
- scientific follow up of the 'Combles et Clochers' project;
- scientific follow up of the ecological management of road verges;
- research, organisation and follow up of the project aimed at developing nature in municipalities (PCDN);
- research on the conservation of underground cavities;
- follow-up of the Walloon environment using biological indicators (dragonflies, butterflies, birds, reptils and amphibians;
- biodiversity, management and maintenance of vegetation on some riverbanks of the Meuse;
- forest research, with a part on sylvicultural practices favourable to biodiversity.

As far as scientific support is concerned, the **Research Centre for Nature, Forests and Wood** (CRNFB), which depends on the Nature and Environment administration, conducts or coordinates various studies. At the biological diversity level, the main lines of research are:

- the inventory and the monitoring of biological diversity (OFFH);
- the monitoring of aquatic organisms (Hydrobiology section);
- the monitoring of the management of protected areas;
- the permanent inventory of forests that recently included parameters relating to biological diversity.

The CRNFB hosts the Information System on Biodiversity in the Walloon Region (mrw.wallonie.be/dgrne/sibw). The different universities also play an important role in research on biological diversity conservation, either independently (dissertations, theses, etc.) or through research agreements with the Walloon Region. For specific missions, the Region finances research activities of universities, institutes and naturalists' organisations.

The **Brussels Capital Region** is supporting research on biodiversity in the framework of the inventory and monitoring network of the flora and fauna (several species groups). The BIME is also supporting several university research projects on special species groups or on habitats and ecosystems, and is participating is cartography (Biological Evaluation Map) and evaluating projects in the framework of the blue and green network programme.

The BIME is collaborating in the research of e.g. the RBINS and the VUB on water quality with some macrophytes and macroinvertebrates. The BIME supported also research on the presence and dynamics of fox in the urban area. The BIME is also supporting especially research on bat species.

Flemish Region: the **Institute of Nature Conservation** (IN), a scientific institute of the Ministry of the Flemish Community, is an institute for applied scientific research related to the conservation of nature (in a broad sense). The Institute provides science-based information on nature and advises on its translation into policy. The Institute operates as a dynamic information and knowledge centre and falls under the direct responsibility of the appropriate Minister. It has an advisory function towards the government and additionally the IN contributes to the increase in and dissemination of information concerning nature conservation and the sustainable use of nature, biodiversity and natural resources.

Several key activities of the IN seem especially relevant within the context of this performance review: 1) studies on the current distribution of species and monitoring of their populations; 2) studies on the (ecological) typology of communities and ecotopes, their geographical distribution and temporal variation; 3) the Nature Report (NARA), that is drawn up biennially and provides an overview of the status of nature in the Flemish Region.

1) Distribution of species and monitoring of populations
The IN collects information on various aspects of the ecology of individual species and taxonomic groups. Studies on the current and past distribution of individual species and of changes in the number and size of their populations provide an indispensable source of knowledge for the description of the state of nature in the Flemish Region. This information also serves as a solid base for the compilation of Red Lists, following standard methods. These provide an estimate of the threat status of species in a particular group of organisms. Red Lists provide important indications about the attention which should be devoted to certain species by authorities responsible for nature policy and managers of natural sites. The study of the relations between organisms and their surroundings is helpful for understanding and explaining the underlying causes of distribution patterns, local presence or absence and observed population trends. This knowledge is necessary to provide advice on the protection and conservation of endangered species.

The activities are geographically situated at two levels. On the one hand, information is collected for the whole of the Flemish Region, to get an overview of the distribution and populations sizes for the whole area. On the other hand, specific and detailed studies are carried out in selected areas, to examine changes in population sizes, spatial relations with environmental factors, effects of conservation policies, etc.

The studies of different species (groups) require a different approach and expertise. Therefore, for practical reasons research is often split into groups of species. However, there are clear similarities between the projects as far as assumptions, objectives, methods and applications are concerned. The various studies deal with four research themes: (i) Research of distribution patterns and application to conservation policies; (ii) Protection of species and auto-ecological research; (iii) Bio-indicative research; and, (iv) Monitoring of populations.

Examples of research into distribution include the following projects: vascular plants, various groups of invertebrates, fish, amphibians and reptiles, breeding birds, overwintering water birds and geese,

and martelids.

2) Communities and ecotopes
Ecological typology outlines criteria to distinguish clearly recognisable, identifiable and quantifiable entities in nature, which can be used to classify, map and evaluate spatially identified spots or areas in e.g. nature reserves and management plans. Nature types that were recently outlined in cooperation with other institutes are: grasslands, mud flats and salt marshes, freshwater marshes, dunes and heathland, shrubs (tall herb vegetation), pioneering communities and peripheral woodland zones.

The ecotope typology is based on biotic, abiotic and landscape ecological data, taking into account the fact that degradation (acidification, fertilisers, fragmentation, etc.) can play an important role. In addition, historical data are taken into account. An important goal is the description of the present and possibly previous status of ecotopes and their communities, including species which require attention.

Current action points include drawing up pragmatic ecological typologies for stagnant freshwater environments and agriculturally altered - but nonetheless species-rich - grasslands. Ecotope typology will be extended to freshwater marshes, semi-natural grasslands, pioneering communities, shrubs (tall herb vegetation) and peripheral woodland zones.

In the context of geographical variation, work will initially be carried out on the Biological Evaluation Map (BWK), version 2. After a thorough description of the ecological typology, a start will be made on geographical mapping in the form of BWK version 3. This takes into account the relevant developments in this field.

In the context of temporal variation, firstly, a basic range of instruments will be drawn up for the integrated monitoring of stagnant freshwater environments and water courses, as well as agricultural, species-rich grasslands. A targeted monitoring programme will be set up, taking into account the possibilities of other initiatives in this field.

3) Nature Report
Data acquired as a result of monitoring by the Institute and other environmental authorities and associations, are crucial for the preparation and execution of policy and to ensure an accurate and prestigious Nature Report (NARA), which appears biennially. Till now four Nature Reports have been published.

Together with the Environment Report (MIRA), the Nature Report (NARA) provides an important scientific basis for the Flemish policy on nature and the environment and its evaluation. While MIRA reports on the general environmental quality and on environmental policy, NARA does so for the status of nature and its relevant policy. NARA also serves as an inventory in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD, Rio de Janeiro, 1992) and provides support to the reporting for the EU Birds and Habitats Directives. On the one hand, NARA evaluates the status of nature, and on the other hand, it evaluates policy plans (government manifesto, environmental and nature policy planning, etc.), policy processes (such as the way in which regulations and instruments are created), policy products (application of instruments, execution of actions, etc.), and policy impact. This requires the prompt availability of quantitative data on: the status of nature, which are easy to interpret (biotic and abiotic); on man's attitude to nature; the use of policy resources; and, the achievements of policy and its impacts. This is done by monitoring carefully selected indicators, measured with standardised methods and comparing them with goals and norms (preferably within set periods). The creation of databases, which can easily be consulted, is very important in this respect. Indicators, methods and goals or norms are based on research.

On the institute's website www.instnat.be the Nature Reports can be downloaded as well as other publications, atlases and data banks consulted.
A new nature indicators website that has been launched recently gives information on status and trend of the indicators included in the MINA-plan and the indicators that were adopted at EU level for biodiversity: www.natuurindicatoren.be

Integrated information systems have been developed during the last years such as MMIS (Environment Information System), Felnet (Flanders Environmental Library Network).

The **Institute for Forestry and Game Management** handles the data on wildlife collected by the game management units, including bag statistics and inventory of game populations and performs scientific research concerning freshwater fishery.

90. ◆ On Article 12(c), does your country promote and cooperate in the use of scientific advances in biological diversity research in developing methods for conservation and sustainable use of biological resources?	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the use of scientific advances in biodiversity research in developing methods for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
General and policy relevant research as well as site-specific research on habitats and species is performed for the development of conservation objectives and measures. Scientific support is foreseen among others related to the carthography of habitats and the evaluation of conservational status. The Belgian Forum on Forest Biodiversity (SPO) gathers and summarises background scientific information in order to develop management practices enhancing forest biological diversity. This is also taken care of by the Steering Committees Biodiversity Convention and Nature.

Box LI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 13 - Public education and awareness

91. Is your country implementing a communication, education and public awareness strategy and promoting public participation in support of the Convention? (Goal 4.1 of the Strategic Plan)	
a) No	
b) No, but a CEPA strategy is under development	X
c) Yes, a CEPA strategy developed and public participation promoted to a limited extent (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, a CEPA strategy developed and public participation promoted to a significant extent (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the implementation of a CEPA strategy and the promotion of public participation in support of the Convention.
Flemish Region: the theme on biodiversity in the Environment & Nature Policy Plan includes an education and public awareness programme. The aims of this programme are to: - raise public awareness on biodiversity; - enhance the understanding of how biodiversity affects them and the role they can play; - ensure that people understand the links between environmental quality and quality of life; - help people to learn more about biodiversity so that they can appreciate it and help to conserve it; - develop public awareness and participation in biodiversity conservation.

The key objective is to increase awareness, understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity, and engage many more people in conservation. In each of the five provinces several Visitors Centres have been established nearby or in main nature areas with exhibitions on the local and regional biodiversity, organised guided tours and educational programmes for schools or interested public groups. The Nature and Forest Divisions participate on regular basis in provincial, regional and national exhibitions and fairs. Websites of these divisions are being revised to be more attractive and informative for the general public.

Brussels Capital Region: the biodiversity theme is integrated in the education and public awareness programme of the Brussels Institute for Environmental management. The aims of the programme are similar to those enumerated by the Flemish Region.

Walloon Region: the 'Plan d'Action pour le développement de la nature' (in preparation) will contain a chapter on eduction and public awareness. The decree approving the cooperation agreement between the French Community and the Walloon Region in relation to environmental education entered into force on 21.01.2004. This agreement forsesees an array of actions in relation to the following:
- information;
- pedagogy;
- integration of environmental education in school courses;
- exchange of experiences and knowledge;
- structural aid for schools incorporating sustainable development into their housing activities;
- logistic cooperation.

Public participation is a guiding principle for the implementation of action number 18 of the **Federal** Plan for Sustainable development (2004-2008), dedicated to the protection of biodiversity.

The National Biodiversity Strategy, which should be ready for publication early 2006, will have a specific objective dedicated to the promotion of communication, education and public awareness on biological diversity. Public participation will be one of the guiding principles for the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy.

92. Is your country undertaking any activities to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work on Communication, Education and Public Awareness as contained in the annex to decision VI/19? (decision VI/19)

a) No	
b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some activities are being undertaken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, many activities are being undertaken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the activities to facilitate the implementation of the programme of work on CEPA.

Flemish Region: many statutory and non-statutory organisations and facilities have education activities, programmes and materials geared towards giving messages about biodiversity, its vital importance and the need to manage it sustainably.

Newsletters of the Nature Division and of the Nature & Environment Education Division are published regularly. Cooperation projects with NGO's include publication of brochures and leaflets that are widely distributed. School programmes include specific sessions on environment and nature aspects. NGO's organise almost weekly events on nature and forest conservation aspects through guided tours or exhibitions. There are also specific yearly programmes such as Forest Week, Nature Day, Day of Biodiversity, Day of Landscape Patrimonium, or events related to specific sites such as the Scheldt Estuary, or specific species (groups) such as the Night of the Bats.

Walloon Region:
- publication of brochures and organisation of colloquia on Natura 2000 and more specifically on Natura 2000 and forests, Natura 2000 and agriculture, Natura 2000 and wetlands, Natura 2000 and hunting and fishing, towards an informed audience but also the larger public;

- the Region has developed an extended network of 'Centres Régionaux d'Initiation à l'Environnement' (CRIE), centres for environmental education and awareness. Those centres develop programmes based on nature and biodiversity for public awareness purposes. Their actions are mainly (but not exclusively) oriented towards school children aged 6-12;
- naturalists' associations are financed in view to organise public awareness and education activities;
- sensibilisation and participation: the Nature and Forest Division launched several partnerships with municipalities aiming among others to sensibilise and involve them in the preservation and development of their natural heritage: 'Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature', the road verges operation, 'Combles-et-Clochers', the tree week, etc.;
- school and education: different organisms (CRIE, Probio, associations promoting education) provide to schools educational programmes in relation to nature conservation. The 'Institut d'écopédagogie' organises additional training courses for teachers on how to get in touch with nature. Education within teachers colleges contains a similar aspect. The 'Réseau Idée' assists schools to integrate activities aiming for the discovery of and sensibilisation on nature and the environment. The Walloon Region finances and distributes pedagogic kits on different themes related to the environment and the natural heritage. The 'Centres de Dépaysement et de Plein Air' (CDPA), established by the French Community, conduct training and education activities in relation to the environment for schools;
- the Order adopted on 08.02.2002 by the Walloon Region regulates the approbation of organisations involved with the education and sensibilisation on nature and forests as well as the attribution of grants for their training and sensibilisation activities.

The **Brussels Capital Region** is granting many nature conservation associations and semi-official institutions to develop the conservation and promotion of biodiversity, through education programmes and education activities, trainings sessions, sensitisation activities, active communication through brochures, leaflets, media actions, nature events, etc. This sometimes goes to the very local level (eg guidelines for nature oriented management of private gardens).

The BIME has a regularly newsletter which promotes and encourages sustainable way of life for the citizens in general. Specific brochures and leaflets on nature conservation and biodiversity in urban green spaces are widely distributed in different information centers and via the local NGO. Information is also given through website, panels in public green spaces, etc.

There are also specific yearly events such as the 2 weeks of the forest, the environment day, the patrimonium day, the Batnight, several municipalities organise their green discovery days, etc.

The **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences**, the **Royal Museum for Central Africa** and the **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** have educational sections, develop permanent and temporal exhibitions and other projects towards the public on biodiversity and related matters, organise guided tours in their musea, etc.

In the RBINS, this section also organises practical workshops for children that address a great variety of specific themes and promote awareness on nature and biological diversity.

The **CBD National Focal Point** manages a thematic library on biodiversity consultable online through the Internet and available to all. The CBD-NFP provides guidance to secundary school, high school and university students working on biodiversity-related subjects. It published in December 2004 the brochure 'Biodiversiteit in België: een overzicht / La biodiversité en Belgique: un aperçu' in 10,000 Dutch and 10,000 French copies which are distributed free of charge to the general public upon demand. Six months later, all copies have been sent out. A reprint is planned. Copies are also downloadable free of charge via www.naturalsciences.be/biodiversity.

On the 2005 International Day on Biodiversity, the CBD-NFP together with the Mutimedia Team of the RBINS, launched an innovative interface on the biodiversity in Belgium on the Internet. This interface will be enriched by an educational component and then brought to the attention of the primary and secundary schools in Belgium (www.naturalsciences.be/biodiversity/amai).

93. Is your country strongly and effectively promoting biodiversity-related issues through the press, the various media and public relations and communications networks at national level? (decision VI/19)	
a) No	

b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, to a limited extent (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, to a significant extent (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the promotion of biodiversity-related issues through the press, the various media and public relations and communications networks at national level.

Flemish Region: mainly through work of NGO's. Often the press and other media are only reflecting problematic aspects related with nature conservation such as conflict issues with regard to land owners or users. Press conferences are among others organised for the launch of Nature Reports and Environmental and Nature Reports.

Walloon Region: in order to inform on Natura 2000 in the broadest possible way, an entire media campaign was launched with tv and radio spots, press articles, specific brochures for farmers, foresters, hunters and fishermen.

For the French-speaking community, a specific tv programme 'Jardin Extraordinaire' addresses nature and biodiversity topics from Belgium and worldwide. For the moment, the Dutch-speaking community seems to lack such a programme.

Brussels Capital Region: each year, the Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment organises a one-day celebration of the environment for a wide audience, including the press and the general public.

The **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences**, the **Royal Museum for Central Africa** and the **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** are organising special events in relation to the International Day on Biodiversity, to World Ocean Day, etc. and are setting up press events when new exhibitions are opened. Discussion fora on diverse topics (IAS, inland waters, forests) are organised by BBPF. Widely accessible symposia are organised by various actors.

The **CBD National Focal Point** organised press meetings at the occasion of the publication of Biodiversity in Belgium, the overview brochure on the biodiversity in Belgium, the launch of the innovative interface on Belgian biodiversity, the celebration of the International Day on Biodiversity. Many interviews were given to radio and tv. Oral presentations on biodiversity and related themes have been and are made to diverse audiences such as NGO's, students, the private sector, etc.

North Sea: an exposition on the North Sea has been set up in 2004 on the initative of the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment.

An awareness campaign on the North Sea has been organised in 2005 by the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment. This activity was made in parallel with the finalisation of the Royal Decree on marine protected areas in the North sea. The campaign made use of the following tools: radio, television, folders and summer activities on the Belgian coast for young people.

To enhance awareness about the North Sea, a specific website was launched recently: www.de-noordzee.be.

In 2002, the **Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment** - DG Environment has developed and widely distributed a booklet in Dutch and French on biodiversity: 'Biodiversité: construire pour demain?!'

Regarding biosafety, the Federal Public Service organised on 30 November 2004 a GMO day open to all stakeholders and representatives, in order to explain all legislations concerning GMO's biosafety, from international to national ones, and to debate in various workshops actuality subjects related to the matter (coexistence, comparison of legislations in various countries, USA-EC WPO conflict, enlargement of the evaluation, etc.).

94. Does your country promote the communication, education and public awareness of biodiversity at the local level? (decision VI/19)	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the efforts to promote the communication, education and public awareness of biodiversity at the local level.

Flemish Region: mainly through NGO's which run informal and formal programmes on local biodiversity issues. Provincial and municipal environment policies include an important chapter on public awareness and educational programmes. See also questions above.

Walloon Region: this is taken care of via the nature organisations, the CRIE, etc. Furthermore, the 'Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature' (PCDN), River Contracts and Natural Parcs are three participatory instruments among others aiming to the sensibilisation and education of the public:

- the PCDN are municipal initiatives based on local partnership on nature development aiming for the preservation and development of biodiversity by taking account of the ecological network;
- a River Contract brings together all the actors of the valley with the aim to reach a consensus on an action programme for the restoration of the water course, the river banks and surroundings and the water resources. Invited are representatives of the political, administrative, socio-economic, educational, scientific and associative worlds;
- a Natural Parc is a rural territory with high biological and geographical interest, subject to measures to protect the environment in harmony with the needs of the population and the socio-economic development. The Natural Parcs organise several communication, sensibilisation and educational activities towards the public.

Most of the public awareness actions and educational programmes on a sustainable way of life and on biodiversity conservation in the **Brussels Capital Region** are also focused to the local level, as the Brussels Capital Region is a very small and urbanised region.

In 2003, two 'citizens fora' (one in the Walloon Region and one in the Flemish Region) were organised by the **Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment** and the organisation Fundation for Future Generations at the local communal level for statements, questions-answers sessions and discussions between scientists, officials, and local citizens around the problematics of GMO's biosafety. A report of those meetings was made by the Fundation for Future Generations.

See also under question 92.

95. Is your country supporting national, regional and international activities prioritised by the Global Initiative on Education and Public Awareness? (decision VI/19)	
a) No	
b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some activities supported (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, many activities supported (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the support of national, regional and international activities prioritised by the Global Initiative on Education and Public Awareness.

Flemish Region: support is given by the Nature and Forest Divisions or by provincial authorities for yearly events. See also comments above.

96. Has your country developed adequate capacity to deliver initiatives on communication, education and public awareness?	
a) No	

b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are being implemented (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are being implemented (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the development of adequate capacity to deliver initiatives on communication, education and public awareness.

c) **Flemish Region**: within the Nature and the Forest & Green Spaces Division a specific section deals with 'communication, awareness raising, education' for which the colleagues are trained or expertise from outside is contracted on project base. Many actions happen in cooperation with NGO's, local authorities or Regional Landscape Associations. Main general actions include:

- extending the accessibility of nature and forest areas for the public supports the efforts to increase public awareness and support of the society for nature conservation. In a recent study about 75% of the consulted group of people indicated to visit at least once a year a nature or forest area. The category visiting nature areas regularly increased from 37.4% in 1997 to 43.4% in 2004. The study stresses the importance of nearby and easy accessible sites. By introducing subsidies for NGO's and for private owners in 1999 for giving public admission to their nature areas and for installations of visitor facilities enhanced the accessibility and attracted higher numbers of visitors;
- a bi-monthly newsletter is distributed for free by several institutions through website and in publication form, such as Nature Division (www.natuur.be), Forest Division (www.bosengroen.be), Institute for Nature Conservation (www.instnat.be), Institute for Forestry and Game Management (www.ibw.vlaanderen.be), and for each of the LIFE and Interreg projects;
- website information development is on the increase. More interactive information systems are already taken up in the websites but should be enhance to trigger higher interest from the public. Every year several brochures are published on a specific theme or area;
- visitors Centres (10) established nearby protected areas have an important role in informing visitors on the nature values of the sites in that area, educational programmes and awareness rising;
- yearly events are organised around a specific theme: Biodiversity Day, Wetlands Day, Week of the Parks, Week of the Forest, Nature Day, European Night of the Bats, tree and hedges planting days; or for a specific area such as the Scheldt Weekend;
- participation in yearly fairs with a stand on nature and forest conservation events such as Country Side;
- public information sessions that were organised in each of the 5 provinces include: 20 years Birds Directive in the Flemish Region (1999), Natura 2000 in the Flemish Region (2001), FEN 1st stage of demarcation (2002).

NGO's play an important role in raising awareness for nature conservation and in nature education of the youth. Every weekend many events are being organised locally. The rising number of nature NGO's members reflects an increase in public interest. Several NGO's also spread a weekly newsletter by (e-)mail.

Walloon Region: the Nature Direction published brochures on the protection of amphibians and swallows, as well as a DVD on swallows, targeting a large audience. Four informative brochures and associated posters on birds (city birds, countryside birds, forest birds and wetland birds) have also been published.

97. Does your country promote cooperation and exchange programmes for biodiversity education and awareness at the national, regional and international levels? (decisions IV /10 and VI/19)

a) No	X
b) Yes (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the promotion of cooperation and exchange programmes for biodiversity education and awareness, at the national, regional and international levels.

The Nature Conservation and Site Protection Section of the Special Environmental Commission of the Benelux Union features a working group on environmental communication and education.

98. Is your country undertaking some CEPA activities for implementation of cross-cutting issues and thematic programmes of work adopted under the Convention?	
a) No (please specify reasons below)	
b) Yes, some activities undertaken for some issues and thematic areas (please provide details below)	X
c) Yes, many activities undertaken for most issues and thematic areas (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive activities undertaken for all issues and thematic areas (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the CEPA activities for implementation of cross-cutting issues and thematic programmes of work adopted under the Convention.

Throughout the country, CEPA activities have been organised in relation to protected areas and the ecological network / Natura 2000, forests, inland waters, wetlands, agriculture.

Flemish Region: in addition to the above, training sessions are organised by visitor centres, university departments or administrative divisions on specific aspects such as the Scheldt estuary, the coastal zone, wetlands, bat conservation, etc.

Walloon Region: the 'Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature', River Contracts and Natural Parcs are three participative instruments among others aiming for the communication towards and the sensibilisation and education of the public.

99. ◈ Does your country support initiatives by major groups, key actors and stakeholders that integrate biological diversity conservation matters in their practice and education programmes as well as into their relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies? (decision IV/10 and Goal 4.4 of the Strategic Plan)	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the initiatives by major groups, key actors and stakeholders that integrate biodiversity conservation in their practice and education programmes as well as their relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

NGO's, universities, institutes, etc. are supported by the competent federal, regional or community bodies.

Naturalists' associations are financed in view to organise public awareness and education activities. Nature protection organisations such as WWF, Natuurpunt, Natagora, AVES, the Royal Belgian Society for the Protection of Birds, 'Ardenne et Gaume', 'Les Cercles des Naturalistes de Belgique', Youth and Nature and 'Forêt Wallonne' all have educational activities oriented towards nature conservation (e.g. excursions, visits of nature reserves, management of nature reserves, publications, etc.) or towards specific thematic areas (e.g. forests, quality of watercourses, etc.).

Other associations such as GAWI (integrated and biological fruit production) and CARI (protection of pollinators) receive support from the **Walloon Region** to promote awareness programmes on sustainable management of natural resources.

100. Is your country communicating the various elements of the 2010 biodiversity target and establishing appropriate linkages to the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in the

implementation of your national CEPA programmes and activities? (decision VII/24)	
a) No	
b) No, but some programmes are under development	X
c) Yes, some programmes developed and activities undertaken for this purpose (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes developed and many activities undertaken for this purpose (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the communication of the various elements of the 2010 biodiversity target and the establishment of linkages to the Decade on Education for Sustainable Development.

Box LII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.
Brussels Capital Region: the BIME is supporting a number of educational efforts on different levels: form children to adults. Specific attention is given to school children from 6 to 12 years, via special information centers (regional ecological information centers) and local nature centers, granted by the BIME. For the Sonian Forest, a specific information centre, the Information Centre of the Sonian Forest (CIFS-ICZO) has been installed. This centre provides more specialised information and education to school children of secondary grade (12-18 years) and students of higher education and universities. Many naturalists' organisations are financed in view to organise public awareness and education activities oriented to nature conservation (excursions, visits of natural sites, management activities, publications, etc.).

Article 14 - Impact assessment and minimising adverse impacts

101. ◆ On Article 14.1(a), has your country developed legislation requiring an environmental impact assessment of proposed projects likely to have adverse effects on biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) No, legislation is still in early stages of development	
c) No, but legislation is in advanced stages of development	
d) Yes, legislation is in place (please provide details below)	X
e) Yes, review of implementation available (please provide details below)	

Further information on the legislation requiring EIA of proposed projects likely to have adverse effects on biodiversity.
Flemish Region: through its regional law, the Flemish Region has implemented EC Directive 85/337/EEC (the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive), which applies to a wide range of projects that include physical interventions in the environment. Besides this, a number of regulations for impact assessments exist under the Decree for Nature Conservation, the Decree for Integrated Water Policy, the Decree for landscape protection and the Forest Decree.

