Second National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity

2001

Prefatory note

1. Concerning the answers in the tick boxes:

- most of the crosses in the tick boxes are the result of discussions during the second meeting of the contact group 'National reporting' (April 2001) and of onward bilateral discussions leading to a (partial) consensus;

- when a cross is used in combination with one or more other marks, the cross refers to an agreement reached by all actors except for the actor(s) which is (are) represented by the other mark(s);

- the following marks/abbreviations were used in the tick boxes of the Second National Report to the CBD:

Br.	Brussels Capital Region
Fed.	Federal level
Fl.	Flemish Region
Marine	Marine ecosystem (= Belgian part of the North Sea)
Micro-org.	Specific situation/information related to the Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms (BCCM)
Priv.	Private sector
Wa.	Walloon Region

2. Concerning the notes and comments in the text boxes:

- when a note is only applicable to one region, the name of the region is clearly mentioned in the note;

- when a note is applicable at a more general Belgian level, no hierarchical authority is mentioned;

- when, in relation to some articles, examples/notes were provided by, and only applicable to, a specific institute or university, the name of this institute or university is detailed.

Contents

Please provide the following details on the origin of this report

Contracting Party	Belgium
National Focal Point	
Full name of the institution:	Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS)
Name and title of contact officer:	Dr J. Van Goethem, Head of Department
Mailing address:	Department of Invertebrates Vautierstraat 29 B-1000 Brussels Belgium
Telephone:	+32-2-627 43 43
Fax:	+32-2-627 41 41
E-mail:	jackie.vangoethem@naturalsciences.be
Contact officer for national report (if different)	
Full name of the institution:	Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS)
Name and title of contact officer:	Mr Marc Peeters, Assistant-adviser
Mailing address:	Department of Invertebrates Vautierstraat 29 B-1000 Brussels Belgium
Telephone:	+32-2-627 45 65
Fax:	+32-2-627 41 41
E-mail:	marc.peeters@naturalsciences.be
Submission	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	Ms Magda Aelvoet, Federal Minister for Consumers interests, Health and Environment
Date of submission:	31 October 2001

Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report

05.10.2000. During the 14th plenary meeting of the Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention'1, members were informed on COP decision V/19 regarding the drafting of the Second National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

14.02.2001. 16th plenary meeting of the Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention': establishment of a contact group aiming to develop the second national report and consisting of experts and representatives of federal and regional departments directly involved in the reporting process.

06.03.2001. First formal meeting of the contact group 'National reporting': determination of the adequate redaction methodology for, and format of, the second national report. For this purpose, a consensus was reached upon the use of the questionnaire developed by the CBD-Secretariat and recommended in decision V/19 of COP-5.

March-April 2001. Written consultation round through which all stakeholders (experts and departments not represented during contact group meeting, scientific institutions, private sector, non-governmental organisations, etc.) were invited to contribute on the basis of the questionnaire.

19.04.2001. Second formal meeting of the contact group 'National reporting': based on compiled written contributions received before the meeting and oral contributions of the participants during the meeting, the questionnaire was completed as much as possible. Due to the appropriate meeting organisation (big screen projection and on-line completion of questionnaire), all 377 questions were discussed or at least quoted.

End of April 2001. Based on all oral and written contributions, a first version of the second national report was widely disseminated. The members of the CCIEP-groups 'Biodiversity Convention', 'Nature', 'Forests', 'Agriculture and environment', 'Trade and environment' and 'Biosafety', the experts of the thematic contact groups such as 'Ecosystem approach' and 'Impact assessment, liability and redress' and all the persons who already made some kind of contribution received this first version and were asked to further complete the questionnaire, to make additional notes, to give comments, etc.

June 2001. Based on the resulting contributions, comments and suggestions, a second version of the national report was developed. This version was placed on the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism (B CHM) website as a consultation draft giving the opportunity to all stakeholders to transmit final comments and contributions to the National Focal Point.

The final version was submitted for approval to the CCIEP and the Interministerial Conference for the Environment. After approval, the official final version was published as a paperback on 31.10.2001 and placed on the B CHM in replacement of the consultation draft.

1 The Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention' acts under the Co-ordinating Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP) and includes representatives of all federal and regional departments involved with biodiversity, experts specialised in various related themes, and the presidents, or their representatives, of related CCIEP-groups such as 'Nature', 'Forests', 'Agriculture and environment', 'Trade and environment' and 'Biosafety'.

The following persons and organisations contributed to the report:

Dieter Anseeuw
Institute for Forestry and Game Management
Duboislaan 14
B-1560 Hoeilaart

Moussa Badji
Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13
B-3080 Tervuren

Geoffrey Bailleux
Ministry of Economical Affairs
Boulevard du Roi Albert II, 16
B-1000 Brussels

Pascal Baute
Directorate General for Natural Resources and Environment
Ministry of the Walloon Region
Avenue Prince de Liège 15
B-5100 Namur

Charles-Hubert Born
Université catholique de Louvain
Place Montesquieu 2
B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve

Etienne Branquart
Directorate General for Natural Resources and Environment / Belgian Biodiversity Platform
Ministry of the Walloon Region
Avenue Prince de Liège 15
B-5100 Namur

Didier Breyer
Institute for Public Health
Rue Juliette Wytsman 14
B-1050 Brussels

Jos Buys
Directorate-General for International Co-operation
Brederodestraat 6
B-1000 Brussels

Abigail Caudron
Belgian Biodiversity Platform
RBINS
Vautierstraat 29
B-1000 Brussels

Els Coart
Agricultural Research Centre Ghent
Caritasstraat 21
B-9090 Melle

Xavier Coppens
Nature Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Gebr. Van Eyckstraat 4-6
B-9000 Ghent

Rene Custers
Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology
Rijvisschestraat 120
B-9052 Ghent

Luc De Bruyn
Institute of Nature Conservation
Kliniekstraat 25
B-1070 Brussels

Karen De Roo
Institute of Nature Conservation
Kliniekstraat 25
B-1070 Brussels

Carl De Schepper
Forests and Green Spaces Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Wilfrieda Decraemer
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Vautierstraat 29
B-1000 Brussels

Han de Koeijer
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Vautierstraat 29
B-1000 Brussels

Philippe Desmeth
Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms
Place Croix du Sud 3
B-1348 Louvain-la-Neuve

Gommaar Dubois
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Karmelietenstraat 15
B-1000 Brussels

Anne Franklin
National Focal Point to the CBD
RBINS
Rue Vautier 29
B-1000 Brussels

Machteld Gryseels
Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment
Gulledelle 100
B-1200 Brussels

François Guissart
Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs
Rue de la Science 8
B-1000 Brussels

Rudy Herman
Science Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Boudewijnlaan 30
B-1000 Brussels

Marc Herremans
Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13
B-3080 Tervuren

Francis Kerckhof
Management Unit of the Mathematical Model of the North sea
3de en 23ste Linieregimentsplein
B-8400 Ostend

Marc Lateur
Agricultural Research Centre Gembloux
Rue de Liroux 4
B-5030 Gembloux

Christian Laurent
Directorate General for Natural Resources and Environment
Ministry of the Walloon Region
Avenue Prince de Liège 15
B-5100 Namur

Eddy Loosveldt
Division for General Environmental and Nature Policy
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Els Martens
Nature Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Jan Mees
Flanders Marine Institute
Victorialaan 3
B-8400 Ostend

Catherine Mertens
Federal Council for Sustainable Development
Rue des Aduatiques 71-73
B-1040 Brussels

Hendrik Neven
Land Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Alain Pauly
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
Rue Vautier 29
B-1000 Brussels

Marc Peeters
National Focal Point to the CBD
RBINS
Vautierstraat 29
B-1000 Brussels

Geert Pillu
Division for General Environmental and Nature Policy
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Anne-Marie Pironnet
Ministry of Small Enterprises, Traders and Agriculture
Simon Bolivarlaan 30
B-1000 Brussels

René Poismans
Ministry of Small Enterprises, Traders and Agriculture
Simon Bolivarlaan 30
B-1000 Brussels

Marc Pollet
Institute for the Promotion of Innovation by Science and Technology in Flanders
Bischoffsheimlaan 25
B-1000 Brussels

Jan Rammeloo
National Botanic Garden of Belgium
Domein of Bouchout
B-1860 Meise

Guido Rappé
National Botanic Garden of Belgium
Domein of Bouchout
B-1860 Meise

Pierre Rasmont
University of Mons-Hainaut
Avenue Maistriau 19
B-7000 Mons

Monika Sormann
Science Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Boudewijnlaan 30
B-1000 Brussels

Jan Stuyck
Institute for Forestry and Game Management
Gaverstraat 4
B-9500 Geraardsbergen

Jurgen Tack
Institute of Nature Conservation / Belgian Biodiversity Platform
Kliniekstraat 25
B-1070 Brussels

Guy Teugels
Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13
B-3080 Tervuren

Patrick Van Damme
Ghent University
Coupure Links 653
B-9000 Ghent

Koen Van Den Berge
Institute for Forestry and Game Management
Gaverstraat 4
B-9500 Geraardsbergen

Nathalie Van den Bossche
Cabinet of the Minister for Economy and Scientific Research
Square de Meeûs 23
B-1000 Brussels

Ines Van den houwe
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Kasteekpark Arenberg 13
B-3001 Leuven

Aline van der Werf
Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs
Rue de la Science 8
B-1000 Brussels

Jackie Van Goethem
National Focal Point to the CBD
RBINS
Vautierstraat 29
B-1000 Brussels

Bart Van Impe
Europe and Environment Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Wouter Van Landuyt
Institute of Nature Conservation
Kliniekstraat 25
B-1070 Brussels

Geertrui Van Overwalle
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Minderbroedersstraat 5
B-3000 Leuven

Luc Van Puyvelde
Tibotec (private sector)
Generaal de Wittelaan 11 / 3
2800 Mechelen

Jos Van Slycken
Institute for Forestry and Game Management
Gaverstraat 4
B-9500 Geraardsbergen

Elke Vanwildemeersch
Europe and Environment Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Koning Albert II-laan 20
B-1000 Brussels

Griet Vergauwe
Ministry of Small Enterprises, Traders and Agriculture
Simon Bolivarlaan 30
B-1000 Brussels

Koen Verlaeckt
Science Division
Ministry of the Flemish Community
Boudewijnlaan 30
B-1000 Brussels

Ines Verleye
Cabinet of the Federal Minister for the Environment
Kunstlaan 7
B-1210 Brussels

Hugo Verreycken
Institute for Forestry and Game Management
Duboislaan 14
B-1560 Groenendaal - Hoeilaart

Please provide information on any particular circumstances in your country that are relevant to understanding the answers to the questions in this report

1. Geographical notes

Belgium is situated in the west of Europe, bordered by the North Sea, the Netherlands, Germany, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and France. Although a small country (30,528 km^2), its location favoured its past and actual position as an economic and urban nerve centre of Europe.

Belgium has a mild temperate wet climate, the south-eastern parts of the country (High Ardennes, Eiffel) nevertheless display features of a slightly more continental climate. Belgium offers a diversity of sites and landscapes due to its very long, eventful geological history, as well as the widely varying - at first glance almost imperceptible - climatic conditions from one region to another.

At the end of 2000 Belgium had a population of 10,239,000 inhabitants. The population density reaches 335 inhabitants per square kilometer, which makes Belgium, together with the Netherlands, one of the most densely populated countries in Europe. The gross national product (GNP) of Belgium for 1998 amounts to 9,189 billions BEF. The greatest part of the GNP comes from the tertiary sector, employing the largest part of the working population.

Geographically Belgium shows three major areas: Lower Belgium (up to 100 m above sea level), Middle Belgium (between 100 and 200 m above sea level) and Upper Belgium (from 200 to over 500 m above sea level).

2. Biological diversity

The diversity of the physical environment has resulted in an equally great biological diversity. The vast majority of components of the actual fauna and flora, roughly estimated at more than 40,000 species, colonised Belgium after the last glaciation, some 12,000 years ago. During the last 100 years, wildlife, plants, and ecological processes have been threatened by pollution of water, air and soils, intensive agricultural practices, fragmentation of nature areas, etc. A significant number of wild species has disappeared. This is particularly well-documented for higher plants, vertebrates, various insect groups, spiders and non-marine molluscs. In recent years, a recovery of formerly declining populations in various groups has been observed, most probably as a result of many conservation regulations and actions.

3. Political framework

Belgium gained its independence in 1830. In recent years, the country has rapidly evolved, through four sets of institutional reforms (in 1970, 1980, 1988-89 and 1993) into a federal structure. A fifth one is currently under process. As a result, the first article of the Belgian Constitution states nowadays: "Belgium is a Federal State which consists of Communities and Regions" (see Fig. 1).

The redistribution of competences followed two broad lines. The first line of reforms concerns linguistic matters and, more broadly, everything related to culture. Thus Belgium has three Communities today, based on language: the Flemish Community, the French Community and the German-speaking Community.

The second line of the State reform is historically inspired by economic concerns, expressed by Regions who wanted to have more autonomous power. This gave rise to the founding of three Regions: the Flemish Region, the Brussels Capital Region and the Walloon Region. To some extent Belgian Regions are similar to the German 'Länder' or the Swiss cantons. The country is further divided into 10 provinces (since 1 January 1995) and 589 communes or cities.

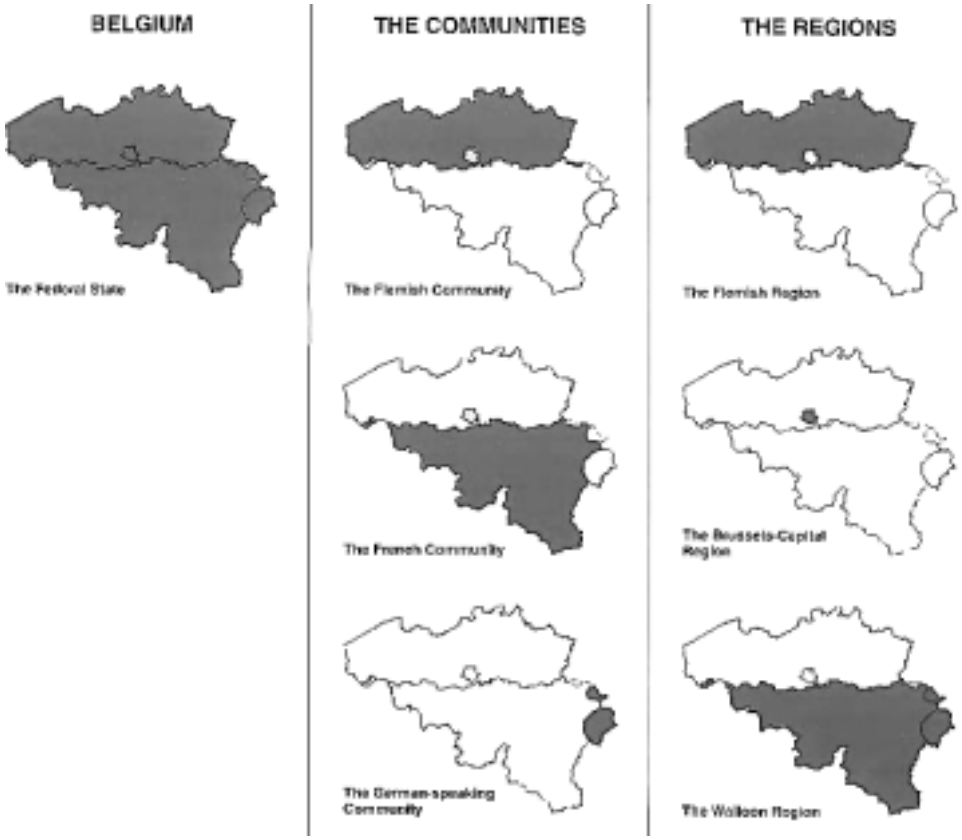

Fig. 1 – Belgium, a Federal State which consists of Communities and Regions

Because of these reforms, Belgium has a very distinct and unusual character. Under the level of the Federal Government are situated two lower levels of government: that of the Regions and that of the Communities, each with their own parliament and government. Since 1980, nature conservation is a shared responsibility of the Federal Government and the Regions.

The Federal State level retains important areas of competence including: foreign affairs, defence, justice, finances, social security, important sectors of public health and domestic affairs, etc. The Regions are *inter alia* competent in the fields of nature and water management, land zoning and nature conservation, spatial planning and public works. Furthermore the Regions and Communities are entitled to run foreign relations in those areas where they are competent.

Although nature conservation policy is mostly a regional matter, co-ordination bodies, under the authority of the Federal Minister for Environment, are in charge of its international aspects. For environmental matters the federal co-ordinating body is the Co-ordinating Committee for

International Environmental Policy (CCIEP), composed by representatives of all the federal and regional competent administrations. This body functions under the high level authority of the Interministerial Conference for the Environment (ICE), chaired by the Federal Minister for Environment.

4. Belgium and the Convention on Biological Diversity

Belgium signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on 5 June 1992, during the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro). Due to the fourth set of the institutional reform (1993) the ratification process was complex. The instrument of ratification of Belgium was deposited at the United Nations in New York on 22 November 1996. Belgium became hence a Contracting Party to the Convention on that day. In pursuance of Art. 36, point 3, of the Convention, the Convention on Biological Diversity entered into force for Belgium on 20 February 1997. In July 1995, the CCIEP designated the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS) as the National Focal Point for the follow-up of the CBD.

Several steering committees are currently operating under the direct authority of the CCIEP, one of these is the Steering Committee ‘Biodiversity Convention’. Concerning the terms of reference for this Steering Committee, priority was given to the preparation of the First National Report and of a Country Study on Biological Diversity. The Steering Committee has also a more political function concerning the preparatory, participatory and negotiation activities related to the CBD process.

As mentioned above, the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention on Biological Diversity is mostly a Regional competence. The objectives, strategies and action plans of the Regions are reflected by detailed information in relevant text boxes. However, several federal bodies also have an important role in the achievement of the aims of the Convention. These federal bodies are mainly the Ministry for Consumers interests, Health and Environment, the Ministry for Economy and Scientific Research, the Ministry for Agriculture and Middle Classes, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Co-operation.

Since the Convention on Biological Diversity does not afford particular attention to urban biodiversity, the implementation of the Convention in urban areas, such as the Brussels Capital Region, is not evident. At times were almost half of the world’s population lives in urban areas, a debate on urban biodiversity has become inevitable. Not only cities are suitable for a high level of biodiversity, recent development has also shown that suburban areas often have richer biodiversity than the surroundings of agricultural areas.

The COP has established programmes of work that respond to a number of Articles. Please identify the relative priority accorded to each theme and the adequacy of resources. This will allow subsequent information on implementation of each Article to be put into context. There are other questions on implementation of the programmes of work at the end of these guidelines.

Inland water ecosystems

1. What is the relative priority for implementation of this work programme in your country?	
a) High	Fl.
b) Medium	X
c) Low	
d) Not relevant	
2. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?	
a) Good	
b) Adequate	X
c) Limiting	
d) Severely limiting	

Marine and coastal biological diversity

3. What is the relative priority for implementation of this work programme in your country?	
a) High	X
b) Medium	
c) Low	
d) Not relevant	
4. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?	
a) Good	
b) Adequate	
c) Limiting	X
d) Severely limiting	

Agricultural biological diversity

5. What is the relative priority for implementation of this work programme in your country?	
a) High	X
b) Medium	Fl.
c) Low	
d) Not relevant	

6. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?	
a) Good	
b) Adequate	X
c) Limiting	
d) Severely limiting	

Forest biological diversity

7. What is the relative priority for implementation of this work programme in your country?	
a) High	Wa.
b) Medium	X
c) Low	
d) Not relevant	
8. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?	
a) Good	Wa.
b) Adequate	
c) Limiting	X
d) Severely limiting	

Biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands

9. What is the relative priority for implementation of this work programme in your country?	
a) High	
b) Medium	X
c) Low	
d) Not relevant	
10. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?	
a) Good	
b) Adequate	X
c) Limiting	
d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on work programmes and priorities

(9 & 10) There are no ‘dry and sub-humid lands’ in Belgium as defined under the CBD. However, Belgium has some projects, mainly in Africa, in relation to this theme and programme of work. *Inter alia* the Ghent University is involved in some local projects. More information can be found under Article 5 – Co-operation.

Article 5 Co-operation

11. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	Fl.

12. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting	Fl.	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

13. Is your country actively co-operating with other Parties in respect of areas beyond national jurisdiction for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) bilateral co-operation	X
b) international programmes	X
c) international agreements	X

Decision IV/4. Status and trends of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems and options for conservation and sustainable use

14. Has your country developed effective co-operation for the sustainable management of transboundary watersheds, catchments, river basins and migratory species through bilateral and multilateral agreements?	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	X
c) yes - significant extent (please give details below)	
d) not applicable	

Decision IV/15. The relationship of the CBD with the CSD and biodiversity-related conventions, other international agreements, institutions and processes or relevance

15. Has your country developed management practices for transboundary protected areas?	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent (please give details below)	Fl.
c) yes - significant extent	X
d) not relevant	

Decision V/21. Co-operation with other bodies

16. Has your country collaborated with the International Biodiversity Observation Year of DIVERSITAS, and ensured complementarity with the initiative foreseen to be undertaken by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to increase scientific knowledge and public awareness of the crucial role of biodiversity for sustainable development?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	X
c) to a significant extent	

Decision V/27. Contribution of the Convention on Biological Diversity to the ten-year review of progress achieved since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

17. Is your country planning to highlight and emphasize biological diversity considerations in its contribution to the ten-year review of progress since the Earth Summit?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

Comments in relation to question 13:

- CHM Partnership

According to the idea of partnering role supported by the CBD-Secretariat, Belgium is hosting for the necessary time the Clearing-Houses for the Convention on Biological Diversity of non-webconnected CHM National Focal Points (www.naturalsciences.be/bch-cbd/belgium/partner.htm).

The partnership activities started in 1998 with the request from the Democratic Republic of Congo to develop and host their CBD CHM website. The Belgian National Focal Point agreed and the server of the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences (RBINS) is hosting this CHM since 1998. This partnership was presented by the NFP of the D.R. Congo to other countries with difficulties to develop a CHM. Since the launch of the first partner CHM others have followed. At present, the Belgian NFP is hosting the CHM websites of: Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger and the Republic of Djibouti. The CHMs of Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger, and the Republic of Djibouti are produced and maintained by the webmaster of the Belgian CHM.

In 1999, the Belgian NFP received a request from Chad about the possibility of webmaster training for the Chad CHM. In September 1999, a person from Chad followed a month-long training provided by the Belgian NFP. As a result the CHM of Chad was published on the web. The NFP of the Democratic Republic of Congo received training during the month of July 2000. During this training, the site of the Democratic Republic of Congo was modernised. These experiences and similar requests from other countries showed the need for training of NFP staff of African CHMs. Therefore the NFP developed a training programme to enable the persons in charge of the CHM in their country to develop and maintain webpages for their CBD-CHM. So far three training sessions of one month each were given in 2000 and 2001 to

people from Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Benin, Djibouti and Cameroon. A total of 10 people have received training since the beginning of the partnership. Financing by the Department of Development Co-operation has facilitated the partnership initiative and training.

A secondary goal of the training was the development and launch of the national CHM website of the trainees. At this moment the sites of the Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Guinea are developed and maintained by their respective CHM-NFP or the trainee.

The partnership initiative by Belgium is still the only active CHM partnership with developing countries in the world. African countries are much interested in this initiative, as was again emphasised during the 'African regional meeting on Biosafety CH and CHM' at the UNEP Head Quarters in Nairobi, Kenya from 26-28 February 2001. Following the two presentations on partnership and training possibilities representatives of different countries made requests for more information on these possibilities. Similar interest on the Belgian initiative was also shown by Central and Eastern European countries during the Pan-European workshop on 'Building the CHM partnership' in Bonn, 28-29 September 2001.

The Belgian CHM NFP participated to the 'Séminaire régional sur la diversité biologique et les aires protégées en Afrique centrale' (Cameroun, 17-21.09.2001) and presented the Belgian CHM partnering role and the importance of information sharing. The CHM NFP of the D.R. Congo participated to the 'Deuxième réunion régionale du programme de soutien à la planification de la biodiversité pour l'Afrique de l'ouest et l'Afrique centrale' (Ghana, 17-19.09.2001) and gave a presentation about the CHM of the D.R. Congo and the role of the CHM partnership with Belgium.

