



## Executive summary and overview

Biodiversity has many dimensions, and the importance of these has still not been adequately addressed. It provides, among other things, resources including all our food and many medicines and other life support products. Biodiversity underpins human well-being through the provision of ecological services that are, for instance, essential for nutrient cycling, soil fertility and fruit-tree pollination as well as clean, fresh water and air. It also provides a wide range of recreational opportunities and it is an inexhaustible resource for learning, education, inspiration and cultural identity. Biodiversity conservation is therefore a common concern for all of humankind.

In Belgium, environmental matters including nature conservation are essentially matters of Regional competence. The Federal level is competent for environmental matters in the marine areas under Belgian jurisdiction, military domains and railway embankments, it has specific environmental competences (CITES, trade of non-indigenous species, product standards) and other competences related to the environment and biodiversity (development cooperation, finance, economy, etc.) at its disposal as well as action levers (public procurements, taxation, etc.).

The Strategy is the Belgian answer to the formal obligation under the CBD and also takes the other commitments made at European and international level into account. It offers a framework for policy-making and further development of actions. It includes the existing Regional and Federal frameworks and action plans and it supports their integration and fine-tuning. It aims at giving strategic political orientations in order to allow actors for biodiversity in Belgium to work in partnership to contribute nationally and internationally towards the achievement of the target of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2020. This will be achieved by ensuring a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, while also taking into account the other biodiversity agreements where relevant. The Strategy pays particular attention to creating more coherence and filling the gaps existing in Belgian instruments and optimizing integration of biodiversity concern at national and international level.

The Strategy has a vision and a general objective that are in line with the CBD Strategic Plan and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020:

**Vision:** "By 2050, our Biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides - our natural capital - are valued, conserved, appropriately restored and wisely used for their intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human well-being and economic prosperity, so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided".

**General objective:** "Contribute nationally and internationally to the achievement of the 2020 target of halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services, and restoring them insofar as feasible, while stepping up our contribution to averting global biodiversity loss".

The strategy spells out a range of 15 priority strategic objectives (objective 14 is new) and 85 operational objectives (eight of them are new) to guide the development of actions by the competent regional and federal authorities. Following the recommendations to update the NBS, the content of the chapter on implementation and follow-up of the NBS has been fully reshaped in the revised NBS and some other parts have been somewhat adapted to fully reflect the commitments to meet the CBD Aichi targets and the new EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (see appendix 4 - Concordance of the Aichi Targets with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and with the updated NBS).

The text of the NBS clearly identifies, for each objective, the link with articles of the CBD, the relevant Aichi Target, thematic programmes of work, guidelines, etc. adopted under the Convention as well as the relevant EU commitment. Its main focus is on sectoral integration of Biodiversity.

Where necessary, implementation measures are taken in a coordinated way by the Federal and Regional Governments and the other relevant actors. Examples of achievements until 2009 are published in the fourth national report to the CBD (2009) and in the mid-term assessment of the NBS (2012).

The updated strategy is established for an eight-year period (2013-2020). No specific actions or indicators are adopted in the Strategy itself but they will be adopted and developed at a later stage in the implementation process, in consultation with all the actors for biodiversity in Belgium. Reporting on the progress made and on the obstacles to implementing the NBS takes place through the national reporting procedure for the CBD (2014, 2019). The information on implementation of the NBS is also published on the website of the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism.

Many different actors have an active role to play in the implementation of the Strategy: ministries and administrations, advisory and consultative bodies, research institutes, NGOs, information centres, individuals and community groups, etc. Several actions will have to be performed simultaneously in different sectors and - after further consultation and coordination - on several administrative levels.

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**Biodiversity 2020 - Update of Belgium's National Biodiversity Strategy**