Brussels Capital Region: EIA has been integrated in the regional law. It applies to a wide range of projects that include physical interventions in the environment. EIA and impact regulations exist also in general for green spaces, especially green spaces with biological value and protected areas (cfr. Transposition of habitatdirective).

Walloon Region:
- the Environment Code identifies the projects requiring an impact assessment and the format and minimal elements of the assessment (articles 55 & 56). The articles 57 to 61 define the agreement procedure;
- the Decree in relation to the Environment Permit (11.03.1999), which entered into force on 01.10.2002, reforms the regime on the environmental impact assessment and on the approval of exploitation (replacing it by the Environment Permit). Objective is to integrate in one permit all former authorisations required in relation to the environment, such as on exploitation, water collection, discharge of used water, explosifs, etc. The Decree creates also the 'Permis Unique', bringing together the Environment Permit and the Urbanism Permit when a mixed project needs this two authorisations. This new regulation thus allows for the integration of all environmental aspects in one permit, the integration of environment and urbanism in a faster procedure due to strict and shorter delays, as well as the transposition of a number of European directives for which the Region had accumulate some delay. The decree foresees also a simplified declaration procedure for companies with small environmental impact;
- furthermore, the Decree on the conservation of Natura 2000 sites and wild fauna and flora foresees, in his article 29 §2, that each plan or project subject to licensing […] which is not directly linked to or necessary for the management of the site, but susceptible to affect the site significantly […] is subject to an impact assessment as foreseen in the legislation.

Federal: concerning environmental risk assessment of GMO's, Belgium has transposed in a Royal Decree dated 25.02.2005 the European directive CE/2001/18 relative to deliberate release and placing on the market of GMO's, precisely based on environmental risk assessment and management.

North Sea: the general principles described in chapter two of the Belgian Law of 20.01.1999 on the protection of the marine environment in the areas under Belgian jurisdiction are the following: the principle of preventive action, the precautionary principle, the principle of sustainable management, the polluter pays principle and the restoration principle. The primary purpose of the law is the conservation of the specific character, biodiversity and pristine nature of the marine environment through protection and restoration measures. The Royal Decree of 09.09.2003 related to the law on the protection of the marine areas under Belgian jurisdiction (MMM Law) imposes a procedure of environmental impact assessment in the case of industrial activities.

102. ◆ On Article 14.1(b), has your country developed mechanisms to ensure that due consideration is given to the environmental consequences of national programmes and policies that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity?

a) No	
b) No, mechanisms are still in early stages of development	X
c) No, but mechanisms are in advanced stages of development	
d) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the mechanisms developed to ensure that due consideration is given to the environmental consequences of national programmes and policies that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biodiversity.

b) **Brussels Capital** & **Walloon Region**: a mechanism is in early stage of development.

d) The **Flemish Region** has implemented the EC Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC), which requires that certain (mainly public sector) plans and programmes that are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision and which set the framework for development consent are made subject to an SEA. The owners of relevant plans and programmes must conduct an SEA, hold a public consultation, and explain publicly the reasons for taking a course of action. Among the factors looked at in the SEA process are effects on biodiversity. Specific

attention is given to possible impact on Natura 2000 sites and nature of forest sites indicated on the land use maps.

103. On Article 14.1(c), is your country implementing bilateral, regional and/or multilateral agreements on activities likely to significantly affect biological diversity outside your country's jurisdiction?	
a) No	
b) No, but assessment of options is in progress	
c) Yes, some completed, others in progress (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes (please provide details below)	

Further information on the bilateral, regional and/or multilateral agreements on activities likely to significantly affect biodiversity outside your country's jurisdiction.

Application of the Espoo Convention (Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context).

Bilateral agreements exist with the Netherlands regarding developments in the estuary of the Scheldt river (developments in both of the countries that may affect the estuary system), and for developments in the river Grensmaas (gravel extraction by the Netherlands). For each of the agreements a bilateral follow up commission has been established, under which several operational and scientific working groups are active.

104. On Article 14.1(d), has your country put mechanisms in place to prevent or minimise danger or damage originating in your territory to biological diversity in the territory of other Parties or in areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction?	
a) No	
b) No, mechanisms are still in early stages of development	
c) No, but mechanisms are in advanced stages of development	
d) Yes, mechanisms are in place based on current scientific knowledge	X

105. On Article 14.1(e), has your country established national mechanisms for emergency response to activities or events which present a grave and imminent danger to biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) No, mechanisms are still in early stages of development	
c) No, but mechanisms are in advanced stages of development	
d) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further information on national mechanisms for emergency response to the activities or events which present a grave and imminent danger to biodiversity.

Under the EIA legislation a mechanism exists that indicates the obligations to respond to activities or events that present imminent danger to biodiversity. In the Nature and in the Forest Decrees, specific responsibilities are given to the divisions to act in such cases of imminent danger such as for fires or flooding.

Concerning unintentional transboundary movements of GMO's that could have advers effects on biodiversity (or health), Belgium has designated a contact point (DG Environment of the **Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment**) having the role for that purpose described in article 17 of the Cartagena Protocol. Besides that and following the European

legislation (a.o. directive CE/2001/18 transposed into a Belgian Royal Decree) in application in Belgium, notifiers have to submit, in their application forms for GMO's field trials or placing on the market, control, risk management measures and emergency plans; following that legislation, authorisations for placing on the market can be immediately suspended or withdrawn if new information related to environmental or health risks of those GMO's appears after authorisation.

North Sea: the national responsibility for dealing with catastrophic events, including grave pollution incidents (oil or other dangerous substances) in the Belgian marine waters is dealt with in the national contingency plan for the North Sea. The Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment organises response to oil pollution at sea (booms and skimmers), with vessels from the Flemish Region and the Navy.

106. Is your country applying the Guidelines for Incorporating Biodiversity-related Issues into Environment-Impact-Assessment Legislation or Processes and in Strategic Impact Assessment as contained in the annex to decision VI/7 in the context of the implementation of paragraph 1 of Article 14? (decision VI/7)

a) No	
b) No, but application of the guidelines under consideration	
c) Yes, some aspects being applied (please specify below)	X
d) Yes, major aspects being applied (please specify below)	

Further comments on application of the guidelines.

The **Flemish** and **Brussels Capital Regions** have implemented the EC Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC), which requires that certain (mainly public sector) plans and programmes that are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision and which set the framework for development consent are made subject to an SEA. The owners of relevant plans and programmes must conduct an SEA, hold a public consultation, and explain publicly the reasons for taking a course of action. Among the factors looked at in the SEA process are effects on biodiversity. Specific attention is given to possible impact on Natura 2000 sites and nature of forest sites indicated on the land use maps.

The **Federal** level is transposing Directive 2001/42/EC. The Law imposes a Strategic Environmental Assessment when plans or programmes are elaborated which, due to the expected impact these will have, are subject to an evaluation following articles 6 and 7 of the Habitats Directive.

107. On Article 14 (2), has your country put in place national legislative, administrative or policy measures regarding liability and redress for damage to biological diversity? (decision VI/11)

a) No	X
b) Yes (please specify the measures)	

Further comments on national legislative, administrative or policy measures regarding liability and redress for damage to biological diversity.

The European Commission recently adopted the Liability Directive. This Directive will be translated by Belgium in regional legislation in the near future.

Flemish Region: environmental impact assessment is a prerequisite before a licence can be issued for main developments and transport infrastructure projects. A specific procedure for impact assessment and derogation has to be followed for infrastructure projects that may have an impact on FEN sites (art 26bis of the Decree for Nature Conservation) or on Natura 2000 sites (art 36ter, 3-6 of the same Decree that includes the transposition of art. 6 of the EU Habitats Directive). For each EIA study an interdepartmental steering committee is established to ensure proper follow up of issues relevant to each of the concerned sectors.

At the initiative of the EIA unit of AMINAL (Administration for Environment, Nature, Land and Water Management) a research study was carried out on the composition of technical EIA Guidelines. The book of directives for guiding EIA reporting groups effects and describes possible methodologies per group. It gives practical and methodological suggestions for all activities subject to EIA, including motorways and railways. Spatial attention was made to mitigation measures, management aspects and monitoring of the measures taken.

With regard to infrastructure works, the effect groups studied are the following:

- immediate space occupation by motorways and railways, and the works of art, slopes, and earthmoving resulting from the former: destruction of existing ecotopes (and their vegetation) and habitat spots or complete biotopes;
- barrier effects;
- disturbance by road use, more specifically vibrations and noise but visual stimuli just as well (nightly road lighting, motorcar and train lights);
- water and soil pollution (soot, oil, other hydrocarbons, dust, rust, heavy metals, salt for icy roads, etc.) with indirect effects on verges and their fauna and flora and on waterways, ditches, and dikes by the run-off water from roads;
- ecotope and biotope changes by the lowering of groundwater level as consequence of (temporary or permanent) drainage for the construction of works of art or by breaking soil layers that are difficult for water to penetrate, or by drainage (permanent);
- over-fertilisation and acidification because of NO_x and SO_2 emission by road traffic;
- ecotope and biotope changes as result from soil disturbances (close concentration, structural changes, pollution, etc.) because of motorway and railway construction;
- higher order effects: due to ecotope changes or disappearance of specific species habitat requirements of other animal species are no longer met or they do no longer have sufficient prey (food chain, food web).

For projects or plans that may have an impact on Natura 2000 sites an internal directive "Protection of Special Protection Zones" of the Department Environment and Infrastructure that outlines a detailed procedure has been developed in 2001 to comply with art. 6 of the Habitats Directive. The directive has been updated in 2003 taking into account the transpositions of the EU directives into the Decree for Nature Conservation as adopted by the Flemish government on 19 July 2002. In 2001 and in 2002 training sessions on the procedure were held for all administrations of the Department.

The procedure for assessment and derogation for projects that may have an impact on FEN sites is outlined in art. 26bis of the Decree for Nature Conservation, and proves to be even more complex than the one for Natura 2000 sites.

One of the most important positive outcomes of the introduction of above-mentioned procedures is the increasing concertation with the nature sector, administration as well as institute and NGO, at the onset of the planning or in the project preparation faze. It also supports a better integration of biodiversity into the transport sector.

The book of EIA directives mentioned above is now being revised to integrate specific procedural steps and assessments for Natura 2000 and FEN.

North Sea: the Belgian law of 20.01.1999 on the protection of the marine environment in the areas under Belgian jurisdiction includes the polluter pays principle and the restoration principle.

Federal: No specific legislative measures regarding liability and redress for damage to biological diversity caused by GMO's exist presently in Belgium, but are presently being established in the process of the Cartagena Protocol (see also answer to question 109). Moreover, liability and redress regime will be foreseen in the regional decrees currently being established for coexistence rules between GMO's and non-GMO's cultures.

108. Has your country put in place any measures to prevent damage to biological diversity?	
a) No	

b) No, but some measures are being developed	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures in place to prevent damage to biological diversity.

Walloon Region: article 28 of the Decree on the conservation of natura 2000 sites and the wild fauna and flora forbids the degradation and perturbation of the species for which the Natura 2000 site has been designated, if these perturbations are susceptible to have a significant impact. Article 26 of the designation Order will regulate the specific bans in or around the Natura 2000 site as well as each other preventive measure in or around the site to prevent the degradation of the natural habitats and the perturbation of the species for which the site has been designated.

See also above.

109. Is your country cooperating with other Parties to strengthen capacities at the national level for the prevention of damage to biodiversity, establishment and implementation of national legislative regimes, policy and administrative measures on liability and redress? (decision VI/11)

a) No	
b) No, but cooperation is under consideration	
c) No, but cooperative programmes are under development	X
d) Yes, some cooperative activities being undertaken (please provide details below)	
e) Yes, comprehensive cooperative activities being undertaken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on cooperation with other Parties to strengthen capacities for the prevention of damage to biodiversity.

The EC has recently adopted the Liability Directive as mentioned above. Besides that, a liability and redress legal regime is currently developed in the framework of the Cartagena Protocol. It should be established in 2008. The Flemish and Walloon Regions are participating in the *ad hoc* legal and technical experts group on liability under the Biosafety Protocol. The elaboration of Belgian points of view is coordinated by the Federal Ministry of Environment and the Belgian Focal Point for the Protocol.

Belgium participates to annual Benelux-Biotechnology meetings where administrative authorities in the relevant fields discuss on possible common positions or collaborations on related matters, a.o. coexistence problematics between GMO's and non-GMO's cultures and alert systems for non-intentional transboundary movements of GMO's.

Box LIII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 15 - Access to genetic resources

110. ◈ Has your country endeavored to facilitate access to genetic resources for environmentally sound uses by other Parties, on the basis of prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms, in accordance with paragraphs 2, 4 and 5 of Article 15?	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the efforts taken by your country to facilitate access to genetic resources for environmentally sound uses by other Parties, on the basis of prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms.

The **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** developed a policy for exchange of genetic resources and benefit sharing in line with most of the other European botanic gardens.

In response to the Convention on Biological Diversity, material is only provided by the Garden to public institutions working in the areas of research, trialling, breeding, conservation and education. No material is provided to individuals or commercial enterprises. Furthermore, any material obtained may not be used to generate commercial profit. Finally, material or its progeny passed on to third parties must adhere to the same conditions.

The **International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain** (INIBAP) conserve all available banana and plantain genetic resources. INIBAP has put in place a system for the safe movement of varieties, this material is distributed freely to users under the terms and conditions of a Material Transfer Agreement.

111. ◈ Has your country taken measures to ensure that any scientific research based on genetic resources provided by other Parties is developed and carried out with the full participation of such Parties, in accordance with Article 15(6)?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures to ensure that any scientific research based on genetic resources provided by other Contracting Parties is developed and carried out with the full participation of such Contracting Parties.

Budget lines from the **Belgian Development Cooperation** are available to launch research projects in developing countries in cooperation with Belgian research institutes. Budget lines from the **Belgian Science Policy** are available in the framework of specific bilateral agreements. It may concern projects involving exchange of biological material and technology transfer.

112. ◈ Has your country taken measures to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of the results of research and development and of the benefits arising from the commercial and other use of genetic resources with any Contracting Party providing such resources, in accordance with Article 15(7)?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive legislation is in place (please provide details below)	

e) Yes, comprehensive statutory policy or subsidiary legislation are in place (please provide details below)	
f) Yes, comprehensive policy and administrative measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the type of measures taken**.**

The **Belgian Coordinated Collections of Micro-organisms** (BCCM) use a MTA following the Bonn guidelines and operate in such a way that tracking the biological material is possible.

The **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** is member of IPEN, a network of Botanic Gardens that organises the exchange of living plant specimens.

The NBGB and BCCM are discussing the compatibility of their respective approaches.

113. In developing national measures to address access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, has your country taken into account the multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing set out in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture?

a) No	X
b) Yes (please provide details below)	

Further information on national measures taken which consider the multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing as set out in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The **International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain** (INIBAP) supply germplasms to users under the terms and conditions of a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA). INIBAP is following closely the ABS issue and the International Treaty on Plant and Genetic Resources Material Transfer Agreement development. The development of the ITPGR MTA is awaited for comparison with existing MTA in use in Belgium.

114. Is your country using the Bonn Guidelines when developing and drafting legislative, administrative or policy measures on access and benefit-sharing and/or when negotiating contracts and other arrangements under mutually agreed terms for access and benefit-sharing? (decision VII/19A)

a) No	
b) No, but steps being taken to do so (please provide details below)	
c) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Please provide details and specify successes and constraints in the implementation of the Bonn Guidelines.

Case by case negotiation takes place directly between providers and users without involvement of public authorities in so far the contractual arrangements are lawful.

115. Has your country adopted national policies or measures, including legislation, which address the role of intellectual property rights in access and benefit-sharing arrangements (i.e. the issue of disclosure of origin/source/legal provenance of genetic resources in applications for intellectual property rights where the subject matter of the application concerns, or makes use of, genetic resources in its development)?

a) No	

b) No, but potential policies or measures have been identified (please specify below)	
c) No, but relevant policies or measures are under development (please specify below)	
d) Yes, some policies or measures are in place (please specify below)	X
e) Yes, comprehensive policies or measures adopted (please specify below)	

Further information on policies or measures that address the role of IPR in access and benefit-sharing arrangements**.**

Belgium has amended its patent laws of 18.03.1984 in function of the implementation of the Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 06.07.1998 on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions.

The current Belgian patent law goes beyond the conditions to comply with Directive 98/44/EC, and brings the legislation on patents in accordance with international developments. Since practical modalities on disclosure of origin are still being discussed at international level, the law provides a leeway for further developments. The new requirement "that patent applications must contain the geographic source of the plant or animal material, if known, that formed the basis for the development of the invention" is a formal requirement that aims to contribute to transparency with regard to the geographic origin of the genetic source on which the invention is directly based.

116. Has your country been involved in capacity-building activities related to access and benefit-sharing?

a) Yes (please provide details below)	X
b) No	

Please provide further information on capacity-building activities (your involvement as donor or recipient, key actors involved, target audience, time period, goals and objectives of the capacity-building activities, main capacity-building areas covered, nature of activities). Please also specify whether these activities took into account the Action Plan on capacity-building for access and benefit-sharing adopted at COP VII and available in annex to decision VII/19F.

Belgium supports a research network on ABS governance coordinated by the Centre for Philosophy of Law of the **Catholic University of Louvain** (UCL) (within the IAUP V programme), providing PhD fellowships for students coming both from developed and developing nations. This programme also is supported by an integrated project coordinated by the CPDR and funded through the 6th framework programme for research and development. A website is being developed to capitalise the results of these programmes: www.cpdr.ucl.ac.be/biodiversity.php.

Capacity building on the implementation of the ABS provisions in the field of microbiological information is a key component of the building of a future technology platform of biological resource centres (EPIC: European Platform for International Biological Resources Consolidation), coordinated by the **BCCM**.

BCCM, in collaboration with the World Federation for Culture Collections, has organised a training course 'Management of Culture Collections of Micro-organisms' in Morocco. IPR and ABS was one of the topics of the course. In addition, the trainees had the opportunity to handle specific IPR and ABS cases during tailor-made case study sessions.

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** supports capacity-building activities contributing indirectly (though not explicitly) to the ABS objective of the Convention, through different development co-operation channels. Most of the ABS-related development aid deals with agronomic research, training and technical assistance, either through inter-universitarian co-operation or through support to international organisations (CGIAR and several of its components: IITA, ICRISAT, CIMMYT, IRRI, IPGRI, CIAT, ILRI, ICRAF). The overall support for the CGIAR-related institutes amounts to €6,000,000 for 2003, of which €4,000,000 consists of earmarked funding through a dozen of programmes that include an ABS component.

Through UNESCO, Belgium provides support (€125,000 in 2002; €180,000 in 2003) to the ERAIFT (Ecole Régionale d'Aménagement et de gestion Intégrés des Forêts Tropicales) in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with a strong emphasis on high-degree education aiming at the conservation and the sustainable use of forest resources. A component herein addresses the issue of the access to and the equitable sharing of benefits from the rain forest genetic diversity for the local populations.
Inter-universitarian ABS-related cooperation includes research and training programmes in developing countries' universities in such topics as: crop protection and resistance improvement, livestock food and livestock health improvement, applied microbiology. They cover: Senegal, Kenya, China, Ecuador, Cuba.

Support to fair trade projects through development NGO's contributes to improve both the diversification of local production and the sharing of benefits from biodiversity resources in favour of small producers. Yearly, around €70,000 are devoted to this support by the Belgian Development Cooperation.

Box LIV.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

f) funding of the 5-days training course in Morocco has been obtained mainly from a small subnational budget line, although it had an multilateral, North-African impact with participants from nine countries. Budgets for such courses are generally low and it is more difficult to get the appropriate funding for 'micro'-projects and small events than for big programmes, although these micro-projects are very effective, fill a gap at short and medium time and answer specific practical needs, by helping managers of biological resources in developing countries to face the problems they encounter in their daily operations.

Multilateral projects are less likely to be financed by national bodies than by international instances, but the administrative work to get financial support from international bodies is disproportionate compared to the necessary budget. The design of a micro-budget for micro-projects up to €75,000 should be undertaken in the framework of the CBD, on the model of the micro-loans in developing countries.

Article 16 - Access to and transfer of technology

117. ◈ On Article 16(1), has your country taken measures to provide or facilitate access for and transfer to other Parties of technologies that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or make use of genetic resources and do not cause significant damage to the environment?

a) No	X
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures to provide or facilitate access for and transfer to other Parties of technologies that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity or make use of genetic resources and do not cause significant damage to the environment.

One of the tasks of the **Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism** (B CHM) is to promote scientific and

technical cooperation, as well as capacity building among Parties of the Convention. The B CHM plays a partnering role to developing countries by hosting for the time needed their national CHM and by providing training opportunities for CHM national focal points. The B CHM is hosted by the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be).

The **Belgian Biosafety Clearing-House** (BBCH) is the Belgian node of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH). The BBCH was established by the Service of Biosafety and Biotechnology (SBB) in June 2001 (website: www.biosafetyprotocol.be). The information provided concerns local and international regulations, GMO's authorisations in Belgium, guidelines and agencies involved in biological safety including its biodiversity dimension but also scientific information related to GMO's. The SBB plays a partnering role to developing countries by organising training activities for the creation and use of BCH.

Substantial aid to developing countries in terms of biodiversity-related technology and/or knowledge transfer is provided through the **Consultative Group on International Agricutural Research** (CGIAR) and its components: International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT), International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF), International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain (INIBAP – see case study 3 in annex). The overall support from Belgium for the CGIAR-related institutes amounts to €5,000,000 for 2003 and €4,500,000 for 2004, of which more than €4,000,000 consists of earmarked funding through a dozen of research and capacity building programmes.

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** funds universities, via the Flemish and French Community Interuniversity Councils (VLIR and CIUF), to carry out research projects on biodiversity in developing countries. The VLIR and CIUF offer scholarships to participate in international courses (MSc level) held in Belgium. These scholarships are available for developing country applicants. VLIR also provides PhD scholarships to promising graduates of its international courses. Both VLIR and CIUF offer travel bursaries for Belgian and European students registered at a Flemish and French-speaking universities for travel to a developing country. For all these programmes, topics must have a strong development component.

The **Belgian Federal Science Policy Office** gives funding to several projects of interest, and is also responsible for coordinating the preparation and the follow-up for the scientific section of the bilateral agreements for economic, industrial, scientific and technological cooperation which Belgium has concluded with a number of countries (Bulgaria, China, Poland, Russia, Vietnam).

The Belgian Federal Science Policy Office finances bilateral cooperation projects and finances the Belgian contribution to GBIF, which includes a capacity-building component.

The 'Belgian Coordinated Collections of Micro-organisms' (BCCM) constitute a consortium of four complementary research-based culture collections financed by the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office. BCCM aims to share the biological material of its collections, related information, as well as its experience and know-how in the field of fundamental and applied (micro)biology to the benefit of its partners and clients in the scientific and industrial communities. BCCM provides capacity building for micro-organisms (website: bccm.belspo.be).

Since June 2000, the **Plant Biotechnology Institute for Developing Countries** (IPBO, Ghent University) is active in training, technology transfer and plant biotechnology research, oriented to the needs of the developing countries. The topics on which the institute concentrate its activities are Biodiversity, Nutritional Enhancement, Plant Diseases and Abiotic Stress, involving the following crops: Bamboo, Beans, Cassava (manioc), Citrus, Cowpea, Lathyrus (grass pea), Papaya, Rice, Tropical Trees and Banana (website: www.ipno.ugent.be).

The International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain (INIBAP) was created in 1985, with the objectives of creating partnerships and supporting research carried out by its partners in both developing and industrialised countries. Many of the producing countries have

limited research capacity, but participation in regional networks supported by INIBAP helps them to make the best use of available resources. INIBAP maintains germplasms of Banana and Plantain under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in the framework of International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI). INIBAB has established the world's largest Musa germplasm collection, which is located at KULeuven University in Belgium. INIBAP has put in place a system for the safe movement of these varieties, and this material is distributed freely worldwide. Since May 1994, INIBAP is a programme of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricutural Research (CGIAR). The website of INIBAP is www.inibap.org. See also information on cryopreservation in box XXIII.

118. On Article 16(3), has your country taken measures so that Parties which provide genetic resources are provided access to and transfer of technology which make use of those resources, on mutually agreed terms?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place	X
d) Yes, comprehensive legislation is in place	
e) Yes, comprehensive statutory policy or subsidiary legislation in place	
f) Yes, comprehensive policy and administrative arrangements in place	
g) Not applicable	

119. On Article 16(4), has your country taken measures so that the private sector facilitates access to joint development and transfer of relevant technology for the benefit of Government institutions and the private sector of developing countries?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some policies and measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive policies and measures are in place (please provide details below)	
e) Not applicable	

Further information on the measures taken.

The **Belgian Investment Office** (BIO) is a public-private fund aimed at providing financial support to develop the private sector of developing countries. It is aimed at being a facilitation mechanism for private North-South partnerships so as to enable technology transfers, including in the field of biodiversity-related issues (www.b-i-o.be).

Box LV.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Programme of Work on transfer of technology and technology cooperation

120. Has your country provided financial and technical support and training to assist in the implementation of the programme of work on transfer of technology and technology cooperation? (decision VII/29)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes being implemented (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes being implemented (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the provision of financial and technical support and training to assist in the implementation of the programme of work on transfer of technology and technology cooperation.

The Earth observation programmes Stereo and Vegetation, supported by the **Federal Science Policy** aim at generalising use of satellite data as a source of information, contributing simultaneously to infrastructure, to data support and data use, introducing of remote sensing in operational services, grouping researchers into poles of expertise of international standing. The poles of expertise developed within the programme are: the cartography and land management; the agriculture, the study of ecosystems and vegetation at the local, regional and global scale. These poles of expertise are of direct assistance to developing countries for the implementation or preparation of their biodiversity conservation strategies (http://telsat.belspo.be/projects/projectsearch.asp).

121. Is your country taking any measures to remove unnecessary impediments to funding of multi-country initiatives for technology transfer and for scientific and technical cooperation? (decision VII/29)

a) No	
b) No, but some measures being considered	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the measures to remove unnecessary impediments to funding of multi-country initiatives for technology transfer and for scientific and technical cooperation.