- The Flemish Community: bilateral co-operation

Chile
1996: RUG-KUL-Universidad de Concepcion: Reconstruction, monitoring and remediation on freshwater environments based on the use of biological indicator species.
1999: RUG-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 Flanders.

China
1998: RUG-VIB-Chinese Academy of Sciences-Institute of Botany: Biodiversity, conservation and sustainable use of *Lilium* in China.
1999: KUL-RUG-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: KUL-RUG-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: KUL-RUG-University of Wroclaw: Search for the most potent and protease resistant peptides of particular insect species for eventual exploitation in pest control measures.
1998: RUG-VUB-Agricultural University of Warsaw: Environmental river catchment by natural or artificial wetlands.
2000: RUG-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: University Ghent: Marine biology.
1996: KUL-LUC-University Potchefstroom: Purification and characterisation of natural toxins from scorpions living in southern Africa targeting ion channels in humans and insects.
1996: University Ghent: feasibility study: Quality of education at the Botany Department.
1996, 1998: University Ghent: Marine biology and nematology: tuition on biodiversity of species and their habitats.
1996: University Ghent: Bilateral tuition project on plant biotechnology.
1997: RUCA-VUB-University Zululand: Comparative study of bioaccumulation and effects of metals in mussels between a temperate and subtropical region: the Scheldt estuary (Antwerp harbour-Flanders) and the Richards Bay Harbour.
1998: KUL-LUC-VUB-University of Stellenbosch: Neural networks and advances methods for monitoring and control of flotation plants.
1998: RUG-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: University Ghent: Co-operation between the University of Ghent 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 in the framework of international agreements and programs, and multilateral co-operation

The Flemish Government Direction for Nature
Bonn Convention: Reintroduction of Sahara-Sahel 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-Bird 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, Germany, 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.

Inter alia 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).

- The Walloon Region: overview of ongoing projects

Wallonia 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 Directive, the Habitats and Bird 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.

- 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 DGIC].
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].

Bénin
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: DGIC].

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: DGIC].

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].

- Scientific institutions - Federal level: co-operation projects

The National Botanic Garden of Belgium hosted from 1997 onwards the secretariat of AETFAT (Association for the taxonomic study of the flora of

tropical Africa / Association pour l'étude taxonomique de la flore d'Afrique tropicale) and organised in August-September 2000 the XVIth AETFAT congress under the overall theme 'Plant systematics and geography for a better understanding of African biodiversity'. A total of two hundred thirty five participants (50% of African countries) attended. The high attendance of African delegates was made possible through international co-operation and an important financial input from DGIC. The congress was preceded and followed by a series of short training courses organised by different Belgian universities for attendants from African countries. The secretariat has recently been transferred to Addis Ababa and gets further technical support from the former Belgian secretariat in organising the next congress in 2003. Currently the proceedings are prepared for publishing.

Since 1997, the National Botanic Garden of Belgium is collaborating with CECODI (a NGO active mainly in the field of sustainable development) in a training and research programme for the use of edible mushrooms. It concerns both the culture of species locally known as being edible and collections in the wild, demonstrating the economic and social value of non timber products of dry forests. The aim of the programme is double: on the one hand the use of 'waste' products of agriculture (as a substrate for mushroom growth) and on the other hand the sustainable use of natural resources (mainly ectomycorrhizal Fungi). The program has a strong ethno-mycological component and is strongly directed to the poorest families (with to limited access to agricultural land) and the training of women. A book on the edible Fungi of Benin, which has its value for the rest of West Africa, will be published in 2001 and is aimed to be distributed within the region at an affordable price.

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 – D.R. Congo, CNDRS - Comoros, UCT – South Africa), entomology and invertebrates (NMK - Kenya, Ivory Coast, SADC region, BEST – D.R. Congo), ichthyology (TAFIRI - Tanzania, Fisheries Dept. - Zambia) and mammalogy (UNIKIS – D.R. 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 DGIC, the European Union and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature.

The Belgian CHM NFP is a partner of the EURODETS initiative, which is currently under development. It involves several European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands) and is co-ordinated by the German CHM NFP. EURODETS, or Nature Detectives on the Internet, aims to support the awareness raising on the Convention on Biological Diversity in Europe and Pan-Europe by combining direct field observations in nature with Internet through visualisation of nature-based observations on maps and through interactive fora.

The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences is co-operating in the European Union Project PASCALIS (Protocols for the Assessment and Conservation of Aquatic life in the Subsurface). Object: assessment and conservation of groundwater biodiversity in Europe. Partners: 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 (see also

Article 18). 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.

Under the GEF Pilot Phase, Belgium has co-financed a project called 'Gestion participative des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune' in Burkina Faso/Côte d'Ivoire on participatory management of natural resources.

(14-15) Flanders – Transboundary protected areas for which a common management plan has been developed or is being developed: transboundary Nature Park 'De Zoom-Kalmthoutse Heide', the Scheldt estuary area, Grensmaas (area along the Maas river), Stamprooierbroek. At the coast there is a transboundary management programme in relation to the 'Zwin', and in the coastal area between Duinkerken (France) and Lombardsijde (Flanders). On the basis of a 'transboundary ecological plan' more sites have been identified for the future development of a common policy and management plan (Wallonia: see comments on question 13).

(16) A Belgian research project, LITUS, was developed in the frame of IBOY-DIVERSITAS. Aim of the project is to study interactions of biodiversity, productivity and tourism on European sandy beaches. The project, financed by federal funds, is co-ordinated at the Marine Biology Section (Ghent University).

Article 6 General measures for conservation and sustainable use

18. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	X	b) Medium	Fl.	c) Low	

19. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting	Fl.	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

20. What is the status of your national biodiversity strategy (6a)?	
a) none	
b) early stages of development	Br.
c) advanced stages of development	Fl. / Fed.
d) completed2	
e) completed and adopted2	Wa.
f) reports on implementation available	Fl.
21. What is the status of your national biodiversity action plan (6a)?	
a) none	
b) early stages of development	Br.
c) advanced stages of development	Wa. / Fl.
d) completed2	
e) completed and adopted2	
f) reports on implementation available	Fl.
22. Do your national strategies and action plans cover all articles of the Convention (6a)?	
a) some articles only	
b) most articles	X
c) all articles	
23. Do your national strategies and action plans cover integration of other sectoral activities (6b)?	
a) no	
b) some sectors	X
c) all major sectors	
d) all sectors	

2/ Please provide information requested at the end of these guidelines.

Decision II/7 and Decision III/9 Consideration of Articles 6 and 8

24. Is action being taken to exchange information and share experience on the national action planning process with other Contracting Parties?	
a) little or no action	Fl.
b) sharing of strategies, plans and/or case-studies	
c) regional meetings	X
25. Do all of your country's strategies and action plans include an international co-operation component?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
26. Are your country's strategies and action plans co-ordinated with those of neighbouring countries?	
a) no	
b) bilateral/multilateral discussions under way	
c) co-ordinated in some areas/themes	X
d) fully co-ordinated	
e) not applicable	
27. Has your country set measurable targets within its strategies and action plans?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) programme in place	Wa. / Fl.
e) reports on implementation available	Fl.
If a developing country Party or a Party with economy in transition -	
28. Has your country received support from the financial mechanism for the preparation of its national strategy and action plan?	
a) no	
b) yes	
If yes, which was the Implementing Agency (UNDP/UNEP/World Bank)?	

Decisions III/21. Relationship of the Convention with the CSD and biodiversity-related conventions

29. Are the national focal points for the CBD and the competent authorities of the Ramsar Convention, Bonn Convention and CITES co-operating in the implementation of these conventions to avoid duplication?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	Fl.
c) yes – significant extent	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(20) Both the Flemish and Walloon Region have developed a biodiversity strategy for the CBD-issues belonging to their competences (see below). The Brussels Capital Region did not develop a strategy as such, but strategic priorities are mentioned in various management plans and programmes.

At the federal level, strategic actions on biodiversity related themes are stated in the Federal Plan for Sustainable Development. Strategic elements were also mentioned in the First National Report of Belgium to the CBD, published in 1998.

At the national level, a national biodiversity strategy is being developed, mainly based on all documents referenced above and aiming to integrate biodiversity considerations into programmes and plans for all concerned sectors. The National Strategy will be published in 2002.

(20 & 21) Flanders - The Environmental Policy and Nature Development Plan (MINA-Plan 2: 1997-2001) is currently being implemented. The overall aim is to enhance integration of nature conservation and environmental policy into other sectoral and cross-sectoral policies. MINA-Plan 2 includes an overall action plan for 13 Themes. Loss of biodiversity is one of the main themes. The Plan indicates specific goals, identifies expected outcomes as well as a timetable and the means to achieve them, and establishes an institutional framework for the implementation. A more detailed action plan is published every year to indicate implementation on a yearly basis.

On the level of local authorities a Provincial Environment and Nature Plan by each of the 5 Provinces of Flanders is developed every 5 years.

Under the sectoral jurisdiction, specific policy planning documents are being developed; e.g. nature conservation policy plan and action plan, forestry action plan, integrated water policy plan. All of those are integrated in the overall goals and targets of the environment policy plan but also include the detailed planning of the implementation (= action plan) under each sector. The next Environment-Nature Plan (MINA-Plan 3: 2002-2007) is being developed.

Reporting on the implementation is published in environment and nature reports: MIRA-1 (1994), MIRA-2 (1996), MIRA-T 1998 (report on the implementation of each of the 13 themes of the MINA-Plan), MIRA-T 1999 and MIRA-S 2000 which describes scenario’s for future development for 23 themes. An extensive reporting on nature conservation policy and implementation is published in 1999 in the Nature Report 1. The next report, Nature Report 2, is in preparation.

(20 & 21) Wallonia - The Environmental Plan for Sustainable Development in the Walloon Region (PEDD), adopted by the Walloon Government on 9 March 1995, constitutes the Region’s contribution for a Biodiversity Strategy (Book 3, chapter 1 – Biodiversity Conservation). The Region’s CBD Action Plan, the ‘Nature Conservation Plan’, based on the concept of ecological network, is being developed.

The Walloon Region has also adopted the following strategic plans and projects that take into account biodiversity issues: the Regional Spatial Development Project (SDER), for which the Walloon Code of Town and Country Planning, Urban Development and Heritage (CWATUP) serves as legal basis, the Walloon Program of Rural Development and finally the Contract for the Future in Walloon Region, which gives orientations for the development of the Region. All these plans are dealing with biodiversity as an important element of Walloon natural heritage.

(29) The Belgian Co-ordinating Committee for International Environmental Policy (CCIEP) assures the co-ordination for all international aspects of environmental policy. The CCIEP is composed by representatives of all the federal and regional competent administrations. Several steering committees are operating under the direct authority of the CCIEP. One of these is the Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention'. To achieve an efficient co-ordination at this level, the presidents (or their representatives) of other CCIEP-groups concerned by the implementation of the CBD, such as 'Nature', 'Forests', 'Biosafety', 'Agriculture and Environment' and 'Trade and Environment', are invited to each meeting of this Steering Committee.

The Nature Group of the CCIEP, chaired by the Nature and Forestry Division of the Walloon Region, is in charge of the follow up of CBD-related nature Conventions, such as CITES, Ramsar, Bern, Bonn, etc. Regarding the preparation of CBD meetings such as SBSTTA and COP, the Nature Group is preparing the Belgian positions concerning Article 8 of the Convention. The Nature Group also co-ordinates the follow-up of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy.

Article 7 Identification and monitoring

30. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	Wa.	b) Medium	Fl.	c) Low	Br.

31. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	Wa.	c) Limiting	Fl.	d) Severely limiting	Fed. / Br.

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

Brussels Capital Region – Databases of several groups are being developed. Collection of data is limited to a few groups. No resources are available for analysis.

Flanders - Although more attention and means have been allocated to identification, inventories and monitoring of biodiversity through the implementation of MINA-Plan 2, the available resources are still limiting adequate knowledge of the country-wide biological diversity and good understanding of the effects of processes and activities having an impact on biodiversity.

National level – More information on the indicators used in Belgium in the frame of the Convention on Biological Diversity can be found in the thematic report 'Indicators for biological diversity in Belgium'. This report has been compiled by the National Focal Point in response to Notification 2001-05-17/02 from the Executive Secretary of the CBD, and is based on contributions of various federal, regional and community actors. It is available at the NFP and on the CHM NFP website.

32. Does your country have an ongoing inventory programme at species level (7a)?	
a) minimal activity	
b) for key groups (such as threatened or endemic species) or indicators	
c) for a range of major groups	X
d) for a comprehensive range of species	Fl.
33. Does your country have an ongoing inventory programme at ecosystem level (7a)?	
a) minimal activity	
b) for ecosystems of particular interest only	
c) for major ecosystems	X
d) for a comprehensive range of ecosystems	
34. Does your country have an ongoing inventory programme at genetic level (7a)?	
a) minimal activity	
b) minor programme in some sectors	
c) major programme in some sectors	X
d) major programme in all relevant sectors	

35. Does your country have ongoing monitoring programmes at species level (7a)?	
a) minimal activity	
b) for key groups (such as threatened or endemic species) or indicators	X
c) for a range of major groups	Wa.
d) for a comprehensive range of species	
36. Does your country have ongoing monitoring programmes at ecosystem level (7b)?	
a) minimal activity	
b) for ecosystems of particular interest only	
c) for major ecosystems	X
d) for a comprehensive range of ecosystems	
37. Does your country have ongoing monitoring programmes at genetic level (7b)?	
a) minimal activity	
b) minor programme in some sectors	
c) major programme in some sectors	X
d) major programme in all relevant sectors	
38. Has your country identified activities with adverse affects on biodiversity (7c)?	
a) limited understanding	
b) threats well known in some areas, not in others	X
c) most threats known, some gaps in knowledge	Wa.
d) comprehensive understanding	
e) reports available	Wa.
39. Is your country monitoring these activities and their effects (7c)?	
a) no	Br.
b) early stages of programme development	Fl.
c) advanced stages of programme development	
d) programme in place	Wa.
e) reports on implementation available	Wa.
40. Does your country co-ordinate information collection and management at the national level (7d)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of programme development	Fed. / Fl.
c) advanced stages of programme development	
d) programme in place	Wa.
e) reports on implementation available	

Decision III/10 Identification, monitoring and assessment

41. Has your country identified national indicators of biodiversity?	
a) no	
b) assessment of potential indicators underway	Br.
c) indicators identified (if so, please describe below)	Fl. / Wa.
42. Is your country using rapid assessment and remote sensing techniques?	
a) no	
b) assessing opportunities	Fed.
c) yes, to a limited extent	Fl.
d) yes, to a major extent	Wa.
e) reports on implementation available	
43. Has your country adopted a “step-by-step” approach to implementing Article 7 with initial emphasis on identification of biodiversity components (7a) and activities having adverse effects on them (7c)?	
a) no	
b) not appropriate to national circumstances	
c) yes	X
44. Is your country co-operating with other Contracting Parties on pilot projects to demonstrate the use of assessment and indicator methodologies?	
a) no	X
b) yes (if so give details below)	
45. Has your country prepared any reports of experience with application of assessment methodologies and made these available to other Contracting Parties?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
46. Is your country seeking to make taxonomic information held in its collections more widely available?	
a) no relevant collections	
b) no action	
c) yes (if so, please give details below)	X

Decision V/7. Identification, monitoring and assessment, and indicators

47. Is your country actively involved in co-operating with other countries in your region in the field of indicators, monitoring and assessment?	
a) no	
b) limited co-operation	Fl. / Br.
c) extensive co-operation on some issues	X
d) extensive co-operation on a wide range of issues	

48. Has your country made available case studies concerning the development and implementation of assessment, monitoring and indicator programmes?	
a) no	
b) yes - sent to the Secretariat	
c) yes – through the national CHM	X
d) yes – other means (please specify)	X
49. Is your country assisting other Parties to increase their capacity to develop indicator and monitoring programmes?	
a) no	
b) providing training	X
c) providing direct support	X
d) sharing experience	X
e) other (please describe)	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(32-34) No coherent information system is available in Belgium nor 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 are still conducted by separate university laboratories or research institutions in the frame of on-going research projects or on request of governmental administrations or agencies. No global database is available and each research group holds its own data.

(32-37) 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 analysing 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 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.

The basic assignments of the OFFH are: organizing and co-ordinating the collection and analysis of biological data in order to gather information about the state of biodiversity in Wallonia; defining the main lines of a strategy for its conservation and assess its effectiveness; standardizing, recording and managing biological data collected within the scope of agreements or subsidies by the Walloon Region; disseminating information, encouraging interaction and organizing 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:

- 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.).
- 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 standardizing 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.
- 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.
- The 'System of information on Biodiversity in Wallonia' (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.

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.

These 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.

(32-37) Flanders – An inventory of the main ecosystems and habitats is inserted in the Nature Report 1 (1999). An integrated information system and an overall database on scientific research are now being developed.

The Flemish Institute of Nature Conservation is a research institute of the Flemish Government. It is responsible for reporting on the state of nature in Flanders. It is also in charge of a number of inventories, the Biological Evaluation Map (BEM), and a number of Red Species Lists (See Annex 7.1. for a reference list of identification and monitoring publications for the Flemish Region).

(32 and following) 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 (e.g. symposium 'Invertebrates of Belgium' in November 1988, 'Status and trends of the Belgian Fauna, with particular interest for exotic species' in December 2001) and publishes atlases, bulletins, study documents through which information on species inventories, red lists, indicator species and monitoring processes is given/published.

(32 & 35) 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.

The National Botanic Garden's monitoring produces red lists, mostly in collaboration with the regions [with(in) Flemish Region: phanerogams and mosses, with(in) 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.

(34 & 37) 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.

Germplasm is freely available to users under the terms and conditions of a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA), which ensures that the genetic material, and information related to it, stays in the public domain. The Belgian government is funding through the Belgian Development Co-operation Department INIBAP's *Musa* germplasm conservation and dissemination activities (see text box related to Article 9 on *ex situ* conservation for more information).

(34 & 37) 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 utilisation 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 Flanders, with only some hundreds of individuals still present. In a forest near Leuven (Meerdaalwoud) and in the most eastern part of Flanders (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. This 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). The project started in 1999 and runs until the end of 2002. 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*).

(40) See information on biodiversity-related websites in the text box under Art. 17.

(41) Flanders - The most important indicators related to nature that have been used for evaluation of, and reporting about, nature conservation action plan and management activities:
- % 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 surpassed;
- 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.

(41) Walloon Region - The inventory and monitoring programmes of the Walloon Region (see 32-37) are used as a basis for the establishment of environmental and biological diversity indicators that are reported regularly in the State of the Walloon Environment. In the 2000 edition, major types of biological diversity-related indicators are status indicators, i.e. status of flora and fauna, forest composition, etc.; pressure indicators, i.e. pressure from urbanisation, public pressure through leisure activities, agricultural fertilisers and pesticides, hunting, etc.; impact indicators, i.e. forest health, atmospheric fallout on forests, big game impact on forest health and composition, etc; response indicators: i.e. protected areas, biological diversity considerations outside protected areas, etc.

(41) Brussels Capital Region - The Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment 3 (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; etc.

More information can be found in the report 'Indicators for biological diversity in Belgium' (2001), available on the Belgian CHM website at http://www.naturalsciences.be/bch-cbd/belgium/contribution/documents.htm

(42 b) In the framework of the Earth Observation research programme of the OSTC, techniques are developed for monitoring at local, regional and global scale. Several issues are related to biodiversity: land cover and land use change, land degradation in semi-arid regions, landscape and morphology habitat and endangered species or indicator species of biodiversity. Some demonstration and feasibility studies regarding landscape and habitat monitoring were conducted in Belgium and abroad, e.g.:

- monitoring of forest stands and dynamic database development (in Poland);
- development of information system for tropical forest management (in Indonesia);
- assessment of impact of development projects on environment (Burkina Faso);
- monitoring of elephant habitats (Botswana);
- monitoring of the winter range habitats of migratory geese (Belgium);
- monitoring of mangrove degradation (Kenya).

Furthermore, Belgium is particularly involved in the preparation of the Global Monitoring and Environment Security (GMES) and plans new applications for the near future (coastal management, land use, forest fires, etc.).

(46) Belgium is involved in the GBIF initiative (Global Biodiversity Information Facility - www.gbif.org) and is analysing the feasibility of implementation of the GBIF in Belgium. Belgium is also participating to the creation of the future European Network of Biodiversity Information (ENBI).

In the framework of the 'Multi-annual Information Society Support Programme' (OSTC), a first call for proposals has been launched where possibilities are offered to digitise collections based on a qualitative approach to the problems linked to digitisation (choice of format in relation to existing standards, choice of electronic storage medium, etc.) and to develop innovative applications for making data more available (data management system, multilingual access interfaces, virtual communities for thematic collections, etc.)(www.belspo.be).

A website was developed for the Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms consortium (BCCM) (financed by the OSTC) through which taxonomic information on microbial species and strains is available and can be searched (www.belspo.be/bccm).

The BCCM also participated in a EC financed project called Common Access to Biological Resources and Information (CABRI). The project issued a website where the catalogues of the major European culture collections can be searched (www.cabri.org).

(46) The National Botanic Garden of Belgium has executed a pilot project to make information held in its collections more widely available. A database structure for species and specimens was developed to allow a wide array of interactive output on the internet. Two products are by now available:

- www.br.fgov.be/RESEARCH/COLLECTIONS/HERBARIUMS/SP/katanga.html [information on the flora and vegetation of Katanga (RD Congo)]
- www.br.fgov.be/RESEARCH/COLLECTIONS/HERBARIUMS/SP/coffea.html [digitised images of nomenclature types of *Coffea* and related genera (angiosperms, Rubiaceae)]

Information at the specimen level is available on the web for the whole of the mycological collections (about 150,000 specimens).

(47) Flanders - Monitoring of water-birds: information shared through Wetlands International (The Netherlands). Monitoring of oil victims (Flemish coast): information shared through ORNIS Consult (Denmark).

(48) Flanders - Through reports of the Institute for Nature Conservation (Scientific Institute of the Flemish Government) (See Annex 7.2. for reference list of relevant publications).

(49) See also text on collaboration of NBGB with CECODI (in text box under Art. 5 – Co-operation).

(49) Flanders – The Institute of Nature Conservation acts as the secretariat of the European Conservation Institutes Research Network (CONNECT).

Decisions on Taxonomy

Decision IV/1 Report and recommendations of the third meeting of SBSTTA [part]

50. Has your country carried out a national taxonomic needs assessment, and/or held workshops to determine national taxonomic priorities?	
a) no	
b) early stages of assessment	X
c) advanced stages of assessment	
d) assessment completed	
51. Has your country developed a national taxonomic action plan?	
a) no	X
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) action plan in place	
e) reports on implementation available	
52. Is your country making available appropriate resources to enhance the availability of taxonomic information?	
a) no	
b) yes, but this does not cover all known needs adequately	X
c) yes, covering all known needs	
53. Is your country encouraging bilateral and multilateral training and employment opportunities for taxonomists, particularly those dealing with poorly known organisms?	
a) no	
b) some opportunities	X
c) significant opportunities	
54. Is your country investing on a long-term basis in the development of appropriate infrastructure for your national taxonomic collections?	
a) no	
b) some investment	X
c) significant investment	
55. Is your country encouraging partnerships between taxonomic institutions in developed and developing countries?	
a) no	
b) yes – stated policy	X
c) yes – systematic national programme	
56. Has your country adopted any international agreed levels of collection housing?	
a) no	
b) under review	
c) being implemented by some collections	X
d) being implemented by all major collections	

57. Has your country provided training programmes in taxonomy?	
a) no	
b) some	X
c) many	
58. Has your country reported on measures adopted to strengthen national capacity in taxonomy, to designate national reference centres, and to make information housed in collections available to countries of origin?	
a) no	
b) yes – in the previous national report	
c) yes – via the clearing-house mechanism	
d) yes - other means (please give details below)	X
59. Has your country taken steps to ensure that institutions responsible for biological diversity inventories and taxonomic activities are financially and administratively stable?	
a) no	
b) under review	
c) yes for some institutions	X
d) yes for all major institutions	
60. Has your country assisted taxonomic institutions to establish consortia to conduct regional projects?	
a) no	
b) under review	
c) yes – limited extent	X
d) yes – significant extent	
61. Has your country given special attention to international funding of fellowships for specialist training abroad or for attracting international experts to national or regional courses?	
a) no	
b) under review	
c) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
62. Has your country provided programmes for re-training of qualified professionals moving into taxonomy-related fields?	
a) no	X
b) some	
c) many	

Decision V/9. Global Taxonomy Initiative: Implementation and further advance of the Suggestions for Action

63. Has your country identified its information requirements in the area of taxonomy, and assessed its national capacity to meet these requirements?	
a) no	
b) basic assessment	X
c) thorough assessment	
64. Has your country established or consolidated taxonomic reference centres?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
65. Has your country worked to increase its capacity in the area of taxonomic research?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
66. Has your country communicated information on programmes, projects and initiatives for consideration as pilot projects under the Global Taxonomy Initiative to the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
67. Has your country designated a national Global Taxonomy Initiative focal point linked to other national focal points?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
68. Has your country participated in the development of regional networks to facilitate information-sharing for the Global Taxonomy Initiative?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition - 69. Has your country sought resources through the financial mechanism for the priority actions identified in the decision?	
a) no	
b) applied for unsuccessfully	
c) applied for successfully	

Further comments on implementation of these decisions

(general) The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, the Royal Museum for Central Africa and the National Botanic Garden of Belgium are members of CETAF (Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities).