**Executive summary**

**Part I. Introduction**

**Part II. The Belgian political framework**

**Part III. Guiding principles, concepts and approaches**

**Part IV. The updated strategy to 2020**

<b>IV.1 - Our ambition</b>	<b>EU 2020 targets</b>	<b>CBD Aichi targets</b>
<p><b>Vision to 2050</b> By 2050, our Biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides - our natural capital - are valued, conserved, appropriately restored and wisely used for their intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human well-being and economic prosperity, and so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided</p>	EU 2050 vision	Vision of CBD Strategic Plan
<p><b>General objective of the Strategy until 2020</b> The general objective of the Strategy is to contribute nationally and internationally to the achievement of the 2020 target of halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up our contribution to averting global biodiversity loss</p>	EU 2020 Headline Target	Mission of the CBD Strategic Plan
<b>IV.2 - Strategic objectives</b>	<b>EU 2020 targets</b>	<b>CBD Aichi targets</b>
<b>Objective 1: Identify and monitor priority components of biodiversity in Belgium</b>		
1.1 Define a common Belgian methodology for the identification and monitoring of priority components of biodiversity according to EU guidelines		
1.2 Identify and monitor priority species, habitats, genetic and functional components of biodiversity		CBD T5
<b>Objective 2: Investigate and monitor the effects of threatening processes and activities and their causes</b>		
2.1 Investigate and monitor the effects and causes of activities and processes, including new and emerging risks, that threaten components of biodiversity in Belgium		Partly CBD Goal B
2.2 Investigate and monitor the effects of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem services		CBD T10
2.3 Investigate the potential impact on biodiversity of the internal trade (legal and illegal) of live animals and plants at a Belgian level and potentially adapt relevant regulations, including market regulation when appropriate	EU T6 Act. 17c	CBD T4
<b>Objective 3: Maintain or restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in Belgium to a favourable conservation status</b>		CBD T5, T10, T11, T14

3.1 At least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through the development of effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and are integrated into the wider landscapes	EU T1 Action 1b,c	CBD T11
3.2 At least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through the development of effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and are integrated into the wider seascapes	EU T1 Action 1b,c	CBD T11
3.3 Ecosystems, their resilience and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing, inter alia, a green infrastructure and restoring at least 15 % of degraded ecosystems	EU T2 Act. 6	CBD T14 &15
3.4. Develop and implement action plans so as to ensure the maintenance or rehabilitation of our most threatened species to a favourable conservation status	EU T1 Act. 1c	CBD T12
3.5 Adopt an integrated strategy for ex situ conservation of biodiversity together with measures for its implementation		
3.6 Take measures to minimise the impact of the identified processes and activities threatening biodiversity and ecosystem services		CBD T8
3.7 Invasive alien species (IAS) and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment	EU T5	CBD T9
3.8 Define the framework and the conditions to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services	EU T2 Act. 7	CBD T5
<b>Objective 4: Ensure and promote the sustainable use of components of biodiversity</b>		CBD T4
<b>4a) General</b>		
4a.1 Identify and promote good practices involving the sustainable use of biodiversity		CBD T3, T4, T7, T8
<b>4b) Sustainable products, consumption and production policies</b>		
4b.1 Avoid or minimise the risk to biodiversity posed by production and consumption, products and services	EU T3, T4, T6 Act.17a	CBD T3+ T6 & T7
4b.2 Adopt biodiversity criteria in public procurement policies to prevent biodiversity loss		CBD T3
<b>4c) Agriculture</b>		CBD T7
4c.1 Promote measures favourable to biodiversity under the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)	EU T3	CBD T 6 & 7
4c.2 Enhance and encourage the role of farmers as biodiversity actors	EU T3A, Act.9	CBD T1
4c.3 Promote agricultural diversification		CBD T7
4c.4 Promote the integration of biodiversity into rural development	EU T3A	CBD T1
4c.5 Promote the sustainable use of genetic resources for food, and agriculture	EU T3A, Act.10	CBD T13
4c.6 Reduce the impacts of pesticides on biodiversity and ecosystem		