The Paris Declaration (March 2005) on Aid Effectiveness targets more ownership, harmonisation, alignment, results and mutual accountability. Its §4 states that both donor and developing countries commit themselves "to taking concrete and effective action to address the remaining challenges, including (…) insufficient integration of global programmes and initiatives into partner countries' broader development agendas (…)". This commitment is not specific to technology transfer and scientific and technical cooperation, but it provides the framework to do so.

A harmonisation agenda is currently underway, it includes the adjustement of each donor country's cooperation procedure toward a common approach.

See also question 117.

122. Has your country made any technology assessments addressing technology needs, opportunities and barriers in relevant sectors as well as related needs in capacity building? (annex to decision VII/29)

a) No	X
b) No, but assessments are under way	
c) Yes, basic assessments undertaken (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, thorough assessments undertaken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on technology assessments addressing technology needs, opportunities and barriers in relevant sectors as well as related needs in capacity building.

123. Has your country made any assessments and risk analysis of the potential benefits, risks and associated costs with the introduction of new technologies? (annex to decision VII/29)

a) No	
b) No, but assessments are under way	X
c) Yes, some assessments undertaken (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive assessments undertaken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the assessments and risk analysis of the potential benefits, risks and associated costs with the introduction of new technologies.

The newly (2004) designated Belgian Focal Point for the Cartagena Protocol (DG Environment, **Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment**) has launched in 2005 a research project, with a team from a Belgian university, on socio-economical impacts of GMO's, interesting developed and developing countries. This aims at establishing a methodology for the study of such impacts, on basis of some cases studies, respecting the wording of the Cartagena Protocol (socio-economic impacts of GMO's related to impacts on biodiversity and on the indigeneous and local populations). In that study, the case by case general relevancy of GMO cultures compared to other types of cultures and technologies, solving the same problems is considered, in terms of impacts for the environment, for the local population (producers and consumers) and for the food-chain, taking also into account the influence and cost of marketing. The first part of this study (for which a renewal of funding is awaited) did start in April 2005 and will finish at the end of 2005. This work is complementary to the work already undertaken by the Catholic University of Louvain in this area.

124. Has your country identified and implemented any measures to develop or strengthen appropriate information systems for technology transfer and cooperation, including assessing capacity building needs? (annex to decision VII/29)

a) No	
b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are in place and being implemented (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are being implemented (please provide details below)	

Further comments on measures to develop or strengthen appropriate information systems for technology transfer and cooperation.

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** holds a permanent database where all development aid interventions are recorded, according to the donors' obligation to report ODA (Official Development Aid) and OA (Official Aid) to the Development Aid Committee (DAC) of OECD. They also include all technology transfer actions that are financed or co-financed by public funding and which respond to

the DAC's criteria for ODA. This database is not accessible yet to a wider public.

Currently, a new, more comprehensive and user-friendly internet-based database management system is under construction and expected to be operational in mid-2005, where substantial information will be readily available on any theme.

With regard to developing countries, the Belgian Cooperation has supported different information management systems related to biodiversity. So far, these systems are essentially focused on knowledge transfer, but present a potential for technology transfer:

- capacity building activities for the implementation of the CBD's Clearing House Mechanism in several developing countries (training and technical assistance). See also answer in box LIX concerning capacity building for the Biosafety Clearing house of the Cartagena Protocol);
- the Central African programme REIMP (Regional Environmental Information Management Programme) is implemented by the 'Association pour le Développement de l'Information Environnementale' (ADIE). The main goal of this programme is to improve the management of biodiversity and natural resources in the Congo Basin, through fostering an effective knowledge transfer toward and within the seven countries involved (DRC, Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, CAR and Chad).

Since 1996, IPH manages the **Belgian Biosafety Server** (website: biosafety.ihe.be). This website primarily aims at providing to, and exchanging with, the competent authorities, the scientific community, the private sector, NGO's and the public in general, scientific, technical and legal information on genetically modified organisms. Due to the horizontal character of GMO's and Biotechnology, the information provided concerns both R&D and market parameters of the agro-food/feed, pharmaceutical, medical, veterinary, agronomic and environmental sectors but also local and international regulations, guidelines and agencies involved in biological safety including its biodiversity dimension.

A project called **METAFRO InfoSys** (Metadata African Organization - Information System) (website: http://metafro.africamuseum.be/) was launched at the end of 1997. Metafro Infosys is an electronic catalogue of data sets and data sources related to Central Africa (including Angola, Burundi and Rwanda). The data set includes documents, metadata information on institutions and research projects, library catalogues and collections. This "Information system" or "knowledge management system", namely a full CRIS (Current Research Information System) is dedicated to provide access to and dissemination of research information related to Central Africa (including Angola, Burundi and Rwanda). Metafro Infosys is also the Digital Information Centre (DICE) for the Royal Museum for Central Africa. Identified beneficiaries of the catalogue are research and training institutions; Central African countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo - Kinshasa, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon) including Angola, Burundi and Rwanda, and regional organisations; federal administrations; NGO's, the private sector; international organisations (FAO, UNEP, UNDP, UNHCR, UNESCO, The World Bank, IUCN, WWF, IGBP, Research stations, ITTO, EC Programmes, etc.). The launch and first part of the project were financed by the Belgian Science Policy. From 2002 onwards, METAFRO Infosys is supported by the Belgian Development Cooperation.

For **B CHM** and **BCCH**: see under question 117.

125. Has your country taken any of the measures specified under Target 3.2 of the programme of work as a preparatory phase to the development and implementation of national institutional, administrative, legislative and policy frameworks to facilitate cooperation as well as access to and adaptation of technologies of relevance to the Convention? (annex to decision VII/29)

a)	No	
b)	No, but a few measures being considered	
c)	Yes, some measures taken (please specify below)	X
d)	Yes, many measures taken (please specify below)	

Further comments on the measures taken as a preparatory phase to the development and implementation of national institutional, administrative, legislative and policy frameworks to facilitate cooperation as well as access to and adaptation of technologies of relevance to the Convention.

See information above.

Four case studies can be found in annex.

Box LVI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Case studies of Belgian cooperation in technology transfer and capacity building

Case study 1: the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office

At the federal level, the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (Belspo) gives funding to several projects of interest, and is also responsible for coordinating the preparation and the follow-up for the scientific section of the bilateral agreements for economic, industrial, scientific and technological cooperation which Belgium has concluded with a number of countries (Bulgaria, China, Poland, Russia, Vietnam). Belspo website is www.belspo.be.

The Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms (BCCM™) constitute a consortium of four complementary research-based culture collections financed by the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office (see web site http://www.belspo.be/bccm/). Over 50.000 well-documented and authenticated strains of bacteria, filamentous and yeast fungi (including the most important test and control strains) and over 1.500 plasmids are readily deliverable by BCCM™ on a world-wide basis. Some 10 unique cDNA libraries are also made available.

The BCCM™ consortium aims to share the biological material of its collections, related information, as well as its experience and know-how in the field of fundamental and applied (micro)biology to the benefit of its partners and clients in the scientific and industrial communities.

The Federal Science Policy Office is responsible for coordinating the preparation and the follow-up for the scientific section of the bilateral agreements for economic, industrial, scientific and technological cooperation which Belgium has concluded for already more than twenty years with a number of countries (Bulgaria, China, Poland, Russia, Vietnam). The Federal Science Policy Office chairs the Belgian delegation at the regular meetings (about every 2 years) of the Mixed Committees for S&T cooperation where representatives of both countries examine the results of the bilateral cooperation and set together the course of future common projects.

Within these framework agreements, science policy acts as driving force for the overall relationships and the promotion of the commercial traffic between the concerned countries. The S&T cooperation can take various forms: information exchange, exploratory expert mission, common research and demonstration or valorisation project.

Alongside coordination, the Federal Science Policy Office itself finances cooperation projects in their areas of competence, particularly projects involving space research or that are linked to subjects dealt with national research programmes or conducted by federal scientific institutions under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Science Policy. In this way, they contribute to the international valorisation of this research and the transfer of know-how.

- BULGARIA: A bilateral agreement for economic, industrial, scientific and technical cooperation between the Belgian-Luxemburg Economic Union (BLEU) and the Republic of Bulgaria was signed on the 22nd of March 1974. Within this framework, the the XIIth meeting of the Mixed Committee for S&T cooperation was held in Sofia on the 22nd of Mai 2003; 8 cooperation projects have been approved.
- CHINA: A bilateral agreement for economic, industrial, scientific and technical cooperation between the Belgian-Luxemburg Economic Union (BLEU) and the People's Republic of China was signed in Beijing on the 23rd of November 1979. Within this framework, the XIVth meeting of the Mixed Committee for S&T cooperation was held in Beijing on the 21th en 22th of November 2002; 21 cooperation projects have been approved.
- POLAND: A bilateral agreement for economic, industrial, scientific an technical cooperation between the Belgian-Luxemburg Economic Union (BLEU) and the Republic of Poland was signed in Brussels on the 22nd of November 1973. Within this framework, the XVth meeting of the Mixed committee for S&T

cooperation was held in Brussels on the 26th and 27th of March 2001; 15 cooperation projects have been approved.
- RUSSIA: An agreement of understanding and cooperation between the Kingdom of Belgium and the Russian Federation was signed in Brussels on the 8th of December 1993. Within this framework, the last meeting of the Mixed Committee was held in Brussels on the 24th of June 2002; 18 cooperation projects have been approved.
- VIETNAM: On 25 september 2002 a federal agreement for scientific and technical cooperation was signed in Brussels between the Government of the Kindom of Belgium and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The cooperation will be focused in a first step on aquaculture, including related quality standards for environment and food safety.

Research projects:
BL/10/C11: Study and conservation of specific groups of Actinomycetes and Microfungi in China
BL/19/C19: Belgian and Chinese Crop Growth Monitoring Systems: comparison, adaptation and improvement
BL/C/003: 3-D modelling of the circulation and dispersion of pollutants in marine coastal zones
BL/C/03: Use of Remote Sensing Technology for the search of copper deposits in Henan province
BL/C/04: Municipal Information Network for Science and Technology Commission of Chongqing
BL/C/05: Design and implementation of an urban geographical information system (Hangzhou) integrating remote sensing techniques
BL/C/10: Identification and classification of Actinomycetes, specially bioactive Streptomyces strains isolated from Chinese soils
BL/C/11: Mycofloristic survey and taxonomic studies of saprobic microfungi isolated in the Changbai Mountains
BL/P/02: Compiling of a spatial forest databank for the monitoring of pine woods in Poland
BL/P/03: Biodiversity in the Coastal Antarctic Sea-Ice Zone

Case study 2: the Plant Biotechnology Institute for Developing Countries
The Plant Biotechnology Institute for Developing Countries (IPBO, Ghent University) is active in training, technology transfer and plant biotechnology research, oriented to the needs of the developing countries. IPBO was inaugurated on June 13, 2000. The website of the institute is www.ipbo.ugent.be.
The topics on which the institute concentrate its activities are Biodiversity, Nutritional Enhancement, Plant Diseases and Abiotic Stress, involving the following crops: Bamboo, Beans, Cassava (manioc), Citrus, Cowpea, Lathyrus (grass pea), Papaya, Rice, Tropical Trees and Banana.

The project Bamboo Thematic Network has the following general objectives:
- to create a knowledge infrastructure that will foster bilateral co-operation between European and developing countries in order to valorise international scientific research on bamboo.
- to identify the socio-economic and environmental conditions and corresponding implementation strategies required for the commercial and industrial validation of research on bamboo as a timber substitute and renewable source of bioenergy.
- to determine the long and short term research on bamboo needed to integrate bamboo technologies in the global market while ensuring sustainable development.
This project has the following scientific and technological objectives:
- to establish a network from industry, research institutes, and universities focusing on bamboo RTD in order to:
- - improve co-operation between research organisations and industry in Europe and developing countries
- - facilitate access for research centres and industries in the EU to technical knowledge about bamboo in developing countries
- - engage in advanced research on bamboo biotechnology
- - simplify and improve exchange of knowledge about bamboo through meetings, internet presence, and on-line databases
- - create a public forum in which the research community can generate and focus new research proposals for submission
- to develop a 'bamboo RTD knowledge base' on the Internet in order to:
- - collect and consolidate national socio-economic and environmental data relevant to bamboo
- - maintain a state-of-the-art inventory of biotechnological developments on bamboo
- - disseminate research finding on bamboo and related fields with relevance to industry and the environment
- - increase public awareness on environmental, economic, and industrial aspects of bamboo

- to identify the demands and requirements from industry into research on bamboo in various fields in order to:
- - compose a matrix of bamboo genotypes, silviculture techniques, industrial processes, and products
- - detect unsolved problems, gaps in knowledge, and market feasibility
- - generate ideas to solve technical problems within research on bamboo and develop plans for innovative and cost effective RTD projects
- - initiate a programme of technology transfer focusing on bamboo biotechnology and wood technology
- - identify opportunities for European involvement in bamboo RTD projects in third countries

The project Molecular diversity and relationships of the genera *Carica* and *Vasconcellea* aim to clear out the relationships and investigate the genetic diversity between and within the genera *Carica* and *Vasconcellea*. The genera *Carica* and *Vasconcellea* are two of the six genera belonging to the plant family of the Caricaceae. *Carica papaya* is the best-known and economically most important plant of this family, with a fruit production of 5,4 Mton in 2001 (FAO). Unripe fruits are frequently used for the extraction of the proteinase papain, which has applications in the beverage, food and pharmaceutical industries. The *Vasconcellea* species have big potential for the future as some of them contain papain with higher enzymatic activity, while others bear bigger or sweeter fruits. Above all, they grow in colder subtropical areas than *Carica papaya*. Different methods are used: microsatellites, DNA sequencing, flow cytometry and cytogenetic investigation.

The project on Sustainable Management of Neo-Tropical Tree Genetic Resources: Combining molecular and modelling methods to understand the structure and dynamics of gene diversity has the following goals:
- to examine the structure and dynamics of genetic variation for a range of species within natural ecosystems and identify the main factors that are responsible for the partitioning of variation within a range Central and South American forest tree species.
- to examine the impact of identified extraction methods/habitat degradation on selected economically important species.
- to produce a model that will integrate field observations and DNA-based technologies to provide realistic simulations of the impact of differing land-use strategies and extraction regimes on the genetic resource base of impacted species.
- to improve capacity to execute sound natural forest management by improving awareness of genetic implications of natural forest management and implementation of a modelling approach to setting sustainability strategies.

Tropical forests are complex ecosystems, and their management often involves the sustainable exploitation of a range of resources, including non-timber products (e.g. fruits and nuts, medicines etc). Genetic diversity represents an essential component promoting population level adaptation ensuring the continued proliferation of individual species within tropical systems. Reduced genetic diversity can lead to loss of adaptive variation and inbreeding depression, both of which can threaten the long-term survival of isolated populations. Many tropical species are currently extracted at unsustainable levels or their habitats are being degraded, threatening the long-term survival of species within this ecosystem. Whether harvested from natural or managed landscapes, there is a need to develop a practical, operational system concerned with the management of genetic sustainability.

Case study 3: the International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain
This network was created in 1985, with the objectives of creating partnerships and supporting research carried out by its partners in both developing and industrialised countries. Many of the producing countries have limited research capacity, but participation in regional networks supported by INIBAP helps them to make the best use of available resources. INIBAP maintains germplasms of Banana and Plantain under the auspices of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in the framework of International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI). INIBAB has established the world's largest Musa germplasm collection, which is located at KULeuven University in Belgium. INIBAP has put in place a system for the safe movement of these varieties, and this material is distributed freely worldwide.
Since May 1994, INIBAP is a programme of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricutural Research (CGIAR). The website of INIBAP is www.inibap.org

Case study 4: Workshop on enabling environments for technology transfer
The Centre for Sustainable Development of Ghent University has organised in April 2003 a series of lectures on Transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries under the Climate Convention at the occasion of the UNFCCC Workshop on enabling environments for technology transfer (Ghent, 10-11.04.2003).
Five sessions were hold on each of the key themes of the UNFCCC Framework for meaningful and effective actions to enhance the implementation of Article 4, paragraph 5, of the Convention:
Session 1: Technology Transfer: Historical Account and Broader Perspective
Session 2: Technology Needs and Needs Assessment
Session 3: Technology Information
Session 4: Capacity Building
Session 5: Mechanisms for Technology Transfer
Session 6: Enabling Environments
Report of the workshop: http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2003/sbsta/inf04.pdf.
More information on the different lectures:
http://cdonet.rug.ac.be/english/technology_transfer/TT-EN.htm
A workshop will be organised by the UNFCCC Expert Group on Technology Transfer in 2005. As Belgium is convinced of the importance to accentuate the link on 'technology transfer and adaptation' between UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD, we intend to invite CBD en UNCCD at the workshop.

Article 17 - Exchange of information

126. ◆ On Article 17(1), has your country taken measures to facilitate the exchange of information from publicly available sources with a view to assist with the implementation of the Convention and promote technical and scientific cooperation?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place	X

The following question (127) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

127. ◆ On Article 17(1), do these measures take into account the special needs of developing countries and include the categories of information listed in Article 17(2), such as technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on?	
a) No	
b) Yes, but they do not include the categories of information listed in Article 17(2), such as technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on	
c) Yes, and they include categories of information listed in Article 17 (2), such as technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on	X

Box LVII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;

d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

The initiatives on information exchange mentioned and described in the Second National Report (p. 97-99) are still functional and have added more information on their sites. The digitalisation of taxonomical collections in Belgium is continuing and the information from the different collections is made public through the BeBIF portal.

Since the Second National Report, much work has been done on Natura 2000 and among others on the exchange of information in relation to this programme. Webpages:
Flemish Region: www.instnat.be/content/page.asp?pid=EUR_NA_Natura2000
Brussels Capital Region: www.ibgebim.be/english/contenu/content.asp?ref=1374
Walloon Region: mrw.wallonie.be/dgrne/sibw/sites/Natura2000/home.html

The Belgian Science Policy supports the **Belgian Biodiversity Platform** (BBPF) whose main aims are:
- to elaborate and regularly update a reference database on Belgian research institutions, scientific and experts as well as research projects, collections and databases related to biodiversity. The Platform acts as the national node of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), whose goal is to make biodiversity related data freely and easily available to all. The platform strives to build a bioinformatics infrastructure to integrate Belgian biodiversity resources within a unified environment;
- to perform an analysis of the current biodiversity research in Belgium: identification of strengths and gaps and by this, to actively contribute to the definition of a national research strategy on biodiversity. The platform acts as national node of the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRS), whose objective is to improve the effectiveness and relevance of the biodiversity research in Europe;
- to enhance the dialogue and facilitate exchanges of information among scientists and between national researchers and policy-makers, notably via the development of discussion thematic Forums : forest biodiversity, freshwater biodiversity, invasive species, systematics and taxonomy. Website: www.biodiversity.be.

Projects not mentioned in the Second National Report with special emphasis on information relevant to developing countries:
- the Albertine rift, a mountainous region situated in the middle of the African continent is a biodiversity hotspot. It includes the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and the western part of Uganda and of Tanzania. A database on its birds, butterflies, Rubiaceae and fish is developed and accessible via projects.bebif.be/enbi/albertinerift/birds;
- the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences acts as the Belgian representative in the European Network for Biodiversity Information (ENBI) coordinated by the University of Amsterdam. The RBINS ensures the follow-up of studies and advancement made at European level to better valorise the digitised collections.

Article 18 - Technical and scientific cooperation

128. ◆ On Article 18(1), has your country taken measures to promote international technical and scientific cooperation in the field of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	

Further information on the measures to promote international technical and scientific cooperation.

The **National Botanic Garden of Belgium** has the largest botanical collections from Central Africa in the world, as well as large historical holdings from other tropical countries, e.g. Brazil and Mexico. It develops training programmes for students from developing countries and initiatives to transfer its

tropical biodiversity data to the countries of origin, *inter alia* in the framework of the 'African Plant Initiative' funded by the Mellon Foundation.

The African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC), situated at the **Royal Museum for Central Africa**, is supported by the Belgian Development Cooperation. The RMCA has the largest zoological collections from Central Africa in the world, and ABIC organises training internships for students from developing countries, with an emphasis on datamining and transfer of collection information. ABIC engages in co-operation agreements with the source institutions of the students to ensure support for the valorisation of the transferred information after the training. Internships are individually adapted to meet the needs and requirements of the applicants.

Belgium's National Focal Point to the GTI, situated at the **Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences**, is financially supported by the Belgian Development Cooperation. This museum and research institute harbours zoological collections (roughly 37 million specimens), a tissue bank for sequence analyses, a library of global importance, well-equipped research facilities and well-trained scientific and curatorial staff. The Belgian Focal Point to the GTI offers training in taxonomy and collection management for selected students from developing countries worldwide. This tuition, provided in collaboration with the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Tervuren, Belgium), cuts across all levels and aims at professional taxonomists, postgraduate, graduate and undergraduate students, technicians and parataxonomists. Training for the individual includes traditional and molecular approaches to taxon identification and classification while institutional support includes reference centre and website development. In addition the Belgian GTI NFP offers access to collections and gives support for taxonomy based research projects carried out in developing countries. Valorisation of archives and collections relating to partner countries, as well as creating public awareness and education, complements the training offers.

The **B CHM** is not only promoting technical and scientific cooperation through the training of national CHM focal ploints of partner countries but tries to stimulate this as well through regional and subregional initiatives. The participants to the regional CHM training for Central Africa formulated a proposal to develop a sub-regional portal to promote the cooperation between the countries.

Flemish Region: financial and technical support is given in the framework of CMS to a programme on the conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan antelopes in Tunesia, in cooperation with the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences and with France. Financial support is also provided through the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests.

See also information provided under article 5.

129. ◈ On Article 18(4), has your country encouraged and developed methods of cooperation for the development and use of technologies, including indigenous and traditional technologies, in pursuance of the objectives of this Convention?	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant methods are under development	
c) Yes, methods are in place	X

130. ◈ On Article 18(5), has your country promoted the establishment of joint research programmes and joint ventures for the development of technologies relevant to the objectives of the Convention?	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide some examples below)	X
Examples for the establishment of joint research programmes and joint ventures for the development of technologies relevant to the objectives of the Convention.	

In the framework of the Earth Observation research programme of the **Belgian Science Policy** Office, several research projects conducted with local agencies for natural resources management in Africa, Indonesia and with international organisations such as the Worldbank/Environment, FAO/FOREST, UNEP, IUCN, WWF International and Oxfam aim to improve remote sensing methods for monitoring and planning purposes.

Within the frame of bilateral agreements with i.e. China, Poland, Russia, joint research projects are initiated by the Belgian Science Policy Office consisting in a transfer of Belgian know-how which has been developed through the Belgian Science Policy Office R&D programmes. About 0.4 Mio Euro per year is devoted to biodiversity projects which include the study and conservation of specific groups of micro-organisms in different provinces and regions of China, the use of remote sensing techniques for monitoring land use changes in Poland, etc.

Flemish Region: the Institute of Nature Conservation is an active member of the ALTER-net project 'A Long-term Biodiversity, Ecosystem and Awareness Research Network'. The project, which involves 24 research institutes in Europe, was launched in 2004 and aims to develop a Network of Excellence (NoE). This NoE will create a European long-term inter-disciplinary facility for research on the complex relationship between ecosystems, biodiversity and society. It will provide scientific support for policy assessment and development on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the European Union, and a facility for information retrieval and reporting on biodiversity-related issues. The project runs over a period of five years (www.alter-net.info).

131. Has your country established links to non-governmental organisations, private sector and other institutions holding important databases or undertaking significant work on biological diversity through the CHM? (decision V/14)	
a) No	
b) No, but coordination with relevant NGOs, private sector and other institutions under way	
c) Yes, links established with relevant NGOs, private sector and institutions	X

The following question (132) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

132. Has your country further developed the CHM to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to gain access to information in the field of scientific and technical cooperation? (decision V/14)	
a) No	
b) Yes, by using funding opportunities	X
c) Yes, by means of access to, and transfer of technology	X
d) Yes, by using research cooperation facilities	X
e) Yes, by using repatriation of information	X
f) Yes, by using training opportunities	X
g) Yes, by using promotion of contacts with relevant institutions, organisations and the private sector	X
h) Yes, by using other means (please specify below)	

Further comments on CHM developments to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to gain access to information in the field of scientific and technical cooperation.

b) using funding opportunities: the Belgian Development Cooperation has funded the organisation by the Secretariat of the Convention of several regional meetings for the CHM.

c) see information under article 16.

d) using research cooperation facilities: several initiatives are mentioned in the sections on capacity building (among others under articles 15 and 16) to promote the access to research facilities in Belgium by researchers from developing countries.

e) access to information: mainly by making information available through BeBIF, ABIC, MetaFro, B CHM, etc. and by the NBGB (see also information under article 17).

f) training opportunities: the B CHM organised, with funding from the Belgian Development Cooperation, several training courses for the CHM-NFPs of developing countries in the use of web publishing tools for the creation of national CHMs. National CHMs from 20 developing countries are hosted at the B CHM server to promote the access to information on scientific and technical cooperation from developing countries. During the period 2003-2005 the B CHM and BCH organised three training courses for BCH-NFPs from partner countries in the utilisation of the central BCH portal.

A regional workshop for CHM-NFPs has been organised in December 2003, in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention. Fifteen participants exchanged experiences on the implementation of the national CHMs and how to further technical and scientific cooperation between their countries.

A sub-regional CHM training workshop for Central African partner countries has been organised in January 2005, in Bujumbura (Burundi). This workshop was organised in collaboration with Burundi, Rwanda and the Secretariat for the Convention. About 15 partners to the national CHMs from five countries received training on how to exchange information through the internet.

133. Has your country used CHM to make information available more useful for researchers and decision-makers? (decision V/14)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant initiatives under consideration	
c) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on development of relevant initiatives.

The Belgian CHM is a portal for information related to the implementation of the CBD in Belgium. The B CHM receives many requests related to the Convention from researchers and decision makers. If the information is not available on related sites the B CHM makes the information available on its own site. There are also collaborations with the Belgian Biodiversity Platform.