(general) Flanders - In the case of invertebrates, Flanders has a large number of very competent specialists and as such much expertise but apart from personal contacts with fellow-scientists in Flanders and abroad, this source of knowledge is not exploited in an optimal way. Moreover, apart from some separate initiatives (e.g. international nematology course at the Ghent University), no real efforts are made to increase this knowledge among a

wider range of scientists by e.g. training courses. On the other hand, GTI is given too little attention despite the expertise available in Flanders.

A Marine Species database for Eastern Africa (MASDEA) was conceived to fill the need for a comprehensive species register for the Western Indian Ocean. The database will thus be a species register for the region and a road map to the scientific literature relevant to biogeographical studies in the region. Responsibility for the database is now shared by the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) and the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ). KMFRI undertakes research and provides facilities for Kenyan and non-Kenyan students to carry out post graduate marine and fisheries research. Technical developments and maintenance of the database is done by VLIZ, as is some of the input into the database. The region was defined on an *ad hoc* basis and corresponds roughly with the region that was then covered by the RECOSCIX project: all countries of the Eastern African coast (from Somalia down to Mozambique), the Red Sea and Eritrea, and the Western Indian Ocean islands (Seychelles, Mauritius, Comoros, Reunion, Madagascar). South Africa and Djibouti were added later. URL: www.vliz.be/vmdcdata/Masdea/index.htm

RECOSCIX-WIO is an information project working towards establishing a lasting network of marine and aquatic institutes in the Western Indian Ocean (WIO) region with the Regional Dispatch Centre (RDC) in Mombasa (Kenya) as its central node. The Flemish Inter-University Council, with the University Centre of Limburg as the implementing institution, sponsored this project. Since 1999, it was taken over by IOC/IODE and put under the umbrella of ODINAFRICA II projects. URL: ioc.unesco.org/odinafrica/

(general) European workshops have been organised for exchanging knowledge on apple genetic resources cultivars identification. Other research is focused on the development of molecular markers as identification tools to assure a better collection management of plant genetic resources (avoiding duplications, synonyms, etc.).

(50) In October and December 2001, symposia on the Belgian flora and fauna will be organised. The aims of both symposia are to assess the needs in taxonomic research and to highlight the priorities for future work.

(52) In 2001, the RBINS received EU funding for the ABC project (Access to Belgian Collections of interest for biodiversity).
The RBINS adhered to ENHSIN (European Natural History Specimen Information Network) and is involved with ENBI (European Network for Biodiversity Information).

With the financial support of DGIC, the RMCA acts as a partner of the FishBase Consortium and program.

(53) The RMCA participates in FishBase training courses for African researchers in Namibia, Senegal and Kenya (EU-ACP project) and in a freshwater ecosystems biodiversity programme in the Central African region (WWF project).

(57) Several, mostly African, M.Sc. and Ph.D. students are trained in the field of fish biodiversity in the Ichthyology Department of the RMCA. Short term training is also provided.

(58) The Directorate-General for International Co-operation of the federal Belgian Government supports the African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC) at the Royal Museum for Central Africa. RMCA has the largest zoological collections from Central Africa in the world, and ABIC specifically aims to be a taxonomic reference centre, and to repatriate

information from its zoological collection to the countries of origin.

(58) The National Botanic Garden of Belgium published an overview on all literature available of edible, poisonous and useful Fungi of Africa South of the Sahara (Scripta Bot. Belg. 5, 63 p., 1993; Scripta Bot. Belg. 10, 56 p., 1994) as a basis for further research in the different countries.

Furthermore, as there was no flora available for the region Brazzaville - Kinshasa, a guide has been published for trees and shrubs of that region (Scripta Bot. Belg. 4, 495 p., 1992). All genera occurring are illustrated. The guide not only concerns native trees and shrubs, but also ornamentals planted in cities.

The National Botanic Garden publishes series on botany and mycology of tropical Africa, e.g.: 'Flore d'Afrique centrale' (nearly 50 volumes), 'Distributiones Plantarum Africanarum' (more than 1500 distribution maps), the 'Flore iconographique des champignons du Congo', the 'Flore illustrée des champignons d'Afrique centrale', a checklist of the algal flora of the East African Great Lakes and an important number of miscellaneous publications devoted to tropical regions, mainly central Africa.
Furthermore taxonomic and collection information is made available on the web.

(65) In 2000, at the initiative of the National Committee of Biological Sciences, the 'Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten' and the 'Académie royale des sciences, des letters et des beaux-arts de Belgique' reported to all relevant decision makers in Belgium on the unfortunate situation of taxonomy (world-wide). They called for redress by enhancing university teaching in taxonomy and by creating jobs for taxonomists.

In the tri-annual programme for activities of the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (2001-2003), much focus is given to enhance taxonomic expertise.

Article 8 In situ conservation [excluding Articles 8h and 8j]

70. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	Fl.	b) Medium	Wa.	c) Low	Br.

71. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	Br.

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

72. Has your country established a system of protected areas which aims to conserve biological diversity (8a)?	
a) system under development	Marine
b) national review of protected areas coverage available	X
c) national protected area systems plan in place	
d) relatively complete system in place	X
73. Are there nationally adopted guidelines for the selection, establishment and management of protected areas (8b)?	
a) no	
b) no, under development	
c) yes	X
d) yes, undergoing review and extension	
74. Does your country regulate or manage biological resources important for the conservation of biological diversity with a view to ensuring their conservation and sustainable use (8c)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	X
d) programme or policy in place	X
e) reports on implementation available	X
75. Has your country undertaken measures that promote the protection of ecosystems, natural habitats and the maintenance of viable populations of species in natural surroundings (8d)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Wa. / Br.
c) potential measures under review	Wa.
d) reasonably comprehensive measures in place	Fl.

76. Has your country undertaken measures that promote environmentally sound and sustainable development in areas adjacent to protected areas (8e)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Wa.
c) potential measures under review	Wa.
d) reasonably comprehensive measures in place	Fl.
77. Has your country undertaken measures to rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems (8f)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	X
d) comprehensive measures in place	
78. Has your country undertaken measures to promote the recovery of threatened species (8f)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	X
d) comprehensive measures in place	
79. Has your country undertaken measures to regulate, manage or control the risks associated with the use and release of living modified organisms resulting from biotechnology (8g)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	X
d) comprehensive measures in place	
80. Has your country made attempts to provide the conditions needed for compatibility between present uses and the conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components (8i)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	Wa. / Br.
c) advanced stages of development	
d) programme or policy in place	Fl.
e) reports on implementation available	
81. Has your country made attempts to provide the conditions needed for compatibility between present uses and the conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components (8i)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	Marine
c) advanced stages of development	
d) legislation or other measures in place	X

82. Does your country regulate or manage processes and categories of activities identified under Article 7 as having significant adverse effects on biological diversity (8l)?	
a) no	
b) under review	
c) yes, to a limited extent	X
d) yes, to a significant extent	
If a developed country Party - 83. Does your country co-operate in providing financial and other support for *in- situ* conservation particularly to developing countries (8m)? ***If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition -*** 84. Does your country receive financial and other support for *in situ* conservation (8m)?	
a) no	
b) yes (if so, please give details below)	X

Decision II/7 Consideration of Articles 6 and 8 of the Convention

85. Is action being taken to share information and experience on implementation of this Article with other Contracting Parties?	
a) little or no action	
b) sharing of written materials and/or case-studies	X
c) regional meetings	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(72) Wallonia – At first, the Walloon Region focused on *in situ* conservation through protected areas. Nowadays, through the application of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives, the Region is also contributing to the building of the European Natura 2000 network, focusing on biodiversity protection and sustainable use outside protected areas (See also Annex 8.1. for more information about nature conservation in the Walloon Region).
The protection of habitats is ensured through several statuses:
- the government nature reserve: this is a protected area, laid out on lands belonging to the Walloon Region, leased by the Region or made available to it for that purpose. As of 1 June 2001, there were 90 government nature reserves, including underground cavities (caves, quarries, cellars). The 53 government nature reserves above ground totalise 6,400 ha.
- the chartered nature reserve: this is a protected area, managed by a natural or artificial person other than the Region and recognised by the Ministry, at the request of the owner of the lands and with the agreement of the occupier. The status of these sites is strengthened and subsidies are granted for the purchase and the management of lands. On 1 June 2001, there were 103 chartered nature reserves for a total of 1,308 ha.
- the forest reserve: this is a forest or a part of a forest, protected with the aim of safeguarding characteristic or remarkable sites of plantations of indigenous species and protecting the integrity of the surrounding soil and environment. On 1 June 2001, there were 10 forest reserves totalling 312 ha.
- the wet area of biological interest: this status allows the protection of wet areas. As of 1 June 2001, there were 30 recognised wet areas of biological

interest, totalling 957 ha.
- the underground cavity of scientific interest: this status allows underground cavities of scientific (biological, geological, petrographical, mineralogical or prehistoric) interest to be protected. On 1 June 2001, there were 30 recognised sites.
- the Special Protection Area (SPAs) / Natura 2000 network: in pursuance of the directive 97/43/EC concerning the conservation of wild birds, special protection areas were named by the Walloon Regional Executive. These are rather vast framework-perimeters in which the habitats that must be the subject of special protection and the most sensitive areas (core areas) are determined. As of 1 June 2001, these core areas represented 6,850 ha. Those areas are part of the Natura 2000 network.
- the Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) / Natura 2000 network: in pursuance of the directive 92/43/EEC concerning the conservation of natural habitats as well as wild fauna and flora, the Walloon Region has officially designated 22,000 ha and the Government will approve 33,000 additional hectares very soon, which will be integrated into the European network.

As far as protection of species is concerned, a large number are legally protected, either totally (protection decrees) or by regulations on specimens (laws on hunting, fishing) (see questions 81-82). Legal protection however is not sufficient to safeguard the species for which the main problem is the disappearance of habitats. This explains why the measures taken are increasingly tending towards the protection of habitats.

(72) Flanders - The number of nature reserves is relatively high (743) but the total surface of the nature reserves is relatively low (21,273 ha). During the period 1998-2000, the number of nature reserves increased from 604 to 743 while the total surface increased from 15,155 ha to 21,273 ha. 21,273 ha represents 1.6% of the total surface of Flanders. The Nature Management Plan 1997-2001 wants to increase this figure up to 3.7% of the total Flemish surface. 9,978 ha is managed by the Flemish Government while NGOs are managing 11,156 ha (NARA-2).

3,000 ha of forest reserve are planned. Both managed and unmanaged surfaces are present or foreseen, with a majority of unmanaged ones (see Annex 8.2.).

Besides the sites mentioned above, about 10,000 ha of the military areas are also being managed by the Direction for Nature.

As of October 2001, Flanders' contribution to the Natura 2000 network includes 23 Special Protection Areas under the Birds Directive (about 97,580 ha) and 38 Special Areas of Conservation under the Habitats Directive (about 102,000 ha).

(72) Brussels Capital Region - Under the Nature Conservation Act (1973), a number of biologically valuable areas received the status of nature reserve, providing an optimum management according to biological diversity. It concerns mostly a few forest areas and a diverse relic farming area with forest and marsh. Areas which are not the property of the Region qualify for the status of recognised nature reserve. So far however, due to the high cost price of land, there is not a single application for the recognition of a private area as nature reserve.

As of 2001, the Brussels Capital Region has designed 11% of its territory as Natura 2000 areas. Although the Habitat-directive criteria are not adapted to the urban situation, an effort was made to incorporate key areas in the network, notably the Brussels Forest of Soignes and three complexes of valley and forest zones.

(72 a) The establishment of marine protected areas is foreseen in the law on

the marine environment (so-called MMM law). Royal decree in preparation.

(73-75) Flanders - Overall indications for the selection, establishment and management of protected areas are given in the Nature Conservation Decree (1997). Management plans are being developed for the sites that are under ownership of the Flemish Regional government or local authorities. The application to receive the status of protected area for a site under private ownership requires a management plan for the area. Nature conservation organisations can receive financial support for the acquisition of sites, the management activities and the monitoring of species and management actions. Specific criteria have been developed for the level of subsidies related to the type of habitats and to the expected outcomes of the proposed management practices.

The basis of the regulation on protection and sustainable use is provided by the legal framework related to the different area categories of the ecological network that is being developed: areas with priority for nature conservation (= large units of natural areas + large units of nature in development), areas where nature receives specific attention besides other functions (= interweaving and connecting areas). Site-specific nature orientation plans that describe the overall goals and indicate the required regulations and instruments for a particular site, are being developed.

(74) An informal project aims at the development of an *in situ* standard tree orchard network as safe duplication methodology for an *ex situ* collection of fruit tree landraces. Two regional projects (one in Wallonia and one in Flanders) have as objective to make an inventory of wild species of *Malus*, *Pyrus*, *Cornus*, *Mespilus*, *Ligustrum*, *Ribes*, etc., for a better management of the *in situ* conservation measures for these species.

(74-75, 81-82) Flanders - Hunting is only possible in well-defined hunting regions and on well-defined animal species, viz.
- Big game: *Cervus elaphus*, *Capreolus capreolus*, *Dama dama*, *Ovis musimon*, *Sus scrofa*;
- Small game: *Lepus europaeus*, *Phasianus colchicus*, *Lyrurus tetrix*, *perdix perdix*;
- Waterfowl: *Anas platyrhynchus*, *Anas strepera*, *Anas clypeata*, *Aythya fuligula*, *Aythya ferina*, *Anas acuta*, *Anas crecca*, *Anas penelope*, *Anser anser*, *Anser fabalis*, *Gallinago gallinago*, *Fulica atra*, *Aythya marila*, *Anser albifrons*, *Anser brachyrhynchus*, *Branta canadensis*, *Gallinula chloropus*, *Vanellus vanellus*, *Anas querquedula*, *Lymnocryptes minimus, Pluvialis apricaria*;
- Other game: *Columba palumbus*, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, *Vulpes vulpes*, *Felis catus*, *Putorius putorius*, *Mustela erminea*, *Mustela nivalis*, *Martes martes*, *Martes foina*.

Only the underlined ‘game species’, can really be hunted for (cf. periodical opening Decision – 1998-2003). All other species do not belong to the hunting game and can not be hunted for. The hunting regions, the means to hunt and the transport and trade in game are also strictly regulated. For big game, a yearly shooting plan has to be submitted per hunting region or administrative unit, which mentions the quantity of game that can be shot that year. Feral cats can be hunted for the whole year in behalf of nature conservation. Furthermore, it is prohibited to release foxes, rabbits and other wild animals into the wild in Flanders. For pheasants there is an exception: under certain conditions the release of one pheasant per hectare is permitted.

Separate hunting regions can voluntary be put together to larger administrative units in behalf of the game management, the nature conservation and the improved supervision. Projects on nature and game management in acknowledged game management units are stimulated and financially supported by

the government. These projects have to implement a game management plan and contribute to the region and specific nature conservation.

In regions appointed as sensitive natural habitats (Wild Birds Directive, Ramsar), extra limitations are imposed to the hunt, such as e.g. for the use of lead shot, the permitted hunting period or hunting can be completely forbidden.

For manipulation, use for scientific or education purposes or for crop protection reasons of species that are protected by law (such as amphibians, bats, birds, etc.), a specific derogation has to be requested. Reporting of derogations for bird species is being done every year under the EU-Birds Directive, for other species on the Annexes of the Habitats Directive every three years.

(74-75, 81-82) Wallonia - The following legislation is in place in Wallonia:
- Flora: AR 16.02.1976. Protects some wild plant species, including orchids.
- Molluscs: AERW 21.02.1984. Capture of *Helix pomatia* and *Helix aspersa* is restricted from 1 August to 30 September.
- Crustaceans: AERW 29.04.1987 confirmed by AERW 4.03.1993 and AERW 19.02.1998 forbids to fish the red-footed crayfish till 31.12.2002.
- Insects: AERW 9.07.1987 protects 50 species, mainly Lepidoptera and Coleoptera.
- Fish: AERW 19.03.1992 reinforces protection of species. Fishing of the following species is forbidden : *Rhodeus sericeus amarus, Acipenser sturio, Platichthys flesus, Lampetra fluvialitis, Petromyzon marinus, Misgumus fossilis, Cobitis taenia, Lota lota, Salmo trutta trutta, Salmo salar*.
- Reptiles and amphibians: AERW 30.03.1983, modified by AERW 7.02.1984, protects all indigenous amphibian and reptile species, except for the common green and brown frogs (*Rana esculenta complex, Rana temporaria temporaria*) that can be hunted by special permit.
- Birds: AR 20.07.1972 protects most indigenous species, except for game species and huntable species. Legislation for those species has evolved over time.
- Mammals: AERW 30.03.1983 protects a number of wild vertebrate species in Wallonia, except for game species and very common species (such as moles, mice, rats, etc.). AERW 13.08.1992 gives protection status to the otter, the bagder, the wild cat and the red squirrel by removing them from the list of huntable species.
- Introduced species: AERW 29.11.1990 aims to prevent the release of non-indigenous animal species in the wild. This legislation can only become effective after its legal publication with an indigenous species list.
- Some species are protected under the Bern Convention, which came into force in Belgium on 1.12.1990.

(77) Examples are nature rehabilitation and development projects.

(78) Flanders - A species management plan has been developed for the following species or species groups: bats, meadow birds, partridge, stork, various owl species, various fresh water fish species, various plant species.

(79) Since 1993, Belgium has implemented measures to regulate, manage or control the risks associated with the use and release of living modified organisms resulting from biotechnology (also called GMOs – genetically modified organisms). These measures are generally based on the implementation of Directives, Decisions, Regulations and Guidelines adopted at the European Union (EU) level. The main relevant EU legislation are: Directive 90/219/EEC on the contained use of genetically modified micro-organisms (as amended by

Directive 98/81/EC), Directive 90/220/EEC on the deliberate release into the environment of genetically modified organisms (as recently revised and repealed by Directive 2001/18/EC), Regulation (EC) No 258/97 on Novel Foods, and Regulations (EC) No 1139/98 and No 49/2000 on labelling of food products produced from genetically modified Soybean and Maize.

Belgium has managed an harmonised implementation of EU legislation in its federal and regional legal frameworks. The decisions of authorisation coming from different administrative bodies representing different institutional levels are co-ordinated through a single common science-based biosafety advisory system. In such a system, all regulatory-related aspects of the uses of GMOs are assessed altogether in a co-ordinated way, inside the same procedures, independently of the specific regulation(s) that are involved. The biological safety is assessed on a case by case basis taking the precautionary and the familiarity principles as priorities. This advisory system, established according to the 'Co-operation Agreement of 25 April 1997 between the Federal State and the Regions on the administrative and scientific co-ordination concerning Biosafety' consists of two bodies: the Biosafety Advisory Council and the Service of Biosafety and Biotechnology (SBB).

The recent revision of EU Directives 90/219/EEC and 90/220/EEC will lead in the next few months to an adaptation of the federal and regional regulatory frameworks related to biosafety. This updating will also allow our country to integrate the appropriate legal and administrative measures to implement its obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Belgium has signed the Protocol on 24 May 2000 and ratification is in progress.

Belgium is also actively participating in the development of scientific methods and regulatory measures to guarantee the unequivocal identification, detection and traceability of GMOs, as well as in the development of technical and administrative measures ensuring public information and participation concerning the use and release of genetically modified organisms.

(80) Flanders - Area-specific regulations under the Manure Action Programme. Actions under the Rural Development Programme.

(81 b) Protection status is foreseen in the law on the marine environment (so-called MMM law). Royal decree in preparation.

(82) Sand and gravel extraction, dredging and dumping of dredge spoil are subject to licences. The areas where these activities take place are intensely monitored. The royal decree of 20 December 2000 (Official Journal of 25 January 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.).

(83) Under the GEF Pilot Phase, Belgium has co-financed a project called 'Gestion participative des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune' in Burkina Faso/Côte d'Ivoire on participatory management of natural resources.

In 2001, the Directorate-General for International Co-operation provided funding for *in situ* biodiversity conservation in the D.R. Congo.

Article 8h Alien species

86. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

87. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	X	Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

In general, most Belgian legislative tools are related to plant health regulation (crop protection). Few measures explicitly consider the issue of alien invasive species as a threat for natural ecosystems, even if coastal and freshwater habitats begin to be invaded by numerous exotic species.

In the national strategy (publication foreseen for 2002), alien species will be specifically addressed and integrated in plans for the concerned sectors.

For Flanders, the resolution of the Flemish Executive concerning the introduction of non-indigenous species (31.07.1993) inhibits any intentional release of animal species at places where escapes into nature may be expected. The Nature Conservation Decree (21.10.1997) aims at an enhancement of the native fauna and flora, and the protection of plant and animal species and their habitat communities. Together with the 'stand-still' principle, this also assumes the counteraction of the invasion of alien species.

For Wallonia, the resolution of the Walloon Government regulating the release of non indigenous animal species in the wild and the introduction of these species in game reserves (29.11.1990) foresees a.o. a permit system and a compulsory assessment of the impacts of the non indigenous species on indigenous fauna and nature, and an evaluation of the risks that the species would spread to adjacent areas. No introductions may harm the local fauna and flora. For the moment, the applicability of this resolution is uncertain due to the lack of a list of indigenous species in Wallonia.

88. Has your country identified alien species introduced?	
a) no	
b) only major species of concern	
c) only new or recent introductions	Br. / Wa.
d) a comprehensive system tracks new introductions	
e) a comprehensive system tracks all known introductions	Fl.
89. Has your country assessed the risks posed to ecosystems, habitats or species by the introduction of these alien species?	
a) no	
b) only some alien species of concern have been assessed	X
c) most alien species have been assessed	

90. Has your country undertaken measures to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	

Decision IV/1 Report and recommendations of the third meeting of SBSTTA

91. Is your country collaborating in the development of projects at national, regional, sub-regional and international levels to address the issue of alien species?	
a) little or no action	
b) discussion on potential projects under way	Wa.
c) active development of new projects	Fl.
92. Does your national strategy and action plan address the issue of alien species?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	

Decision V/8. Alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species

93. Is your country applying the interim guiding principles for prevention, introduction and mitigation of impacts of alien species in the context of activities aimed at implementing article 8(h) of the Convention, and in the various sectors?	
a) no	
b) under consideration	X
c) limited implementation in some sectors	
d) extensive implementation in some sectors	
e) extensive implementation in most sectors	
94. Has your country submitted case-studies to the Executive Secretary focusing on thematic assessments?	
a) no	X
b) in preparation	
c) yes	
95. Has your country submitted written comments on the interim guiding principles to the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
96. Has your country given priority to the development and implementation of alien invasive species strategies and action plans?	
a) no	X
b) yes	

97. In dealing with the issue of invasive species, has your country developed or involved itself in mechanisms for international co-operation, including the exchange of best practices?	
a) no	
b) transboundary co-operation	X
c) regional co-operation	
d) multilateral co-operation	X
98. Is your country giving priority attention to geographically and evolutionarily isolated ecosystems in its work on alien invasive species?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
99. Is your country using the ecosystem approach and precautionary and bio-geographical approaches as appropriate in its work on alien invasive species?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
100. Has your country developed effective education, training and public-awareness measures concerning the issue of alien species?	
a) no	
b) some initiatives	X
c) many initiatives	
101. Is your country making available the information which it holds on alien species through the CHM?	
a) no	
b) some information	X
c) all available information	
d) information available through other channels (please specify)	X
102. Is your country providing support to enable the Global Invasive Species Programme to fulfil the tasks outlined in the decision and its annexes?	
a) no	
b) limited support	X
c) substantial support	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(88) Flanders:
- Flora. A database is being developed for higher plants in Flanders. It will contain all recently introduced species (after ’72). For the established plants, there is an extensive list of all species. This list also contains species introduced before 1972. There is active eradication of the cherry (*Prunus serotina*) in some parts of Flanders, leading to good results *i.a.* in the Kempen.
- Breeding birds. There is a program in which rare, colonial and introduced breeding bird species are being monitored. 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 goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*), the mandarin duck (*Aix galericulata*), the ring-

necked parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*) and the monk parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*) are being monitored. This program is called the 'Bijzondere Broedvogels Vlaanderen Project' (Flemish Special Breeding Bird Project).
- Mammals. The Asiatic ground squirrel (*Eutamias sibiricus*) and the coypu (*Myocastor coypus*) are studied to investigate the necessity of monitoring. There is active eradication for the muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*) because this species is known to provoke serious harm to waterways.
- Fish. Through the monitoring and inventory of fish occurring in the Flemish inland waters, alien fish species are also being monitored.