services		
4c.7 Prevent cultivated GMOs from leading to the loss, displacement or genetic introgression into local agricultural varieties and related wild flora and prevent them from affecting the surrounding natural biodiversity		CBD T7
4c.8 Ensure that the production of plants, inter alia non indigenous plants, for renewable energy does not negatively impact on biodiversity		CBD T9
<b>4d) Fishery in marine and inland waters</b>	<i>EU T4</i>	<i>CBD T6&amp;T7</i>
4d.1 Promote the implementation of good fishing practices in the North Sea, favourable to fish protection and their habitats, including the implementation of the Common Fishery Policy	EU T4 Act.13 & 14	CBD T1&T6
4d.2 Ensure that recreational and sport fishing practices at sea and inland waters respond to ecological management objectives to avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity	EU T4 Act. 14	CBD T6
4d.3 Prevent GM fish from threatening marine and freshwater biodiversity and populations		CBD T6
<b>4e) Wise use of wetlands</b>		CBD T7
4e.1 Apply Ramsar Convention guidelines on Wise use of Wetlands Concept as far as relevant		
<b>4f) Forestry</b>		CBD T7
4f.1 Promote the conservation of forest biodiversity through independent credible forest certification systems that provide a guarantee for sustainable forest management	EU T3B Act. 11	CBD T1, T3, T4, T7, T8
4f.2 Promote nature-oriented forestry that provides a guarantee for sustainable forest management, including forest conservation	EU T3B Act. 12	CBD T1
4f.3 Protection of forest genetic diversity		
4f.4 Prevent GM trees from having a negative impact on forest and general biodiversity		
<b>4g) Hunting</b>		
4g.1 Promote integrated management of hunting grounds in cooperation with farmers, foresters and environmental NGOs and the application of good hunting practices		CBD T1, T3, T4, T7, T8
4g.2 Promote the involvement of hunters as biodiversity actors		CBD T1
4g.3 Promote stability within the hunting sector		
<b>4h) Tourism and leisure</b>		
4h.1 Apply CBD tools to monitor and control the impact of tourism on biodiversity, in particular in protected areas	EU T6	CBD T11
<b>Objective 5: Improve the integration of biodiversity concerns into all relevant sectoral policies</b>		CBD T2
5.1 Promote and support stakeholders involvement inter alia through partnerships at all levels of decision-making relating to biodiversity	EU T1 Act. 3b	CBD T4
5.2 Encourage the involvement of the private sector in the protection of biodiversity, as an integral part of business planning and operations		
5.3 Ensure that this Strategy is taken into account in decision-making and policy discussions and encourage the development and use of guidelines for the integration of biodiversity into all relevant sectoral policies		CBD T1, T4, T7

5.4 Identify in strategic planning the negative and positive effects of the different sectoral policies (land-use planning, transport, energy) on priority elements of biodiversity, and take measures to correct or strengthen these effects		
5.5 Eliminate, phase out or reform incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts on biodiversity and encourage the development and application of incentives favourable to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including economic, fiscal and financial instruments	EU T6 Act.17c	CBD T3
5.6 Take biodiversity concerns into account in national export credit policy		
5.7 Consider the potential impact on biodiversity, and in particular the invasiveness of species, in making import and export decisions	EU T5	CBD T9
5.8 Maximalise the advantages for health arising from biodiversity and ecosystem services and expand the collaboration between the interested organisations / public services		CBD T14
5.9 Encourage the implementation of CITES with the aim of supporting conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity		
5.10 Maintain and reinforce the social function of biodiversity		
5.11 Integrate biodiversity values into national (federal and regional) policies, programmes, planning processes and reporting systems, and develop an approach to support incorporation into national accounting if needed	EU T2 Action5	CBD T2
<b>Objective 6: Promote and contribute to an equitable access to and sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources - ABS</b>		
6.1 By 2014, raise awareness about the concept of ABS in the context of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol, and widely disseminate information on ABS		CBD T16
6.2 By 2014, ratify and implement the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization	EU T6 Act. 20	CBD T16
6.3 By 2020, have mechanisms in place to enhance national and global cooperation on ABS issues		CBD T16
6.4 By 2020, create operational mechanisms to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity		CBD T18
6.5 By 2015, have a functional Access and Benefit Sharing Clearing House in place		CBD T16
<b>Objective 7: Improve and communicate scientific knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services</b>		
7.1 Compile and synthesise existing data and information and disseminate this knowledge to a wider audience		CBD T19
7.2 Promote and encourage research that contributes to the knowledge and understanding of Belgium's biodiversity and ecosystem services and their values	EU T2 Act.5	CBD T19
7.3 Develop adequate monitoring methodologies and biodiversity indicators		CBD T19
7.4 Map and assess the state of ecosystems and their services and assess the values of such services	EU T2 Act. 5	CBD T19