See box XLV for information on other initiatives.

134. Has your country developed, provided and shared services and tools to enhance and facilitate the implementation of the CHM and further improve synergies among biodiversity-related Conventions? (decision V/14)	
a) No	
b) Yes (please specify services and tools below)	X

Further comments on services and tools to enhance and facilitate the implementation of CHM and further improve synergies among biodiversity-related Conventions.

The Belgian CHM is offering services as mentioned in the Second National Report (p. 100-101). It has developed a standardised web model to facilitate the implementation of the CHM by partner countries and to promote interoperability between CHMs in the near future. Belgium participated actively in the 'Informal Meeting on Interoperability of Information among the Three Rio and Other Environmental

Conventions', Montreal, November 2004. National level discussions are ongoing towards developing a joint website with the NFP for the Desertification Convention.

Box LVIII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Article 19 - Handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits

135. ◈ On Article 19(1), has your country taken measures to provide for the effective participation in biotechnological research activities by those Contracting Parties which provide the genetic resources for such research?

a) No	X
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place	
d) Yes, comprehensive legislation are in place	
e) Yes, comprehensive statutory policy and subsidiary legislation are in place	
f) Yes, comprehensive policy and administrative measures are in place	

136. ◈ On Article 19(2), has your country taken all practicable measures to promote and advance priority access by Parties, on a fair and equitable basis, to the results and benefits arising from biotechnologies based upon genetic resources provided by those Parties?

a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	X
c) Yes, some measures are in place	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place	

Box LIX.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Already before the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol in Belgium on 14.07.2004, the Service of

Biosafety and Biotechnology of the **Scientific Institute for Public Health** had started to establish the Belgian component of the Biosafety Clearing House, taking advantage of its experience and information on biosafety gathered through the organisation of the Belgian Biosafety Server (BBS), initiated in 1996. Those initiatives not only contain information on Belgian biosafety regulations and GMO's authorisations, but also on risk evaluations and other scientific informations and links relative to biosafety. As such, it was designated as the Belgian BCH Focal Point. Thanks to its long experience and expertise in the development and management of internet-based systems for information sharing in the field of biosafety, it participated in a training programme (3 weeks) for webmasters of developing countries for the BCH of the Protocol, financed by the Belgian Development Cooperation.

The organisation of or the co-financing of the organisation by other European countries of seminars on GMO's risk assesment and management for representatives of developing countries is presently discussed between the Belgian Focal Point for the Protocol (DG Environment of the **Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment**) and the **Belgian Development Cooperation**. (see also answer to question 123 on research projects on socio-economic impacts of GMO's).

Article 20 – Financial resources

Box LX.

Please describe for each of the following items the quantity of financial resources, both internal and external, that have been utilised, received or provided, as applicable, to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity, on an annual basis, since your country became a Party to the Convention.	
a) Budgetary allocations by national and local Governments as well as different sectoral ministries	
b) Extra-budgetary resources (identified by donor agencies)	
c) Bilateral channels (identified by donor agencies)	
d) Regional channels (identified by donor agencies)	
e) Multilateral channels (identified by donor agencies)	
f) Private sources (identified by donor agencies)	
g) Resources generated through financial instruments, such as charges for use of biodiversity	

Box LXI.

Please describe in detail below any major financing programmes, such as biodiversity trust funds or specific programmes that have been established in your country.
Flemish Region: during the period 1997-2003 there was a clear trend to allocate higher budgets for environment. Compared to other sectors the part for environment increased from 4.2% to 4.7%. From 2003 onwards the level decreased again to 4.3%. For the Nature and the Forest Division savings were important for the budget allocated for acquisition of land and management investments and for

subsidies for land acquisition by NGO's.

For the theme Biodiversity in the MINA plan the budget varies from 139,601 Keuro in 2001 to 113,774 Keuro in 2005, indicating a decrease of 2.5%.

A recent evaluation of the financial instruments used for specific Nature, Forest and Landscape Conservation programmes indicates following figures: of the 40 to 50 mio euro as a mean yearly budget 62% is spent for management actions, 21% for land acquisition and 15% for awareness rising, communication and educational programmes. In function of the stakeholder groups the figures indicate the following distribution: 50% for agricultural sector, 27% for nature NGO's, 7% for education and awareness centres and organisation, 5% for Regional Landscapes, 5% for forest owner groups, 2% for other private owners.

Boxes XLIX and L concern developing countries ('recipient' countries); for financial resources provided by Belgium to developing country parties, see question 138.

137. ◈ On Article 20(1), has your country provided financial support and incentives to those national activities that are intended to achieve the objectives of the Convention?

a) No	
b) Yes, incentives only (please provide a list of such incentives below)	
c) Yes, financial support only	
d) Yes, financial support and incentives (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on financial support and incentives provided.

Funding and incentives through all competent federal, regional and community departments.

The next question (138) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

138. ◈ On Article 20(2), has your country provided new and additional financial resources to enable developing country Parties to meet the agreed incremental costs to them of implementing measures which fulfill the obligations of the Convention?

a) No	
b) Yes (please indicate the amount, on an annual basis, of new and additional financial resources your country has provided)	X

Further comments on new and additional financial resources provided.

Most of the financial resources for developing countries are provided by the **Belgian Development Cooperation** of the Federal Ministry Foreign Affairs, either through direct bilateral cooperation or through third-party actors, such as NGO's, scientific institutions, universities or multilateral organisations.

Based on the 'Rio markers' in the ODA statistics that are provided to OECD/DAC on a yearly basis, the financial resources that Belgium has provided to help developing countries meet their commitments under the CBD or, more widely, to implement measures in favour of biodiversity, are the following (in EUR):

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Relevance 2	1,112,576	843,360	1,507,496	1,157,162
% vs total	0.19%	0.13%	0.23%	0.16%
Relevance 1	16,041,939	19,326,726	19,608,186	26,043,275

Relevance 1	16,041,939	19,326,726	19,608,186	26,043,275
% vs total development cooperation	2.76%	2.92%	3.04%	3.63%

The score 'Relevance 2' (principal objective) means that biodiversity was an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental to its design. The score 'Relevance 1' (significant objective) means that biodiversity was an important, but secondary, objective of the activity. It has therefore to be assumed that only 'a fraction of it' was specifically targeted at biodiversity issues.

The next question (139) is for DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OR COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

139. ◈ On Article 20(2), has your country received new and additional financial resources to enable it to meet the agreed full incremental costs of implementing measures which fulfill the obligations of the Convention?	
a) No	
b) Yes	

140. ◈ Has your country established a process to monitor financial support to biodiversity, including support provided by the private sector? (decision V/11)	
a) No	
b) No, but procedures being established	X
c) Yes (please provide details below)	
Further comments on processes to monitor financial support to biodiversity, including support provided by the private sector.	

141. ◈ Has your country considered any measures like tax exemptions in national taxation systems to encourage financial support to biodiversity? (decision V/11)	
a) No	
b) No, but exemptions are under development (please provide details below)	
c) Yes, exemptions are in place (please provide details below)	X
Further comments on tax exemptions for biodiversity-related donations.	
Flemish Region: the tax exemption systems that have been introduced so far are the exemption of succession rights for forests and the exemption of succession rights and levy for real property for land in FEN. Forest owners receive subsidies for the development and implementation of forest management plans that are based on sustainable forest management.	

142. Has your country reviewed national budgets and monetary policies, including the effectiveness of official development assistance allocated to biodiversity, with particular attention paid to positive incentives and their performance as well as perverse incentives and ways and means for their removal or mitigation? (decision VI/16)	
a) No	X

b) No, but review is under way	
c) Yes (please provide results of review below)	

Further comments on review of national budgets and monetary policies, including the effectiveness of official development assistance.

This is foreseen through the cross-compliance system.

143. Is your country taking concrete actions to review and further integrate biodiversity considerations in the development and implementation of major international development initiatives, as well as in national sustainable development plans and relevant sectoral policies and plans? (decisions VI/16 and VII/21)

a) No	
b) No, but review is under way	
c) Yes, in some initiatives and plans (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, in major initiatives and plans (please provide details below)	

Further comments on review and integration of biodiversity considerations in relevant initiatives, policies and plans.

Flemish Region: in the framework of the Envirtonment & Nature Policy Plan for 2004-2008, project-based actions are undertaken to integrate biodiversity considerations into the regional policy plans of the follwing sectors: transport, health, defense, water policy, agriculture. Similar actions are being developed at the **Federal** level.

144. Is your country enhancing the integration of biological diversity into the sectoral development and assistance programmes? (decision VII/21)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, into some sectoral development and assistance programmes (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, into major sectoral development and assistance programmes (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the integration of biodiversity into sectoral development and assistance programmes

Flemish Region: the Environment Policy Plan includes a part on 'Integration' that focuses on four main sectors for the plan period: agriculture, transport, health, water. For each of those, specific projects are being undertaken, taking into account biodiversity conservation and nature development. In the theme 'Biodiversity' specific actions include the development of protocols or cooperation agreements with other sectors such as with tourism and recreation, youth organisations, land owners organisation, agriculture, ministry of defence, transport for management and nature development of road and river verges, port authorities.

The next question (145) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

145. Please indicate with an "**X**" in the table below in which area your country has provided financial support to developing countries and/or countries with economies in transition. Please elaborate in the space below if necessary.

A r e a s	**Support provided**

a) Undertaking national or regional assessments within the framework of MEA (decision VI/8)	
b) *In-situ* conservation (decision V/16)	X
c) Enhance national capacity to establish and maintain the mechanisms to protect traditional knowledge (decision VI/10)	X
d) *Ex-situ* conservation (decision V/26)	X
e) Implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (decision VI/9)	X
f) Implementation of the Bonn Guidelines (decision VI/24)	
g) Implementation of programme of work on agricultural biodiversity (decision V/5)	X
h) Preparation of first report on the State of World's Animal Genetic Resources (decision VI/17)	
i) Support to work of existing regional coordination mechanisms and development of regional and sub regional networks or processes (decision VI/27)	X
j) Development of partnerships and other means to provide the necessary support for the implementation of the programme of work on dry and subhumid lands biological diversity (decision VII/2)	
k) Financial support for the operations of the Coordination Mechanism of the Global Taxonomy Initiative (decision VII/9)	X
l) Support to the implementation of the Action Plan on Capacity Building as contained in the annex to decision VII/19 (decision VII/19)	X
m) Support to the implementation of the programme of work on mountain biological diversity (decision VII/27)	X
n) Support to the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas (decision VII/28)	X
o) Support to the development of national indicators (decision VII/30)	
p) Others (please specify)	
Further information on financial support provided to developing countries and countries with economies in transition.	

The next question (146) is for DEVELOPING COUNTRIES OR COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION

146. Please indicate with an "**X**" in the table below in which areas your country has applied for funds from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), from developed countries and/or from other sources. The same area may have more than one source of financial support. Please elaborate in the space below if necessary.

A r e a s	**Applied for funds from**		
	GEF	**Bilateral**	**Other**

a) Preparation of national biodiversity strategies or action plans			
b) National capacity self-assessment for implementation of Convention (decision VI/27)			
c) Priority actions to implement the Global Taxonomy Initiative (decision V/9)			
d) *In-situ* conservation (decision V/16)			
e) Development of national strategies or action plans to deal with alien species (decision VI/23)			
f) *Ex-situ* conservation, establishment and maintenance of *Ex-situ* conservation facilities (decision V/26)			
g) Projects that promote measures for implementing Article 13 (Education and Public Awareness) (decision VI/19)			
h) Preparation of national reports (decisions III/9, V/19 and VI/25)			
i) Projects for conservation and sustainable use of inland water biological diversity (decision IV/4)			
j) Activities for conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity (decision V/5)			
k) Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (decision VI/26)			
l) Implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative			
m) Implementation of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity			
n) Others (please specify)			
Further information on application for financial support.			

Box LXII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

D. THEMATIC AREAS

147. Please use the scale indicated below to reflect the level of challenges faced by your country in implementing the thematic programmes of work of the Convention (marine and coastal biodiversity, agricultural biodiversity, forest biodiversity, inland waters biodiversity, dry and sub-humid lands and mountain biodiversity).

3 = High Challenge	1 = Low Challenge
2 = Medium Challenge	0 = Challenge has been successfully overcome
NA = Not applicable	

Challenges	Programme of Work					
	Agricultural	Forest	Marine and coastal	Inland water ecosystem	Dry and subhumid lands	Mountain
(a) Lack of political will and support	2	1	2	2	2	NA
(b) Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement	2	2	2	2	3	NA
(c) Lack of main-streaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors	3	2	3	2	2	NA
(d) Lack of precautionary and proactive measures	2	1	2	2	3	NA
(e) Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weakness	1	1	1	1	1	NA
(f) Lack of transfer of technology and expertise	1	2	1	1	1	NA
(g) Loss of traditional knowledge	2	NA	1	NA	1	NA
(h) Lack of adequate scientific research capacities to support all the objectives	1	2	1	1	0	NA

(i) Lack of accessible knowledge and information	2	2	1	1	0	NA
(j) Lack of public education and awareness at all levels	2	2	2	2	1	NA
(k) Existing scientific and traditional knowledge not fully utilised	2	2	1	2	2	NA
(l) Loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented	2	1	3	2	2	NA
(m) Lack of financial, human, technical resources	2	2	1	2	2	NA
(n) Lack of economic incentive measures	3	1	2	3	2	NA
(o) Lack of benefit-sharing	2	2	2	2	2	NA
(p) Lack of synergies at national and international levels	2	2	1	1	3	NA
(q) Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders	2	2	3	2	3	NA
(r) Lack of effective partnerships	2	2	2	2	3	NA
(s) Lack of engagement of scientific community	1	1	1	1	1	NA
(t) Lack of appropriate policies and laws	2	1	1	1	3	NA
(u) Poverty	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

(v) Population pressure	2	2	2	1	2	NA
(w) Unsustainable consumption and production patterns	3	1	3	3	1	NA
(x) Lack of capacities for local communities	2	1	1	2	1	NA
(y) Lack of knowledge and practice of ecosystem-based approaches to management	2	1	1	2	2	NA
(z) Weak law enforcement capacity	3	1	2	3	2	NA
(aa) Natural disasters and environmental change	0	2	1	NA	2	NA

Inland water ecosystems

148. Has your country incorporated the objectives and relevant activities of the programme of work into the following and implemented them? (decision VII/4)

Strategies, policies, plans and activities	No	Yes, partially, integrated but not implemented	Yes, fully integrated and implemented	NA
a) Your biodiversity strategies and action plans		X		
b) Wetland policies and strategies		X		
c) Integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans being developed in line with paragraph 25 of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development		X		
d) Enhanced coordination and cooperation between national actors responsible for inland water ecosystems and biological diversity		X		

Further comments on incorporation of the objectives and activities of the programme of work

Walloon Region: au cours de ces dernières années, la Région wallonne a adopté de nouveaux outils en vue d'avoir une gestion plus intégrée de l'eau et des zones humides: le Code de l'Eau, le Plan Pluies, le Décret Natura 2000 (voir box LXIII).

Flemish Region:
b) through implementation of the Ramsar Convention policies and strategies;
c) through implementation of the EC Water Framework Directive.

The Flemish Decree on Integrated Water Policy (2003) introduces new structures for integrated water policy in the Flemish Region, based on hydrographical conditions. Important characteristics of this policy are the division in river basins and sub-river basins, the integrated water policy plans, the introduction of organisational structures on each level and the public consultation on each hydrographical level.

The **Brussels Capital Region** adopted an integrated water management policy through his blue network programme. The blue network emphasises on integrated, durable and ecologically-justified management of the open waterways in the Region, as well as associated wetlands, marshy areas and ponds. This requires active co-operation between the various sectors, in particular between the green spaces managers and the infrastructure department.

149. Has your country identified priorities for each activity in the programme of work, including timescales, in relation to outcome oriented targets? (decision VII/4)	
a) No	X
b) Outcome oriented targets developed but priority activities not developed	
c) Priority activities developed but not outcome oriented targets	
d) Yes, comprehensive outcome oriented targets and priority activities developed	

Further comments on the adoption of outcome oriented targets and priorities for activities, including providing a list of targets (if developed).

Flemish Region: main targets of the programme of work are included in the EC Water Framework Directive that has been transposed into the Decree of Integrated Water Policy. Specific objectives and targets are included in the Environment & Nature Policy Plan 2003-2007. As yet these targets and activities have not been cross-related to the CBD programme of work, which is not the main driver for inland water policy planning.

Walloon Region: see box LXIII.

150. Is your country promoting synergies between this programme of work and related activities under the Ramsar Convention as well as the implementation of the Joint Work Plan (CBD-Ramsar) at the national level? (decision VII/4)	
a) Not applicable (not Party to Ramsar Convention)	
b) No	
c) No, but potential measures were identified for synergy and joint implementation	
d) Yes, some measures taken for joint implementation (please specify below)	X
e) Yes, comprehensive measures taken for joint implementation (please specify below)	

Further comments on the promotion of synergies between the programme of work and related activities under the Ramsar Convention as well as the implementation of the Joint Work Plan (CBD-Ramsar) at the national level.

Flemish Region: the objectives, targets and measures regarding management, rehabilitation and monitoring of water systems are included in the Environment & Nature Policy Plan 2003-2007. They are mainly based on the legislation provided by the EC Water Framework Directive that also represents an implementation of actions under Ramsar and CBD.

Brussels Capital Region: there are no Ramsar-sites in the Brussels Capital Region. However, the Region is contributing to the objectives of the Convention by its blue network programme (see higher).

Walloon Region: la Convention de Ramsar et la CDB sont toutes deux suivies au niveau de la Direction de la Nature. Des représentants de la Direction de la Nature participent aux réunions du comité national Ramsar.

National level synergies between the Ramsar Convention and the CBD are discussed within the Steering Committee Nature.

151. Has your country taken steps to improve national data on: (decision VII/4)

Issues	Yes	No	No, but development is under way
a) Goods and services provided by inland water ecosystems?	X		
b) The uses and related socioeconomic variables of such goods and services?	X		
c) Basic hydrological aspects of water supply as they relate to maintaining ecosystem function?	X		
d) Species and all taxonomic levels?	X		
e) On threats to which inland water ecosystems are subjected?	X		

Further comments on the development of data sets, in particular a list of data sets developed in case you have replied "**YES**" above.

Walloon Region: voir box LXIII pour plus d'information sur le Plan Pluies, le Code de l'Eau, le Projet PIRENE (Programme Intégré de Recherche Environnement-Eau).

Brussels Capital Region: through its blue network programme, the BIME carries out or supports research for optimal integration of water management and nature. The BIME developed an integrated database on open water and ponds in the Region, which includes data on geographic distribution, hydrographic and hydrological data, ecological quality of the water, biological data on flora and fauna, etc. See also question 148.

The BIME is collaborating to the research of among others RBINS and VUB on water quality based on some macrophytes and macroinvertebrates. The BIME is supporting the monitoring of wintering water birds populations, amphibians and reptiles, macrophytes, bats and other specific floral and faunal groups related to open water. The BIME is carrying out specific management practices for ponds, to improve global biodiversity quality.

Flemish Region:
c) the Institute of Nature Conservation carries out research to support the optimal integration of water management and nature. The aim is to have an 'integrated river valley management' where watercourse, riverbanks and the adjacent floodplain are considered and where ecological principles are in balance with safety aspects. The Institute investigates the hydrologic and ecological functioning of these ecosystems as well as the relation and interaction between water(flows) and the biotic system.

The following monitoring projects are currently running and databases being developed:
- hydrological monitoring in nature reserves in the Flemish Region;

- biomonitoring in the river Scheldt estuary;
- monitoring of Natura 2000 areas in the port of Antwerp.

d) the Institute of Nature Conservation and the Institute of Forestry and Game Management run programmes and develop databases on:
- monitoring of wintering waterbird populations in the Flemish Region;
- monitoring of birds in Special Protection Areas (EU Bird Directive) and Ramsar sites;
- breeding bird atlas and database for the Flemish Region;
- monitoring of amphibians and reptiles in the Flemish Region;
- monitoring of invertebrate species in the Flemish Region;
- development of flora database for the Flemish Region;
- monitoring distribution and status of freshwater fish;
- development of database 'Fish Information System (VIS)' for the Flemish Region;
- development and coordination of database on species distribution in the Flemish Region.

e) the Institute of Forestry and Game Management and the Institute of Nature Conservation carry out a project on monitoring and develop a database on 'fish migration constraints' of priority rivers and streams in the Flemish Region and investigate the implementation through appropriate management measures.

The Institute of Nature Conservation reports biennially on the state of nature in the Flemish Region through the publication of a Nature Report (NARA). The most recent report was published in May 2005 (Dumortier M., De Bruyn L., Hens M., Peymen J., Schneiders A., Van Daele T., Van Reeth W., Weyembergh G. & Kuijken E., 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud nr. 24, Brussel). It presents new facts and figures regarding the state of species and habitats, disturbances, the sustainable use of natural resources and the impact of protective measures taken by the government.

152. Has your country promoted the application of the guidelines on the rapid assessment of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems? (decision VII/4)

a) No, the guidelines have not been reviewed	X
b) No, the guidelines have been reviewed and found inappropriate	
c) Yes, the guidelines have been reviewed and application/promotion is pending	X
d) Yes, the guidelines promoted and applied	

Further comments on the promotion and application of the guidelines on the rapid assessment of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems.

a) **Flemish Region**

c) **Walloon Region**: les travaux d'évaluation de la qualité biologique des cours d'eau par la biodiversité des macro-invertébrés ont été poursuivis et ont évolué en fonction des exigences propres à la Directive 2000/60/CE. Les bases de données sur les populations de poissons disponibles en Région wallonne ont été enrichies et restructurées. Les premières synthèses sur l'ensemble des éléments biologiques disponibles par cours d'eau ou par bassin versant ont été préparées, notamment pour la Vesdre, la Haine et la Lesse. Quatre stations de mesures ont été sélectionnées en vue de leur inclusion au sein d'un réseau européen de mesures de la qualité biologique des eaux de surface. Dans la Directive 2000/60/CE, il est en effet prévu que cette qualité se fonde sur la qualité de la flore (macrophytes, diatomées, phytoplancton) et de la faune aquatique (macroinvertébrés et poissons). Dans ce contexte, les premières mesures de la qualité biologique des eaux de surface basée sur les macrophytes ont été entamées.

Box LXIII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Walloon Region:
1) Le Décret du 06.12.2001 relatif à la conservation des sites Natura 2000 ainsi que de la faune et de la flore sauvage, modifiant la Loi du 12.07.1973 sur la conservation de la nature, est entré en vigueur le 22.01.2002. A cet effet, de nombreuses zones humides ont été désignées sites Natura 2000 (en Région wallonne, le réseau Natura 2000 suit en partie le réseau hydrographique).

2) La Directive cadre européenne sur l'eau a réorienté la politique wallonne dans le domaine d'une gestion plus cohérente par sous bassin hydrographique. Ainsi, la Région a découpé son territoire en 15 sous-bassins hydrographiques qui constituent désormais les unités de gestion pour la fixation des objectifs de qualité, les Contrats de Rivière, la gestion piscicole, l'égouttage et l'assainissement des eaux usées. Cette nouvelle gestion a conduit la Région à réorganiser le secteur de la production et de la distribution d'eau (nouvelle tarification, fonds social de l'eau), à adapter ses réseaux de surveillance et à mettre en place de nouvelles structures (comme les observatoires des eaux). Des programmes d'action plus intégrés ont été développés, notamment en ce qui concerne la lutte contre les inondations (Plan Pluies) et la gestion durable de l'azote en agriculture. Dans ce contexte, la Région veut se doter d'outils législatifs et techniques adéquats, à travers le Code de l'Eau et différentes recherches orientées vers la modélisation du cycle de l'eau (Projet PIRENE).

3) Le Code de l'Environnement contient un Code de l'Eau. Ce code de l'Eau a été adopté par voie décrétale le 27.05.2004. Ce Décret porte sur la codification du droit de l'eau en Région wallonne et assure la transposition de la Directive cadre de l'UE sur l'eau (Directive 2000/60/CE). Le principe général du Code de l'Eau est « L'eau fait partie du patrimoine commun de la Région wallonne. Le cycle de l'eau est géré de façon globale et intégrée, dans le constant souci d'assurer à la fois la qualité et la pérennité de la ressource, dans le cadre d'un développement durable ».
Les objectifs du Code de l'Eau sont:
- de prévenir toute dégradation supplémentaire, de préserver et d'améliorer l'état des écosystèmes aquatiques ainsi que, en ce qui concerne leurs besoins en eau, des écosystèmes terrestres et des zones humides qui en dépendent directement;
- de promouvoir une utilisation durable de l'eau, fondée sur la protection à long terme des ressources en eau disponibles;
- de viser à renforcer la protection de l'environnement aquatique ainsi qu'à l'améliorer, notamment par des mesures spécifiques conçues pour réduire progressivement les rejets, émissions et pertes de substances prioritaires, et pour arrêter ou supprimer progressivement les rejets, émissions et pertes de substances dangereuses prioritaires;
- d'assurer la réduction progressive de la pollution des eaux souterraines et des eaux de surface et de prévenir l'aggravation de leur pollution;
- de contribuer à atténuer les effets des inondations et des sécheresses;
- de protéger la santé des personnes des effets néfastes de la contamination des eaux destinées à la consommation humaine en garantissant la salubrité et la propreté de celles-ci.

4) De plus, suite aux inondations majeures de 2003, le gouvernement wallon a adopté un Plan Pluies pour coordonner les mesures visant à limiter les dégâts dus aux crues. Il est décomposé en cinq grandes parties: l'amélioration de la connaissance du phénomène inondation, la conduite d'actions de prévention au niveau des bassins versants afin de favoriser l'infiltration de l'eau plutôt que son ruissellement, l'entretien des rivières pour qu'elles gardent leurs capacités d'écoulement, la réduction de l'occupation des zones à risques et enfin l'amélioration de la gestion des situations de crise.