(88) Wallonia - Alien species are identified through inventories of species for some groups (e.g. mosses and liverworts, vascular plants, crustaceans, birds, mammals). The Nature, Forest and Woods Research Centre is currently monitoring invasive species in the Walloon watercourses.

(88) An example of the identification of introduced alien species is provided by the National Botanic Garden of Belgium which has documented the spread of some alien invasive species. Special attention has been given to some bryophytes (e.g. *Lophocolea semiteres*) and to invasive C4 grasses (e.g. *Setaria macrocarpa, S. verticilliformis, Panicum dichotomiflorum*) in the weed communities of maize-fields in Flanders.

(90) The Belgian law of 20 January 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). Due to the specific and international character of the issue of non indigenous species in ballast water of ships, however the new Belgian framework law did not specifically touch this issue, and this activity is to be regulated by an implementation decree. 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).

(91) The Walloon Region finances the activities of the Secretariat of the Bern Convention, regarding alien species.

(91) GISP made a call for action to be part of the extended collaborative information exchange system on invasive alien species. The Belgian National Focal Point has submitted the form and will act as the national focal point for this programme.

Moreover, the Belgian NFP, in co-operation with the Flemish Region (AMINAL), is currently working on the establishment of a contact group on alien species that will operate under the authority of the Steering Committee 'Biodiversity Convention'. This contact group will address, among others, the issues of inventory, monitoring, reporting and legislation.

There are a few individual initiatives from scientists, who take part in international research programmes dealing with invasive organisms.

Belgium, through the Belgian Biodiversity Platform, participated to the Montpellier EPBRS meeting on alien species (2000).

(92) 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') and on marine and freshwater ecosystems. URL: www.belspo.be

(92) Flanders - Action 117 under the theme 'Loss of biodiversity' in the Environmental Policy and Nature Development Plan 1997-2001 (MINA-Plan 2) implies the elaboration of a framework to consider the desirability of (re-)introduction of species and to avoid unwanted (re-)introductions. This also implies taking into account the genetic diversity within species in case of (re-)introduction and considering the consequences of the use of GMOs on local biodiversity.

The Institute for Forestry and Game Management is currently developing a documented database of the non-native fish species of Flanders, which may be used in the future as a reference system for information on the occurrence and the ecology of non indigenous fish species in Flanders.

(101 b) A page with information on alien species in Belgium is under preparation and will be available soon on the B CHM website.
(101 d) A brochure on Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) was published by the Brussels Capital Region.

The Flemish Region published a brochure directed to the general public on *Prunus serotina*, *Eutamias sibiricus*, *Rana catasbeiana*, *Trachemys scripta elegans*, *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*, and rhododendrons at the end of 2000. Articles *inter alia* on alien amphibian species were published in periodicals of nature organisations.

A symposium on the Belgian fauna, with emphasis on alien species, is planned on 14 December 2001. The publication of proceedings is foreseen.

Article 8j Traditional knowledge and related provisions

103. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium		c) Low	X

104. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	X

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

Belgium does not consider that there are indigenous and local communities within the meaning of the CBD in Belgium. Therefore some of these questions are inappropriate for answer or are answered in our capacity as Party to the CBD upholding the principles that the CBD has so far identified.

In the Walloon Region, there are no traditional knowledge as intended by the CBD. However, some traditional and naturalist knowledge are still linked to rural lifestyles. They tend to progressively vanish because of the disappearance of those lifestyles.

105. Has your country undertaken measures to ensure that the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are respected, preserved and maintained?	
a) no measures	X
b) some measures in place	
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
106. Is your country working to encourage the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of such knowledge, innovations and practices?	
a) no	X
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) programme or policy in place	

Decision III/4 and Decision IV/9. Implementation of Article 8(j)

107. Has your country developed national legislation and corresponding strategies for the implementation of Article 8(j)?	
a) no	X
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) legislation or other measures in place	

108. Has your country supplied information on the implementation of Article 8(j) to other Contracting Parties through media such as the national report?	
a) no	
b) yes - previous national report	
c) yes – CHM	X
d) yes - other means (please give details below)	
109. Has your country submitted case-studies to the Executive Secretary on measures taken to develop and implement the Convention's provisions relating to indigenous and local communities?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
110. Is your country participating in appropriate working groups and meetings?	
a) none	
b) some	X
c) all	
111. Is your country facilitating the active participation of representatives of indigenous and local communities in these working groups and meetings?	
a) no	X
b) yes	

Decision V/16. Article 8(j) and related provisions

112. Has your country reviewed the programme of work specified in the annex to the decision, and identified how to implement those tasks appropriate to national circumstances?	
a) no	X
b) under review	
c) yes (please provide details)	
113. Is your country integrating such tasks into its ongoing programmes, taking into account the identified collaboration opportunities?	
a) no	X
b) not appropriate to national circumstances	
c) yes – to a limited extent	
d) yes – to a significant extent	
114. Is your country taking full account of existing instruments, guidelines, codes and other relevant activities in the implementation of the programme of work?	
a) no	X
b) not appropriate to national circumstances	
c) yes – to a limited extent	
d) yes – to a significant extent	

115. Has your country provided appropriate financial support for the implementation of the programme of work?	
a) no	X
b) not appropriate to national circumstances	
c) yes – to a limited extent	
d) yes – to a significant extent	
116. Has your country fully incorporated women and women's organisations in the activities undertaken to implement the programme of work contained in the annex to the decision and other relevant activities under the Convention?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
117. Has your country taken measures to facilitate the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the implementation of the Convention?	
a) no	X
b) not appropriate to national circumstances	
c) yes – to a limited extent	
d) yes – to a significant extent	
118. Has your country provided case studies on methods and approaches concerning the preservation and sharing of traditional knowledge, and the control of that information by indigenous and local communities?	
a) no	
b) not relevant	
c) yes – sent to the Secretariat	
d) yes – through the national CHM	
e) yes – available through other means (please specify)	X
119. Does your country exchange information and share experiences regarding national legislation and other measures for the protection of the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities?	
a) no	X
b) not relevant	
c) yes – through the CHM	
d) yes – with specific countries	
e) yes – available through other means (please specify)	
120. Has your country taken measures to promote the conservation and maintenance of knowledge, innovations, and practices of indigenous and local communities?	
a) no	X
b) not relevant	
c) some measures	
d) extensive measures	

121. Has your country supported the development of registers of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, in collaboration with these communities?	
a) no	X
b) not relevant	
c) development in progress	
d) register fully developed	
122. Have representatives of indigenous and local community organisations participated in your official delegation to meetings held under the Convention on Biological Diversity?	
a) not relevant	X
b) not appropriate	
c) yes	
123. Is your country assisting the Secretariat to fully utilize the clearing-house mechanism to co-operate closely with indigenous and local communities to explore ways that enable them to make informed decisions concerning release of their traditional knowledge?	
a) no	X
b) awaiting information on how to proceed	
c) yes	
124. Has your country identified resources for funding the activities identified in the decision?	
a) no	X
b) not relevant	
c) partly	
d) fully	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(general) Some traditional knowledge was collected in Belgium during countryside investigations concerning traditional fruit uses, specific landraces and plant multiplication techniques.

(108) In the frame of the CHM-partnership between Belgium and some African countries, information on the implementation of Article 8(j) in those countries can be found via their CHM website hosted on the Belgian CHM server.

(110) Two Belgian delegates were present at WG8J-1 (March 2000, Sevilla).
The Belgian Federal State takes part to the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee of the WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation) on intellectual property relating to genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore.

(116) Biodiversity related activities in Belgium are open to all.

(118) A study on ethnobotany and traditional practices was elaborated.
The programme APFT (Avenir des Peuples des Forêts Tropicales, 1997-2000) was carried out as a collaboration between Belgium (Université Libre de

Bruxelles and Faculté des Sciences Agronomiques de Gembloux), France (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) and the United Kingdom (University of Kent) under the financial assistance of the European Commission. A book was subsequently produced (‘Des Forêts et des Hommes’, Editions de l’Université Libre de Bruxelles, 2001). The main goal of the APFT programme was to study and report the daily life of forest communities at the end of the 20th century. Changes in the way of life of those communities were assessed and some questions on tropical forests and their populations were adressed as objectively as possible. This work was undertaken with the view of providing decision-makers and donor agencies with a sound background for the development of viable and serene political, economical and cultural systems as well as for a sensible conservation of biodiversity.

Article 9 Ex situ conservation

125. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

126. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	Micro-org.	c) Limiting	X	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources
(126 b) Resources are adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations in relation to micro-organisms. Article 9 is implemented since the establishment in 1983 of the 'Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms (BCCM)'. The BCCM consortium consists of four complementary research-based service culture collections financed and co-ordinated by the Belgian federal Office for scientific, technical and cultural affairs (OSTC). Each five years, the BCCM action is scientifically and financially evaluated. (126 c) For the other collections, resources can be considered as limiting. *For the same reason, two answers, one general (X) and one specific for the micro-organisms (Micro-org.), are indicated for questions 130 and 131.*

127. Has your country adopted measures for the *ex situ* conservation of components of biological diversity *native* to your country (9a)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
128. Has your country adopted measures for the *ex situ* conservation of components of biological diversity *originating outside* your country (9a)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
129. If the answer to the previous question was yes, is this being done in active collaboration with organisations in the other countries (9a)?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
130. Has your country established and maintained facilities for the *ex situ* conservation of and research on plants, animals and micro-organisms that represent genetic resources *native* to your country (9b)?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	Micro-org.

131. Has your country established and maintained facilities for the *ex situ* conservation of and research on plants, animals and micro-organisms that represent genetic resources *originating elsewhere* (9b)?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	Micro-org.
132. If the answer to the previous question was yes, is this being done in active collaboration with organisations in the other countries (9a)?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
133. Has your country adopted measures for the reintroduction of threatened species into their natural habitats under appropriate conditions (9c)?	
a) no measures	X
b) some measures in place	
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
134. 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 (9d)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
If a developed country Party - 135. Has your country co-operated in providing financial and other support for ex situ conservation and in the establishment and maintenance of ex situ conservation facilities in developing countries (9e)? ***If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition -*** 136. Has your country received financial and other support for ex situ conservation and in the establishment and maintenance of ex situ conservation facilities (9e)?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(general) The Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms (BCCM) consist of four complementary culture collections at the service of the scientific and industrial communities. The BCCM consortium 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).

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 Directorate-General for International Co-operation. 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.

(127) Fruit tree *ex situ* collections are very important in Belgium both at the formal and informal (NGOs) 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.

(128) 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, KU Leuven (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. Germplasm is freely available to users under

the terms and conditions of a Material Transfer Agreement (MTA), which ensures that the genetic material, and related information, stays in the public domain. On average, samples of five accessions are supplied every day for agricultural research projects in NARS, IARCs and ARIs in developed and developing countries. The Belgian government is funding through the Directorate-General for International Co-operation INIBAP's *Musa* germplasm conservation and dissemination activities.

(128) The National Botanic Garden of Belgium assures the management of a wild Phaseoleae/Phaseolinae germplasm collection. It has been designated by the 'International Plant Genetic Resources Institute' (IPGRI), as a base 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 1,560 accessions representing 192 taxa. *Phaseolus* and *Vigna* are the most highly represented genera with respectively 29 species (677 accessions) and 61 species (709 accessions). Most accessions are made for the consultation of wild or weedy materials (77%).

The Zoo of Antwerp and its antennae in Planckendael contribute to the *ex situ* conservation of wild animal species, through their participation in the European Endangered Species Programme. Among others, they have reproduction programmes for the Okapi (*Okapia johnstoni*), the Bonobo (*Pan paniscus*), the Golden-headed Lion Tamarin (*Leontopithecus chrysomelas*), the Military Macaw from Mexico (*Ara militaris*) and the Congo Peafowl (*Afropavo congensis*).

(134) Between 1989 and 1997, the National Botanic Garden of Belgium collected seeds from characteristic and endangered species in the different phytogeographical districts of Belgium. The 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.

Article 10 Sustainable use of components of biological diversity

137. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	Fl.	b) Medium	Wa.	c) Low	

138. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

139. Has your country integrated consideration of the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision making (10a)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	Wa.
d) programme or policy in place	Fl.
e) review of implementation available	Fl.
140. Has your country adopted measures relating to the use of biological resources that avoid or minimize adverse impacts on biological diversity (10b)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Wa.
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	Fl.
141. 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 (10c)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Wa.
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	Fl.

142. 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 (10d)?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Wa.
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	Fl.
143. Does your country actively encourage co-operation between government authorities and the private sector in developing methods for sustainable use of biological diversity (10e)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	Wa.
d) programme or policy in place	Fl.
e) review of implementation available	

Decisions IV/15. Relationship of the Convention with the Commission on Sustainable Development and biodiversity-related conventions

144. Has your country submitted to the Secretariat information on tourism and its impacts on biological diversity, and efforts to effectively plan and manage tourism?	
a) no	
b) yes – previous national report	X
c) yes – case-studies	
d) yes – other means (please give details below)	
145. Has your country submitted to the Secretariat information on biodiversity-related activities of the CSD (such as SIDS, oceans, seas and freshwater resources, consumption and production patterns)?	
a) no	
b) yes - previous national report	X
c) yes – correspondence	
d) yes - other means (please give details below)	

Decision V/24. Sustainable use as a cross-cutting issue

146. Has your country identified indicators and incentive measures for sectors relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity?	
a) no	
b) assessment of potential indicators underway	
c) indicators identified (if so, please describe below)	X

147. Has your country assisted other Parties to increase their capacity to implement sustainable-use practices, programmes and policies at regional, national and local levels, especially in pursuit of poverty alleviation?	
a) no	
b) not relevant	
c) to a limited extent	X
d) to a significant extent (please provide details)	
148. Has your country developed mechanisms to involve the private sector and indigenous and local communities in initiatives on sustainable use, and in mechanisms to ensure that indigenous and local communities benefit from such sustainable use?	
a) no	
b) mechanisms under development	Wa.
c) mechanisms in place (please describe)	Fl.
149. Has your country identified areas for conservation that would benefit through the sustainable use of biological diversity and communicated this information to the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	X
b) yes	

Decision V/25. Biological diversity and tourism

150. Has your country based its policies, programmes and activities in the field of sustainable tourism on an assessment of the inter-linkages between tourism and biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	
c) to a significant extent	X
151. Has your country submitted case-studies on tourism as an example of the sustainable use of biological diversity to the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
152. Has your country undertaken activities relevant to biodiversity and tourism in support of the International Year of Ecotourism?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
153. Has your country undertaken activities relevant to biodiversity and tourism in support of the International Year of Mountains?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
154. Has your country undertaken activities relevant to biodiversity and tourism in support of the International Coral Reef Initiative?	
a) no	X
b) yes	

155. Has your country established enabling policies and legal frameworks to complement voluntary efforts for the effective implementation of sustainable tourism?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	X
c) to a significant extent (please describe)	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(139) Flanders – The forest policy of the Flemish Region is part of the Environment Policy Plan 1997-2002. In general, policy planning is part of more generic and specific strategic planning process. The forest policy is described in:
- the Flemish Government Act on Forests (June 13th 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 5 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 5 years. There are 3 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 functions 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 who dispose over an agreed forest management plan and who want 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.

(139) Wallonia - In response to Belgium's engagement to implement the 'General principles for the sustainable management of forests in Europe' and the 'General principles for the conservation of biological diversity in European forest', of the second Ministerial Conference on Forests (Helsinki, 1993), Wallonia produced an assessment of the management of its forests ('La Gestion Durable de la forêt en Wallonie', June 1997 Edition). The first part of the report describes the main characteristics of forests, as well as the legal and institutional framework of forest policy in Wallonia. The second part of the report illustrates forest management as it is carried out in Wallonia, using criteria and indicators determined by the Helsinki resolutions. Objectives and targets for sustainable forest management are identified both for publicly- and privately-owned forests.

(146) 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 (see question 41).

(decision V/25) For a project on eco-tourism, the National Botanic Garden of Belgium collaborates with a Belgian NGO in Costa Rica. The collaboration only concerns the development and management of a small botanic garden devoted to the biodiversity of Costa Rica. Staff members of the NBGB give on the spot training to gardeners. The education section of the NBGB helps with the interpretation in the Costa Rica garden.

(151) The relationship between tourism and the meiobenthic biodiversity is currently studied in the frame of a Ph.D. (IWT-grant) at the Ghent University. Based on this research a case-study could be elaborated for transmission to the Executive Secretary in the future.

(155) Every year, the southern part of the Walloon Region attracts many tourists thanks to its preserved nature and rural areas. Tourism is in many places a major part of the local economy. For about ten years, the Walloon Region has been supporting integrated tourism, through financing the creation of rural guesthouses, tourism at the farm, etc. The Region also helps to renovate ancient infrastructures such as those for social tourism.

In relation to activities in natural areas, legal frameworks have been set up to limit the adverse impact of some activities on biodiversity. This includes the regulation of motor sports, regulation of circulation in forests aiming to forbid motor vehicles and to prioritise quietness and non-adverse activities (walk, biking, horse riding, skiing), regulation of circulation on watercourses (motorboats, kayaks, scuba divers, etc.), regulation of fisheries, etc.

Article 11 Incentive measures

156. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	Fl.	b) Medium	Wa.	c) Low	

157. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	Fl.	c) Limiting	Wa.	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

158. Are programmes in place to identify and ensure the adoption of economically and socially sound measures that act as incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) programmes in place	X
e) review of implementation available	
159. Do these incentives, and the programmes to identify them and ensure their adoption, cover the full range of sectoral activities?	
a) no	
b) some sectors	X
c) all major sectors	
d) all sectors	

Decision III/18. Incentive measures

160. Has your country reviewed legislation and economic policies to identify and promote incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) reviews in progress	Wa.
c) some reviews complete	Fl.
d) as far as practically possible	

161. Has your country ensured the development of mechanisms or approaches to ensure adequate incorporation of both market and non-market values of biological diversity into plans, policies and programmes and other relevant areas, *inter alia*, national accounting systems and investment strategies?	
a) no	
b) early stages of identifying mechanisms	X
c) advanced stages of identifying mechanisms	
d) mechanisms in place	
e) review of impact of mechanisms available	
162. Has your country developed training and capacity building programmes to implement incentive measures and promote private-sector initiatives?	
a) no	
b) planned	
c) some	X
d) many	
163. Has your country incorporated biological diversity considerations into impact assessments as a step in the design and implementation of incentive measures?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
164. Has your country shared experience on incentive measures with other Contracting Parties, including making relevant case-studies available to the Secretariat?	
a) no	
b) yes - previous national report	
c) yes – case-studies	X
d) yes - other means (please give details below)	

***Decision IV/10. Measures for implementing the Convention* [part]**

165. Is your country actively designing and implementing incentive measures?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) measures in place	X
e) review of implementation available	
166. Has your country identified threats to biological diversity and underlying causes of biodiversity loss, including the relevant actors, as a stage in designing incentive measures?	
a) no	
b) partially reviewed	X
c) thoroughly reviewed	
d) measures designed based on the reviews	
e) review of implementation available	

167. Do the existing incentive measures take account of economic, social, cultural and ethical valuation of biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	Wa.
c) yes – significant extent	Fl.
168. Has your country developed legal and policy frameworks for the design and implementation of incentive measures?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	Wa.
c) advanced stages of development	
d) frameworks in place	Fl.
e) review of implementation available	
169. Does your country carry out consultative processes to define clear target-oriented incentive measures to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss?	
a) no	
b) processes being identified	Wa.
c) processes identified but not implemented	
d) processes in place	Fl.
170. Has your country identified and considered neutralizing perverse incentives?	
a) no	
b) identification programme under way	X
c) identified but not all neutralised	
d) identified and neutralised	

Decision V/15. Incentive measures

171. Has your country reviewed the incentive measures promoted through the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
172. Has your country explored possible ways and means by which these incentive measures can support the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity in your country?	
a) no	
b) under consideration	Fed.
c) early stages of development	Wa.
d) advanced stages of development	Fl.
e) further information available	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(general) Flanders - Management contracts of the Flemish Government: 597 (out of 710) management contracts were approved for financial support in 2000. 28% of the management contracts dealt with the management of meadows related to birds, 25% dealt with the management of edges and 47% dealt with the management of small landscape elements:
* Meadow bird management (2 packages conversion arable land into grassland)
Within demarcated meadow bird areas but not in expansion perimeters of Flemish or acknowledged nature reserves.
* Buffer management (2 packages grassland mowing and grazing)
As a rule on cultivated lands within the agricultural structure in demarcated areas (in anticipation of this not within the destinations mentioned in Article 20 of the Nature Conservation Decree) everywhere in Flanders, except if a Nature Directive Plan finds a management agreement inappropriate for this objective. The measure is not applicable within expansion perimeters of Flemish or acknowledged nature reserves.
* Botanical management (4 packages grassland and 2 packages arable land)
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.

(general) Wallonia - For the Walloon Region, incentive measures are foreseen within the following resolutions:
- grants for appropriate agro-environmental practices (resolution of the Walloon Government, 11.03.1999);
- subsidies for the plantation of hedges (resolution of the Walloon Government, 09.02.1995);
- subsidies for appropriate sylvicultural practices (resolution of the

Walloon Government, 17.11.1994);
- subsidies when acquiring land for nature reserve purposes (resolution of the Walloon Executive, 17.07.1986).

(general) In the Brussels Capital Region, subsidies are *i.a.* granted for the management of recognised nature reserves (resolution of the Brussels Capital Executive, 25.10.1990).

(158) Concerning the private sector, programmes to ensure the adoption of economically and socially sound measures that act as incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity are in early stages of development.

(165) An example of an economic incentive for the private sector is the investment deduction for environmentally sound investments.

Article 12 Research and training

173. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

174. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	Fl.	c) Limiting	Fed. / Wa.	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources
In the framework of the current Multi-annual Scientific Plan for a Sustainable Development (SPSD-II: 2000-2004) of the OSTC, about 7.44 Mio Euro (on 57 Mio Euro) are devoted to research on biodiversity issues, compared to 3.1 Mio Euro in the previous Plan (SPSD-I: 1996-2000).

175. 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 (12a)?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	Br.
c) advanced stages of development	Wa.
d) programmes in place	Fed. / Fl.
176. Has your country provided support to other Parties for education and training in measures for the identification, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components (12a)?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
177. Does your country promote and encourage research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (12b)?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
178. Does your country promote and co-operate in the use of scientific advances in biological diversity research in developing methods for conservation and sustainable use of biological resources (12c)?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	Fl.
If a developed country Party -	
179. Does your country's implementation of the above activities take into account the special needs of developing countries?	
a) no	
b) yes, where relevant	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(175) International Course on Nematology (Biology Dept., Ghent University), Biodiversity Training Course on behalf of the United Nations University (Ghent University), weekly seminars on biodiversity (Catholic University of Louvain-La-Neuve), etc. Most Belgian universities have 3rd cycle environmental management courses (equivalent of a Master's degree), including courses on the management of (inter-)tropical areas.