7.5 Evaluate the level of integration of biodiversity into sectoral policies and their impact on biodiversity		CBD T19
7.6 Improve our knowledge of the socio-economic benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services	EU T2 Action 5	CBD T19
7.7 Improve the Science-Policy interface in biodiversity and promote actor participation		CBD T19
7.8 Promote research on the effects of GMOs and products of synthetic biology on biodiversity and on related socio-economic aspects, and on methodologies to assess these		CBD T19
<b>Objective 8: Involve the community through communication, education, public awareness and training</b>		CBD T1
8.1 Strive to include biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as the ecosystem approach in educational programmes		CBD T1
8.2 Promote understanding of the importance of biodiversity and improve knowledge of Belgium's biodiversity and ecosystem services	EU T1 Action 3a	CBD T1
8.3 Raise awareness among, and provide thematic training courses for the sectors that impact directly or indirectly on biodiversity, including the private sector, using language tailored to the specific nature of the target sector	EU T1 Action 3b	CBD T1
<b>Objective 9: Strengthen the biodiversity-related regulatory framework and ensure the implementation of, compliance with and enforcement of biodiversity related legislations</b>		
9.1 Ensure that the National Strategy is supported by effective legislation and improve its enforcement		
9.2 Ensure full implementation and improve enforcement of biodiversity-related legislations, including the Birds and Habitats Directives, through inter alia training programmes for the relevant authorities, in particular judges, prosecutors, inspectors and custom officials		
9.3 Ensure full compliance with and enforcement of the environmental liability regime (i.e. Directive 2004/35 CE on environmental liability) towards biodiversity offences	EU T1 Action 3c	CBD T1
<b>Objective 10: Ensure a coherent implementation of / and between biodiversity-related commitments and agreements</b>		
10.1 Ensure a coherent implementation of biodiversity-related agreements to which Belgium is a Party		
10.2 Reduce overlaps, duplications or contradictions in the implementation of different biodiversity-related conventions		
10.3 All climate change, biodiversity and desertification cooperation projects funded by Belgium should be assessed to ensure that they are mutually supportive of the objectives of the three Rio conventions		
<b>Objective 11: Ensure continued and effective international cooperation for the protection of biodiversity</b>		
11.1 Gain a comprehensive view of all cooperation and interregional projects supported by Belgium		
11.2 All programmes and projects funded in partner countries have an ex ante environmental assessment procedure, ranging, as appropriate, from environmental screening to full environmental impact assessment* or strategic environmental assessment*	EU T6 Act. 19	

11.3 Make best use of Belgian expertise to support implementation of the Convention in developing countries		
11.4 Promote integration of biodiversity and biosafety into the development plans of partner countries		
11.5 Enhance international coordination and effective exchange of information between ex situ conservation centres (zoos, botanic gardens)		
11.6 Contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for biodiversity in partner countries, based on national priorities, in particular in support of the development of National Protected Area programmes, National Forest Programmes, integrated coastal and marine programmes, or other equivalent instruments, as well as their integration into relevant policy instruments		CBD T7
<b>Objective 12: Influence the international agenda within biodiversity-related conventions</b>		
12.1 Enhance Belgium's contribution to the protection of global biodiversity	EU T6	
12.2 Keep up our leading role in different international and EU forums to strengthen and ensure coherence, within the framework of the CBD Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets, between biodiversity related conventions		
12.3 Enhance synergies between CBD and the bodies of the Antarctic Treaty System and UNCLOS		
<b>Objective 13: Enhance Belgium's efforts to integrate biodiversity concerns into relevant international organisations and programmes</b>		
13.1 Integrate biodiversity concerns into all international organisations and programmes that are relevant to biodiversity		
13.2 Support efforts of developing countries to combat illegal logging and associated illegal trade as well as their efforts to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD+)		CBD T5&7
<b>Objective 14: Promote the commitment of cities, provinces and other local authorities in the implementation of the Biodiversity Strategy 2020</b>		
14.1 Encourage local authorities to develop and implement local biodiversity strategies and related action plans		CBD SP + Dec. X/22
<b>Objective 15: Ensure the provision of adequate resources for biodiversity</b>		
15.1 By 2020 at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for biodiversity from all sources (including possible innovative financial mechanisms) should increase substantially compared to the average annual biodiversity funding for the years 2006-2010	EU T1 Act. 2 ; EU T6 Act. 18 ;	CBD T20 + CBD Decision XI/4
15.2 Fully use existing EU financing instruments to promote biodiversity	EU T1 Act. 2 + EU T6 Act 18	CBD T2, T3, T20
15.3 By 2015, contribute towards the doubling of the total biodiversity-related financial resource flows to developing countries and at least maintain this level until 2020, including through a		CBD T20 + CBD