5) Le projet PIRENE (Programme Intégré de Recherche Environnement-Eau) vise à mettre au point des méthodes et des outils qui pourront être utilisés pour une gestion intégrée de l'eau en Wallonie, dans la perspective de répondre aux exigences de la Directive 2000/60/CE établissant un cadre pour une politique communautaire dans le domaine de l'eau. Il a permis la conception d'un modèle complet du cycle de l'eau en Région wallonne, englobant tous les processus significatifs: sols, eaux souterraines,

eaux de surface, zones humides, et ce tant pour les aspects quantitatifs que qualitatifs. Le modèle envisage également les aspects juridiques (compatibilité des législations de la Région wallonne avec la gestion intégrée de l'eau, cohérence avec les contraintes imposées par les engagements internationaux), économiques (analyse économique des utilisations de l'eau) et sociologiques (acceptabilité sociale des actions de gestion envisagées, rôle des acteurs).

Cet outil permet de reproduire le fonctionnement du système des ressources en eau, d'évaluer l'incidence des pressions dues aux différents secteurs d'activité (épandages agricoles, liaison égouttage-épuration, retombées atmosphériques, etc.) et de simuler l'effet des politiques et programmes d'actions envisagés. PIRENE est donc destiné à devenir un véritable outil d'aide à la décision, à l'adresse des autorités publiques.

6) De nombreux projets visant l'utilisation rationnelle des zones humides sont en cours:
- promotion des techniques végétales, en vue du rétablissement d'une végétation riveraine naturelle, garante de stabilité pour les berges;
- étude sur l'acces du bétail au cours d'eau;
- travaux et études en matière de cours d'eau non navigables et de wateringues pour l'amélioration des habitats aquatiques (en ce compris la libre circulation des poissons);
- étude pour le suivi scientifique de la réhabilitation du saumon atlantique dans le bassin de la Meuse ou projet Saumon 2000.

7) De plus, il existe 2 outils participatifs visant entièrement ou en partie à la gestion durable des zones humides: les Contrats de Rivières et Les Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature (PCDN):
- le Contrat de Rivière consiste à mettre autour d'une même table tous les acteurs de la vallée, en vue de définir consensuellement un programme d'actions de restauration des cours d'eau, de leurs abords et des ressources en eau du bassin. Sont invités à participer à cette démarche les représentants des mondes politique, administratif, enseignant, socio-économique, associatif, scientifique…;
- les PCDN sont des initiatives communales de partenariat local pour le développement de la nature dont le but est la préservation et le développement de la biodiversité par la prise en compte du réseau écologique. Des projets de restauration des zones humides font partie des PCDN.

8) Arrêté du Gouvernement wallon instaurant une prime à l'installation d'un système d'épuration individuelle des eaux entré en vigueur le 01.01.2004.

Marine and coastal biological diversity

General

153. Do your country's strategies and action plans include the following? Please use an "**X**" to indicate your response. (decisions II/10 and IV/15)	
a) Developing new marine and coastal protected areas	X
b) Improving the management of existing marine and coastal protected areas	X
c) Building capacity within the country for management of marine and coastal resources, including through educational programmes and targeted research initiatives (if yes, please elaborate on types of initiatives in the box below)	X
d) Instituting improved integrated marine and coastal area management (including catchments management) in order to reduce sediment and nutrient loads into the marine environment	X
e) Protection of areas important for reproduction, such as spawning and nursery areas	X
f) Improving sewage and other waste treatment	X
g) Controlling excessive fishing and destructive fishing practices	

h) Developing a comprehensive oceans policy (if yes, please indicate current stage of development in the box below)	X
i) Incorporation of local and traditional knowledge into management of marine and coastal resources (if yes, please elaborate on types of management arrangements in the box below)	
j) Others (please specify below)	
k) Not applicable	

Please elaborate on the above activities and list any other priority actions relating to conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity.

North Sea: the Marine Ecosystem Management Department of the RBINS coordinates the research of sea birds and sea mammals that end up on our beaches or are found at sea or caught by mistake. The Department makes sure that the carcasses of stranded marine mammals are made available for scientific research aiming to develop mechanisms to measure the quality of the marine environment. Since 1992, the Institute of Nature Conservation performs monitoring programmes concerning oil pollution at sea (through 'beached bird surveys') and the distribution and breeding biology of sea-birds.

Flemish Region: in the framework of LIFE Nature projects in Natura 2000 areas in the coastal region site-specific research and nature development and rehabilitation actions of dune and grass land are ongoing, as well as sensibilisation and education programmes though the visitor centres of the nature reserves at the coast.

Management of Natura 2000 sites (SACs & SPAs) is still being established in some sites but methods continue to be refined. The Flemish Region is contributing to an EU expert group which is developing generic guidance for the management of marine Natura 2000 sites. Protected sites designated in the coastal zone extend generally to the low mean watermark. Management plans are already in place on many of these sites, for other sites the plans and conservation objectives are in preparation. The Flemish Region also participates in an EU Integrated Coastal Zone management project.

Since 2004, the **Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment**, DG Environment is part of the coordination centre for Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Implementation of Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management

154. Has your country established and/or strengthened institutional, administrative and legislative arrangements for the development of integrated management of marine and coastal ecosystems?

a) No	
b) Early stages of development	X
c) Advanced stages of development	
d) Arrangements in place (please provide details below)	
e) Not applicable	

Further comments on the current status of implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management.

In 2001, a coordination center for Integrated Coastal Zone Management has been established. It acts as a point of contact in the coastal zone where cross-sectoral themes are discussed on a local basis. The links between these local discussions and the more 'central' decision making process are ensured through a double system: first, a representative from this coordination center is invited to the higher level (and international) discussions and meetings; secondly, the Federal Government subsidises the work of the coordination center and takes part to its discussions including with the local representatives. By doing so, a win-win situation is created. Under these arrangements, an inventory of the sea-land interactions (and vice versa) is underway. This was made possible through the European Recommendation on ICZM. This work will include the identification of areas in need of further inte-

gration.

155. Has your country implemented ecosystem-based management of marine and coastal resources, for example through integration of coastal management and watershed management, or through integrated multidisciplinary coastal and ocean management?	
a) No	
b) Early stages of development	X
c) Advanced stages of development	X
d) Arrangements in place (please provide details below)	
e) Not applicable	

Further comments on the current status of application of the ecosystem to management of marine and coastal resources.

b) for the marine resources.

c) for the coastal resources: through implementation of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management and through the review process of the spatial and land use planning (**Flemish Region**).

Marine and Coastal Living Resources

156. Has your country identified components of your marine and coastal ecosystems, which are critical for their functioning, as well as key threats to those ecosystems?	
a) No	
b) Plans for a comprehensive assessment of marine and coastal ecosystems are in place (please provide details below)	
c) A comprehensive assessment is currently in progress	
d) Critical ecosystem components have been identified, and management plans for them are being developed (please provide details below)	X
e) Management plans for important components of marine and coastal ecosystems are in place (please provide details below)	
f) Not applicable	

Further comments on the current status of assessment, monitoring and research relating to marine and coastal ecosystems, as well as key threats to them

North Sea: two Habitats Directive and three Birds Directive areas are under designation. This designation takes place within the framework of the Law on the Marine Environment.

Flemish Region: for the nature reserves and Natura 2000 areas in the coastal area, conservation objectives and management plans are being developed. Reporting on monitoring and research data is included in the bi-annual Nature Reports of the Institute of Nature Conservation.

Specific chapters of the publication Biodiversity in Belgium deal with the marine and coastal ecosystems.

157. Is your country undertaking the following activities to implement the Convention's work plan on coral reefs? Please use an "**X**" to indicate your response.

Activities	Not implemented nor a priority	Not implemented but a priority	Currently implemented	Not applicable
a) Ecological assessment and monitoring of reefs				X
b) Socio-economic assessment and monitoring of communities and stakeholders			X	X
c) Management, particularly through application of integrated coastal management and marine and coastal protected areas in coral reef environments			X	X
d) Identification and implementation of additional and alternative measures for securing livelihoods of people who directly depend on coral reef services				X
e) Stakeholder partnerships, community participation programmes and public education campaigns			X	X
f) Provision of training and career opportunities for marine taxonomists and ecologists			X	X
g) Development of early warning systems of coral bleaching				X
h) Development of a rapid response capability to document coral bleaching and mortality				X
i) Restoration and rehabilitation of degraded coral reef habitats				X
j) Others (please specify below)				X

Please elaborate on ongoing activities.

The Belgian part of the **North Sea** contains no coral reefs. Therefore, 'not applicable' has been ticked in relation to the Belgian marine waters.

b, c, e, f) activities ticked as 'currently implemented' are undertaken through cooperation activities by the **Flemish Region**. A specific post-graduate training programme for foreign students from tropical countries include aspects on coral reefs, mangrove and lagoon ecosystems.

Marine and Coastal Protected Areas

158. Which of the following statements can best describe the current status of marine and coastal protected areas in your country? Please use an "**X**" to indicate your response.	
a) Marine and coastal protected areas have been declared and gazetted (please indicate below how many)	X
b) Management plans for these marine and coastal protected areas have been developed with involvement of all stakeholders	X
c) Effective management with enforcement and monitoring has been put in place	X
d) A national system or network of marine and coastal protected areas is under development	X
e) A national system or network of marine and coastal protected areas has been put in place	
f) The national system of marine and coastal protected areas includes areas managed for purpose of sustainable use, which may allow extractive activities	X
g) The national system of marine and coastal protected areas includes areas which exclude extractive uses	X
h) The national system of marine and coastal protected areas is surrounded by sustainable management practices over the wider marine and coastal environment.	
i) Other (please describe below)	
j) Not applicable	

Further comments on the current status of marine and coastal protected areas.

a) **Flemish Region**: dunes in the coastal area are protected by Law. The two main Natura 2000 site complexes that have been designated, one SPA and one SAC for small parts overlapping, cover most of the natural areas in the coastal zone.

Three main sites are recognised as NGO nature reserve, for a total surface of about 74 ha. Eleven sites are recognised as nature reserves of the Flemish administration (Nature Division) with a total surface of 1,032 ha. There is of course also an overlap between the reserves and Natura 2000 sites.

b, c) **Flemish Region**: for the Natura 2000 sites, conservation objectives and management plans are being developed. Inventory and consultation of and communication with stakeholders is a key part of these plans. For recognised nature reserves, a management plan exists and is implemented, monitoring actions and reporting are included in these plans.

d) **North Sea**: the establishment of Marine Protected Areas is foreseen in the Law on the Marine Environment (so-called MMM law). A Royal Decree is in preparation.

f) **Flemish Region**: Natura 2000 sites are areas which aim to contribute to the maintenance of bio-diversity in Europe but do not require the exclusion of natural resource use so long as it does not have a significant effect on the site's management. New extractive activities or developments within a site likely to have a significant effect on the site's management are subject to an appropriate assessment.

g) **North Sea**: the extraction of non-living resources is not allowed within MPA's. Fishery activities are not yet regulated within MPA's.

Mariculture

159. Is your country applying the following techniques aimed at minimising adverse impacts of mariculture on marine and coastal biodiversity? Please check all that apply.	
a) Application of environmental impact assessments for mariculture developments	
b) Development and application of effective site selection methods in the framework of integrated marine and coastal area management	
c) Development of effective methods for effluent and waste control	
d) Development of appropriate genetic resource management plans at the hatchery level	
e) Development of controlled hatchery and genetically sound reproduction methods in order to avoid seed collection from nature.	
f) If seed collection from nature cannot be avoided, development of environmentally sound practices for spat collecting operations, including use of selective fishing gear to avoid by-catch	
g) Use of native species and subspecies in mariculture	
h) Implementation of effective measures to prevent the inadvertent release of mariculture species and fertile polypoids.	
i) Use of proper methods of breeding and proper places of releasing in order to protect genetic diversity	
j) Minimising the use of antibiotics through better husbandry techniques	
k) Use of selective methods in commercial fishing to avoid or minimise by-catch	
l) Considering traditional knowledge, where applicable, as a source to develop sustainable mariculture techniques	
m) Not applicable	X

Further comments on techniques that aim at minimising adverse impacts of mariculture on marine and coastal biodiversity.

North Sea: there is currently no mariculture in Belgian waters.

The laboratory of Aquaculture (**Ghent University**) is involved in overseas projects to minimise environmental impacts of fish and shellfish hatchery activities (EU-INCO and Belgian cooperation projects).

Alien Species and Genotypes

160. Has your country put in place mechanisms to control pathways of introduction of alien species in the marine and coastal environment? Please check all that apply and elaborate on types of measures in the space below.	
a) No	X
b) Mechanisms to control potential invasions from ballast water have been put in place (please provide details below)	

c) Mechanisms to control potential invasions from hull fouling have been put in place (please provide details below)	
d) Mechanisms to control potential invasions from aquaculture have been put in place (please provide details below)	
e) Mechanisms to control potential invasions from accidental releases, such as aquarium releases, have been put in place	
f) Not applicable	

Further comments on the current status of activities relating to prevention of introductions of alien species in the marine and coastal environment, as well as any eradication activities.

Belgium takes part in IMO and its related instruments such as the Convention on ballast water.

Box LXIV.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Federal:

- FPSD I (2000-2004): in order to fulfil the international commitments related to the marine environment, an action programme integrated at Federal level will be set up to round off the measures already taken by the Regions and those they are still to take within their own areas of competence. The objectives of this action programme will include those determined at international level. This programme will cover, among other things, the implementation of the OSPAR strategies for (1) hazardous substances, (2) radioactive substances, (3) eutrophication, (4) the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, and (5) offshore activities;
- FPSD II (2004-2008): action 20 (task force North Sea, coast guard).

Agricultural biological diversity

161. ◈ Has your country developed national strategies, programmes and plans that ensure the development and successful implementation of policies and actions that lead to the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity components? (decisions III/11 and IV/6)

a) No	
b) No, but strategies, programmes and plans are under development	X
c) Yes, some strategies, programmes and plans are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive strategies, programmes and plans are in place (please provide details below)	

Further comments on agrobiodiversity components in national strategies, programmes and plans.

b) **Walloon Region**

c) in the **Flemish Region**:

- agri-environmental measures in the regional plans for rural development;

- codes of good agricultural practices 'nature conservation'.

Recently, much attention has been paid to nature and natural values within agricultural areas, which is often referred to as 'agricultural nature management'. Currently (01.01.2005), there are five types of agricultural management agreements between farmers and the Flemish Ministry that are explicitly aimed at enhancing nature (*i.e.* management of grassland birds, parcel edges, small-scale landscape elements, nature, and botanical management). These management agreements aim to stimulate farmers to actively contribute to nature and the environment, more than they would do through 'normal' agricultural practices.

162. ◈ Has your country identified ways and means to address the potential impacts of genetic use restriction technologies on the *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation and sustainable use, including food security, of agricultural biological diversity? (decision V/5)	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	X
c) Yes, some measures identified (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures identified (please provide details below)	

Further information on ways and means to address the potential impacts of genetic use restriction technologies on the *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity.

The DG Environment of the **Federal Public Service on Health, Food Chain Security and Environment** is presently funding a study on the socio-ecological impacts of GMO's. In that study, the case by case general relevancy of GMO cultures compared to other types of cultures and technologies, solving the same problems, is considered in terms of impacts for the environment, for the local population (producers and consumers) and for the food-chain.

Annex to decision V/5 - Programme of work on agricultural biodiversity

Programme element 1 – Assessment	
163. Has your country undertaken specific assessments of components of agricultural biodiversity such as on plant genetic resources, animal genetic resources, pollinators, pest management and nutrient cycling?	
a) No	
b) Yes, assessments are in progress (please specify components below)	X
c) Yes, assessments completed (please specify components and results of assessments below)	X

Further comments on specific assessments of components of agricultural biodiversity.

b) **Flemish Region**: bird surveys in agricultural areas are performed by the Instiute of Nature Conservation in cooperation with NGO's. Monitoring of the agri-environment measures takes place. The area of land managed under current agri-environment schemes has continued to increase.

Research into the ecology and pest management of three rodent species [*i.e.* brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus)*, muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) and coypu (*Myocastor coypus*)] is currently carried out by the Institute of Forestry and Game Management.

c) **Flemish Region**: assessments are completed in relation to animal genetic resources, pest management, nutrient cycling.

164. Is your country undertaking assessments of the interactions between agricultural practices and the conservation and sustainable use of the components of biodiversity referred to in Annex I of the Convention (e.g. ecosystems and habitats; species and communities; genomes and genes of social, scientific or economic importance)?

a) No	
b) Yes, assessments are under way	X
c) Yes, some assessments completed (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive assessments completed (please provide details below)	

Further comments on assessment of biodiversity components (e.g. ecosystems and habitats; species and communities; genomes and genes of social, scientific or economic importance).

Walloon Region: the SAGRIWATEL project attempts to supply a decision-making support tool for estimating and forecasting agricultural production and for describing rural land quality at different scales (from the plot to the whole region). Three types of tools are required in order to set up an integrated system for monitoring the state of Walloon agriculture: (i) spatial information on annual agricultural land use, using IACS (Integrated Administration and Control System); (ii) CGMS (Crop Growth Monitoring System) yield forecasting, adapted to Belgian conditions; and (iii) satellite information, with different levels of spatial and temporal resolution.

This collection of tools is used to produce a set of indicators, both agricultural and agri-environmental (AEI). Agri-environmental indicators are regarded as promising tools for assessing, quantifying and monitoring the effects of agriculture with the objective of ensuring sustainability and minimising environmental impact. While some agri-environmental measures (AEM) are directly linked to the AEI used, other issues are also addressed. From the huge list of AEI published by the European Commission, attention focuses on those where the accuracy of results has the greatest likelihood of being improved by remote sensing: plot size, crop sequence, farm land cover in winter, direction of soil tillage, use of buffer zones, share of agricultural land subject to environmental control, permanent grass area trend and diversity of plant products. Spatial representation of these AEI is implemented partly from the spatial information provided by IACS and partly from the satellite data mentioned above.

Flemish Region: analyses of a number of farmland species in relation to habitat use and agricultural practices are currently planned at the Institute of Nature Conservation (models of habitat requirement, density factors, etc). First results have been published in: Vermeersch, G. & De Bruyn, L., 2002. De verspreiding van vogels in Vlaanderen voorspellen: het voorbeeld van de Veldleeuwerik *Alauda arvensis*. Natuur.oriolus 68:9-16. (*Predicting the distribution of birds in Flanders: the example of the skylark, Alauda arvensis).*

A project on habitat choice of the stonechat *Saxicola torquata* (in farmland as well as in heathland), has been running since 2004, organised by the Province of Antwerp Nature Study Umbrella (ANKONA) and published in: Vermeersch G., 2005. Het project Roodborsttapuit in de provincie Antwerpen, tussentijds verslag projectjaar 2004, Ankona, Antwerpen, 8 pp. (*The stonechat project in the province of Antwerp, first report 2004*).

A project is running in the Province of West-Flanders in collaboration with the Institute of Nature Conservation, focusing on small-scale relations between agricultural use and farmland birds with education and management aspects included. An initial report has been published: Dochy, O. & Hens, M., 2005. Van de stakkers van de akkers naar de helden van de velden: Beschermingsmaatregelen voor akkervogels. Rapport IN.R.2005.01. Instituut voor Natuurbehoud, Brussel i.s.m. provinciebestuur West-Vlaanderen, Brugge. (*Conservation measures for farmland birds*).

The Institute of Nature Conservation investigates the distribution and ecology of geese in the Flemish Region, also within the wider scope of the EU FRAGILE project on the pink-footed goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*). The coastal agricultural areas in the Flemish Region play an important role for wintering and migrating geese on an international scale.

The Institute of Nature Conservation carries out hydrological research in rural areas, concentrating on the analysis of flood flows in relation to the safety policy, low flows, the quality of hydrological data, erosion and sediment transport.

Research is carried out by the Institute of Forestry and Game Management (IBW) to develop instruments to evaluate the effect of game management plans and to develop standard methods for the data analysis of 'game management units' in the Flemish Region.

165. Has your country carried out an assessment of the knowledge, innovations and practices of farmers and indigenous and local communities in sustaining agricultural biodiversity and agro-ecosystem services for food production and food security?	
a) No	
b) Yes, assessment is under way	X
c) Yes, assessment completed (please specify where information can be retrieved below)	

Further comments on assessment of the knowledge, innovations and practices of farmers and indigenous and local communities.

Flemish Region: existing agri-environmental schemes include several packages promoting good management practices for biodiversity. The new agri-environmental programme expands on these measures with a range of options that emphasise on organic management, natural resource protection and genetic diversity (such as rare or old breeds).

166. Has your country been monitoring an overall degradation, status quo or restoration/rehabilitation of agricultural biodiversity since 1993 when the Convention entered into force?	
a) No	
b) Yes, no change found (status quo)	
c) Yes, overall degradation found (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, overall restoration or rehabilitation observed (please provide details below)	

Further comments on observations.

Flemish Region: the Nature Report 2005 presents new facts and figures regarding the state of species and habitats, disturbances, the sustainable use of natural resources and the impact of protective measures taken by the Government.

Data from the Flemish Breeding Bird Atlas show an overall decline of species occurring in agricultural areas (Vermeersch G., Anselin A., Devos K., Herremans M., Stevens J., Gabriëls J. & Van Der Krieken B., 2004. Atlas van de Vlaamse broedvogels 2000-2002. Mededelingen van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud 23, Brussel, 496 pp.).

Programme element 2 - Adaptive management	
167. Has your country identified management practices, technologies and policies that promote the positive, and mitigate the negative, impacts of agriculture on biodiversity, and enhance productivity and the capacity to sustain livelihoods?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential practices, technologies and policies being identified	
c) Yes, some practices, technologies and policies identified (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive practices, technologies and policies identified (please provide details below)	

Further comments on identified management practices, technologies and policies.
Flemish Region: agri-environmental measures for biodiversity were identified. Various forms of management agreements between farmers and the Flemish Ministry can be implemented, including agreements for botanical management and management in favour of grassland birds. The Institute of Nature Conservation forms part of a wider European project, the so-called GREENVEINS project, which investigates biodiversity within the rural landscape. It aims to relate biodiversity with the intensity of agriculture in various types of arable land. By doing so, the project aims to develop a model which explains this relationship and which is applicable on a European scale. **Walloon Region**: 1) La 'jachère-faune' existe en Région wallonne depuis 2000; elle permet l'utilisation des terres gelées pour l'installation de couverts végétaux constituant un habitat privilégié pour la faune. Cependant celle-ci n'a qu'un succes limité probablement du à une méconnaissance des agriculteurs et des chasseurs, à la sévérité des sanctions financières en cas d'infraction constatée et à la charge administrative qu'elle entraine pour les agriculteurs et les chasseurs. A cet effet, la jachère faune a été revue pour 2005 et diverses contraintes ont été levées afin de viser une meilleure répartition et obtenir un maillage plus adéquat: - réduction de la dimension minimale des parcelles en jachère; - simplification des procédures. 2) Il y a eu une révision des mesures agri-environnementales en Région wallonne. Un nouvel arrêté du Gouvernement wallon du 28.10.2004 prévoit des mesures d'incitations agri-environnementales notamment pour: la conservation des éléments du réseau écologique et du paysage (haies et bandes boisées, arbres, arbustes isolés, arbres fruitiers à hautes tiges, bosquets, mares), les prairies naturelles, les bordures herbeuses extensives, les prairies à haute valeur biologique, lesbandes de parcelles aménagées. 3) Si une MAE est demandée pour une parcelle en zone SEP (Structure Ecologique Principale de Wallonie qui identifie les grandes zones d'intérêts écologiques, les principaux corridors écologiques qui les relient et les principales barrières écologiques qui les fragmentent), une plus value de 20% est accordée à la prime et ce en vue de cibler les primes pour les zones écologiquement importantes. 4) Une nouvelle subvention à la plantation de haies sera bientôt disponible et remplacera la précédente. Par rapport à la précédente, celle-ci prévoit: - des primes plus élevées à la plantation de haies; - des primes pour l'entretien de haies; - l'intégration de nouveaux éléments tels que les alignements d'arbres et les vergers; - et une simplification de la démarche administrative.

Programme element 3 - Capacity-building	
168. Has your country increased the capacities of farmers, indigenous and local communities, and their organisations and other stakeholders, to manage sustainable agricultural biodiversity and to develop strategies and methodologies for *in-situ* conservation, sustainable use and management of agricultural biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) Yes (please specify area/component and target groups with increased capacity)	X
Further comments on increased capacities of farmers, indigenous and local communities, and their organisations and other stakeholders.	
Flemish Region: this is being addressed by the promotion of organic farming. In the framework of Management Agreements under the agri-environmental programme of the Rural Development Programme (RDP), financial incentives and technical support are provided.	

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** supports a number of sustainable rural development programmes in South-America, Africa and South-East Asia, either through NGO or official bilateral channel, including the promotion of environmentally friendly agricultural practices (organic agriculture, rescue of indigenous varieties, etc.).

169. Has your country put in place operational mechanisms for participation by a wide range of stakeholder groups to develop genuine partnerships contributing to the implementation of the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential mechanisms being identified	
c) No, but mechanisms are under development	X
d) Yes, mechanisms are in place	X

170. Has your country improved the policy environment, including benefit-sharing arrangements and incentive measures, to support local-level management of agricultural biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but some measures and arrangements being identified	
c) No, but measures and arrangements are under development	X
d) Yes, measures and arrangements are being implemented (please specify below)	X

Further comments on the measures taken to improve the policy environment.

Flemish Region: a number of actions have been taken in the Flemish Region, e.g. management agreements to sustain grassland birds, management of parcel edges, conservation of small-scale landscape elements and botanical management. These actions are described in the Decision of the Flemish Government (October 2003) concerning the development of management agreements in order to support rural development (EU legislation: Provision (EEC) nr. 1257/1999).

Furthermore, benefit-sharing arrangements have been achieved through the delineation of multi-functional areas in which agriculture, forestry, landscape based recreation and biodiversity are meant to develop in mutual coherence (so-called 'interweaving nature areas' that are part of the ecological network).