(176) The Directorate-General for International Co-operation of the federal Belgian Government supports the African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC) at the Royal Museum for Central Africa. ABIC organises training internships with a focus on taxonomy and biodiversity for students from developing countries.

The Royal Museum for Central Africa organised in 2000 on the RFI Comoros a capacity-building training workshop about inventorying terrestrial biodiversity and its eco-tourism potential.

(177) At the federal level, the OSTC encourages research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial ecosystems (temperate regions), of marine ecosystems (in particular the North sea) and of Antarctic ecosystems.
The main objectives are:
- to better understand the links between biological diversity, the structure and the functioning of ecosystems and the impacts of human and environmental threats (climate change in particular) 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.

In support of Article 12 (b) and (c), the Belgian federal government launched a Biodiversity Platform aiming at improving the information exchange and communication between the scientific community, the research funding bodies, the policy-makers in the field of environment and the land-managers, notably via the Belgian Biodiversity Forum website, thematic workgroups and the organisation of biodiversity-related meetings. This Platform promotes biodiversity research and an increased use of its results for applied environment management.

(177) Wallonia - As far as scientific support is concerned, the Nature, Forests and Wood Research Centre, which depends from the Nature and Forestry Division, conducts or co-ordinates various studies. At the biological diversity level, the main lines of research are:
- the inventory and the monitoring of biological diversity (Observatory of Fauna, Flora and Habitats - OFFH);
- the monitoring of aquatic organisms (Hydrobiology section);
- the monitoring of the management of protected areas (Biological research centre);
- the permanent inventory of forests that recently included parameters relating to biological diversity;
- the genetic improvement of the main forest species grown in the Walloon Region (study of origins, selection of seeding plantation areas, individual selection, locating and protecting plantation areas to be conserved, etc.).
The Gembloux Scientific Centre hosts the Walloon Biodiversity server (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.

(177) Flanders - The Flemish Institute of Nature Conservation (www.instnat.be) is responsible for reporting on the state of nature in Flanders, including applied ecological and hydrogeological research with a view to nature conservation. It is also in charge of a number of inventories, the compilation of species Red Lists and the establishment of the Biological Evaluation Map. The Institute for Forestry and Game Management (www.ibw.vlaanderen.be) has a similar function for forests. It is also responsible for scientific research on fish stock and their management. The Flemish Impulse Programme Nature Development (VLINA) was started in 1996 as a means to stimulate research on nature conservation in Flanders. Biological diversity indicators are one of the five themes treated within the scope of the programme, with indicators of forest biological diversity being the first ascribed research assignment. The Flemish Environmental Agency (www.vmm.be) is a para-governmental institution complementary to the environmental administration. One of the tasks of the VMM is to establish and run the monitoring programme on surface water quality.

(178 b) General research in Flanders.
(178 c) Policy relevant research in Flanders.

Article 13 Public education and awareness

180. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	X	b) Medium	Fl.	c) Low	

181. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

182. Does your country promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, the conservation of biodiversity (13a) through media?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
183. Does your country promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, the conservation of biodiversity (13a) through the inclusion of this topic in education programmes?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
184. Does your country co-operate with other States and international organisations in developing relevant educational and public awareness programmes (13b)?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	

Decision IV/10. Measures for implementing the Convention [part]

185. Are public education and awareness needs covered in the national strategy and action plan?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	Wa.
c) yes – significant extent	Fl.
186. Has your country allocated appropriate resources for the strategic use of education and communication instruments at each phase of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation?	
a) limited resources	
b) significant but not adequate resources	X
c) adequate resources	

187. Does your country support initiatives by major groups that foster stakeholder participation and that integrate biological diversity conservation matters in their practice and education programmes?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
188. Has your country integrated biodiversity concerns into education strategies?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	Wa.
d) yes	Fl.
189. Has your country made available any case-studies on public education and awareness and public participation, or otherwise sought to share experiences?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
190. Has your country illustrated and translated the provisions of the Convention into any local languages to promote public education and awareness raising of relevant sectors?	
a) not relevant	
b) still to be done	
c) under development	
d) yes	X
191. Is your country supporting local, national, sub-regional and regional education and awareness programmes?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition - 192. When requesting assistance through the GEF, has your country proposed projects that promote measures for implementing Article 13 of the Convention?	
a) no	
b) yes	

Decision V/17. Education and public awareness

193. Does your country support capacity-building for education and communication in biological diversity as part of the national biodiversity strategy and action plans?	
a) no	
b) limited support	
c) yes (please give details)	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(general) In Flanders there are a number of educational efforts on different levels: on all levels of education between 3 and 18 years, specific aspects of environmental education are an integral part of the educational program. The institutes of higher education do not have a specific program. Most of the Flemish universities have signed the COPERNICUS Treaty (Co-operation Program in Europe for Research on Nature and Industry through Co-ordinated University Studies).
* Regional initiatives:
- the Flemish environmental action plan (MINA 2), initiative 146, created an environmental education department within the government administration;
- AMINAL is responsible for 5 educational centers open to the public; in 3 of them the environmental education department offers integrated EE-programmes;
- AMINAL will organize at the end of 2001 a course 'Professional Environmental Education'.
Most of governmental owned nature reserves are open to the public.
Several specific projects are subsidised: the 'Environment Encounter Program' for all the basic schools, the 'Educational Schelde Communication Project' (11-14 y.), the 'Environment-boat' as a sailing EE-centre, and some smaller projects.
* Provincial initiatives:
- each province (except one) has its own centre for environmental education; the province without own centre has several regional points of support for environmental education;
- most of the provincial owned nature reserves also have an educational function.
* Cities:
- a number of cities in Flanders have their own environmental education center;
- most cities have an own educational program.
* Private organisations:
- 2 privately owned environmental education organisations are active in Flanders: 'Centrum voor Natuur- en Milieu-educatie (CVN)' and the environmental education organisation 'De Wielewaal - Educatief'. The CVN organizes each year a course for nature guides. In 2000, 416 persons followed the course of which 213 graduated.
* Socio-cultural organisations:
- non governmental nature organisations are offering their members a wide range of environmental education activities.
* Youth organisations:
- the 'Jeugdbond voor Natuurstudie en Milieubescherming (JNM)' is an organisation specific for children and young adults between 8 and 25 years.
* Organised groups: some organisations have a number of specific environmental education initiatives. Actions include:
- set up of visitor centres in vicinity of major protected areas;
- organisation of guided tours in protected areas;
- publication of brochures and folders on specific aspects of nature conservation;
- co-operation with and support of nature conservation organisations and provincial or municipal authorities for specific public awareness projects;
- educational centre for forestry;
- development of websites.
More information: www.mina.vlaanderen.be/milieueducatie/centra/

(general) The Walloon Region has developed an extended network of 'Centres Régionaux d'Initiation à l'Environnement' (CRIE), centres for environmental

education and awareness. Those centres develop programs based on nature and biodiversity for public awareness purposes. Their actions are mainly (but not exclusively) oriented towards school children aged 6-12. Furthermore, 'green classes' are organised in most schools.

Naturalists' associations are financed in view to organise public awareness and education activities. Nature protection organisations such as the WWF, AVES, the 'Ligue Royale pour la Protection des Oiseaux' (LRBPO), the 'Réserves naturelles et ornithologiques de Belgique' (RNOB), 'Ardenne et Gaume', 'Les Cercles des Naturalistes de Belgique', 'Jeunes et 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.

The NGO 'Les Cercles des Naturalistes de Belgique' organises every year nature guide training courses at 5 training locations, both in French (Vierves-sur-Viroin, Sart-Tilman, Mont-Rigi, Bon-Secours and Brussels) and in German (Haus Ternell).

The Walloon Region also launches regularly thematic nature protection or development operations, which always include an important public awareness and educational part. Some examples of projects include the migration of black storks (www.explorado.com) or the raising of ladybirds as a means of sustainable control of aphids (www.coccinelles.be)

(general) Federal level - In 2000 a brochure entitled 'Threatened plant species and the tourist' was edited in Dutch and French and widely disseminated by the Federal Ministry for Agriculture. Another brochure, dealing with CITES and the concerned plant species, is also available at the Ministry for Agriculture.

Some research projects, in association with relevant university courses, demonstrate the need for, and the potential uses of, plant genetic resources. Development of 'on farm' or *in situ* orchards together with visits of collections and manifestations organised for schools and the general public enhance the public awareness concerning this topic. Public and media collaboration plays a key role for the collection of endangered old fruit tree cultivars.

Within the National Botanic Garden of Belgium an education section has been created a few years ago. As the presentation of the collections is ongoing, new display texts are formulated, with special attention to the CBD and its consequences. The next 'Education congress' of the European Botanic Gardens will be organised and hosted by the National Botanic Garden of Belgium. The development of the education strategy is completely in line with the action plan of Botanic Gardens conservation International in this field.

The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences has a fully operational educational unit, in charge of organising school visits (3-18 years old) and guided tours for visitors of the Natural History Museum, as well as seminars and teacher trainings on nature and biodiversity. This unit also organises practical workshops for children (in French: Ateliers Nature, ages 5-12/ in Dutch: Natuurateliers, ages 7-16) that address a great variety of specific themes and promote awareness on nature and biological diversity (Wednesdays, Saturdays and holidays).

(190) The text of the Convention is available on the Belgian CHM in Dutch, French and German, which are the three official languages in Belgium. Moreover a Dutch and French version of the Belgian CHM were launched during

the summer period of 2001 and are currently being developed. Several articles, brochures, etc. on CBD provisions have been published in Dutch and French for the Belgian public.

The colloquium 'Belgium and the Convention on Biological Diversity – A state of the art' was organised on 17 November 1999 and was open to all (Van Goethem, J.L., Hecq, W. & Peeters, M. (Eds), 2000. Proceedings of the colloquium 'Belgium and the Convention on Biological Diversity – A state of the art'. Bulletin de l'Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique, Biologie, vol. 70 – supplement, ISSN 0374-6429: 103 pp).

Article 14 Impact assessment and minimizing adverse impacts

194. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

195. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	X	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

Flanders - The procedures for EIA include provision for assessment of the impact on environmental aspects, fauna and flora, as well as development of mitigating and compensatory measures.

In the Walloon Region, the decree on EIA of 11.09.1985 will soon be replaced by the entering into force of the decree on environmental permits (11.03.1999). Article 6, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Habitat Directive, imposing an impact assessment for projects involving habitats and species targeted by this directive, will soon be transposed in legislation within the Walloon Region. For the Brussels Capital Region, the Habitat Directive, and thus also the paragraphs mentioned above, were transposed in the resolution of 26.10.2000.

There are no specific budgets for the protection of marine biodiversity as such, but the research budgets currently allocated at federal level for marine research and the promotion of the initiatives taken in the framework of the Convention seem to be adequate.

196. Is legislation in place requiring an environmental impact assessment of proposed projects likely to have adverse effects on biological diversity (14 (1a))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) legislation in place	X
e) review of implementation available	

197. Do such environmental impact assessment procedures allow for public participation (14(1a))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	

198. Does your country have mechanisms in place to ensure that the environmental consequences of national programmes and policies that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity are duly taken into account (14(1b))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	X
c) advanced stages of development	Wa.
d) fully compliant with current scientific knowledge	

199. Is your country involved in bilateral, regional and/or multilateral discussion on activities likely to significantly affect biological diversity outside your country's jurisdiction (14(1c))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	Fl.
c) yes – significant extent	Wa.
200. Is your country implementing bilateral, regional and/or multilateral agreements on activities likely to significantly affect biological diversity outside your country's jurisdiction (14(1c))?	
a) no	
b) no, assessment of options in progress	
c) some completed, others in progress	X
b) yes	
201. Has your country mechanisms in place to notify other States of cases of imminent or grave danger or damage to biological diversity originating in your country and potentially affecting those States (14(1d))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) mechanisms in place	X
e) no need identified	
202. Has your country mechanisms in place to prevent or minimize danger or damage originating in your State to biological diversity in other States or in areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (14(1d))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) fully compliant with current scientific knowledge	X
e) no need identified	
203. Has your country national mechanisms in place for emergency response to activities or events which present a grave and imminent danger to biological diversity (14(1e))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	
d) mechanisms in place	X
204. Has your country encouraged international co-operation to establish joint contingency plans for emergency responses to activities or events which present a grave and imminent danger to biological diversity (14(1e))?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
c) no need identified	

***Decision IV/10. Measures for implementing the Convention* [part]**

205. Has your country exchanged with other Contracting Parties information and experience relating to environmental impact assessment and resulting mitigating measures and incentive schemes?	
a) no	
b) information provided to the Secretariat	
c) information provided to other Parties	X
d) information provided on the national CHM	
206. Has your country exchanged with other Contracting Parties information on measures and agreements on liability and redress applicable to damage to biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) information provided to the Secretariat	X
c) information provided to other Parties	X
d) information provided on the national CHM	

Decision V/18. Impact assessment, liability and redress

207. Has your country integrated environmental impact assessment into programmes on thematic areas and on alien species and tourism?	
a) no	
b) partly integrated	X
c) fully integrated	
208. When carrying out environmental impact assessments does your country address loss of biological diversity and the interrelated socio-economic, cultural and human-health aspects relevant to biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) partly	X
c) fully	
209. When developing new legislative and regulatory frameworks, does your country have in place mechanisms to ensure the consideration of biological diversity concerns from the early stages of the drafting process?	
a) no	
b) in some circumstances	X
c) in all circumstances	
210. Does your country ensure the involvement of all interested and affected stakeholders in a participatory approach to all stages of the assessment process?	
a) no	X
b) yes - in certain circumstances	
c) yes - in all cases	Wa.

211. Has your country organised expert meetings, workshops and seminars, and/or training, educational and public awareness programmes and exchange programmes in order to promote the development of local expertise in methodologies, techniques and procedures for impact assessment?	
a) no	X
b) some programmes in place	Wa.
c) many programmes in place	
d) integrated approach to building expertise	
212. Has your country carried out pilot environmental impact assessment projects, in order to promote the development of local expertise in methodologies, techniques and procedures?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please provide further details)	
213. Does your country use strategic environmental assessments to assess not only the impact of individual projects, but also their cumulative and global effects, and ensure the results are applied in the decision making and planning processes?	
a) no	X
b) to a limited extent	
c) to a significant extent	
214. Does your country require the inclusion of development of alternatives, mitigation measures and consideration of the elaboration of compensation measures in environmental impact assessment?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	X
c) to a significant extent	X
215. Is national information available on the practices, systems, mechanisms and experiences in the area of strategic environmental assessment and impact assessment?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please append or summarise)	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(196) The general principles described in chapter 2 of the Belgian law of 20 January 1999 on the protection of the marine environment in the areas under Belgian jurisdiction: 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 20 December 2000 related to the law on the protection of the marine areas under Belgian jurisdiction (MMM law) imposes a procedure of environmental impact assessment.

(201) Such a mechanism is foreseen in the royal decree of 20 December 2000 in relation to marine areas (for more information, see note in relation to question 196).

(213) Flanders – The use of strategic environmental assessments to assess not

only the impact of individual projects, but also their cumulative and global effects, is under development.

(213) A first step towards strategic environmental assessments in relation to the marine environment can be found in Article 28, §4 of the law on the protection of the marine environment mentioning the development of an integrated environmental impact assessment for all similar activities.

(214 c) Development of alternatives required by the royal decree of 20 December 2000 in relation to marine areas (for more information, see comment above in relation to question 196).

Article 15 Access to genetic resources

216. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

217. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	Micro-org.	c) Limiting	X	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

(217) Resources are adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations in relation to micro-organisms (see BCCM). In general however, available resources for this article and the related decisions are limiting (same distinction is made for questions 221 and 222).

(general) The draft Bill transposing the Directive 98/44/EC on the legal protection of biotechnological inventions into Belgian law is breaking new grounds compared with the Directive as regards the following issues:

- Patentability of the elements of the human body, including the genes
Unlike the Directive, the transposition text does not stipulate that a gene may constitute a patentable invention but states that a gene may provide *a basis* for a patentable invention. This is a terminological correction induced by the wording of the Article 52 of the European Patent Convention and of the Article 2 of the Belgian Patent Act. This will not give rise to a difference in interpretation according to the principle of similar interpretation. The transposition Bill provides explicitly that the human body is not an asset, that patentability conditions must be met and that the monopoly resulting from the patent is limited to what constitutes the invention and in particular, that is does not impede the free disposal of preexisting elements, as implicitly referred to in the Directive, notably in Article 5 thereof.

- Non-patentability if the invention is contrary to public order and morality
New examples of non-patentability for the aforementioned reason are added to the Belgian Patent Act. As the European Directive (Article 6, §2) does not give an exhaustive list of examples, the national legislator is empowered to take other cases into account. The transposition text provides an additional specification insofar as it does not cover the cases where the exploitation of the invention is contrary to law and order but those where the *conditions of development of the invention* are contrary to public order and morality. The Belgian legislator may legitimately consider that the exploitation of the invention and the conditions of its development are entangled. The examples to be added concern the inventions developed in violation of human rights, of the Convention on Biological Diversity or without the consent of the donor when it comes to human body samples.

- Definition of invention
The transposition text may include a definition of the invention in the Belgian Act of 28 March 1984 with the aim to put into force the consensus which is generally accepted and according to which inventions are patentable whereas discoveries are not. The very idea of a definition of the invention gives rise to criticism because it is feared that this definition will freeze the evolution of law. Nevertheless, the definition proposed only includes non-controversial elements that are found in the constant legal practice and theory.

- Mention of the geographical origin of the living matter from which the invention is derived
It is proposed, as provided for in the 27th preamble, that the states require the applicant to mention the geographical origin of the living material from which he developed his invention. This provision reinforces the sovereign rights of the states concerning their biological resources, which are guaranteed in the Convention on Biological Diversity. In accordance with the 27th preamble, this requirement is only to be fulfilled when the biological origin is known.

- Limitations of the monopoly resulting from the patent
It is specified that the monopoly is limited to what constitutes the invention and that it will not impede the free disposal of preexisting elements. These elements are only the repetition of a traditional rule in patent law, aiming at reassuring the public opinion, especially as regards human genes.

(*This text is provided for information only and does not bind the Belgian state as to the final content of the legislation transposing the Directive 98/44/EC into Belgian law*.)

Moreover, regardless of the transposition of the Directive 98/44/EC, it can prove useful to say that the Act of 28 January 1997 adapting the Patent Act of 28 March 1984 to the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), annexed to the Agreement instituting the World Trade Organisation, has amended the Article 4, §2, of the Patent Act in order to complement the notion of public order by referring to the protection of the health and life of people and animals, to the preservation of plants and to the protection against serious damages to the environment. So Belgium has literally included the notions of the Article 27.2 of the TRIPS Agreement into its patent law.

(general) For what concerns policy on access to genetic resources, the 'Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms' are public *ex situ* collections. Technically, the biological resources conserved in their facilities are publicly available through printed and on-line catalogues, at cost-covering prices. BCCM has developed a policy summarised in the MOSAICC code of conduct (see www.belspo.be/bccm/mosaicc).

Beside BCCM, other institutions involved in *ex situ* and *in situ* management of biological resources have developed, sometimes in co-ordination with similar bodies at international level, appropriate administrative and policy measures to operate according to the terms of Article 15.

218. Has your country endeavoured to create conditions to facilitate access to genetic resources for environmentally sound uses by other Contracting Parties (15(2))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
219. Is there any mutual understanding or agreement in place between different interest groups and the State on access to genetic resources (15(4))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	

220. Has your country an open participation planning process, or any other process in place, to ensure that access to resources is subject to prior informed consent (15(5))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	X
d) processes in place	
221. Has your country taken 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 (15(6))?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Micro-org.
c) potential measures under review	X
d) comprehensive measures in place	
222. Has your country taken measures to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of the results of research and development and the benefits arising from the commercial and other use of genetic resources with any Contracting Party providing such resources (15(7))?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	Micro-org.
c) potential measures under review	X
?d) comprehensive measures in place	
If so, are these measures	
a) Legislation	
b) Statutory policy or subsidiary legislation	
c) Policy and administrative measures	X

Decision II/11 and Decision III/15. Access to genetic resources

223. Has your country provided the secretariat with information on relevant legislation, administrative and policy measures, participatory processes and research programmes?	
a) no	
b) yes, within the previous national report	X
c) yes, through case-studies	
d) yes, through other means (please give details below)	X
224. Has your country implemented capacity-building programmes to promote successful development and implementation of legislative, administrative and policy measures and guidelines on access, including scientific, technical, business, legal and management skills and capacities?	
a) no	
b) some programmes covering some needs	X
c) many programmes covering some needs	
d) programmes cover all perceived needs	
e) no perceived need	

225. Has your country analysed experiences of legislative, administrative and policy measures and guidelines on access, including regional efforts and initiatives, for use in further development and implementation of measures and guidelines?	
a) no	
b) analysis in progress	X
c) analysis completed	
226. Is your country collaborating with all relevant stakeholders to explore, develop and implement guidelines and practices that ensure mutual benefits to providers and users of access measures?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
227. Has your country identified national authorities responsible for granting access to genetic resources?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
228. Is your country taking an active role in negotiations associated with the adaptation of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Decision V/26. Access to genetic resources

229. Has your country designated a national focal point and one or more competent national authorities to be responsible for access and benefit-sharing arrangements or to provide information on such arrangements?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
c) yes, and Executive Secretary notified	
230. Do your country's national biodiversity strategy, and legislative, administrative or policy measures on access and benefit-sharing, contribute to conservation and sustainable use objectives?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	
c) to a significant extent	X
Parties that are recipients of genetic resources 231. Has your country adopted administrative or policy measures that are supportive of efforts made by provider countries to ensure that access to their genetic resources is subject to Articles 15, 16 and 19 of the Convention?	
a) no	
b) other arrangements made	X
c) yes	

232. Does your country co-operate with other Parties in order to find practical and equitable solutions supportive of efforts made by provider countries to ensure that access to their genetic resources is subject to Articles 15, 16 and 19 of the Convention, recognizing the complexity of the issue, with particular consideration of the multiplicity of prior informed consent considerations?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details)	X
233. In developing its legislation on access, has your country taken into account and allowed for the development of a multilateral system to facilitate access and benefit-sharing in the context of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources?	
a) no	X
b) legislation under development	
c) yes	
234. Is your country co-ordinating its positions in both the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources?	
a) no	
b) taking steps to do so	
c) yes	X
235. Has your country provided information to the Executive Secretary on user institutions, the market for genetic resources, non-monetary benefits, new and emerging mechanisms for benefit sharing, incentive measures, clarification of definitions, *sui generis* systems and “intermediaries”?	
a) no	X
b) some information provided	
c) substantial information provided	
236. Has your country submitted information on specific issues related to the role of intellectual property rights in the implementation of access and benefit-sharing arrangements to the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
237. Has your country provided capacity-building and technology development and transfer for the maintenance and utilisation of ex situ collections?	
a) no	
b) yes to a limited extent	X
c) yes to a significant extent	

(general) Various States made a first attempt to affirm the rights of indigenous peoples and to give effect to the equitable sharing objective laid down in Article 15 of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

In *Europe*, a first effort in that direction was established within the framework of the recently approved EU Biotechnology Directive (Directive 98/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 July 1998 on the Legal Protection of Biotechnological Invention, 213 *Official Journal of the European Communities - Legislation*, July 30 1998, 13). In an attempt to implement the fair and equitable sharing principle of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Recital 27 was introduced in the EU Biotechnology Directive. Recital 27 requires that "if an invention is based on biological material of plant or animal origin or if it uses such material, the patent application should, where appropriate, include information on the geographical origin of such material, if known; whereas this is without prejudice to the processing of patent applications or the validity of rights arising from granted patents". Recital 27 contains a praiseworthy principle, but the wording of Recital 27 is so noncommittal, that one can wonder if the introduction of the Recital will sort any effect.

Belgium is the only EU member State that has so far taken Recital 27 seriously. An attempt to enforce Recital 27 was made in the Draft Proposal of August 8 2000 holding various modifications of the Patent Act of March 28 1984 (French: *Avant-projet de loi modifiant la loi du 28 mars 1984 sur les brevets d'invention, en ce qui concerne la brevetabilité des inventions biotechnologiques*). The origin requirement, laid down in recital 27 of the Directive, has undergone two major changes. First, the recital has been given a stronger legal basis by inserting it in the Draft Proposal as full provision, more in particular as § 4 of Article 4. Second, the recital has been given a new wording.