country-driven prioritization of biodiversity within development plans in recipient countries, using as preliminary baseline the average annual biodiversity funding to developing countries for the years 2006-2010		Decision XI/4
15.4 By 2020, support, as appropriate, developing countries to enhance institutional, national, administrative and managerial capacities, in order to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of international and national financial flows for biodiversity		CBD T20 + CBD Decision XI/4
<b>Part V: Implementation and follow-up of the Strategy</b>		
<b>V.1 - Governance</b>		
<b>V.2 - Monitoring and support mechanisms</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SM1. By 2015, adopt, apply and publish indicators to measure progress against the strategic objectives of the NBS</li> <li>• SM2. By 2015, implement the EU reporting tool for NBSs on the CHM website</li> <li>• SM3. By 2015, have a functional Clearing-House Mechanism in place for the Convention and its protocols, including a network of practitioners</li> <li>• SM4. By 2015, functional Clearing-Houses for implementation and technology transfer are in place for the CBD and its Protocols (BCH, ABS-CH)</li> </ul>	SEBI 2020  EU CHM reporting tool for NBS	Indicative list of indicators for the CBD SP 2011-2020 (Dec. XI/3)
<b>V.3 - Duration, reporting, evaluation and review</b>		
<b>List of abbreviations</b> <b>Glossary</b> <b>References</b> <b>Appendix 1:</b> Actors for biodiversity in Belgium <b>Appendix 2:</b> Main international agreements and instruments directly relevant for biodiversity <b>Appendix 3:</b> Main international organizations that have an impact on biodiversity <b>Appendix 4:</b> Concordance of the Aichi Targets with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and Aichi Targets with Biodiversity 2020, Update of Belgium's National Strategy		

# The updated Strategy in a nutshell

## Overview of the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy (Update 2013)

### 2050 Vision

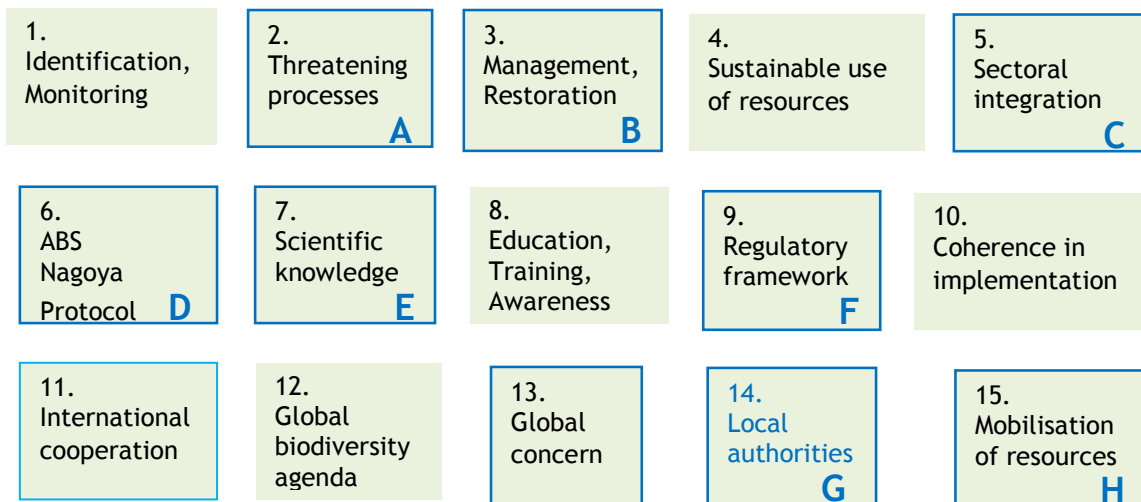
By 2050, our Biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides - our natural capital - are valued, conserved, appropriately restored and wisely used for their intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human well-being and economic prosperity, and so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided

### General objective of the Strategy:

Halting biodiversity loss - restoring and valuing ecosystem services - global contribution

## 15 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

85 proposed measures and 10 guiding principles for implementation



### NEW OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- A) Tackling emerging risks and the impact of internal trade of live specimens;
- B) Protecting and restoring biodiversity and associated ecosystem services through protected areas - green infrastructure - no net loss. Identify pathways of introduction of Invasive Alien Species;
- C) Phasing out perverse incentives and using guidelines on the integration of the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services, in development strategies, planning processes and reporting systems included. Developing an approach to include these values in national accounting;
- D) Implementing the Nagoya Protocol;
- E) Mapping ecosystem services in Belgium and assessing their values;
- F) Ensuring the implementation and enforcement of biodiversity legislation;
- G) Involving provinces, cities and other local authorities;
- H) Boosting the mobilization of resources (including through innovative mechanisms included) and enhancing capacities.

### Governance

Monitoring and support mechanisms  
Duration, reporting, evaluation and review