Walloon Region: voir mesures d'incitations décrites sous la question 167. De plus, les Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature (PCDN), les Contrats de Rivières, les Parcs Naturels et les Commissions de Conservation Natura 2000 sont quatre outils participatifs visant notamment à la gestion locale de la biodiversité agricole.

Programme element 4 – Mainstreaming	
171. Is your country mainstreaming or integrating national plans or strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in sectoral and cross-sectoral plans and programmes?	
a) No	
b) No, but review is under way	
c) No, but potential frameworks and mechanisms are being identified	
d) Yes, some national plans or strategies mainstreamed and integrated into some sectoral plans and programmes (please provide details below)	X

e) Yes, some national plans or strategies mainstreamed into major sectoral plans and programmes (please provide details below)	

Further comments on mainstreaming and integrating national plans or strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity in sectoral and cross-sectoral plans and programmes.

172. Is your country supporting the institutional framework and policy and planning mechanisms for the mainstreaming of agricultural biodiversity in agricultural strategies and action plans, and its integration into wider strategies and action plans for biodiversity?

a) No	
b) Yes, by supporting institutions in undertaking relevant assessments	X
c) Yes, by developing policy and planning guidelines	X
d) Yes, by developing training material	
e) Yes, by supporting capacity-building at policy, technical and local levels	X
f) Yes, by promoting synergy in the implementation of agreed plans of action and between ongoing assessment and intergovernmental processes.	

Further comments on support for institutional framework and policy and planning mechanisms.

173. In the case of centers of origin in your country, is your country promoting activities for the conservation, on farm, *in-situ*, and *ex-situ*, of the variability of genetic resources for food and agriculture, including their wild relatives?

a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on of the conservation of the variability of genetic resources for food and agriculture in their center of origin.

Flemish Region:

- universal gene bank of banana;
- supporting gene bank of old fruit races and indigenous breeds of livestock;
- support for agrobiodiversity in permanent grasslands;
- support for biological agriculture in general.

Box LXV.

Please provide information concerning the actions taken by your country to implement the Plan of Action for the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators.

Box LXVI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Flemish Region:
a) the outcomes and impacts of actions taken are summarised in the Nature Report (NARA), a bi-annual publication of the Institute of Nature Conservation, which reports on the state of nature in the Flemish Region. The most recent report was published in May 2005 (Dumortier M., De Bruyn L., Hens M., Peymen J., Schneiders A., Van Daele T., Van Reeth W., Weyembergh G. en Kuijken E., 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud nr. 24, Brussel).

d) a number of initiatives have been taken and implementation of conservation of biodiversity is being carried out through various programmes (e.g. Natura 2000, Flemish Ecological Network, Ramsar areas, etc.).

f) limited stakeholder involvement; farmer's lobby; different ministries dealing with agriculture and biodiversity conservation/management; etc.

Question 169) additional information of the **Walloon Region**:
Les Plans Communaux de Développement de la Nature (PCDN), les Contrats de Rivières, les Parcs Naturels et les Commissions de Conservation Natura 2000 sont quatre outils participatifs.

Les PCDN sont des initiatives communales. L'élément de base d'un PCDN, c'est le partenariat de tous les acteurs concernés par la biodiversité de leur commune. Se rassemblent ainsi autour de la table des négociations: responsables communaux, naturalistes, chasseurs, pêcheurs, agriculteurs, responsables touristiques, industriels... Chacun avec ses compétences, ses attentes et ses contraintes. Tous ensemble, pour échanger des points de vue et élaborer un programme commun d'actions pour le développement de la nature dont le but est la préservation et le développement de la biodiversité sur fond de réseau écologique.

Les Contrats de Rivière consistent à mettre autour d'une même table tous les acteurs de la vallée, en vue de définir consensuellement un programme d'actions de restauration des cours d'eau, de leurs abords et des ressources en eau du bassin. Sont invités à participer à cette démarche les représentants des mondes politique, administratif, les riverains, les gérants d'infrastructures touristiques, les pêcheurs, les amoureux de la nature, les agriculteurs, les industriels, les propriétaires terriens… tous disposent maintenant d'une plate-forme commune, le Comité de Rivière, pour exprimer leurs souhaits sur la qualité de leurs cours d'eau, pour entendre et prendre en compte le point de vue des autres et ainsi établir ensemble des priorités dans les actions à programmer.

Un Parc Naturel est un territoire rural, d'un haut intérêt biologique et géographique, soumis a des mesures destinées à en protéger le milieu en harmonie avec les aspirations de la population et le développement économique et social du territoire concerné. Pour atteindre cet objectif ambitieux, les acteurs régionaux (responsables communaux et régionaux, agriculteurs, secteur du tourisme, secteur forestier, associations de protection de la nature, etc.) se rassemblent pour trouver ensemble des consensus qui soient satisfaisants pour tous. Le pouvoir organisateur d'un parc doit nécessairement être une autorité publique locale (communes, intercommunale, province, etc.). En dehors du pouvoir organisateur, une commission de gestion du parc est nommée par le Gouvernement wallon. Ses missions: donner un avis, et dans certains cas un accord, pour ce qui concerne des autorisations nécessaires à l'exercice de certaines activités dans le périmètre du parc. Dans les cas les plus lourds comme la construction d'une autoroute, par exemple, l'avis de la commission de gestion doit être favorable pour que l'autorité compétente puisse délivrer le permis correspondant. Dans les autres cas, la commission doit simplement être consultée mais l'autorité compétente ne pourra s'écarter de son avis que par une décision spécialement motivée.

Huit Commissions de Conservation Natura 2000 sont mises en place depuis fin 2004. Elles ont comme objectif d'assurer le suivi de la gestion des sites Natura 2000. Elles rassemblent des représentants des

administrations (agriculture, aménagement du territoire et environnement), et des représentants d'associations (conservation de la nature, professionnels, gestionnaires et propriétaires). Ces Commissions seront effectives dans le courant de l'année 2005.

Forest Biological Diversity

General

174. Has your country incorporated relevant parts of the work programme into your national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national forest programmes?	
a) No	
b) Yes, please describe the process used	X
c) Yes, please describe constraints/obstacles encountered in the process	
d) Yes, please describe lessons learned	
e) Yes, please describe targets for priority actions in the programme of work	

Further comments on the incorporation of relevant parts of the work programme into your NBSAP and forest programmes
The Regions develop(ed) management guidelines and action plans for biodiversity conservation (Beheervisie in the **Flemish Region**, Circulaire Biodiversité in the **Walloon Region**, Natura 2000 guidelines, etc.). **Federal**: the Government Agreement of 2003 addresses specifically the issue of forests. In this document, the government makes the commitment to promote timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way and to tackle illegal logging. Action 19 of the second Federal Plan for Sustainable Development (2004-2008) indicates how the Federal level can contribute to those commitments (promotion of timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way, identification of legislative options to control importation of illegally logged timber at EU and national level, include criteria related to SFM in public procurements, etc.). Due to lack of human resources, actions towards SFM and public procurement have started late. The following actions have been taken by the **Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment**, DG Environment to implement the second Federal Plan for Sustainable Development: - funding of a study identifying possible options to ban the import in the EU of timber and timber products harvested through illegal logging; - proposal to integrate SFM criteria in federal public procurement; - initial analysis of Belgian legislation in order to ban import of illegally produced timber in Belgium. Belgium takes an active part in the ongoing EU discussions to implement the EU FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) action plan. An objective of the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will be dedicated to sustainable use of biodiversity in forestry.

Box LXVII.

Please indicate what recently applied tools (policy, planning, management, assessment and measurement) and measures, if any, your country is using to implement and assess the programme of work. Please indicate what tools and measures would assist the implementation.
Flemish Region: the relevant Flemish authorities have not yet evaluated the CBD work progamme on forest biological diversity in a systematic and co-ordinated way. This does not mean that there are

no policy developments in the areas covered by the CBD work programme. Many of the items that are being dealt with in the work programme are well covered by existing forest policy measures (e.g. national forest and land-use programmes, impact of airborne pollution on forests, forest research, forest assessment, criteria and indicators for sustainable forestry management, forest conservation) or by recent developments. This results from the fact that the dynamics that drive the Flemish forest policy are mainly of a national or subnational nature.

The Flemish Forest Decree (1990) created the basis for a more plan-oriented forest policy. In principle long-term policy plans are adopted by the Flemish Government. On the basis of these more strategic plans, the Flemish forest services have to prepare implementation plans "taking into account the town and country planning, the land-use policy and the general environmental and nature policy". These implementation plans are then submitted to a broad consultation process and are finally to be adopted by the Flemish Government. Before deciding on the long-term policy plans and the implementation plans, the Flemish Government has to inform the Flemish Parliament.

A background study 'Long Term Forestry Plan' (June 1993) described the strategy for forest policy up to the year 2100. On the basis of this report a general policy document was drafted with the same name. This document defines the mission and the vision for forest policy in the Flemish Region for the long term based on a thorough multidisciplinary scientific study and political analysis of the situation of forests and forestry in the Flemish Region. The long-term policy plan was never formally adopted by the Government, but important principles and objectives (like expansion of the forest area) were already being integrated in other policy areas. An important exemple is the integration and decision by the Flemish Government to destinate 10,000 ha as 'forest expansion areas' in the new land use plan (Ruimtelijk Structuurplan Vlaanderen).

The first step towards realisation of this strategy is formulated in the document 'Forestry Action Plan' (first draft: 1998). This plan defines more than 30 key-actions for the next five years and is more oriented towards the implementation of the vision and mission. Key terms in the Flemish forestry planning are quality and quantity. This implementation plan was advised by the Flemish High Council on Forests (10.02.1998), the Flemish High Council for Nature Conservation (03.03.1998) and the Flemish High Council on Hunting (18.03.1998). After several internal procedural rounds and redrafts, the document was not approved by the Flemish Government. One reason for this is that at that moment a lot of policy attention was given to the implementation of the new Decree on nature conservation (1997) and the development of the 'natural structure of the Flemish Region' both having a major impact on forestry in the Flemish Region.

This Forest Action Plan is part of the strategic Flemish Environmental Policy Plan 1997-2001, the second MINA plan. In the actual Environmental Policy Plan this issue is repeated and integrated in a specific 'policy project'. In 2003-2004 a new version of this Forest Action Plan was prepared by the administration since the first plan was almost fully completed and implemented. Thus at the moment, there is no policy plan that describes the sustainable forestry strategy for the Flemish Region in general.

To conclude, it can be mentioned that the forestry policy for the Flemish Region consists of the policy documents 'Long Term Forestry Plan' and 'Forestry Action Plan' that do exist as a guideline for the administration, but were never approved by government. An interesting characteristic of the Flemish case is that although the Forest Decree explicitly states that the Flemish Government adopts the long term policy plan after a consultation process with the high advisory council in which all relevant stakeholders are represented and although the Flemish Government has committed itself that it will approve this forest strategy (Long Term Forest Plan + Forest Action Plan) by means of binding actions in the Flemish Environmental Policy Plan, these documents still bear the label of drafts. Formally, these documents are not yet approven by the Flemish Government in their entirety, but several of the key proposals for action are being implemented by means of the yearly 'rolling' work programme of the Flemish Forest Service or by means of specific projects. Moreover the basic strategies and the basic goals for the Flemish Forest policy are being mentioned in highly important political agreements and documents like the basic Flemish Government Agreement and Declaration, the policy note of the responsible minister and the yearly policy letters and statements of the responsible minister as member of the Flemish Government.

Walloon Region:
La Région wallonne a opté pour la certification forestière selon le système 'Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification' (PEFC), qui touche à 70% de la forêt soumise et 20,000 ha de forêt privée. Ce système implique la mise en œuvre d'un plan de progrès qui comporte un volet en matière de biodiversité, ainsi qu'une charte à laquelle doivent souscrire les propriétaires qui souhaitent bénéficier de la certification.

Dans son plan stratégique, une des orientations de la Division Nature et Forêt est de réduire les investissements via une réduction des interventions. Elle préconise l'utilisation de techniques sylvicoles plus proche de la nature et de tester la méthode Pro Silva. Dans plusieurs cantonnements, des essais de sylviculture Pro Silva ont été mis en place (Habay-la-Neuve, Bouillon, Nassogne, Bièvre, Paliseul). Un projet INTERREG a également été mis en place avec l'asbl Forêt Wallonne. Dans ce cadre, une importante recherche sera réalisée pour rassembler le maximum d'information sur cette méthode et définir les outils nécessaires à son application. Des colloques, journées d'études, sites de références, excursions et formations seront organisés.

Une circulaire relative à la prise en compte de la biodiversité en forêt publique est en cours de finalisation et sera appliquée en 2005. Son but est de détailler et de préciser les mesures spécifiques en faveur du développement de la biodiversité forestière.

75% du réseau Natura 2000 wallon sont constitués de forêt. Cela représente un peu plus de 165,000 ha, soit environ 10% du territoire wallon. Deux tiers de cette surface sont occupés par des peuplements feuillus. Parmi les habitats forestiers d'intérêt communautaire, c'est la hêtraie à luzule qui est la mieux représentée dans le réseau wallon avec près de 40,000 ha. D'autres habitats sont présents sur des surfaces plus modestes mais ils jouent néanmoins un rôle certainement aussi important: érablière de ravin, aulnaie rivulaire et tourbière boisée notamment. Plusieurs espèces d'intérêt communautaire sont également présentes en forêt: cigogne noire, engoulevent, damier de la succise, etc.

The **Brussels Capital Region** has adopted management plans for its forests. Most important is the management plan for the Sonian forest, the largest forest of the Brussels Capital Region (10% of its surface). Major objectifs of the management plans are:
- sustainable management;
- development of biodiversity.

Although lots of practical problems exist due to the heavy recreational pressure, as the forests in the Brussels Capital Region have to be considered as urban forests.

For the Sonian forest, the FSC-label was given in 2003. Biodiversity has also become more than an important matter due to the designation of Natura 2000 sites in the Brussels Capital Region: 14% of the Brussels Capital Region surface has been designated, of which 12% are forests. In the framework of the green network, special attention is also given to the development and special management of green corridors linking the forests.

Federal: the following actions have been taken by the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment - DG Environment in order to implement action 19 (promotion of timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way, identification of legislative options to control importation of illegally logged timber at EU and national level, include criteria related to sustainable forestry management in public procurements, etc.) of the second FPSD:
- funding of an exploratory legal review of available policy options to restrict the import in the EU of timber and timber products harvested through illegal logging;
- proposal to integrate sustainable forestry management criteria in federal public procurement;
- initial analysis of Belgian legislation in order to ban import of illegally produced timber.

Box LXVIII.

Please indicate to what extent and how your country has involved indigenous and local communities, and respected their rights and interests, in implementing the programme of work.
Since Belgium has no indigenous and local communities as such following the terminology of the CBD, this question is not applicable inside the country. **Belgian Development Cooperation** supports some sustainable forest management programmes in forest countries such as the DR of Congo, Peru, Ecuador, Tanzania, Kenya. These include the involvement of local stakeholders such as indigenous, forest dwellers and small farmer communities.

Box LXIX.

Please indicate what efforts your country has made towards capacity building in human and capital resources for the implementation of the programme of work.
Flemish Region: institutional, human and financial resources needed to implement the programme

of work are more or less stable, or tend to decrease.

Walloon Region: l'accord-cadre conclu entre la Région wallonne et deux facultés d'agronomie de la Région wallonne dans le domaine de la recherche coordonnée en matière de gestion durable des forêts est mis en œuvre.

Certaines actions de recherche ont pour but d'améliorer l'état de la biodiversité (Etude des techniques sylvicoles améliorant la biodiversité):
- étude et mise au point de techniques forestières permettant d'améliorer la biodiversité, devant aboutir à des propositions de gestion des milieux ouverts en forêt mais aussi à un appui scientifique à moyen terme à la Division Nature et Forêt pour l'application et le suivi de la Circulaire pour les normes de gestion de la biodiversité en forêt (voir explication sur cette circulaire plus bas);
- impact de la gestion forestière sur la biocénose en Région wallonne;
- changements climatiques et forêts de demain.

D'autres projets de recherche s'inscrivent dans une optique d'aide à la décision et à la gestion forestière:
- quantification des fonctions économiques, écologique et sociale de la forêt, dont une partie de l'action vise à l'estimation économique des biens et servicecs non-marchands de la forêt (fonction récréative, rôle de puits de carbone, protection des eaux et du sol, régulation des cours d'eaux.

The **Belgian Forum on Forest Biodiversity** constitutes an interface between research and field management. One of the objectives is the identification of best management practices for biodiversity conservation in forest ecosystems. Workshops are organised.

Box LXX.

Please indicate how your country has collaborated and cooperated (e.g., south-south, north-south, south-north, north-north) with other governments, regional or international organisations in implementing the programme of work. Please also indicate what are the constraints and/or needs identified.

Flemish Region: there is no direct collaboration between the Flemish Government and other governments, regional or international organisations on forests and forest biological diversity. In 2002, the **Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests** was established which grants local forestry projects in six countries in Latin America. Recipient organisations are usually local NGO's or research institutes, but no governmental organisations due the absence of official collaboration treaty between the Government of the Flemish Region and all of those six countries (Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Suriname). For more information on the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests, see www.groenhart.be. The existence of this Fund is also announced at the CPF Sourcebook on Funding for sustainable forestry management.

The **Walloon Region** financed following projects:

Burkina Faso
- support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant);
- rehabilitation of the dams of Barka, Kouzougou and Naggio (SHER grant);
- scientific valorisation of the Nazinga ranch (Nature+ grant);
- preservation and protection of the forest gallery in the Sourou valley (FUL & Coprod grants).

Morocco
- development of an information system and internet server on biodiversity (UMH grant);
- support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant);
- establishment of a thematic House of the Cedar.

Romania
- support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant);
- analysis and protection of pristine forests (UCL grants).

Mauritania
- extension of the green belt of Nouackchott (FAO grant).

Congo
- reactivation of the hunting domain of Bombo Lumene (Nature+ grant).

The **Brussels Capital Region** developed a CDM-project: a large scale afforesting in a degraded savanna around Nioki (Democratic Republic of Congo), category (JI/CDM). The afforesting project is using indigenous species and in accordance with the local communities with aim to reach the FSC label. The study started in 2003, the concrete afforesting is expected by the end of 2006. The expected date for the project termination is 60 years. The estimated amount of Certified Emission Reduction generated by the project is 44000 tCO per year during the first CP, not yet estimated for the next CP. The project involves mainly public funds from the Brussels Capital Region.

The Brussels Capital Region collaborates with the Flemish and Walloon Regions for the management of the Sonian forest (as it is situated on the three regions). A project of development of interregional management plan (long term vision) is in preparation.

Belgian Development Cooperation:

DR Congo
- management of 5 world heritage sites, through support to UNESCO;
- sustainable forest management in the DR of Congo, through support to WWF and ICCN.

Peru
- plan binacional: sustainable management of the buffer zone around the Tabaconas Namballe natural sancturary.

Ecuador
- plan binacional: sustainable management of the buffer zone around the Podocarpus National Park.

Kenya
- district forestry development programme & integrated natural resources management in Ukambani.

Tanzania
- community-based sustainable management of natural resources in selected villages on the North-Eastern border of Selous Game Reserve.

Expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity

Programme element 1 – Conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing	
175. Is your country applying the ecosystem approach to the management of all types of forests?	
a) No (please provide reasons below)	
b) No, but potential measures being identified (please provide details below)	
c) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Comments on application of the ecosystem approach to management of forests (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impact on forest management, constraints, needs, tools, and targets).

Flemish Region: a thorough and detailed analyses of the ecosystem approach was not fully carried out. In general terms, the main principles of the Flemish forest policy are compatible with the so-called 'ecosystem approach'. As in many countries and as was analysed by the UNFF and the MCPFE-process, both worlds tend to use a different language to address the same issues. The biodiversity issue in the Flemish Region must be viewed in the light of the forest history. Most of the biodiversity has been lost over centuries due to massive deforestation, a very intensive forest use and especially a continuous removal of dead wood and organic material during centuries. The remaining forest is very scattered and often incomplete from biological point of view. Therefore, the acquirement and protection of the few remaining old-growth or semi-natural forests is a key element in the policy towards protection of biodiversity in Flemish forests.

Nevertheless forests will play an important role in the Flemish Ecological Network (FEN: 125,000 ha of

areas with main function of conservation and development of nature which will form a coherent ecological network), to be designated by the year 2002 according to the Decree on nature conservation.

There are several measures that promote the attention for nature conservation measures in Flemish forests. For the development of the new nature conservation policy plan and the implementation of new instruments (e.g. the development of the Flemish Ecological Network) these integration mechanisms still have to prove their effectiveness. The practical consequences and possible restrictions for forestry in these areas are unclear at the moment.

Sustainable forest management should not only consider the conservation of biodiversity but also the other forest functions. This is a constant concern of the educational and public awareness programmes. By promoting the Pro Silva close-to-nature management principles towards local communities, forest owners and environmental NGO's, the Forest and Green Areas Division aims at the conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity on the operational level within a clear ecosystem approach.

Walloon Region:
Deux outils fondamentaux ont été élaborés pour la certification PEFC:
- au niveau régional, un plan de progrès, décliné en objectifs, actions et cibles, a été défini par un groupe de travail où sont représentés les propriétaires et gestionnaires publics et privés, les scientifiques, les intervenants en forêt, les mouvements environnementaux et les 'usagers' de la forêt;
- au niveau des propriétés, la 'Charte pour la gestion forestière durable en Région wallonne' a été élaborée : elle définit les engagements individuels concrets des propriétaires qui souhaitent s'inscrire dans le processus.

Le plan de progrès s'articule autour de six axes pour l'ensemble de la Région Wallonne:
- développer les aménagements forestiers intégrés;
- intensifier l'étude du fonctionnement des écosystèmes, le suivi des dépérissements, et les moyens de lutte à y apporter;
- limiter au strict nécessaire les intrants en forêt, tels que phytocides, pesticides et engrais;
- améliorer la biodiversité en forêt aux niveaux des gènes, des espèces et des écosystèmes;
- développer l'information et la formation des propriétaires, des gestionnaires et des intervenants en forêt à la gestion durable;
- améliorer l'accueil du public en forêt dans le respect des écosystèmes.

La Division Nature et Forêt joue un rôle fondamental dans la mise en œuvre de ce plan, spécialement pour les aspects suivants:
- la révision des plans d'aménagement des forêts soumises, sur base d'une circulaire de 1997 (voir ci dessous 'Objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts') qui consacre le principe de gestion multifonctionnelle et donc d'un équilibre optimal entre les fonctions de production, de protection des sols et des eaux, de conservation de la biodiversité, et les fonctions sociales. A ce jour, près de la moitié des surfaces forestières ont été dotée d'un nouvel aménagement;
- la mise en œuvre d'activités de recherche en relation avec la gestion durable: un deuxième accord-cadre de cinq ans a été conclu en 2004 avec les deux facultés forestières de Wallonie pour mener ces recherches; des contrats spécifiques permettent également le suivi sanitaire en application des règlements européens, ainsi que de poursuivre le troisième objectif du plan de progrès;
- la mise en œuvre de Natura 2000 dans les 150,000 ha de forêts inscrites dans le réseau; du personnel supplémentaire a été engagé pour définir les arrêtés et plan de gestion et proposer des méthodes concrètes de gestion; un important programme de sélection de peuplements à graines a en outre permis de tripler en quelques années le nombre de ces peuplements et d'en sélectionner également pour les espèces secondaires ou d'accompagnement; les subventions aux propriétaires publics et privés ont également été revues dans le sens d'une plus grande diversité, d'un choix d'essences mieux adaptées et d'une sylviculture plus dynamique;
- l'établissement de programmes de formations internes à la gestion durable, et la mise à disposition de moyens de vulgarisation pour les propriétaires publics et privés;
- l'établissement de balisages et de cartes pour le tourisme lent en milieu forestier, en collaboration avec les communes et les offices de tourisme.

Enfin, l'Inventaire permanent des ressources forestières, réalisé par une cellule spécialisée de la Direction des ressources forestières, constitue l'outil fondamental d'évaluation de la politique de gestion des forêts; son taux d'échantillonnage élevé, sa permanence et le large éventail d'informations récol-

tées permettront de déterminer l'évolution des indicateurs de gestion durable au niveau régional.

Objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts:
- favoriser les essences indigènes à potentiel biologique élevé, les espèces ligneuses rares, les peuplements mélangés ainsi que les écotypes locaux;
- favoriser les peuplements mélangés à structure irrégulière et diversifier les régimes/traitements à l'échelle des grands massifs forestiers;
- favoriser le développement de lisières progressives bien étagées en périphérie et à l'intérieur des massifs forestiers; maintenir et restaurer des zones ouvertes extensives au sein des massifs;
- augmenter les volumes de bois mort, accroître la disponibilité en cavités et en arbres sur-âgés; permettre au bois mort de jouer son rôle dans l'entretien de la fertilité des sols forestiers;
- mettre en place un réseau d'aires forestières protégées de manière à conserver les habitats les plus représentatifs et les espèces les plus vulnérables. Ce réseau devrait couvrir de 8.000-10.000 ha dans les forêts soumises;
- adapter les travaux forestiers et les travaux d'infrastructure de manière à limiter leur impact sur la biodiversité;
- ajuster la charge de grands ongulés à la capacité d'accueil du milieu forestier et améliorer cette dernière par la mise en place d'aires naturelles de gagnage et de remise.

De plus cette Circulaire prévoit l'identification des zones du réseau écologique forestier (zones centrales de conservation, zones de développement de la nature, autres zones). Ce zonage devra apparaître clairement dans tous les nouveaux plans d'aménagement forestier. Il devra notamment être établi sur base des différents statuts de conservation existants (réserves forestières, zones Natura 2000, etc.).

Brussels Capital Region: sustainable forestry management is the major guideline for the development and implementation of forest management plans (e.g. management plan of the Sonian Forest, the Brussels Capital Region most important forest, covering 10% of the Regions' surface). This forest received the FSC certificate.

The objective to increase biodiversity is one of the main objectives in the Brussels Capital Region forests, as they have all been declared SAC and thus Natura 2000 site, and is integrated in the regional management plans.