The proposed new article stipulates that the exploitation of an invention is contrary to public order and morality, especially when the invention can be shown to have been developed in circumstances which run counter to public order and morality, which is the case when an invention is developed on the basis of plant or animal material which was imported in violation of the law of the country of origin of these materials: *"§ 4. L'exploitation d'une invention est contraire à l'ordre public et aux bonnes moeurs notamment lorsqu'il est établi que l'invention a été développée dans des conditions contraires à l'ordre public et aux bonnes moeurs. Tel est le cas par exemple: - lorsqu'une invention est développée à partir de matière biologique prélevée ou exportée en violation des dispositions des Articles 3, 8 j), 15 et 16 de la Convention de Rio sur la diversité biologique du 5 juin 1992."*

As a consequence, an invention which uses plant or animal material which was imported in violation of the law of the country of origin, would run counter to Belgian public order and morality, and could be revoked on the basis of Article 49 §1 (1) of the Belgian Patent Act of 1984 (Art. 49 §1 (1) 1984 BPA Act stipulates that a patent may be revoked by court if the subject matter of the patent falls within Articles 3 or 4, or does not meet the requirements of Articles 2, 5, 6 and 7. Cf. Art. 138 (1) (a) EPC which stipulates that a European patent may be revoked if the subject matter of the European patent is not patentable within the terms of Articles 52 to 57).

The Draft Proposal implementing Recital 27 in the Belgian Patent Act has, however, met considerable opposition in legal doctrine, as well as in societal circles.

First, objections from a logistic nature were launched. Which body is going to check whether or not the informed consent was asked properly? Which body is going to effectuate the control of the origin of the plant and animal material? The current Belgian Patent Office? Is this institution equipped to

perform such an activity? When is such control going to take place? Always, or only on demand of a third party?

Second, questions from a more legal or opportunist nature were put forward. Is the introduction of such a weighty sanction – viz. the nullification of a patent – in proportion to the shortcoming? Is it justified and/or opportune that the Belgian patent legislator enforces sanctions against non-compliance with foreign legislation? Is the nullification of a patent an appropriate way to express the concern for equitable legal relationships? Is the annulment of a potentially profitable patent beneficial for the country of origin? Should one not think of other mechanisms – outside the scope of patent law – to bring about equitable sharing between countries hosting plant and animal material and countries using those materials?

Third, the objection was raised by some that the introduction of the recitals as full provisions, runs counter to the pursuit of harmonisation in the Directive. Others, however, argued that the Belgian viewpoint might serve as an example for other member states (expert analysis).

(general) Vegetative and generative material is distributed, free of charge, to public institutions working in the areas of research, breeding, conservation and education. No material is provided to individuals or commercial firms.

For the time being the Belgian Botanic Garden is addressing the exchange of genetic resources and benefit sharing to develop a policy which is in line with most of the other European botanic gardens. The same is going on in other European countries. It is aimed that the European countries develop a common strategy for exchange of material between botanic gardens.

(219) Some collaborations exist between formal research programmes and the private sector (nurseries, seed producers, processing industry, etc.).

(223) BCCM has co-ordinated the MOSAICC project. This project involved 12 partners including the ‘World Federation for Culture Collection (WFCC)’. WFCC has sent information concerning MOSAICC to the secretariat.

(223 d) Information was/is provided to the CBD-Secretariat through the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism and the Belgian Biosafety Clearing-House.

(225) Research project from the Flemish Research Council on 'Intellectual Property Rights and Biodiversity' (2000-2003); Centre Intellectual Property Rights, KU Leuven.

(226) MOSAICC included representatives of public and private, for-profit and non-profit institutions, from developed as well as developing countries.

(227) Authorities granting access to genetic resources have been identified but not necessarily in the framework of the CBD. Some authorities have been in place even before the Convention. These include local, regional and national authorities competent in environmental matters.

(230 & 231) See above-mentioned information on the content of the draft Bill transposing the Directive 98/44/EC into Belgian law: as previously mentioned, the Belgian legislator is thinking about inserting into the Belgian Patent Act (though it would be better to find a solution on multilateral level) a disposition based on the 27th preamble of the Directive on the Legal Protection of Biotechnological Inventions, i.e. the applicant should include information on the geographical origin of the biological resources used to develop his invention, if known. This is the logical application of the rule

according to which the invention must be described precisely enough in the patent application. If the applicant does not know the origin, he has to mention it as well. Every applicant making a false statement or providing wrong information intentionally shall be prosecuted in accordance with the penal provisions of common law applicable to the making of false statements to the public authority. This possible new obligation is self-standing inasmuch as it is not a new patentability criteria (novelty, inventive step and industrial application) and is not, as such, a fundamental provision inherent in patent law.

In so far the principles that have been translated in the provisions and recommendations of the CBD were not yet taken into consideration, OSTC integrates progressively the provisions and recommendations of the CBD into its research contracts, also contracts involving institutions from other countries. It also follows the recommendations of other competent authorities such as DGIC (see also general comment on Article 16 Access to and transfer of technology).

(232) In view of finding practical and equitable solutions, BCCM follows COP-5 conclusions V/26 A.6. stating: "[The COP] notes that voluntary measures, including guidelines, may help ensure realisation of the objectives of the Convention, and to that end invites the parties to consider promotion of their use". Such guidelines should include recommendations for an efficient implementation of the prior informed consent concept.

See also the comment above in relation to question 226, more specifically through MOSAICC coherent approach of CBD and TRIPS Agreement plus Budapest Treaty with regard to micro-organisms. MOSAICC has been initiated by a public funded consortium. Although MOSAICC do not express the position of the administration, this project reflects the importance given to the implementation of Article 15 by the administration in charge of the BCCM program.

(234) Until now, two IU-CBD co-ordination meetings have been organised. WIPO and TRIPS discussions and activities are taken into account in this context. A contact group composed of officers from competent administrations exists.

(236) The European Communities and their Member States, with the Swedish Presidency, sent a letter dated 2 February 2001 containing several contributions to the Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (notably a general note written within the task force 'Biodiversity' of the Council of the European Union between September and February 2001).

Belgium have sent a significant delegation to the first meeting of the WIPO intergovernmental committee on intellectual property and genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore. Outputs of this forum will certainly be relevant in this matter.

(237) See questionnaire on Article 9 and the initiatives taken by other *ex situ* conservation facilities such as the National Botanic Garden of Belgium.

Article 16 Access to and transfer of technology

238. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	Priv.	c) Low	X

239. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	X	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

240. Has your country taken measures to provide or facilitate access for and transfer to other Contracting 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 (16(1))?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
241. Is your country aware of any initiatives under which relevant technology is transferred to your country on concessional or preferential terms (16(2))?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please give brief details below)	
242. Has your country taken measures so that Contracting Parties which provide genetic resources are provided access to and transfer of technology which make use of those resources, on mutually agreed terms (16(3))?	
a) not relevant	
b) relevant, but no measures	
c) some measures in place	X
d) potential measures under review	
e) comprehensive measures in place	
If so, are these measures	
a) Legislation	
b) Statutory policy or subsidiary legislation	
c) Policy and administrative arrangements	X

243. 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 (16(4))?	
a) no measures	X
b) some measures in place	
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
If so, are these measures	
a) Legislation?	
b) Statutory policy and subsidiary legislation?	
c) Policy and administrative arrangements?	
244. Does your country have a national system for intellectual property right protection (16(5))?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
245. If yes, does it cover biological resources in any way?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X

Decision III/17. Intellectual property rights

246. Has your country conducted and provided to the secretariat case-studies of the impacts of intellectual property rights on the achievement of the CBD objectives?	
a) no	X
b) some	
c) many	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(general) Regarding the 'Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms', the consortium follows the recommendations of DGIC in the matters relevant for the activities involving international co-operation and to the extent of the available resources.

(general) An example of technology transfer involving the private sector is a joint project between Tibotec-Virco, a young multinational biotechnology company, and Vietnam were for the development and production of an anti-parasitic drug, the Belgian section of the company upgraded the harvesting and production unit with GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and GAP (Good Agricultural Practice). Equipment and experts were sent to Vietnam and Vietnamese specialists were invited to Belgium for training. For the drug discovery and development program (on HIV, other infectious diseases, and cancer) the company has several collaboration in the field of biodiversity (natural products drugs discovery program).

The private sector highlights the efforts of the Belgian Department for Development Co-operation in relation to this article.

Article 17 Exchange of information

247. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low	

248. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources
See notes on biodiversity-related websites in text box at the end of the questions in relation to Article 18.

249. Has your country taken measures to facilitate the exchange of information from publicly available sources (17(1))?	
a) no measures	
b) restricted by lack of resources	
c) some measures in place	
d) potential measures under review	
e) comprehensive measures in place	X
If a developed country Party - 250. Do these measures take into account the special needs of developing countries (17(1))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
251. If so, do these measures include all the categories of information listed in Article 17(2), including technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X

Article 18 Technical and scientific co-operation

252. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

253. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

254. Has your country taken measures to promote international technical and scientific co-operation in the field of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (18(1))?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	X
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
255. Do the measures taken to promote co-operation with other Contracting Parties in the implementation of the Convention pay special attention to the development and strengthening of national capabilities by means of human resources development and institution building (18(2))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
256. Has your country encouraged and developed methods of co-operation for the development and use of technologies, including indigenous and traditional technologies, in pursuance of the objectives of this Convention (18(4))?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	X
c) advanced stages of development	
d) methods in place	

257. Does such co-operation include the training of personnel and exchange of experts (18(4))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
258. 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 (18(5))?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	

Decision II/3, Decision III/4 and Decision IV/2. Clearing House Mechanism

259. Is your country co-operating in the development and operation of the Clearing House Mechanism?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
260. Is your country helping to develop national capabilities through exchanging and disseminating information on experiences and lessons learned in implementing the Convention?	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
261. Has your country designated a national focal point for the CHM?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
262. Is your country providing resources for the development and implementation of the Clearing-House Mechanism?	
a) no	
b) yes, at the national level	
c) yes, at national and international levels	X
263. Is your country facilitating and participating in workshops and other expert meetings to further the development of the CHM at international levels?	
a) no	
b) participation only	
c) supporting some meetings and participating	X
264. Is your CHM operational	
a) no	
b) under development	
c) yes (please give details below)	X

265. Is your CHM linked to the Internet	
a) no	
b) yes	X
266. Has your country established a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary CHM steering committee or working group at the national level?	
a) no	X
b) yes	

Decision V/14. Scientific and technical co-operation and the clearinghouse mechanisms (Article 18)

267. Has your country reviewed the priorities identified in Annex I to the decision, and sought to implement them?	
a) not reviewed	
b) reviewed but not implemented	
c) reviewed and implemented as appropriate	X

Further comments on implementation of these Articles

Article 17 (general/249):

- see information on the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism below (note in relation to question 264).

- Since 1996, Belgium manages the 'Belgian Biosafety Server' (URL: biosafety.ihe.be). This website primarily aims at providing to, and exchanging with, the competent authorities, the scientific community, the private sector, NGOs and the public in general, scientific, technical and legal information on genetically modified organisms. Since 22 June 2001, this website serves as the national Biosafety Clearing-House (Article 20 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety) via the URL: www.biosafety.be/bch/bch.html. By doing this, Belgium is probably the first country world-wide to launch a national Biosafety Clearing-House under the Biosafety Protocol.

- The Walloon Region has launched its own biodiversity website, working as a proper Walloon Clearing-House Mechanism website (URL: 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 a.o. on 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.

- To provide users with all relevant information concerning biodiversity research in Belgium (funding sources, research institutions,

conferences, experts, etc.), the existing national biodiversity websites (the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism site and Belnet/BIODIV) are linked and completed by the Belgian Biodiversity Forum (www.biodiversity.be). This forum is a portal site centralising, structuring and completing the existing data in order to provide one efficient national information centre on biodiversity research.

- The project BIODIV 'Biodiversity Resources in Belgium' is an inventory of biodiversity resources in Belgium (URL: www.br.fgov.be/biodiv). It is not limited to the biodiversity of the Belgian territory, but includes all Belgian research, with a.o. a rich tradition in Africa. The inventory comprises (meta)data on specialists (both professional and private), research programs 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, from the genome to the biome level, on a planetary scale. The project BIODIV is a federal initiative, started in 1997. It organises this information in a way to provide a maximum utility for the national and international scientific community, the Belgian government and the general public. BIODIV is constructed as a relational database that can be consulted on the Internet. A search can be carried out to find institutions and specialists on a specific research topic, eventually a short explanation of their research, the institution or laboratory they are working in, ways to contact them. Research items and collections can be found using geographical, taxonomical or other keywords. BIODIV provides an access to Belgian scientific websites and offers scientific news and an agenda of events. Some data collected by Belgian researchers are repatriated as dedicated websites: on African *Coffea* types and on the vegetation of Katanga (Congo). The Belgian research can also be selected by DIVERSITAS categories (Core Programme Element or Special Target Area of Research). BIODIV is also a linked information source to other national and international initiatives such as the B CHM, the Belgian Biodiversity Platform, METAFRO, BioCISE.

- At the Royal Museum for Central Africa, a project called METAFRO InfoSys (URL: metafro.africamuseum.be) was launched at the end of 1997 with the objective to develop an electronic catalogue of information sources – an on-line metadata base – present in Belgium and related to sub-Saharan Africa, namely to Central Africa, including Angola, Burundi and Rwanda. This project aims to improve the access to information related to Central Africa and relevant for research and development, to promote and improve the communication and exchange of information among partners within a special interest network, and to promote and improve the interdisciplinary scientific research for the sustainable development of the targeted region. Identified beneficiaries are research and training institutions, Central African countries, federal administrations, NGOs, the private sector and international organisations such as FAO, UNEP, IUCN, WWF, etc. The launch and first part of the project was financed by the Belgian Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs. From 2002 onwards, METAFRO Infosys will be supported by the Belgian Federal Directorate-General for International Co-operation.

- Belgium, via the Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs, is one of the founding countries of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and became a voting participant in GBIF since this project came into being on the 1st March 2001. Belgium will make a financial contribution of 100,000 US$ per year to the GBIF Secretariat for its core program of activities and will establish a GBIF national node that will provide access to the Belgian biodiversity data. GBIF will be an interoperable network of biodiversity databases and information technology tools that will enable users to navigate and put to use the world's vast quantities of biodiversity information to produce national economic, environmental and social benefits. The purpose of establishing GBIF is to design, implement, co-ordinate, and promote the compilation, linking, standardisation, digitalisation and global dissemination of the world's biodiversity data, within an appropriate framework for property rights and due attribution. GBIF will work in close co-operation with established programmes and organisations that compile, maintain and use biological information resources. The participants, working through GBIF, will establish and support a distributed information system that will enable users to access and utilise vast quantities of new and existing biodiversity information to generate new knowledge, wealth and ecological sustainability. More information about GBIF at www.gbif.org

(250-251, 255) The Directorate-General for International Co-operation of the federal Belgian Government supports the African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC) at the Royal Museum for Central Africa. 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 repatriation of collection information. ABIC engages in co-operation agreements with the source institutions of the students to ensure support for the valorisation of the repatriated information after the training. Internships are individually adapted to meet the needs and requirements of the applicants.

(Article 18) See also all the projects mentioned in the text box after the questions of Article 5 – Co-operation.

Some private companies (see previous text box) have collaborations with several countries providing equipment, new techniques, grants and training.

(257) OSTC is granting research fellowships to post-doc scientists from Central and Eastern European Countries, allowing them to work in Belgian laboratories during 6 to 12 months for the execution of an R&D project. About 5 fellowships per year are involved with biodiversity research.

(258) In the framework of the Earth Observation research programme of the OSTC, 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 (see also Article 7).

Within the frame of bilateral agreements with i.e. China, Poland, Russia, joint research projects are initiated by the OSTC consisting in a transfer of Belgian know-how which has been developed through the OSTC 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.

(263) Belgium participated in, and provided financial support for, the meeting on the Biosafety Clearing-House in Cuba (2001). Belgium also participated in the 'African regional meeting on Biosafety CH and CHM' in Nairobi, Kenya (26-28 February 2001). Furthermore, Belgium participated in and helped with the coordination of the Pan-European workshop 'Building the Clearing House partnership' in Bonn (28-29 September 2001).

(264) On 7 October 1996, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, in its quality of Belgian National Focal Point to the Convention on Biological Diversity, launched the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism (B CHM) on the Internet (URL: www.naturalsciences.be/bch-cbd/home.htm). It was the fifth CHM national website world-wide to be added to the official list of Clearing-Houses by the Secretariat of the Convention. The Clearing-House Mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity is an information sharing mechanism set up to promote and facilitate the scientific and technical co-operation in relation to the three objectives of the Convention. It also plays an important role in developing public awareness on those three objectives.

The CHM operates mainly, but not exclusively, via the Internet and is built up as a structurally decentralised and distributed network of Parties and partners working together to facilitate the implementation of the Convention. It provides a variety of on-line data on the Convention, thematic programmes and cross-cutting issues as well as a direct access to numerous regional, national and supra-national websites.

The main tasks of the B CHM are to:
- provide extensive information on the Convention on Biological Diversity and its implementation in Belgium;
- present information on the status of biodiversity at national level, i.e. species, ecosystems and habitats, *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, direct and indirect threats, red lists, etc.;
- assist the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
- promote scientific and technical co-operation, as well as capacity building among Parties of the Convention;
- raise and promote public awareness and education on biological diversity matters.

Its main services are:
- an internet-based gateway providing: information on the CBD and its implementation process at national level, on-line versions of strategic documents related to the Convention (national reports, strategies and action plans, country study, etc.), a permanent link between the CBD Secretariat and Belgian actors, links to internet-based biodiversity information in Belgium, a selection of relevant links at local, national and international level, a selection of facilities such as an extensive list of abbreviations and a glossary related to the Convention;
- any appropriate non internet-based ways (posters, folders, CD-roms, etc.) to disseminate CBD information and share available experience;
- 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;
- a participation in public awareness actions to promote biodiversity knowledge and education.

The B CHM aims to avoid the duplication of efforts by looking for existing information and providing links to those websites. The B CHM creates its own pages to give added value to the information already available on the Internet, for example by integrating data from the three national regions (Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia) and communities (Flemish-, French- and German-speaking Communities) in order to present them in a coherent structure at national level. The role of the B CHM is also to stimulate actors to share their information and data by making them available on the Internet.

Article 19 Handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits

268. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low	

269. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

270. 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 (19(1))?	
a) no measures	X
b) some measures in place	
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive measures in place	
If so, are these measures:	
a) Legislation	
b) Statutory policy and subsidiary legislation	
c) Policy and administrative measures	
271. Has your country taken all practicable measures to promote and advance priority access on a fair and equitable basis by Contracting Parties to the results and benefits arising from biotechnologies based upon genetic resources provided by those Contracting Parties (19(2))?	
a) no measures	
b) some measures in place	
c) potential measures under review	X
d) comprehensive measures in place	

Decision IV/3. Issues related to biosafety and Decision V/1. Work Plan of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

272. Is your country a Contracting Party to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety?	
a) not a signatory	
b) signed, ratification in progress	X
c) instrument of ratification deposited	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(general) Belgium, as a member state of the European Union, is bound by the European Directives with regard to contained use (219) and deliberate release (220).

(270) Together with the partnership activities developed through the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism, the launch of the Belgian Biosafety Clearing-House could be a first step towards an effective participation of provider Parties.

(272) Belgium is actively participating in the work of the Inter-governmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP), as well as in the various inter-sessional activities which are taking place in that framework.
For example, the Belgian government has provided the CBD Secretariat with an expert for the meeting of technical experts on the Biosafety Clearing-House which was held in Montreal from 11 to 13 September 2000.
Belgium is currently setting up administrative, financial and regulatory measures in order to fulfill its obligations and to prepare for an effective implementation of the Protocol.

Article 20 Financial resources

273. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	

274. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	X	d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources

275. Has your country provided financial support and incentives in respect of those national activities which are intended to achieve the objectives of the Convention (20(1))?	
a) no	
b) yes – incentives only	
c) yes – financial support only	
d) yes – financial support and incentives	X

If a developed country Party - 276. 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 fulfil the obligations of the Convention, as agreed between you and the interim financial mechanism (20(2))?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition – 277. Has your country received new and additional financial resources to enable you to meet the agreed full incremental costs of implementing measures which fulfil the obligations of the Convention (20(2))?	
a) no	
b) yes	

If a developed country Party - 278. Has your country provided financial resources related to implementation of the Convention through bilateral, regional and other multilateral channels (20(3))? ***If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition -*** 279. Has your country used financial resources related to implementation of the Convention from bilateral, regional and other multilateral channels (20(3))?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Decision III/6. Additional financial resources

280. Is your country working to ensure that all funding institutions (including bilateral assistance agencies) are striving to make their activities more supportive of the Convention?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
281. Is your country co-operating in any efforts to develop standardised information on financial support for the objectives of the Convention?	
a) no	
b) yes (please attach information)	X

Decision V/11. Additional financial resources

282. Has your country established a process to monitor financial support to biodiversity?	
a) no	
b) procedures being established	X
c) yes (please provide details)	
283. Are details available of your country's financial support to national biodiversity activities?	
a) no	
b) not in a standardised format	X
c) yes (please provide details)	
284. Are details available of your country's financial support to biodiversity activities in other countries?	
a) not applicable	
b) no	
c) not in a standardised format	X
d) yes (please provide details)	
Developed country Parties - 285. Does your country promote support for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention in the funding policy of its bilateral funding institutions and those of regional and multilateral funding institutions?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
Developing country Parties - 286. Does your country discuss ways and means to support implementation of the objectives of the Convention in its dialogue with funding institutions?	
a) no	
b) yes	

287. Has your country compiled information on the additional financial support provided by the private sector?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please provide details)	
288. Has your country considered tax exemptions in national taxation systems for biodiversity-related donations?	
a) no	
b) not appropriate to national conditions	
c) exemptions under development	
d) exemptions in place	X

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(276-278) For the CHM partnership and the related training programmes, financial resources are provided by the Direcorate-General for Development Co-operation (more information in text box under Article 5 – Co-operation).

(281) Belgium is co-operating to develop standardised information on financial support for the objectives of the Convention through the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD.

Article 21 Financial mechanism

289. What is the relative priority afforded to implementation of this Article and the associated decisions by your country?					
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low	

290. To what extent are the resources available adequate for meeting the obligations and recommendations made?							
a) Good		b) Adequate	X	c) Limiting		d) Severely limiting	

Further comments on relative priority and on availability of resources
Belgium attaches great importance to the follow-up of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the interim financial mechanism of the Convention. As a GEF Council Member, Belgium pays special attention to the share of biodiversity projects in the overall GEF portfolio, to the timely approval of enabling activities, to the incorporation of COP guidelines into GEF policy and activities, and to the adequate reporting of GEF activities to the COP. In general, the resources for biodiversity through GEF have been adequate and growing. Within the negotiations for the 3rd replenishment of GEF, Belgium is defending a substantial increase of resources.

291. Has your country worked to strengthen existing financial institutions to provide financial resources for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Decision III/7. Guidelines for the review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism

292. Has your country provided information on experiences gained through activities funded by the financial mechanism?	
a) no activities	
b) no, although there are activities	
c) yes, within the previous national report	X
d) yes, through case-studies	
e) yes, through other means (please give details below)	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

Article 23 Conference of the Parties

293. How many people from your country participated in each of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties?	
a) COP 1 (Nassau)	7
b) COP 2 (Jakarta)	4
c) COP 3 (Buenos Aires)	2
d) COP 4 (Bratislava)	4
e) COP 5 (Nairobi)	6

Decision I/6, Decision II/10, Decision III/24 and Decision IV/17. Finance and budget

294. Has your country paid all of its contributions to the Trust Fund?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Decision IV/16 (part) Preparation for meetings of the Conference of the Parties

295. Has your country participated in regional meetings focused on discussing implementation of the Convention before any meetings of the Conference of the Parties?	
a) no	
b) yes (please specify which)	X
If a developed country Party – 296. Has your country funded regional and sub-regional meetings to prepare for the COP, and facilitated the participation of developing countries in such meetings?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details below)	X

Decision V/22. Budget for the programme of work for the biennium 2001-2002

297. Did your country pay its contribution to the core budget (BY Trust Fund) for 2001 by 1st January 2001?	
a) yes in advance	
b) yes on time	
c) no but subsequently paid	
d) not yet paid	X

298. Has your country made additional voluntary contributions to the trust funds of the Convention?	
a) yes in the 1999-2000 biennium	X
b) yes for the 2001-2002 biennium	
c) expect to do so for the 2001-2002 biennium	X
d) no	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(293) All numbers refer to government delegates only.

(294) All contributions to the Trust Fund, including the one for the year 2000, were paid. For the year 2000, the Belgian contribution (88,281 US$) was paid on the 2nd January 2001. For the year 2001, this contribution will amount to 96,942 US$.

(295) EU co-ordination meetings in preparation of COPs.

(296) Belgium supported a regional meeting of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), held in Harare in preparation of COP-5.

(298 a) In 2000, a voluntary contribution of 8 million BEF was granted to the Trust Fund (BE) for approved activities by COP.
(298 c) It is expected that further support, through voluntary contributions, will be given during the biennium 2001-2002 (amount to be determined).

Article 24 Secretariat

299. Has your country provided direct support to the Secretariat in terms of seconded staff, financial contribution for Secretariat activities, etc?	
a) no	X
b) yes	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(299) Indirect support was provided through the assignment of a Belgian collaborator within the Biodiversity Unit of UNEP from 1994 to 1996.

Article 25 Subsidiary body on scientific, technical and technological advice

300. How many people from your country participated in each of the meetings of SBSTTA?	
a) SBSTTA I (Paris)	3
b) SBSTTA II (Montreal)	2
c) SBSTTA III (Montreal)	2
d) SBSTTA IV (Montreal)	2
e) SBSTTA V (Montreal)	2

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(300 a) SBSTTA I: 2 government delegates, 1 observer

(300 b) SBSTTA II: 2 government delegates

(300 c) SBSTTA III: 1 government delegate, 1 observer

(300 d) SBSTTA IV: 1 government delegate, 1 observer

(300 e) SBSTTA V: 1 government delegate, 1 observer

(300 f) SBSTTA VI: 8 government delegates, 1 observer

Article 26 Reports

301. What is the status of your first national report?	
a) Not submitted	
b) Summary report submitted	
c) Interim/draft report submitted	
d) Final report submitted	X
If b), c) or d), was your report submitted:	
by the original deadline of 1.1.98 (Decision III/9)?	
by the extended deadline of 31.12.98 (Decision IV/14)?	X
Later (please specify date)	

Decision IV/14 National reports

302. Did all relevant stakeholders participate in the preparation of this national report, or in the compilation of information used in the report?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
303. Has your country taken steps to ensure that its first and/or second national report(s) is/are available for use by relevant stakeholders?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
If yes, was this by:	
a) informal distribution?	
b) publishing the report?	X
c) making the report available on request?	X
d) posting the report on the Internet?	X

Decision V/19. National reporting

304. Has your country prepared voluntary detailed thematic reports on one or more of the items for in-depth consideration at an ordinary meeting of the parties, following the guidelines provided?	
a) no	X
b) yes – forest ecosystems	
c) yes – alien species	
d) yes – benefit sharing	

Further comments on implementation of this Article

(301) Submitted during COP-4 (Bratislava) and distributed *in situ* to all delegations.

(302) Some departments paid little or no attention to the first national report. The private sector did not participate in the process.

(304) Thematic reports on forest biological diversity and alien species are in preparation.

Decision V/6. Ecosystem approach

305. Is your country applying the ecosystem approach, taking into account the principles and guidance contained in the annex to decision V/6?	
a) no	
b) under consideration	Wa.
c) some aspects are being applied	
d) substantially implemented	Fl.
306. 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, in particular in the context of activities developed within the thematic areas of the Convention?	
a) no	
b) under consideration	
c) some aspects are being applied	X
d) substantially implemented	
307. Is your country identifying case studies and implementing pilot projects that demonstrate the ecosystem approach, and using workshops and other mechanisms to enhance awareness and share experience?	
a) no	Wa.
b) case-studies identified	
c) pilot projects underway	Fl.
d) workshops planned/held	
e) information available through CHM	
308. Is your country strengthening capacities for implementation of the ecosystem approach, and providing technical and financial support for capacity-building to implement the ecosystem approach?	
a) no	
b) yes within the country	X
c) yes including support to other Parties	
309. Has your country promoted regional co-operation in applying the ecosystem approach across national borders?	
a) no	
b) informal co-operation	
c) formal co-operation (please give details)	X

Inland water ecosystems

Decision IV/4. Status and trends of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems and options for conservation and sustainable use

310. Has your country included information on biological diversity in wetlands when providing information and reports to the CSD, and considered including inland water biological diversity issues at meetings to further the recommendations of the CSD?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
311. Has your country included inland water biological diversity considerations in its work with organisations, institutions and conventions affecting or working with inland water?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition – 312. When requesting support for projects relating to inland water ecosystems from the GEF, has your country given priority to identifying important areas for conservation, preparing and implementing integrated watershed, catchment and river basin management plans, and investigating processes contributing to biodiversity loss?	
a) no	
b) yes	
313. Has your country reviewed the programme of work specified in annex 1 to the decision, and identified priorities for national action in implementing the programme?	
a) no	
b) under review	X
c) yes	

Decision V/2. Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work on the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems (implementation of decision IV/4)

314. Is your country supporting and/or participating in the River Basin Initiative?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
315. Is your country gathering information on the status of inland water biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) assessments ongoing	X
c) assessments completed	X
316. Is this information available to other Parties?	
a) no	
b) yes - national report	
c) yes – through the CHM	X
d) yes – other means (please give details below)	X

317. Has your country developed national and/or sectoral plans for the conservation and sustainable use of inland water ecosystems?	
a) no	
b) yes – national plans only	
c) yes – national plans and major sectors	X
d) yes – national plans and all sectors	
318. Has your country implemented capacity-building measures for developing and implementing these plans?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Decision III/21. Relationship of the Convention with the CSD and biodiversity-related conventions

319. Is the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands, and of migratory species and their habitats, fully incorporated into your national strategies, plans and programmes for conserving biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Further comments on implementation of these decisions and the associated programme of work

(309) The Walloon region has developed formal bilateral co-operation with neighbouring countries, regarding the integrated management of transboundary ecosystems, such as river ecosystems and protected areas.

(315) Flanders - The status of inland water biological diversity is monitored on a large timescale. Even when assessments are already carried out for Belgium as a whole, the Flemish Region is still going on with regional assessments to get a good picture on a larger time frame.

(316 c) Direct links are in preparation.
(316 d) Information available in scientific reports. A general overview is given in:
- Delbeuck, Cl, 2000. Etat de l'Environnement Wallon, 2000. L'environnement wallon à l'aube du XXIe siècle. Approche évolutive. Ministère de la Région wallonne, Direction générale des Ressources Naturelles et de l'Environnement.
- Kuijken, E. (red.), 1999. Natuurrapport 1999. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededelingen van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud 6, Brussel.

Marine and coastal biological diversity

Decision II/10 and Decision IV/5. Conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity

320. Does your national strategy and action plan promote the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
321. 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	
322. Has your country provided the Executive Secretary with advice and information on future options concerning the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
323. Has your country undertaken and/or exchanged information on demonstration projects as practical examples of integrated marine and coastal area management?	
a) no	
b) yes – previous national report	
c) yes - case-studies	
d) yes - other means (please give details below)	X
324. Has your country programmes in place to enhance and improve knowledge on the genetic structure of local populations of marine species subjected to stock enhancement and/or sea-ranching activities?	
a) no	
b) programmes are being developed	
c) programmes are being implemented for some species	X
d) programmes are being implemented for many species	
e) not a perceived problem	
325. Has your country reviewed the programme of work specified in an annex to the decision, and identified priorities for national action in implementing the programme?	
a) no	
b) under review	X
c) yes	

Decision V/3. Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity (implementation of decision IV/5)

326. Is your country contributing to the implementation of the work plan on coral bleaching?	
a) no	
b) yes	
c) not relevant	X
327. Is your country implementing other measures in response to coral bleaching?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details below)	
c) not relevant	X
328. Has your country submitted case-studies on the coral bleaching phenomenon to the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	
b) yes	
c) not relevant	X

Further comments on implementation of these decisions and the associated programme of work

(323) Integrated marine and coastal management: Belgium is currently completing a project called ‘Integral Coastal Conservation Initiative’ with the financial support of the EU LIFE-Nature programme. Activity reports are available yearly. The final report is due at the end of 2001.

Agricultural biological diversity

Decision III/11 and Decision IV/6. Conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity

329. Has your country identified and assessed relevant ongoing activities and existing instruments at the national level?	
a) no	
b) early stages of review and assessment	X
c) advanced stages of review and assessment	
d) assessment completed	
330. Has your country identified issues and priorities that need to be addressed at the national level?	
a) no	
b) in progress	X
c) yes	X
331. Is your country using any methods and indicators to monitor the impacts of agricultural development projects, including the intensification and extensification of production systems, on biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	X
c) advanced stages of development	
d) mechanisms in place	
332. Is your country taking steps to share experiences addressing the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – case-studies	X
c) yes – other mechanisms (please specify)	Fl.
333. Has your country conducted case-studies on the issues identified by SBSTTA: i) pollinators, ii) soil biota, and iii) integrated landscape management and farming systems?	
a) no	
b) yes – pollinators	X
c) yes – soil biota	X
d) yes – integrated landscape management and farming systems	X
334. Is your country establishing or enhancing mechanisms for increasing public awareness and understanding of the importance of the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity components?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	
c) advanced stages of development	X
d) mechanisms in place	

335. Does your country have national strategies, programmes and plans which ensure the development and successful implementation of policies and actions that lead to sustainable use of agrobiodiversity components?	
a) no	
b) early stages of development	X
c) advanced stages of development	
d) mechanisms in place	
336. Is your country promoting the transformation of unsustainable agricultural practices into sustainable production practices adapted to local biotic and abiotic conditions?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
337. Is your country promoting the use of farming practices that not only increase productivity, but also arrest degradation as well as reclaim, rehabilitate, restore and enhance biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	X
c) yes – significant extent	
338. Is your country promoting mobilisation of farming communities for the development, maintenance and use of their knowledge and practices in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes - limited extent	X
c) yes - significant extent	
339. Is your country helping to implement the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
340. Is your country collaborating with other Contracting Parties to identify and promote sustainable agricultural practices and integrated landscape management?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

Decision V/5. Agricultural biological diversity: review of phase I of the programme of work and adoption of a multi-year work programme

341. Has your country reviewed the programme of work annexed to the decision and identified how you can collaborate in its implementation?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

342. Is your country promoting regional and thematic co-operation within this framework of the programme of work on agricultural biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) some co-operation	X
c) widespread co-operation	
d) full co-operation in all areas	
343. Has your country provided financial support for implementation of the programme of work on agricultural biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) limited additional funds	X
c) significant additional funds	
If a developed country Party – 344. Has your country provided financial support for implementation of the programme of work on agricultural biological diversity, in particular for capacity building and case-studies, in developing countries and countries with economies in transition?	
a) no	X
b) yes within existing co-operation programme(s)	
b) yes, including limited additional funds	
c) yes, with significant additional funds	
345. Has your country supported actions to raise public awareness in support of sustainable farming and food production systems that maintain agricultural biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes, to a limited extent	X
c) yes, to a significant extent	
346. Is your country co-ordinating its position in both the Convention on Biological Diversity and the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources?	
a) no	
b) taking steps to do so	X
c) yes	
347. Is your country a Contracting Party to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade?	
a) not a signatory	
b) signed – ratification in process	X
c) instrument of ratification deposited	
348. Is your country supporting the application of the Executive Secretary for observer status in the Committee on Agriculture of the World Trade Organisation?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

349. Is your country collaborating with other Parties on the conservation and sustainable use of pollinators?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
350. Is your country compiling case-studies and implementing pilot projects relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of pollinators?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details)	X
351. Has information on scientific assessments relevant to genetic use restriction technologies been supplied to other Contracting Parties through media such as the Clearing-House Mechanism?	
a) not applicable	
b) no	X
c) yes - national report	
d) yes – through the CHM	
e) yes – other means (please give details below)	
352. Has your country considered how to address generic concerns regarding such technologies as genetic use restriction technologies under international and national approaches to the safe and sustainable use of germplasm?	
a) no	X
b) yes – under consideration	
c) yes – measures under development	
353. Has your country carried out scientific assessments on inter alia ecological, social and economic effects of genetic use restriction technologies?	
a) no	X
b) some assessments	
c) major programme of assessments	
354. Has your country disseminated the results of scientific assessments on inter alia ecological, social and economic effects of genetic use restriction technologies?	
a) no	X
b) yes – through the CHM	
c) yes – other means (please give details below)	
355. Has your country identified the 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?	
a) no	X
b) some measures identified	Fl.
c) potential measures under review	
d) comprehensive review completed	

356. Has your country assessed whether there is a need for effective regulations at the national level with respect to genetic use restriction technologies to ensure the safety of human health, the environment, food security and the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – regulation needed	X
c) yes – regulation not needed (please give more details)	
357. Has your country developed and applied such regulations taking into account, inter alia, the specific nature of variety-specific and trait-specific genetic use restriction technologies?	
a) no	X
b) yes – developed but not yet applied	
c) yes – developed and applied	
358. Has information about these regulations been made available to other Contracting Parties?	
a) no	X
b) yes – through the CHM	
c) yes – other means (please give details below)	

Further comments on implementation of these decisions and the associated programme of work

(333, 349, 350) The main pollinators of wild or cultivated plants belong to the Apoidea, or bees in a broad sense. There are 7 Apoidea families and more than 1000 species in Europe, of which 376 species have been identified in Belgium. Several Belgian specialists at the University of Mons, the Gembloux Agricultural University and the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences study wild Apoidea at Belgian and European levels. These experts have worked together since the 1970's to establish a common database on Apoidea, which contains nowadays more than 120,000 records on Belgian and European species. A faunal overview of European bumblebees will be published soon whereas a faunal study of the Halictidae of Belgium should be finalised by 2002.

In 1993, the conclusions of an inventory report were rather alarming: populations of 31% of Belgian Apoidea species were found to be declining. Since 1993 however, no exhaustive inventory has been carried out in Belgium.

Funding would be welcome to materialise research results. This could include the creation of a website providing:

- general information on pollinators and on measures to be taken for their sustainable conservation;
- information on each Apoidea species, including illustrations for each species allowing their correct identification;
- distribution maps in Belgium and Europe;
- a list of flowers on which the species gather nectar and which are pollinated, its status (common, vulnerable, endangered, etc.) in Belgium and Europe.

National inventories are currently carried out in several European countries and co-operation at European level could be considered. Partner countries could include the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Poland. Although these countries are characterised by considerable human resources (Apoidea specialists), research is often hampered by a lack of resources, just as it is the case in Belgium.

(334) Flanders establishes or enhances mechanisms for increasing public awareness and understanding of the importance of the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity components:
- through support of non governmental organisations for safeguarding indigenous breeds of livestock (cows, sheep, goats, rabbits, poultry);
- through subsidies to farmers for indigenous breeds of livestock (cows, sheep, goats);
- through support of non governmental organisation safeguarding old fruit races;
- through support and subsidies for biological agriculture (using a broader scope of races and varieties);
- through support/subsidies for (agro)biodiversity in permanent grasslands.

(347) Belgium signed the Rotterdam Convention on 11 September 1998. The ratification progress is in process and should be completed before 31 December 2001. For Belgium, this Convention is exclusively a federal competence.

Forest biological diversity

Decision II/9 and Decision IV/7. Forest biological diversity

359. Has your country included expertise on forest biodiversity in its delegations to the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests?	
a) no	
b) yes	
c) not relevant	X
360. Has your country reviewed the programme of work annexed to the decision and identified how you can collaborate in its implementation?	
a) no	
b) under review	
c) yes	X
361. Has your country integrated forest biological diversity considerations in its participation and collaboration with organisations, institutions and conventions affecting or working with forest biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
362. Does your country give high priority to allocation of resources to activities that advance the objectives of the Convention in respect of forest biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
For developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition - 363. When requesting assistance through the GEF, Is your country proposing projects which promote the implementation of the programme of work?	
a) no	
b) yes	

Decision V/4. Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work for forest biological diversity

364. Do the actions that your country is taking to address the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity conform with the ecosystem approach?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
365. Do the actions that your country is taking to address the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity take into consideration the outcome of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests?	
a) no	
b) yes	X

366. Will your country contribute to the future work of the UN Forum on Forests?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
367. Has your country provided relevant information on the implementation of this work programme?	
a) no	X
b) yes – submission of case-studies	
c) yes – thematic national report submitted	
d) yes – other means (please give details below)	
368. Has your country integrated national forest programmes into its national biodiversity strategies and action plans applying the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management?	
a) no	
b) yes – limited extent	
c) yes – significant extent	X
369. Has your country undertaken measures to ensure participation by the forest sector, private sector, indigenous and local communities and non-governmental organisations in the implementation of the programme of work?	
a) no	
b) yes – some stakeholders	Wa.
c) yes – all stakeholders	Fl.
370. Has your country taken measures to strengthen national capacities including local capacities, to enhance the effectiveness and functions of forest protected area networks, as well as national and local capacities for implementation of sustainable forest management, including restoration?	
a) no	
b) some programmes covering some needs	
c) many programmes covering some needs	X
d) programmes cover all perceived needs	
e) no perceived need	
371. Has your country taken measures to implement the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on valuation of forest goods and services?	
a) no	
b) under consideration	X
c) measures taken	

Biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands

Decision V/23. Consideration of options for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in dryland, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah ecosystems

372. Has your country reviewed the programme of work annexed to the decision and identified how you will implement it?	
a) no	X
b) under review	
c) yes	
373. Is your country supporting scientifically, technically and financially, at the national and regional levels, the activities identified in the programme of work?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	X
c) to a significant extent	
374. Is your country fostering co-operation for the regional or subregional implementation of the programme among countries sharing similar biomes?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	X
c) to a significant extent	

Further comments on implementation of these Decisions and the associated programme of work

(Forest biological diversity) For Forestry in Flanders:
- Research (genetic and molecular identification) and field inventory projects on real indigenous species of trees and shrubs, with special attention for rare and vulnerable species;
- Programme towards establishment of, and research in, a network of forest reserves.

(362) Walloon Region - In management plans and in financial incentives for private and public forest owners, but also by integration of biodiversity indicators in the regional continuous forest inventory.

(366) The Walloon Region will contribute to the future work of the UNFF (no human resources for UNFF-1). One person is involved full-time in the preparation of UNFF-2.

(368) Walloon Region - Not by the way of national forest programmes, but via the ‘Plan de Développement de la Nature’ and management plans.

(372-374) Belgium can not apply this decision at the national level because it has no dry or sub-humid lands. Nevertheless, bilateral co-operation projects with Belgian input on some aspects related to this theme exist (see text box at the end of Art. 5 – Co-operation).
The development of synergies with other conventions, particularly the Convention to Combat Desertification as stipulated in the work programme, is under consideration. Possible financial contributions are currently under review.

Decision V/20. Operations of the Convention

375. Does your country take into consideration gender balance, involvement of indigenous people and members of local communities, and the range of relevant disciplines and expertise, when nominating experts for inclusion in the roster?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
376. Has you country actively participated in subregional and regional activities in order to prepare for Convention meetings and enhance implementation of the Convention?	
a) no	
b) to a limited extent	
c) to a significant extent	X
377. Has your country undertaken a review of national programmes and needs related to the implementation of the Convention and, if appropriate, informed the Executive Secretary?	
a) no	
b) under way	X
c) yes	

Please use this box to identify what specific activities your country has carried out as a DIRECT RESULT of becoming a Contracting Party to the Convention, referring back to previous questions as appropriate:

(a) Creation and development of the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism.

(b) CHM-partnership with various African countries.

(c) Financial resources made available to GEF for biodiversity purposes.

(d) Funding by the State Secretary for Development Co-operation of a number of parks and reserves in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

(e) Organisation of the colloquium 'Belgium and the Convention on Biological Diversity – A state of the art' (RBINS, 17.11.1999). Colloquium proceedings were published and made available to all.

(f) Organisation of the symposia 'Botanical biodiversity and Belgium's expertise - BBB 2001' (NBGB, 19-20.10.2001) and 'Status and trends of the Belgian fauna, with a particular attention to alien species' (RBINS, 14.12.2001). Proceedings of both symposia will be available.

(g) Publication of the First National Report of Belgium to the CBD (www.kbinirsnb.be/bch-cbd/belgium/contribution/natiorep1/content.htm).

(h) Development of a country study on the Belgian biological diversity (in progress, expected publication date: 31.12.2001).

(i) Development of a national biodiversity strategy (in development, publication is expected during the first part of 2002).

(j) Promoting coherence and co-ordination between biodiversity, climate and desertification processes.

(k) Set up of a steering committee 'Biodiversity Convention' under the CCIEP. In support of the steering committee, several thematic contact groups are now fully operational (e.g. forest biological diversity, access and benefit-sharing, national reporting, marine and coastal biological diversity, national strategy, etc).

Please use this box to identify joint initiatives with other Parties, referring back to previous questions as appropriate:

(a) The CHM-partnership with various African countries (www.kbinirsnb.be/bch-cbd/belgium/partner.htm).

(b) Input from Flanders in the feasibility study and workshop regarding the harmonisation of national reporting under co-ordination of UNEP.

(c) Belgium contributed actively to the Informal Advisory Committee, Task Force and Steering Committee to the European CHM, together with other EU-countries with a well-developed CHM like *inter alia* Germany and Italy.

(d) Development of the EURODETS (Nature Detectives on the Internet) project together with the Dutch, French, German and Italian CHM National Focal Points, under the co-ordination of the German CHM NFP.

(e) Together with other EU countries, Belgium is strongly supporting the co-ordination between biodiversity, climate and desertification issues.

Please use this box to provide any further comments on matters related to national implementation of the Convention:

The Convention on Biological Diversity does not afford particular attention to urban biodiversity. The implementation of the Convention in urban areas, such as the Brussels Capital Region, is thus not evident. Although any discussion concerning biodiversity in the urban environment, particularly on a small scale, could seem trivial, we consider this as a lack in the Convention. Indeed, at times where almost half of the world's population lives in urban areas, such a debate has become inevitable.

Not only cities are suitable for a high level of biodiversity, recent development has also shown that peri-urban areas often present a richer biodiversity than the surroundings of agricultural areas. Moreover, it is essential to make public and politicians (decision-makers) aware of the biodiversity which surrounds them in their own urban environment. This is merely a first step towards recognizing the importance of biodiversity in the natural areas such as forests, wetlands, etc.

(For more information on country characteristics related to the implementation of the CBD, see text box starting on p. 9)

The wording of these questions is based on the Articles of the Convention and the decisions of the Conference of the Parties. Please provide information on any difficulties that you have encountered in interpreting the wording of these questions

In general:

- indications, like the priority scale (high, medium, low), are interpreted differently by the various stakeholders;
- some questions are somewhat vague and subject to interpretation (e.g. question 229);
- for some questions which can be applied at national or international level (e.g. in relation to Article 8(j) and dry and sub-humid lands), it should be clearly mentioned if an answer on national implementation is asked or on the contrary if information on co-operation projects or joint programmes is requested;
- some questions contain several sub-questions making it problematic to give one (straight) answer.

If your country has completed its national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), please give the following information:

At this moment, the national NBSAP is in preparation. On the other hand, the Flemish and Walloon Region have both already developed regional strategies and management plans (see below) and the Brussels Capital Region included strategic principles in various management documents.