Most important technical actions to increase biodiversity are:
- adaptation of the (very limited) economical function of wood exploitation;
- integration of FSC-principles;
- management gives much importance to avoid soil damage;
- high importance is given to dead wood: increasing amount of dead wood in all forms;
- more very old trees are left;
- more diversity in plantation: more (indigenous) tree species are used for new afforesting;
- special attention is given to special vegetation elements (in particular protection of spring flowers and old woodland vegetation species);
- special attention is given to nature management of fauna;
- special attention is given to management of edges of the forest;
- where possible, green corridors are developed and managed to link forests and relics of forests.

However, the high recreational pressure and very large number of visitors are important obstacles to maintain and increase biodiversity.

176. Has your country undertaken measures to reduce the threats to, and mitigate its impacts on forest biodiversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please specify below the major threats identified in relation to each objective of goal 2 and the measures undertaken to address priority actions
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on measures to reduce threats to, and mitigate the impacts of threatening processes on forest biodiversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: see general environmental and nature policies. Striving for a high quality of the components of the environment is amongst the priorities of these policies. See also question 177.

A specific regulation on deforestation tries to avoid and minimise the impact of deforestation. See the Belgian report to UNFF-2.

Walloon Region: objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans le Plan de progrès et dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts en relation avec les menaces évoquées dans le goal 2:

- espèces exotiques envahissantes: favoriser les essences indigènes à potentiel biologique élevé, les espèces ligneuses rares, les peuplements mélangés ainsi que les écotypes locaux;
- pollution: limiter au strict nécessaire les intrants en forêt, tels que phytocides, pesticides et engrais;
- perte des perturbations naturelles: augmenter les volumes de bois mort, accroître la disponibilité en cavités et en arbres sur-âgés; permettre au bois mort de jouer son rôle dans l'entretien de la fertilité des sols forestiers; favoriser le développement de lisières progressives bien étagées en périphérie et à l'intérieur des massifs forestiers; maintenir et restaurer des zones ouvertes extensives au sein des massifs;
- fragmentation: mettre en place un réseau d'aires forestières protégées de manière à conserver les habitats les plus représentatifs et les espèces les plus vulnérables. Ce réseau devrait couvrir de 8,000-10,000 ha dans les forêts soumises.

Brussels Capital Region:

- limitation of noise pollution;
- limitation of water pollution: special attention is given to prevent water pollution, originating from motorways;
- limitation of general pollution: no use of pesticides;
- invasive exotic species: special attention is given to their management to prevent extension; eradication is performed where and when possible;
- creation of non accessible forest and nature reserves to develop biodiversity islands in the forest;
- integration of biodiversity aspects in general forest management (see question 175).

177. Is your country undertaking any measures to protect, recover and restore forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 3 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on measures to protect, recover and restore forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: the Flemish Decree on Forest (1990; last amended in 2005) stresses the importance of forest conservation and regulates forest management in this way (fire prevention; use of chemical pesticides, herbicides or fungicides; conservation of the herbaceous vegetation, protection against exploitation damage, etc.).

A special form of forest conservation is made possible through the forest reserves. Special and typical forest types (old growth forests) with a natural vegetation type can be appointed or recognised as a

forest reserve. There are two kinds of forest reserves: integral forest reserves, in which only measurements are taken to avoid external disturbance and directed forest reserves, in which the aim is achieving a specific situation by means of a specific management.

The system of forest conservation with respect to internal facts is based on the management plan. Every act not foreseen in an approved management plan is forbidden unless a special permit is delivered by the Division of Forests and Green Areas. Forest conservation in a wider sense (including external pressure) is monitored by means of a yearly forest health and vitality assessment in the framework of the ICP-Forests monitoring programme and the EC Forest Focus Regulation. The expulsion of air pollutants is regulated by means of the Flemish Environmental Regulations.

Since the Flemish Region is poor in forests, afforestation and expantion of the forest cover is an important issue in forest policy and land use management. Ecologically sound afforestation programmes are promoted explicitly.

The protection of several species, vegetation types and ecosystems is regulated by the National Act on Nature Conservation of 1973 and the Flemish Decree on Nature Conservation (October 1997). Nature reserves (can also include forest ecosystems) are specially managed in order to preserve threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems.

Walloon Region: Circulaire Biodiversité en Forêt. Objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts:

- favoriser les essences indigènes à potentiel biologique élevé, les espèces ligneuses rares, les peuplements mélangés ainsi que les écotypes locaux;
- favoriser les peuplements mélangés à structure irrégulière et diversifier les régimes/traitements à l'échelle des grands massifs forestiers;
- favoriser le développement de lisières progressives bien étagées en périphérie et à l'intérieur des massifs forestiers; maintenir et restaurer des zones ouvertes extensives au sein des massifs;
- augmenter les volumes de bois mort, accroître la disponibilité en cavités et en arbres sur-âgés; permettre au bois mort de jouer son rôle dans l'entretien de la fertilité des sols forestiers;
- mettre en place un réseau d'aires forestières protégées de manière à conserver les habitats les plus représentatifs et les espèces les plus vulnérables. Ce réseau devrait couvrir de 8.000-10.000 ha dans les forêts soumises;
- adapter les travaux forestiers et les travaux d'infrastructure de manière à limiter leur impact sur la biodiversité;
- ajuster la charge de grands ongulés à la capacité d'accueil du milieu forestier et améliorer cette dernière par la mise en place d'aires naturelles de gagnage et de remise.

75% du réseau Natura 2000 wallon sont constitués de forêt. Cela représente un peu plus de 165.000 ha, soit environ 10% du territoire wallon. Deux tiers de cette surface sont occupés par des peuplements feuillus. Parmi les habitats forestiers d'intérêt communautaire, c'est la hêtraie à luzule qui est la mieux représentée dans le réseau wallon avec près de 40.000 ha. D'autres habitats sont présents sur des surfaces plus modestes mais ils jouent néanmoins un rôle certainement aussi important: érablière de ravin, aulnaie rivulaire et tourbière boisée notamment. Plusieurs espèces d'intérêt communautaire sont également présentes en forêt: cigogne noire, engoulevent, damier de la succise, etc.

Brussels Capital Region: see question 175.

178. Is your country undertaking any measures to promote the sustainable use of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please specify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 4 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the promotion of the sustainable use of forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: sustainable use of forest biological diversity is the driving force behind the actual Flemish Forest Policy (e.g. development of criteria for sustainable forest management, development and implementation of a forest management vision based on close to nature forest management principles, promotion of FSC-certification).

Walloon Region: forest management guidelines in public forests, eco-certification, etc. (see above)

Brussels Capital Region: sustainable forest management is the major guideline for the development and implementation of forest management plans (e.g. management plan of the Sonian Forest, the Brussels Capital Region most important forest, 10% of the Regions' surface). This forest received the FSC certificate. See also question 175.

In implementation of action 19 (protection of forests) of the Federal Plan for Sustainable Development, the **Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment**, DG Environment is working on the promotion of timber originating from sustainably managed forests through the public procurements and awareness activities towards administrations and citizens (distribution of folders is foreseen at the end of 2005).

179. Is your country undertaking any measures to promote access and benefit-sharing of forest genetic resources?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please specify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 5 and describe measures undertaken
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the promotion of access and benefit-sharing of forest genetic resources. (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets)

Flemish Region: as stated in the Flemish Order of 03.10.2003, the Institute for Forestry and Game Management is responsible for the management of the approved basic forest material in the Flemish Region. This implies following tasks: preparing application forms for approval of the material, observing the approved basic material on a regular basis, managing the register of approved basic material of the Flemish Region and producing the list of Flemish basic material.

This list is a summary of the register and is set up by the rules of the Commission Regulation 1597/2002 and in consultation with the Walloon and Brussels Capital Regions. The register is the source of all information on approved basic material. Consultation of the Flemish register is only possible after written application, addressed to the general manager of the Institute.

Next to the species mentioned in the European Council Directive 1999/105/EC, a list of tree and shrub species was added in the Flemish Order. It concerns species that are mainly used for ecological purposes. The certification of forest reproductive material of these species is optional. For now, basic material of a few of these species is mentioned in the national list in a separate table: *Corylus avellana* L., *Crataegus monogyna* Jacq., *Prunus spinosa* L., *Rhamnus frangula* L. and *Sorbus aucuparia* L. These are autochtonous seed sources and stands under the category 'source-identified'.
A specific long term project was established in order to stimulate and promote the use of these autochtonous trees and shrub species.

Walloon Region:
Comptoir à graine: une des missions du comptoir forestier est de récolter les graines dans les peuplements semenciers belges et principalement wallons, dans un souci de qualité génétique et de biodiversité.

Le comptoir forestier doit également jouer un rôle dans la gestion des ressources génétiques forestières: installations de plantations conservatoires, archivage informatisé des provenances, sauvegarde génétique de provenances menacées, etc.

Un projet de recherche est en cours pour ce comptoir forestier: appui à la sélection de matériel de base. Projet ayant pour objectif d'augmenter les disponibilités en matériel génétique et s'orientant selon trois axes:
- l'action principale concerne la création de vergers à graines de douglas dans lesquels la sélection des individus portera sur les qualités technologiques de leur bois en même temps que les caractéristiques de croissance;
- le projet s'attachera ensuite à la mise à jour du Catalogue des Matériels de Base, document de référence reprenant l'ensemble des matériels de reproduction disponible. Une attention particulière sera portée aux peuplements à graines de hêtre victimes des attaques récentes de scolytes;
- enfin, ce projet s'intéresse aussi à la sélection d'individus isolés de pommiers ou de poiriers sauvages en vue de leur multiplication afin de répondre à la demande croissante d'essences secondaires à vocation écologique.

Brussels Capital Region: for the Sonian forest, special attention is given to preserve the specific genetic characteristics of the Sonian beech, the most important tree species in the forest. Only certified beech trees (origin Sonian forest) may be used for plantation.

Programme element 2 – Institutional and socio-economic enabling environment

180. Is your country undertaking any measures to enhance the institutional enabling environment for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, including access and benefit-sharing?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of Goal 1 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the enhancement of the institutional enabling environment for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, including access and benefit-sharing (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: to ensure a better service to the public, the Flemish public administration will be undergoing major transformations. The challenge for each Government is to continuously improve its service provision to the public and to organise its functioning in such a way that it can easily respond to new challenges. The Flemish Government has also made a priority of administrative innovation and the optimisation of public administration. To this end it launched the large-scale and ambitious innovation project, 'Better Administrative Policy', in 2000.

The administrative innovation process is based on the relationship between the Flemish government and the public in the 21st century society. The 'Better Administrative Policy' therefore is a combination of initiatives and projects involving several actors. The basic principles of the reorganisation were written down in a detailed report entitled: 'Better governance. An outlook on a transparent organisational model for the Flemish public administration'. There will be 13 separate ministries, accounting for about 12,000 civil servants. Each ministry will contain a well-outlined portfolio of competences.

One of the 13 autonomous ministries will be Environment, Nature and Energy. Within this ministry a specialised agency will be created out of the two administratieve divisions: the forests and green areas division and the nature division. This fusion could boost synergies between forests policy and the nature conservation policies by placing these within the same unity. A similar fusion is foreseen with the research institutes.

181. Is your country undertaking any measures to address socio-economic failures and distortions that lead to decisions that result in loss of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of Goal 2 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on review of socio-economic failures and distortions that lead to decisions that result in loss of forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: different policy measures are in place aiming to balance the financial rentability of the forest management so that less direct economic interesting investments or activities can be financed. This is mainly organised through a system of financial subventions or compensations. Another policy measure is the establishment of the so-called forest groupings that are organisations of forest owners aiming to organise the forest management at a larger scale through which the level of efficiency is raised. Meanwhile the forest owners and managers are informed about sustainable forest management and projects that stimulate the development of forest biological diversity can be planned and implemented more efficiently.

182. Is your country undertaking any measures to increase public education, participation and awareness in relation to forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 3 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on measures to increase public education, participation and awareness in relation to forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: in 1992, a specialised educational centre was set up in order to stimulate the public education and the training of the work force in forestry (public and private). Forest biological diversity issues are amongst the priority topics of the activities of this centre. See www.inverde.be (only in dutch).

The Flemish Forest Service manages 10 forest visitor centres. The Forest Service also publishes several brochures about forestry items, including biodiversity in forests. Since 1979, the Flemish Forest Service organises each first or second week of October a sensitising campaign 'the Forest Week'. Each year a specific theme is brought to the attention of the broad public by means of fields

trips, exhibitions and other public events. In 1994 sustainable forestry was highlighted with the slogan 'A Forest Forever...'. In 1995 the focus was on the protection of biological diversity in forests.

Forestry in a highly populated area as the Flemish Region faces several challenges. The challenge is to find new models to integrate various interests and demands of the society and solve complex forest management problems. The eight level ladder of Arnstein helps to reflect how participation is carried out. However, when discussing participation, clearly the ultimate perspective is the goal to achieve sustainable forestry. Sustainable forestry has roughly three pillars: silvicultural aspects, environmental and nature conservation aspects and social aspects. Participation should be an instrument that helps to achieve sustainable forestry.

In the process of development of a contemporary vision on management of public forests in the Flemish Region, the vision evolved that the need for participation in formulation of international policy formulation originated from the necessity to express the needs of indigenous people and communities actually living in the woods. In such cases, a decision on forest management has direct consequences on the way of life and on employment of those people. Their participation in the decision-making is an essential part of sustainable forestry today.

In a densely populated (436 inhabitants per square km) and highly urbanised Region as the Flemish one with a forest area of 10%, the situation is different. The social impact of forest management activities is mainly in the field of active or passive recreation. There will be no lives, villages or jobs lost because of inadequate forest management activities. However concern among people about the way forests are managed is high.

In this context, participation will always be a kind of placation (Arnstein level 5). On the one hand, a balance has to be found between the long-term goals and vision of forestry and the short-term demands of the parties concerned. On the other hand, a balance has to be found between different demands of different user groups of the forest.

The basic principles used by the forest administration are:
- a higher involvement of all kinds of user groups in the management of and daily activities in the forest creates support for other items of the forest policy (protection and expansion of forests);
- an adequate consultation process focuses the attention of the forest managers to local sensitiveness;
- a multifunctional use of small forests means that every use or function also imposes restrictions. This is not always understood by local inhabitants and there is always a risk that participation leads to polarisation. However, participation may not be an alibi not to take up responsibilities or only to defend personal gains.

On local level, the making of a forest management plan is a key moment. The forest manager makes a draft plan. Participation starts on the basis of this draft. A set of minimum requirements exist (at least one information meeting is organised in the early planning stage, contacting local advisory counsels, etc.) and where before there would be some informal meetings with experts or nature organisations, this is now formalised by writing a report and adding it to the management plan.

In the Flemish context, participation could be defined as the active engagement between several groups (government, individuals, organisations, companies, etc.) about a common object or project. A well carried out participation process has following characteristics: exchange of ideas, setting out the rules of the game, evaluation of well-argued possibilities, giving of feed-back after the decisions are made.

Essentially here is that participation on itself does not lead to decisions but can help to obtain better decisions. 'Can help' because the road of a participatory process is full of pitfalls. First of all, it can cost a lot of time, energy and money. Sometimes viewpoints of the people or groups involved are extremely opposing. The most radical opponents can block the whole process, disappear from the process or find another way to achieve their own goals. Sometimes too much is at stake (e.g. occurrence of a rare species) to leave its fate in the hands of a consensus oriented process. Last but not least people are different, everybody has strong and weak points. Some people lack experience in negotiation or in formulating their opinion. The result could be an imbalance between actual demands of the society and the outcome of a participation process.

Brussels Capital Region:
Public education: for the Sonian forest, there is the Information Centre of the Sonian Forest, which is given information to the public, in particular on nature and biodiversity aspects, and which organizes or provides training sessions, guided tours, information for students of all levels, etc.

Awareness and public participation: a participative platform Sonian forest has been created to bring together all kind of people, structures, users and NGO's to discuss specific problems linked to the use of the forest and protection of biodiversity aspects. There has also been a public consultation on the management plan.

Programme element 3 – Knowledge, assessment and monitoring

183. Is your country undertaking any measures to characterise forest ecosystems at various scales in order to improve the assessment of the status and trends of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of Goal 1 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on characterisation of forest ecosystems at various scales (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Walloon Region: Inventaire Permanent des Ressources Forestières de Wallonie. Includes forest typology and use of some composition and structural biodiversity indicators.

Flemish Region: measures are summarised in the Nature Report (NARA), a bi-annual publication of the Institute of Nature Conservation, which reports on the state of nature in the Flemish Region. The most recent report was published in May 2005 (Dumortier M., De Bruyn L., Hens M., Peymen J., Schneiders A., Van Daele T., Van Reeth W., Weyembergh G. en Kuijken E., 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud nr. 24, Brussel).

Based on the information collected through the first regional forest inventory (mainly based on systematic phyto-sociological mapping), a new eco-typology of forests was derived. This typology is now used in the general forest management planning in order to characterise the forest in function of the possible natural vegetation.

Brussels Capital Region:
- there is a general monitoring programme going on for species of fauna and flora, with special interest to the forest species;
- there is a starting monitoring programme for specific habitats and species in the framework of the Habitats Directive;
- there is a monitoring programme going on for nature and forest reserves;
- a permanent forest inventory, which also integrates biodiversity parameters (dead wood, species, floral vegetation, humus, soil, etc.), will start in 2006.

184. Is your country undertaking any measures to improve knowledge on, and methods for, the assessment of the status and trends of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 2 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities

b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on improvement of knowledge on and methods for the assessment of the status and trends (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Walloon Region: study of key structural and compostional components of forest biodiversity. Surveys of some taxonomic groups (birds, butterflies, plants, saproxylic beetles, etc.). These are however rarely designed and standardised to allow a comparison of forest biodiversity through space and time at a global scale.

Flemish Region: measures are described in the Nature Report (NARA), a bi-annual publication of the Institute of Nature Conservation, which reports on the state of nature in the Flemish Region. The most recent report was published in May 2005 (Dumortier M., De Bruyn L., Hens M., Peymen J., Schneiders A., Van Daele T., Van Reeth W., Weyembergh G. en Kuijken E., 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud nr. 24, Brussel).

In the new system of forest management planning, a detailed system for forest inventories was established which pays a lot of attention to biodiversity. This systematic type of forest habitat description gives a solid structure to the methodology for forest habitat inventories. Repetition of this inventory at regular intervals gives a good basis for monitoring the status and trends of forest biological diversity (amongst other issues more relevant to forest management). Methodolgies were developed at the Forest and Green Areas Division of the Ministry of the Flemish Community, in collaboration with universities and the Flemish research institutes.

Walloon Region: dans le cadre de l'inventaire forestier permanent, les arbres morts sur pied et les bois abandonnés au sol sont mesurés et font l'objet d'estimations en nombres de pieds et en volumes pour les premiers, en volumes pour les seconds. Ces relevés constituent un bel exemple d'indicateurs multi-critères car ils répondent simultanément à plusieurs critères: critère 1 (stock de carbone), critère 2 (santé de la forêt), critère 3 (fonctions de production) et critère 4 (biodiversité).

Le projet Xylobios vise à étudier les rôles et impacts des organismes saproxyliques dans les forêts feuillues belges. Il vise à développer une expertise taxonomique belge sur les organismes saproxylophages, à déterminer leur rôle dans la décomposition du bois mort et le fonctionnement des écosystèmes forestiers, à préciser leurs préférences d'habitat et leurs exigences écologiques, à sensibiliser l'opinion publique et les gestionnaires forestiers à l'importance de ces organismes tout en donnant à ces derniers des outils d'aide à la décision en matière d'aménagement.

Brussels Capital Region: thanks to the monitoring programmes on flora, fauna and habitats, specific knowledge on forest biodiversity is increasing and these data help to evaluate and eventually redirect management practices.

A specific monitoring programme is also going on in the only integral nature reserve of the Sonian forest, to help understanding ecosystem functioning in an urban forest without human management.

185. Is your country undertaking any measures to improve the understanding of the role of forest biodiversity and ecosystem functioning?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 3 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the improvement of the understanding of the role of forest biodiversity and ecosystem functioning (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: intensive research programme in relation to this are ongoing at the Institute for Forestry and Game Management. Beside several specific research projects, the forest reserves are the most important tool to this end. By the beginning of 2005, 2,112 ha of forests have the status of forest reserve (1.4% of total forest surface). The target set by the Flemish Environmental Action Plan 1997-2001 was 3,000 ha at the end of 2001. In the original text of the Flemish Forest Decree the title of Chapter II, Section V was 'the scientific forest function and the forest reserves'. Forest reserves were meant to be the 'instruments' or the 'laboratories' for the forest ecosystem research. After the modification of 1999, forest reserves have a more differentiated objective including nature conservation.

Main objectives are stated in article 22 of the Flemish Forest Decree: in the forest reserves, growth and development are left free or an attempt is made to maintain or create natural forest vegetation types and special forest types. The following forests may be designated or recognised as forest reserves (article 4 of the Decree of the Flemish Government of 20.01.1993):

- forests or parts of forests which are principally composed of species characteristic of the area, growing either spontaneously or planted, possessing great natural value or which may be adapted to achieve a great natural value or where a spontaneous evolution may produce a great natural value;
- forests or parts of forests with typical communities of forest plants, forest species or growth forms.

The management of integral forest reserves consists in taking all necessary measures to resist damaging influences as far as possible, among other things by limiting access, forbidding hunting and regulating scientific research (article 7 of the Decree of the Flemish Government of 20.01.1993). In each forest reserve an intensive monitoring programme is set up.

Walloon Region:
Certaines actions de recherche de l'accord cadre ont pour but d'améliorer l'état de la biodiversité (Etude des techniques sylvicoles améliorant la biodiversité):

- 'étude et mise au point de techniques forestières permettant d'améliorer la biodiversité' devant aboutir à des propositions de gestion des milieux ouverts en forêt mais aussi à un appui scientifique à moyen terme à la Division Nature et Forêt pour l'application et le suivi de la Circulaire pour les normes de gestion de la biodiversité en forêt (voir explication sur cette circulaire plus bas);
- 'impact de la gestion forestière sur la biocénose en Région wallonne';
- 'changements climatiques et forêts de demain'.

Un autre projet de recherche de l'accord cadre s'inscrit dans une optique d'aide à la décision et à la gestion forestière:

- 'quantification des fonctions économiques, écologique et sociale de la forêt' dont une partie de l'action vise à l'estimation économique des biens et services non-marchands de la forêt (fonction récréative, rôle de puits de carbone, protection des eaux et du sol, régulation des cours d'eaux.

Un exemple d'autres recherches:

- 'expertise biologique de sites dans le cadre de la mise en oeuvre du réseau Natura 2000 en Région wallonne dans le bassin de la Lesse et de la Basse Semois'. Ce projet vise à:
  - établir les propositions des périmètres des sites Natura 2000 dans les bassins de la Lesse et de la Basse Semois (1ère phase du projet);
  - élaborer et tester une typologie des habitats forestiers wallons:
    - intégrant à la fois les approches wallonnes et européennes;
    - associée à une clé pratique de détermination des habitats sur le terrain;
    - destinée à servir de référence dans le cadre de la rédaction des arrêtés de désignation des sites Natura 2000.
  - définir les bases d'une méthodologie d'estimation de l'état de conservation des habitats forestiers;
  - intervenir dans la réalisation des premiers arrêtés de désignation des sites Natura 2000 en Région wallonne.

Brussels Capital Region: see answers under questions 183 and 184. The Region is also implicated in the Xylobios project.

Second multi-annual scientific support plan for a sustainable development policy (**Federal Science Policy Office**): Xylobios and Fefocon projects.

186. Is your country undertaking any measures at national level to improve the infrastructure for data and information management for accurate assessment and monitoring of global forest biodiversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 4 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the improvement of the infrastructure for data and information management (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Walloon Region: peu développé. Information ponctuelle de l'inventaire permanent et du système d'information sur la biodiversité en Wallonie (SIBW).

Brussels Capital Region: there is no special infrastructure for data and information management on forest biodiversity. These data are integrated in a global GIS on biodiversity of the Brussels Capital Region.

Box LXXI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands

187. Is your country supporting scientifically, technically and financially, at the national and regional levels, the activities identified in the programme of work? (decisions V/23 and VII/2)

a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on scientific, technical and financial support, at the national and regional levels, to the activities identified in the programme of work.

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** supports activities in dry and sub-humid lands of some of its partner developing countries (mainly sub-Saharan African countries). These activities mostly contribute to sustainable rural development and ensuring food security, and have a strong component of soil rehabilitation, and prevention from erosion and degradation. The biodiversity component is most often a side-objective of these actions, and essentially consists of:

- agricultural biodiversity (promotion of indigenous and traditional crops);

- agroforestry;
- preservation of natural vegetation around ponds, oasis or other natural sources of water.

188. Has your country integrated actions under the programme of work of dry and sub-humid lands into its national biodiversity strategies and action plans or the National Action Programme (NAP) of the UNCCD? (decisions V/23, VI/4 and VII/2)	
a) No	X
b) Yes (please provide details below)	
Further comments on actions under the programme of work of dry and sub-humid lands integrated into national biodiversity strategies and action plans or the National Action Programme (NAP) of the UNCCD.	
No specific action of the PoW on dry and sub-humid lands will be integrated into the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) but some objectives will be proposed to ensure effective international cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and to enhance Belgium's contribution to the protection of global biodiversity (through the promotion of synergies between biodiversity-related international agreements and among the three Rio conventions).	

189. Has your country undertaken measures to ensure synergistic/collaborative implementation of the programme of work between the national UNCCD process and other processes under related environmental conventions? (decisions V/23, VI/4 and VII/2)	
a) No	X
b) Yes, some linkages established (please provide details below)	
c) Yes, extensive linkages established (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the measures to ensure the synergistic/collaborative implementation of the programme of work between the national UNCCD processes and other processes under related environmental conventions.	
The Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes project is an example of synergistic implementation: http://www.cms.int/species/ss_antelopes/ss_antelope_intro.htm	

Programme Part A: Assessment	
190. Has your country assessed and analyzed information on the state of dryland biological diversity and the pressures on it, disseminated existing knowledge and best practices, and filled knowledge gaps in order to determine adequate activities? (Decision V/23, Part A: Assessment, Operational objective, activities 1 to 6)	
a) No	X
b) No, but assessment is ongoing	
c) Yes, some assessments undertaken (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive assessment undertaken (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the relevant information on assessments of the status and trends and dissemination of existing knowledge and best practices.	

Programme Part B: Targeted Actions	
191. Has your country taken measures to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of its genetic resources, and to combat the loss of biological diversity in dry and sub-humid lands and its socio-economic consequences? (part B of annex I of decision V/23, activities 7 to 9)	
a) No	X
b) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	
c) Yes, many measures taken (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the measures taken to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of its genetic resources, and to combat the loss of biological diversity in dry and sub-humid lands and its socio-economic consequences.	

192. Has your country taken measures to strengthen national capacities, including local capacities, to enhance the implementation of the programme of work?	
a) No	X
b) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	
c) Yes, comprehensive measures taken (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, all identified capacity needs met (please provide details below)	
Further comments on measures taken to strengthen national capacities, including local capacities, to enhance the implementation of the programme of work.	

Box LXXII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

Mountain Biodiversity

Programme Element 1. Direct actions for conservation, sustainable use ad benefit sharing	
193. Has your country taken any measures to prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of key threats to mountain biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant measures are being considered	
c) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	X

d) Yes, many measures taken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the measures taken to prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of key threats to mountain biodiversity

Within the 'Plan Binacional', the **Belgian Development Cooperation** is implementing bilateral technical assistance programmes with Ecuador and Peru, which focus on the sustainable management of natural resources in buffer zones around protected areas in the Andes (subtropical montanous environment). Both programmes run for five years (2004-2008). The addressed key threats are:

- migration;
- mining activities and/or mining speculation;
- deforestation and soil erosion.

194. Has your country taken any measures to protect, recover and restore mountain biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but some measures are being considered	
c) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, many measures taken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the measures taken to protect, recover and restore mountain biodiversity

See question 193.

195. Has your country taken any measures to promote the sustainable use of mountain biological resources and to maintain genetic diversity in mountain ecosystems?	
a) No	
b) No, but some measures are being considered	
c) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, many measures taken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the measures to promote the sustainable use of mountain biological resources and to maintain genetic diversity in mountain ecosystems

See question 193.

196. Has your country taken any measures for sharing the benefits arising from the utilisation of mountain genetic resources, including preservation and maintenance of traditional knowledge?	
a) No	
b) No, but some measures are being considered	
c) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, many measures taken (please provide details below)	

Further comments on the measures for sharing the benefits arising from the utilisation of mountain genetic resources

See question 193. The area of the programme is not characterised by indigenous presence, as the local population is essentially made of 'colonos mestizos'. Nonetheless, there exists a certain heritage in terms of traditional knowledge and practices with regard to the use of genetic and biodiversity resources.

Programme Element 2. Means of implementation for conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing	
197. Has your country developed any legal, policy and institutional framework for conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity and for implementing this programme of work?	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant frameworks are being developed	
c) Yes, some frameworks are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive frameworks are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the legal, policy and institutional frameworks for conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity and for implementing the programme of work on mountain biodiversity.	
NA	

198. Has your country been involved in regional and/or transboundary cooperative agreements on mountain ecosystems for conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but some cooperation frameworks are being considered	
c) Yes (please provide details below)	
Further information on the regional and/or transboundary cooperative agreements on mountain ecosystems for conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity	
NA	

Programme Element 3. Supporting actions for conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing	
199. Has your country taken any measures for identification, monitoring and assessment of mountain biological diversity?	
a) No	X
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the measures for identification, monitoring and assessment of mountain biodiversity	

200. Has your country taken any measures for improving research, technical and scientific cooperation and capacity building for conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity?	
a) No	X
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	

c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the measures for improving research, technical and scientific cooperation and capacity building for conservation and sustainable use of mountain biodiversity	

201. Has your country taken any measures to develop, promote, validate and transfer appropriate technologies for the conservation of mountain ecosystems?	
a) No	X
b) No, but relevant programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on the measures to develop, promote, validate and transfer appropriate technologies for the conservation of mountain ecosystems	

Box LXXIII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work and associated decisions specifically focusing on: a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken; b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention; c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target; d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans; e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; f) constraints encountered in implementation.

E. OPERATIONS OF THE CONVENTION

202. Has your country actively participated in subregional and regional activities in order to prepare for Convention meetings and enhance implementation of the Convention? (decision V/20)	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the regional and subregional activities in which your country has been involved.

In preparation of the Conferences of the Parties:

- 2002, Budapest (Hungary), Preparation of COP-6, 2nd Conference 'Biodiversity in Europe';
- 2004, Madrid (Spain), Preparation of COP-7, 3rd Conference 'Biodiversity in Europe'.

In preparation of SBSTTA's:

- 2003, Vilm (Germany), preparation of SBSTTA-8 and 9;
- 2004, Vlim (Germany) preparation of SBSTTA-10.

GTI: 2004, Vilm (Germany), European Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) Workshop.

Indicators:

- 2002, Nice (France), EIONET Workshop on indicators;
- 2003, Copenhagen (Denmark), Workshop on 'EEA core set of environmental indicators: biodiversity';
- 2004, Copenhagen (Denmark), EEA Joint meeting on biodiversity indicators.

CHM:

- European regional meetings: 2002, Copenhagen (Denmark), EC CHM meeting; 2003, Prague (Czech Republic), EC CHM/CBD CHM joint meeting for Central and Eastern Europe; 2003, Copenhagen (Denmark), Training Workshop European CHM Portal Toolkit; 2004, Copenhagen (Denmark), EC CHM meeting;
- African regional meetings: 2003, Nairobi (Keyna), Africa Regional Meeting on the Clearing-House Mechanism; 2003, Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), sub-regional CHM workshop for former CHM webmaster trainees;
- Mediterranean: 2003, Tunis (Tunisia), regional CHM meeting.

203. Is your country strengthening regional and subregional cooperation, enhancing integration and promoting synergies with relevant regional and subregional processes? (decision VI/27 B)	
a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on regional and subregional cooperation and processes.

Apart from the cooperation at EU level, can be mentioned:

- money donated to the Secretariat to organise regional meetings on the CHM in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Belgium also organised two workshops in Africa to further technical and scientific cooperation, Ouagadougou 2003 and Bujumbura 2005;
- Belgium is a member and takes an active part to various regional agreements (Bern, AEWA, ASCOBANS, EUROBATS, OSPAR, LANDSCAPE, MCPFE, PEBLDS, EU Birds directive, EU Habitats directive, EU Regulation on CITES, Benelux Convention, EPBRS, EEA/EIONET). One single Focal Point (either one Region or the Federal) has been designated to coordinate sharing of information for these agreements (see contact points in Belgium on the B CHM website at the following URL: http://bch-cbd.naturalsciences.be/belgium/biodiversity/contactpoints/contact_points.htm).

The following question (204) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

204. Is your country supporting the work of existing regional coordination mechanisms and the development of regional and subregional networks or processes? (decision VI/27 B)	
a) No	
b) No, but programmes are under development	
c) Yes, included in existing cooperation frameworks (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, some cooperative activities ongoing (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on support for the work of existing regional coordination mechanisms and the development of regional and subregional networks or processes.

GTI: Belgium is one of the leading partners in the development of a European project on taxonomy called 'Toward a European Distributed Institute in Taxonomy' (EDIT). In addition to EU funding, each country will contribute with its own funds.

CHM: Belgium has worked together with the following sub-regional networks to promote the exchange of information and technical and scientific cooperation:

- South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme: project development for a regional Clearing-House Mechanism, training of the coordinator and technical advice;
- 'Commission des Ministres en charge des Forêts en Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC)': capacity building for networking, development of the corporate website and technical advice;
- the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas in the Mediterranean: project development and technical advice for the development of a regional CHM on protected areas.

Some other networks supported by **Belgian Development Cooperation**:

- Belgium recently started four new bilateral cooperation programmes specifically aimed at promoting sustainable development around protected areas (Tanzania, Uganda, Peru, Ecuador);
- steering increased means to improving forest sector governance and environmental governance in the DR of Congo, through both multilateral and bilateral channels;
- financial contribution to UNEP to support the implementation of MEA's and the integration of environment in PRSPs in partner developing countries has been significantly increased for the time frame 2004-2007.

Belgium funded various projects to improve synergies among MEA's in general, biodiversity related conventions and Rio conventions:

- UNEP projects to promote synergetic implementation of multiple related MEA's (2004-2005);
- partnership for the development of environmental law (Africa);
- implementation of guidelines on enforcement and compliance with MEA's (global);
- capacity building programme for the integration and institutionalisation of environmental management into national poverty reduction programmes and related activities (2004-2007);
- UNEP project on issue-based modules funded in 2002 (running in 2005-2006);
- UNEP project on harmonisation of reporting among biodiversity conventions;
- Belgium organised a side-event on synergies jointly with Italy during SBSTA-20 of UNFCCC (Bonn 2004).

205. Is your country working with other Parties to strengthen the existing regional and subregional mechanisms and initiatives for capacity-building? (decision VI/27 B)	
a) No	
b) Yes	X

206. Has your country contributed to the assessment of the regional and subregional mechanisms for implementation of the Convention? (decision VI/27 B)

a) No	
b) Yes (please provide details below)	X
Further comments on contribution to the assessment of the regional and subregional mechanisms.	
Belgium contributed among others to the revision of the EU biodiversity strategy in 2004 (Malahide).	

Box LXXIV.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of the above decisions specifically focusing on:

a) outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
b) contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
c) contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
d) progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
e) contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
f) constraints encountered in implementation.

The **Flemish Region** initiated, organised and co-financed a workshop for the harmonisation and streamlining of biodiversity reporting under different MEA's.

On the 2010 target: a new nature indicators website has been launched recently and gives information on the status and trend of the indicators included in the MINA-plan and the indicators that were adopted at EU level for biodiversity: www.natuurindicatoren.be

Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism:

a) outcomes and impacts: Belgium first developed its capacity building activities on a bilateral basis. Working with parties involved training in Belgium and in-country follow-up. After a few years, this has led to the organisation of a regional workshop in 2003 and a regional training session for webmasters in 2004, both in Africa. Two more are planned for 2005, also in Africa. Cooperation between countries for the CHM is growing. The impacts of Belgium's programme are multiple: i) involvement of different partners in organising a given activity (e.g. Belgium-SCBD; Belgium-NL and probably Belgium-SCBD-FR in 2005); ii) development of network of former CHM trainees in Africa and iii) recommendations for the establishment of a regional CHM in Africa.

b) Strategic Plan: Belgium's activities directly contribute to Goal 2 'Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention'.

c) 2010 Target: effects are indirect.

d) NBSAPs: Belgium's activities contribute to help implement NBSAPs of partner countries.

e) MDG: idem as point b) and therefore an indirect contribution to Goal 7 'Ensure environmental sustainability'.

f) constraints: the demand for capacity building exceeds what Belgium can currently offer. Training and capacity building requires an important investment in human and financial resources. For this reason, Belgian CHM activities focus mainly on working with African partners while many requests also arise from Asian countries.

Belgian GTI National Focal Point:

a) outcomes and impacts: Belgium's capacity building programme started in 2004. Belgium not only offers training in Belgium, but also participates in *in-situ* research and training projects and the organisation of regional training sessions. It is yet too early to discuss the impacts of the programme, but the interest has been overwhelming, and demands from countries are numerous.

b) Strategic Plan: Belgium's activities directly contribute to Goal 2 'Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention'.

c) 2010 Target: a better knowledge of biodiversity is essential to implement the 2010 target. Taxonomy is fundamental to acquire this knowledge. Since there is a huge taxonomic impediment worldwide, any contribution to the training of new taxonomists has direct impact on the implementation of the 2010 target.

d) NBSAPs: Belgium's activities contribute to help implement NBSAPs of partner countries.

e) MDG: idem as points b) and c) and therefore a direct contribution to Goal 7 'Ensure environmental sustainability'.

f) constraints: as for the CHM, the demand for capacity building exceeds what Belgium can currently offer. Training and capacity building requires an important investment in human and financial resources.

F. COMMENTS ON THE FORMAT

Box LXXV.

Please provide below recommendations on how to improve this reporting format.

- the reporting format makes it extremely difficult for countries with multiple levels of authorities and an institutional fragmentation of competences to fill in the report adequately. The fact that only an 'x' (no other signs) is allowed in the appropriate case(s) constitutes an extra burden;
- questions are often too vague, difficult to interpret and to answer in a concise and efficient manner;
- together with the high number of questions, the nature of a number of questions and boxes (for example the boxes at the end of each article) ask for many data and answers, making the burden to report very heavy;
- the redundancy of questions is annoying. This redundancy includes similar questions within this report, or questions already answered in the second national report or in thematic reports;
- the heavy burden of work: during office hours only, filling in the report took approximately 120 person/days, equalling more than half a year office work of one full time senior officer. When taking evening and weekend work into account, this increases to more than nine months;
- as a response to all difficulties mentioned above, and in order to reduce the reporting burden, Belgium strongly supports (i) a shortened format for national reporting and (ii) decisions to harmonise national reporting of biodiversity-related treaties.

Abbreviations and acronyms used throughout the report

ABC	Access to Belgian Collections of interest for biodiversity
ABIC	African Biodiversity Information Centre
ABS	access and benefit-sharing
ACONITE	Association pour la Cartographie d'Organismes Naturels et les Inventaires Taxonomiques et Ecologiques (Association for Natural Organisms Cartography and Taxonomic and Ecological Inventories)
ADIE	Association pour le Développement de l'Information Environnementale (Environmental Information Development Association)
AEI	agri-environmental indicator
AEM	agri-environmental measure
AETFAT	Association pour l'Etude Taxonomique de la Flore d'Afrique Tropicale (Association for the Taxonomic Study of the Flora of Tropical Africa)
AEWA	Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
AIR	agriculture and agro-industry
ALTER-Net	A Long-Term Biodiversity, Ecosystem and Awareness Research Network
AMINAL	Administratie Milieu-, Natuur-, Land- en Waterbeheer (Administration for Environment, Nature, Land and Water Management)
AnGR	animal genetic resources
ANKONA	Antwerpse Koepel voor Natuurstudie (Province of Antwerp Nature Study Umbrella)
API	African Plants Initiative
ASCOBANS	Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas
BBCH	Belgian Biosafety Clearing-House
BBPF	Belgian Biodiversity Platform
BBS	Belgian Biosafety Server
BCCM	Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms
BCH	Biosafety Clearing-House
B CHM	Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism
Be-BIF	Belgian Biodiversity Information Facility
Belspo	Belgian Science Policy Office
BEM	Biological Evaluation Map
BEST	Bureau d'Etudes Scientifiques et Techniques (Office for Scientific and Technical Research)
BFIS	Belgian Forum on Invasive Alien Species
BIM	Brussels Instituut voor Milieubeheer (Brussels Institute for the Management of the Environment)
BIME	Brussels Institute for the Management of the Environment
BIO	Belgian Investment Office
BLEU	Belgian-Luxemburg Economic Union
BWK	Biologische Waarderingskaart (Biological Evaluation Map)
CAR	Central African Republic
CARI	Centre Apicole de Recherche et d'Information (Beekeeping Research and Information Centre)
CASTEX	Common Approach for Scientific Touring Exhibition
CAWA	Contrat d'Avenir pour la Wallonie Actualisé (Actualised Walloon Contract for the Future)
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCIEP	Coordination Committee for International Environmental Policy
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CDPA	Centre de Dépaysement et de Plein Air (Centre for Open Air and Changes of Scenery)
CE	Commission européenne (European Commission)
CECODI	Centre International d'Ecodéveloppement Intégré (International Centre for Integrated Ecodevelopment)
CEDRE	Centre d'Etudes du Droit de l'Environnement (Study Centre for Environ-

	mental Law)
CEPA	Communication, Education and Public Awareness
CETAF	Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CGMS	Crop Growth Monitoring System
CHM	Clearing-House Mechanism
CIAT	Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical (International Center for Tropical Agriculture)
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CIFS	Centre d'Information Forêt de Soignes (Information Centre of the Sonian Forest)
CIMMYT	Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo (International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center)
CIP	Centro Internacional de la Papa (International Potato Center)
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CIUF	Conseil Interuniversitaire de la Communauté française de Belgique (Inter-university Council of the French Community of Belgium)
CLO	Centrum voor Landbouwkundig Onderzoek (Agricultural Research Centre)
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CNDRS	Centre National de Documentation et de Recherche Scientifique (National Documentation and Scientific Research Centre)
COMIFAC	Commission des Ministres en charge des Forêts en Afrique Centrale (Commission of Ministers in charge of Central African Forests)
COP	Conference of the Parties
COST	European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research
CP	commitment period
CPDR	Centre de Philosophie du Droit (Centre for Philosophy of Law)
CPF	Collaborative Partnership on Forests
CRIE	Centre Régional d'Initiation à l'Environnement (Regional Centre for Environmental Education)
CRIS	Current Research Information System
CRNFB	Centre de Recherche de la Nature, des Forêts et du Bois (Research Centre for Nature, Forests and Wood)
CUD	coopération universitaire au développement (University Development Cooperation)
CWATUP	Code wallon de l'Aménagement du Territoire, de l'Urbanisme et du Patrimoine (Walloon Code of Town and Country Planning, Urban Development and Heritage)
DAC	Development Aid Committee
DG	Directorate General
DGDC	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation
DGRNE	Direction générale des Ressources naturelles et de l'Environnement (Directorate General for Natural Resources and Environment)
DICE	Digital Information Centre
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
DR Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo
EC	European Commission
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
EDIT	European Distributed Institute of Taxonomy
EEA	European Environment Agency
EEC	European Economic Community
EIA	environmental impact assessment
EIONET	European Environment Information and Observation Network
ENBI	European Network for Biodiversity Information
ENHSIN	European Natural History Specimen Information Network
EPBRS	European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy
EPIC	European Platform for International Biological Resources Consolidation
ERAIFT	Ecole Régionale Post-Universitaire d'Aménagement et de Gestion Intégrée des Forêts Tropicales (Regional Post-Graduate Training School on Inte-

	grated Management of Tropical Forests)
EU	European Union
EUFORGEN	European Forest Genetic Resources Programme
EUROBATS	Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats
FAIR	Agriculture and Fisheries Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FELNET	Flanders Environmental Library Network
FEN	Flemish Ecological Network
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FNRS	Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (National Scientific Research Fund)
FP6	Sixth Framework Programme
FPSD	Federal Plan for Sustainable Development
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FUL	Fondation Universitaire Luxembourgeoise (Luxembourg University Foundation) – now Département des Sciences et Gestion de l'Environnement (Sciences and Environmental Management Department *of the ULg*)
FUNDP	Facultés Universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix
FUSAGx	Faculté Universitaire des Sciences Agronomiques de Gembloux (Gembloux Agricultural University)
GAWI	Groupement d'Arboriculteurs pratiquant en Wallonie les techniques Intégrées (Organisation of Walloon Fruit growers who apply the Integrated Techniques)
GBIF	Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GBP	Gewestelijk Bestemmingsplan (Regional Land Use Plan)
GEB	Grensoverschrijdend Ecologisch Basisplan (Transboundary Ecological Plan)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMO	Genetically modified organism
GSPC	Global Strategy for Plant Conservation
GTI	Global Taxonomy Initiative
GURTs	Genetic Use Restriction Technologies
HELCOM	Helsinki Commission
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IAS	invasive alien species
IAUP	International Association of University Presidents
IBGE	Institut bruxellois pour la Gestion de l'Environnement (Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment)
IBW	Instituut voor Bosbouw en Wildbeheer (Institute for Forestry and Game Management)
ICCN	Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature (Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation)
ICE	Inter-Ministerial Conference for Environment
ICP (Forests)	International Co-operative Programme (on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests)
ICRAF	International Centre for Research in Agroforestry
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
ICZM	integrated coastal zone management
ICZO	Informatiecentrum Zoniënwoud (Information Centre of the Sonian Forest)
IGBP	International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme
IGEAT	Institut de Gestion de l'Environnement et d'Aménagement du Territoire (Institute for Environmental Management and Physical Planning)
IHEM	Institute for Hygiene and Epidemiology, Mycology collection - now IPH: Scientific Institute of Public Health
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IMO	International Maritime Organisation

IN	Instituut voor Natuurbehoud (Institute of Nature Conservation)
INCO(-DC)	International Cooperation (with Developing Countries)
INIBAP	International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain
INTERREG	Community initiative concerning border areas (INTERREG 1), concerning border development and cross-border cooperation (INTERREG 2), and concerning trans-European cooperation intended to encourage harmonious and balanced development of the European territory (INTERREG 3)
IPBO	Instituut voor Plantenbiotechnologie voor Ontwikkelingslanden (Plant Biotechnology Institute for Developing Countries)
IPEN	International Plant Exchange Network
IPGRI	International Plant Genetic Resources Institute
IPH	Scientific Institute of Public Health (formerly IHE)
IPR	intellectual property rights
IRPI	Inter-Disciplinary Research for Poplar Improvement
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
ISB	Inventaire et Surveillance de la Biodiversité (Inventory and Monitoring of Biodiversity)
ISH	Inventaire et Surveillance des Habitats (Inventory and Monitoring of Habitats)
ITPGR	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – The World Conservation Union
JI	joint implementation
KULeuven	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Catholic University of Leuven)
LANDSCAPE	European Landscape Convention
LIFE	Financial Instrument for the Environment
LMBP	Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Plasmid collection (*at UGent*)
LMG	Laboratory for Microbiology (*at UGent*)
LUC	Limburgs Universitair Centrum (University Centre of Limburg) - now UHasselt: Universiteit Hasselt (Hasselt University)
MAE	mesure agri-environnementale (agri-environmental measure)
MCPFE	Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MEA	multilateral environmental agreement
METAFRO	Metadata African Organisation
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants
MINA	Milieubeleids- en Natuurontwikkelingsplan voor Vlaanderen (Flanders Environment and Nature Policy Plan)
MIRA	Milieurapport Vlaanderen (Flanders Environmental Report)
MMIS	Milieu Management Informatiesysteem (Environmental Data Information System)
MMM	Marien Milieu Marin (Marine Environment)
MOSAICC	Micro-organisms, Sustainable Use and Access Regulation, International Code of Conduct
MPA	marine protected area
MRW	Ministère de la Région wallonne (Ministry of the Walloon Region)
MTA	Material Transfer Agreement
MUCL	Mycothèque de l'Université Catholique de Louvain (Mycological Collection of the Catholic University of Louvain)
MUIENR	Makerere University Institute of Environment and Natural Resources
MUMM	Management Unit of the North Sea Mathematical Models
NA	not applicable
NAP	National Action Programme
NARA	Natuurrapport Vlaanderen (Flanders Nature Report)
NBGB	National Botanic Garden of Belgium

NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NFP	national focal point
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NMK	National Museums of Kenya
NoE	Network of Excellence
NOP	Nature Objective Plan
OA	Official Aid
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFFH	Observatoire de la Faune, de la Flore et des Habitats (Observatory of Fauna, Flora and Habitats)
OSPAR	Oslo and Paris Conventions for the protection of the marine environment of the North-East Atlantic
PBEPT	Plan de Base Ecologique et Paysager Transfrontalier (Transboundary Ecological and Landscape Plan)
PCDN	Plan Communal de Développement de la Nature (Municipal Nature Development Plan)
PEBLDS	Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy
PEFC	Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification
PIRENE	Programme Intégré de Recherche Environnement-Eau (Environment-Water Integrated Research Programme)
PoW	Programme of Work
PRAS	Plan Régional d'Affectation du Sol (Regional Land Use Plan)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
pSCI	proposed Sites of Community Importance
RBINS	Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
RDP	Rural Development Programme
REIMP	Regional Environmental Information Management Programme
RMCA	Royal Museum for Central Africa
RTD	Research and Technological Development
RZSA	Royal Zoological Society of Antwerp
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SACEP	South Asian Co-operative Environment Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAGRIWATEL	Suivi de l'Etat de l'Agriculture wallonne par Télédétection (Agriculture Monitoring by Remote Sensing in the Walloon Region)
SBB	Service of Biosafety and Biotechnology
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (under UNFCCC)
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (under UNCBD)
SCAR	Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research
SCBD	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SEP	Structure Ecologique Principale (Major Ecological Structure)
SFM	sustainable forest management
SGIB	Sites de Grand Intérêt Biologique (Sites of Great Biological Interest)
SHER	Société pour l'Hydraulique, l'Environnement et la Réhabilitation (Hydraulics, Environment and Rehabilitation Society)
SIBW	Système d'informations sur la Biodiversité en Wallonie (System of Information on Biodiversity in Wallonia)
SoW	State of the World
SPA	Special Protection Area
SURWAL	Surveillance de l'environnement wallon par les bioindicateurs (Monitoring of the state of the Walloon environment through bio-indicators)
SYGIAP	Système de Gestion d'Information pour les Aires Protégées (Information Management System for Protected Areas)
SYNTHESYS	Synthesis of Systematic Resources

TAFIRI	Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute
UA	Universiteit Antwerpen (University of Antwerp)
UCL	Université Catholique de Louvain (Catholic University of Louvain)
UCT	University of Cape Town
UDC	University Development Cooperation
UE	Union européenne (European Union)
UGent	Universiteit Gent (Ghent University)
ULB	University Libre de Bruxelles (Free University of Brussels)
ULg	Université de Liège (University of Liège)
UMH	Université de Mons-Hainaut (University of Mons-Hainaut)
UN	United Nations
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNIKIS	Université de Kisangani (University of Kisangani)
UNIN	University of the North
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
VIB	Vlaams Interuniversitair Instituut voor Biotechnologie (Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology)
VIS	Vis Informatie Systeem (Fish Information System)
VLIR	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad (Flemish Interuniversity Council)
VLIZ	Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee (Flanders Marine Institute)
VUB	Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Free University of Brussels)
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMU	Wildlife Management Unit
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

Abbreviated titels of research programmes are not listed.