Date of completion:		1997	
If the NBSAP has been adopted by the Government			
By which authority?		Government of Flanders	
On what date?		July 8, 1997	
If the NBSAP has been published please give			
Title:		MINA-plan 2. ‘Het Vlaamse Milieubeleidsplan’ 1997-2001.	
Name and address of publisher:		Jean-Pierre Heirman Environment, Nature, Land and Water Administration (AMINAL) Koning Albert II-laan 20 B-1000 Brussels	
ISBN:		90-403-0079-8	
Price (if applicable):		300 BEF (= 7.44 EUR)	
Other information on ordering:			
If the NBSAP has not been published			
Please give full details of how copies can be obtained:			
If the NBSAP has been posted on a national website			
Please give full URL:		www.instnat.be/Natuurrapport/index.htm	
If the NBSAP has been lodged with an Implementing Agency of the GEF			
Please indicate which agency:			
Has a copy of the NBSAP been lodged with the Convention Secretariat?			
Yes		No	X

Date of completion:		1995	
If the NBSAP has been adopted by the Government			
By which authority?		Government of the Walloon Region	
On what date?		March 9, 1995	
If the NBSAP has been published please give			
Title:		Le Plan d'environnement pour le Développement durable.	
Name and address of publisher:		Ministry of the Walloon Region Directorate General for Natural Resources and Environment Avenue Prince de Liège 15 5100 Jambes	
ISBN:			
Price (if applicable):			
Other information on ordering:			
If the NBSAP has not been published			
Please give full details of how copies can be obtained:			
If the NBSAP has been posted on a national website			
Please give full URL:		mrw.wallonie.be/dgrne/pedd/c0e_tm.htm	
If the NBSAP has been lodged with an Implementing Agency of the GEF			
Please indicate which agency:			
Has a copy of the NBSAP been lodged with the Convention Secretariat?			
Yes		No	X

Please provide similar details if you have completed a Biodiversity Country Study or another report or action plan relevant to the objectives of this Convention

* National level: Country study on biological diversity in preparation (foreseen publication date: end of 2001).

* For Flanders:
- NARA-1: www.instnat.be
- MIRA: www.vmm.be

* For Wallonia:
- State of the Environment Report 2000: environnement.wallonie.be/eew2000/

Please provide details of any national body (e.g. national audit office) that has or will review the implementation of the Convention in your country

In 1999, the Belgian Federal Council for Sustainable Development evaluated the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Belgian federal level. The competences of the different federal departments concerned were listed. An overview of what's been and what should be done was given. Finally five recommendations were addressed to the Federal Government:

1. the need for more political coherence,
2. the need for adequate structures (e.g. national programme on biodiversity),
3. the need to make aware and implicate the concerned departments,
4. the need to develop a scientific base for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity,
5. the need to make aware and inform concerned actors and the general public.

Abbreviations and acronyms used in the report

ABC	Access to Belgian Collections of interest for biodiversity
ABIC	African Biodiversity Information Centre
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
AERW	Arrêté de l'Exécutif Régional Wallon (Walloon Regional Executive Order)
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 the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
AGW	Arrêté du Gouvernement Wallon (Walloon Government Order)
AIR	Agriculture and Agro-Industry including Fisheries Programme of Research and Technological Development
AMINAL	Administratie Milieu-, Natuur-, Land- en Waterbeheer van het Vlaams Gewest (Environment, Nature, Land and Water Management Administration of Flanders)
APFT	Avenir des Peuples des Forêts Tropicales (The Future of Tropical Rainforest People)
AR	Arrêté Royal (Royal Decree)
ARI	Agricultural Research Institute
B CHM	Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism
BCCM	Belgian Co-ordinated Collections of Micro-organisms
BCH	Biosafety Clearing-House
BEM	Biological evaluation map
BEST	Bureau d'Etudes Scientifiques et Techniques en R.D. du Congo (Office for Scientific and Technical Research in the D.R. Congo)
BIME	Brussels Institute for Management of the Environment
BPA	Belgian Patent Act
CABRI	Common Access to Biological Resources and Information
CARI	Centre Apicole de Recherches et d'Informations (Beekeeping Research and Information Centre)
CASTEX	Common Approach to Scientific Touring Exhibitions
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCIEP	Co-ordinating Committee for International Environmental Policy
CECODI	Centre International d'Ecodéveloppement Intégré (International Centre for Integrated Ecodevelopment)
CEDRE	Centre d'Etudes du Droit de l'Environnement (Study Centre for Environmental Law)
CETAF	Consortium of European Taxonomic Facilities
CHM	Clearing-House Mechanism
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CNDRS	Centre National de Documentation et de Recherche Scientifique (National Documentation and Scientific Research Centre)
CONNECT	European Conservation Institutes Research Network
COP	Conference of the Parties

COPERNICUS Co-operation Program in Europe for Research on Nature and Industry through Co-ordinated University Studies

COST	European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research
CRIE	Centre Régional d'Initiation à l'Environnement (Regional Centre for Environmental Initiation)
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
CVN	Centrum voor Natuur- en Milieu-educatie (Centre for Nature and Environmental education)
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 Assistance Committee of the OECD
DG	Directorate-General
DGIC	Directorate-General for International Co-operation
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
EC	European Community
ECE-ICP	International Co-operative Programme of the UN Economic Commission for Europe
EE	Environmental education
EEC	European Economic Community
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
ENBI	European Network of Biodiversity Information
ENHSIN	European Natural History Specimen Information Network
EPBRS	European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy
EPC	European Patent Convention
EU	European Union
EUFORGEN	European Forest Genetic Resources Programme
EUROBATS	Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe
EURODETS	Nature Detectives on the Internet
FAIR	Agriculture and Fisheries Programme (of the EU)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FNRS	Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique (National Scientific Research Fund)
FUSAGx	Faculté Universitaire des Sciences Agronomiques de Gembloux (Gembloux Agricultural University)
FUSL	Facultés universitaires Saint-Louis (University Faculties Saint-Louis Brussels)
GAP	Good agricultural practice
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
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GISP	Global Invasive Species Programme
GMES	Global Monitoring and Environment Security
GMO	Genetically modified organism
GMP	Good manufacturing practice
GNP	Gross national product
GTI	Global Taxonomy Initiative
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus

IARC	International Agricultural Research Centre
IBOY	International Biodiversity Observation Year
ICCP	Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety
ICE	Interministerial Conference for the Environment
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: Scientific Institute of Public Health – Louis Pasteur)
INIBAP	International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (of UNESCO)
IODE	International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange
IPGRI	International Plant Genetic Resources Institute
ISB-SURWAL	Inventaire et Surveillance de la Biodiversité – Surveillance de l'état de l'environnement par bio-indicateurs en Wallonie (Inventory and Monitoring of Biodiversity – Monitoring of the state of the environment through bio-indicators in Wallonia)
ISH	Inventaire et Surveillance des Habitats (Inventory and Monitoring of Habitats)
IU	International Undertaking (on Plant Genetic Resources)
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – The World Conservation Union
JNM	Jeugdbond voor Natuurstudie en Milieubescherming (Youth Organisation for Nature Studies and Environment)
KMFRI	Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute
KUL	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (Catholic University of Leuven)
LIFE	L'Instrument Financier pour l'Environnement (Financial Instrument for the Environment)
LITUS	Interactions of biodiversity, productivity and tourism on sandy beaches
LMBP	Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Plasmid collection (Ghent)
LMG	Laboratory for Microbiology (Ghent)
LRBPO	Ligue Royale Belge pour la Protection des Oiseaux (Royal Belgian Bird Protection Union)
LUC	Limburgs Universitair Centrum (University Centre of Limburg)
MASDEA	Marine Species Database for Eastern Africa
MINA-plan	Milieubeleidsplan en Natuurontwikkelingsplan voor Vlaanderen (Flemish Environmental Policy and Nature Development Plan)
MIRA	Milieu- en natuurrapport Vlaanderen (Environmental and nature report Flanders)
MIRA-S	Milieu- en natuurrapport Vlaanderen: scenario's (Environmental and nature report Flanders: scenarios)
MIRA-T	Milieu- en natuurrapport Vlaanderen: thema's (Environmental and nature report Flanders: themes)
MMM	Marien Milieu Marin (Marine Environment)
MOSAICC	Micro-organisms Sustainable Use, Access Regulation and International Code of Conduct
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
NARA	Natuurrapport Vlaanderen (Flemish Nature Report)
NARS	National Agricultural Research Systems
NBGB	National Botanic Garden of Belgium
NFP	National focal point
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NMK	National Museums of Kenya
ODINAFRICA	Ocean Data and Information Network for Africa
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)
OSTC	Belgian Federal Office for Scientific, Technical and Cultural Affairs
PASCALIS	Protocols for the Assessment and Conservation of Aquatic Life in the Subsurface
PEDD	Plan Environnemental pour le Développement Durable (Environmental Plan for Sustainable Development)
RBINS	Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences
RDC	Regional Dispatch Centre
RECOSCIX	Regional Co-operation in Scientific and Information Exchange
RMCA	Royal Museum for Central Africa
RNOB	Réserves Naturelles et Ornithologiques de Belgique (Nature and Ornithological Reserves of Belgium)
RUCA	Universitair Centrum Antwerpen (University of Antwerp - RUCA)
RUG	Universiteit Gent (Ghent University)
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SBB	Service of Biosafety and Biotechnology
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SCAR	Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research
SDER	Schéma de Développement de l'Espace Régional (Regional Spatial Development Project)
SGIB	Inventaire des Sites de Grand Intérêt Biologique (Inventory of Sites of Great Biological Interest)
SIBW	Système d'Information sur la Biodiversité en Wallonie (System of Information about Biodiversity in Wallonia)
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPSD	Scientific Plan for a Sustainable Development
TAFIRI	Tanzania Fisheries Research Institute
TRIPS	Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights
UA	Universiteit Antwerpen (University of Antwerp)
UCL	Université catholique de Louvain (Catholic University of Louvain)
UCT	University of Cape Town
ULB	Université 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
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
UNIKIS	Université de Kisangani (University of Kisangani)
UNIN	University of the North (South-Africa)
VIB	Vlaams Instituut voor Biotechnologie (Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology)
VLINA	Vlaams Impulsprogramma Natuurontwikkeling (Flemish Impulse Programme Nature Development)
VLIZ	Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee (Flanders Marine Institute)
VMM	Vlaamse Milieumaatschappij (Flemish Environmental Agency)
VUB	Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Free University of Brussels)
WFCC	World Federation for Culture Collections
WG8J-1	First meeting of the *Ad hoc* open-ended inter-sessional working group on Article 8(j) and related provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity
WIO	Western Indian Ocean
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organisation
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature

Annex 7.1.: List of references on inventory and monitoring activities in the Flemish Region

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Annex 8.1.: Nature conservation in the Walloon Region

1. Protective statuses (see text box at the end of article 8).

2. Taking nature into account outside protected areas

Town and country planning policy

In the Walloon Region, land use is planned: 23 sector plans cover the whole of the territory and define the potential occupation of the territory. Some statuses have been specified in order to maintain environments considered of biological interest. These are green areas "*intended for maintaining, protecting and regenerating the natural environment*" and among these, more particularly, nature areas and nature areas of scientific interest or nature reserves.
Farming and forestry areas are dedicated to their specific activities and may in theory not be subject to urban development.
The Walloon code of town and country planning, urban development and heritage has just been revised. It redefines more particularly area divisions with a view to a future revision of sector plans. As far as nature preservation is concerned, the code plans another specific nature area where the priority will be given to nature conservation and, superimposed on that, protection areas affected by the legislation concerning nature protection.

Natural parks

The decree of 1985 concerning natural parks, stipulates that the "*natural park is a rural territory of high biological and geographical interest, subject to measures intended to protect its environment in harmony with the aspirations of the population and the economic and social development of the territory concerned*". It therefore involves searching for a harmonious integration of human activities and the protection of the natural heritage.
At present, there are seven, officially recognized, natural parks:
- the national natural park of Hautes-Fagnes Eifel;
- the natural park of the valleys of the Burdinale and of the Mehaigne;
- the natural park of the valley of Attert;
- the natural park of the plains of the Escaut;
- the natural park of the Hill country (*pays des Collines*);
- the Natural park of Viroin-Hermeton;
- the Natural park of the High Lands (Hauts Pays).

River contracts

The river contract is a voluntary agreement, between the whole of public and private actors, on objectives aimed at reconciling the many functions and uses of waterways, of their approaches and of catchment basin water resources. It therefore also deals with biological diversity. The approach is based on a twofold principle: a necessary integrated approach of the waterway management on the one hand, involvement and consultation of all parties concerned on the other hand. This is basically a process where decisions are reached by consensus among the political, associative, scientific bodies about various objectives and proposing actions. Seven river contracts exist in Wallonia, two are being drawn up, they concern: the stream of Fosses, the Dendre, the Haute-Meuse, the Munos Bassin, the Semois, the Hoëgne and the Wayai, the Dyle, the Sambre, the Ton and the Ourthe.

Municipal Nature Development Plans

These were launched from the point of view of sustainable development. It involves safeguarding or developing nature diversity at municipal level, in co-operation with all parties concerned and by taking the economic and social

development of the community into account. The means implemented on a local scale were the establishing of partnerships bringing together persons and associations, the drawing up of an inventory of the nature and landscape heritage and the drawing up of a long-term biological diversity development plan. At present, more than 41 municipalities have launched their plan.

Management of roadsides and public spaces

Since 1984, the use of herbicides on public property has been regulated. In particular the use of herbicides is banned in the Walloon Region on verges, embankments, berms and other land of state property and are part of the road system or adjacent to it, including motorways; in public parks; on waterways, ponds, lakes and their banks when they are public property. The use of herbicides is however still authorized for weeding paved areas, or areas covered with gravel, areas situated less than a metre from a railway track and graveyard paths.The ban on using herbicides to maintain roadsides led to roadside cutting. The idea of cutting roadside vegetation late in the season, a practice more favourable to biological diversity, gradually gained ground. After an experimental phase and its application to regional roads, the Nature Conservation Department provided a new impetus by launching a campaign ‘Late cutting-Refuge area’ among municipalities. Several dozens of them signed an agreement with the Walloon Region.
By signing the ‘Roadside’ agreement:
- the municipality undertakes to draw up a management plan defining areas where roadside cutting will be intensive, and others where it will be extensive while taking a number of provisions into account (cutting height above or equal to 10 cm, cutting dates, etc.);
- the Walloon Region provides the municipalities with the roadsigns ‘late cutting-refuge area’, leaflets for distributing information in all letterboxes and topographical maps to 1/10,000 covering the whole of municipal territory.

Agro-environmental measures

Agro-environmental measures are specific grants intended to remunerate farmers for their contribution to the quality of the environment. The specified subsidies include an incentive share but are especially intended to compensate the income that the farmer agrees to lose compared to a more intensive use of the soil.
The following measures have been adopted by the Walloon Region and are applicable everywhere on a voluntary basis:
- late cutting;
- conservation transition strips (edges of fields sown with grass or farmed extensively (without inflows) and extensive meadow strips (located along waterways, farmed without inflows and mowed late in the season);
- keeping and maintaining hedges and wooded strips;
- keeping livestock populations low;
- rearing local endangered breeds.
In areas defined as being sensitive or priority areas, farming operations may be further assisted technically and subsidized to improve the overall environmental impact of farming (reduction of inflows, traditional cultivation and old varieties, late cutting, etc.).

Forestry policy

Nearly half the area of Walloon forests (236,306 ha) belongs to public owners and is administered by the Nature and Forestry Division. These woods are managed on the basis of management plans called ‘forestry developments’. These firstly consist of drawing up an inventory by collecting a maximum of information about the forest. They then fix objectives to fulfill the different functions. They lastly determine means by defining the future forest, by choosing the methods of development and by drawing up the operating regulations and the work programmes. The new developments must take into account priority forestry conservation vocations, water and soil protection and production. These vocations do not

exclude each other but indicate a priority objective. The conservation vocation comprises biological, genetic, climatic and forestry subvocations. It tries more particularly to safeguard the conservation of rare forestry formations, seeding plantations, para-natural formations and plantations with scientific, educational or historic value. The water protection vocation concerns the areas bordering on waterways, spring areas, catchment wells and dam lakes. It aims at preserving a quantitative and qualitative water supply. Restrictions involve the limitation of clearings, the banning of draining or inflows and the type of treatment. As for the soil protection vocation, it concerns hydromorphous soils with temporary or permanent groundwater, peaty or peat-like soils and sloping soils. Restrictions involve the absence of forestry (where peaty soils are concerned), the limitation of clearings, the banning of draining in some cases, the method of regeneration, the density of plantations and the choice of species. As far as general forestry measures are concerned, the main measures recommended are:

- choice of tree species adapted to stations;
- adoption of a stable and balanced plantation structure. Forests with trees of many ages are preferred without excluding regular forests. Priority is given to natural regeneration;
- mixture of tree species;
- dynamic forestry (wider spacing, large clearings).

Specific measures connected with nature conservation are taken: conservation of dead trees, old trees and epiphytes, management of areas of reproduction of endangered animal species, work timetable in relation to nesting periods, etc. Forest edges are taken into account, glades are maintained and some forest areas are assigned a ‘non-management’ status. Measures are provided in connection with cultivation care, the choice of tree species and treatment in order to favour the habitat of wild ungulates. Lastly, the circular includes measures of landscape types to make the forest more attractive to its users. The opening of the forest to the general public aims at encouraging slow traffic, respectful of the forest ecosystem. Areas accessible to youth movements are not overlooked. Subsidies are granted to private owners to encourage the implementation of these measures in private forests.

Thematic operations

A number of nature conservation actions initiated by the Nature Conservation Department or by non-governmental organisations are structured around a particular objective. Let us mention as examples:

- the attics and belfries operation: launched as part of European Nature Conservation Year among municipalities, its aim is to develop the access of wild fauna (bats and chouette effraie) to the attics and belfries of public buildings;
- the operations ‘*Ciconia nigra*’, ‘*Crex crex*’, ‘Chiroptera’ (jointly funded by the LIFE programmes) aim at purchasing natural areas favourable to these species;
- the ‘Wild Gardens’ operation aims at encouraging management more favourable to biodiversity in the gardens of private citizens (choice of plant species, upkeep, development of ponds, etc.);
- the ‘Underground cavities’ operation aims at listing and protecting underground cavities of great biological interest, in particular of chiropteran interest.

Subsidies for the planting of hedges and wooded strips

Subsidies are granted to encourage the replanting of hedges, subject to compliance with conditions that guarantee its biological interest and a life expectancy of at least 20 years.

Production of seeds of wild plants and indigenous trees

Seeds of indigenous wild plants are used increasingly for sowing after work has been done, when farmland is let to lie fallow or even for laying out wild gardens. A programme aimed at the production of seeds of indigenous origin has been launched, so as to avoid the introduction of exotic species and preserve local ecotypes. At forestry level, research into genetic matters is carried out at the Gembloux Scientific Research Centre. A Forestry Seed Centre (Forest counter of Marche-en-Famenne) has been recently set up. It takes part in maintaining the genetic diversity of Walloon forests through the collection of seeds over a maximum of species, a maximum of origins and a maximum of trees.

Regulation of leisure activities

The strong pressure exerted by leisure activities on the natural environment led to various regulations. The use of motor-driven vehicles outside public thoroughfares is limited to authorized circuits. The Walloon Government decree (*AGW*) of 30 June 1994 regulates the movement of boats and divers on and in waterways. It limits activities to certain times, to certain seasons and to certain sections of waterways as long as the flow reaches a minimum level.

Annex 8.2.: Forest and nature reserves in Flanders

Country:	***Belgium (Flanders)***[2)]	
Forest area (ha) Forest cover (%)	146.381/*** 10,8	
Categories**):	**Strict forest reserve**	**Strict nature reserve**
National name	Integraal bosreservaat	Integraal natuurreservaat
Reference date	V/IX/99	V/IX/99
No silvicultural intervention	X	X
Hunting, game management	(X)	(X)
Lifestock present		(X)
Right of way	(X)	(X)
Safeguard at the borders (roads etc.)	X	X
Safeguard within the area (trails, rivers)	(X)	(X)
Visitors information	(X)	
Non destructive research	(X)	(X)
± Destructive research		
Pesticide treatments allowed	(X)	(X)
Fire intervention	(X)	(X)
Other interventions*)	(X)	(X)
Use of genetic resources*)	(X)	
Legal protection*)	1	2
Ownership*)	1,2,3	1,2,3
Manager*)	1	2
Scientific coordination*)	4	4
Actual reserve area (ha)	1200[2)]	500[21)]
Size range (ha) *)	4 - 100	3-20[1)]
Percentage of total forest area	1%	0,5%

*) See annotations (Appendix 7)
**) E.g. Strict Forest Reserve, National Park, Biosphere Area and other national categories, Site of Special Scientific Interest
***) Total forest area in Belgium: 665.000 ha/22%
X = yes; (X) = in some cases; No = no; — = no answer/ no data

	Forest Reserves	Nature Reserves
Legal protection	Forest Decree (1991)	Decree on Nature Cons. (1997)
Ownership	State, municipalities, private, ...	State, municipalities, private organisations
Type of management	Strict or Special Management	Strict or Special Management
Management responsible	Forest Administration	Nature Cons. Administration
Scientific co-ordination	Inst. for Forestry and Game Mgmt.	Inst. for Nature Conservation

Forest reserves in Flanders:

NAAM	Datum besluit	Oppervlakte (HA)	Houtvesterij	provincie
ZONIENWOUD	14/03/95	117.22	GROENENDAAL	BRABANT
MEERDAAL	14/03/95	143.19	LEUVEN	BRABANT
HEVERLEE	14/03/95	47.13	LEUVEN	BRABANT
PARIKE	14/03/95	9.33	GENT	OOST-VLAND.
NEIGEMBOS	14/03/95	45.01	GENT	OOST-VLAND.
JAGERSBORG	14/03/95	86.54	BREE	LIMBOURG
GALGENBERG	14/03/95	29.82	HASSELT	LIMBOURG
JONGENBOS	14/03/95	82.04	HASSELT	LIMBOURG
DILSERBOS EN PLATTE LENDENBERG	14/03/95	58.16	HASSELT	LIMBOURG
LANKLAARDERBOS	14/03/95	83.69	HASSELT	LIMBOURG
KOLMONT	14/03/95	18.58	HASSELT	LIMBOURG
PIJNVEN	14/03/95	36.93	HECHTEL	LIMBOURG
IN DE BRAND	14/03/95	11.44	HECHTEL	LIMBOURG
COOLHEM	14/03/95	78.64	ANTWERPEN	ANTWERPEN
GROOTBROEK	14/03/95	136.41	BREE	LIMBOURG
HALLERBOS	16/02/96	63.78	GROENENDAAL	BRABANT
BOS TER RIJST	16/02/96	28.59	GROENENDAAL	BRABANT
WIJNENDALEBOS	16/02/96	91.61	BRUGGE	WEST-VLAND.
BEIAARDBOS	03/02/97	17.07	GENT	OOST-VLAND.
KOEIMOOK	03/02/97	39.47	TURNHOUT	ANTWERPEN
GASTHUISBOS	03/02/97	11.02	LEUVEN	BRABANT
MELISBROEK - VIEVERSEL	03/02/97	34.86	HASSELT-HECHTEL	LIMBOURG
OP DEN AENHOF	03/02/97	35.71	HECHTEL	LIMBOURG
SEVENDONK	03/02/97	67.60	TURNHOUT	ANTWERPEN
ZONIENWOUD2	27/08/99	7.89	GROENENDAAL	BRABANT
MEERDAAL2	27/08/99	32.66	LEUVEN	BRABANT
GASTHUISBOS LUBBEEK	27/08/99	7.40	LEUVEN	BRABANT
GOORBOSSEN	27/08/99	47.17	TURNHOUT	ANTWERPEN
MUIZENBOS	27/08/99	34.19	ANTWERPEN	ANTWERPEN
DE HEIRNISSE	27/08/99	76.39	GENT	OOST-VLAND.
	Totaal	**1579.54**		

Een vijfde reeks met vijf voorstellen voor een totale oppervlakte van 107ha is momenteel in behandeling :

- Uitbreiding Grootbroek (Bree en Kinrooi) met 40,8641ha (totale oppervlakte wordt 177,2741ha en is daarmee het grootste bosreservaat in Vlaanderen);
- Domeinbos Kraaienbos te Leut (Maasmechelen) : 1,1954ha
- Domeinbos Overheide te Ravels (Weelde) : 29,5359ha
- Gemeentebos “het Konenbos” te Voeren : 10,807ha
- Privébos “Vrouwenbos” te Voeren : 24,8393ha

Forests in nature reserves: an overview (situation in 1999)

Provincie	**Oppervlakte (ha)**
Antwerpen	2535
Limburg	2730
Vlaams-Brabant	964
Oost-Vlaanderen	619
West-Vlaanderen	214
Som	**7062**