



Dr Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary
Convention on Biological Diversity
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800
Montreal, QC H2Y 1N9, Canada
secretariat@cbd.int

Your ref: SCBD/OES/AD/DA/fd/67429

Our ref: CBD/AF/MP/MS/2009-266

Brussels, 26 June 2009

Dear Dr Djoghlaif,

I hereby would like to inform that Belgium celebrated the 2009 International Day for Biological Diversity by organizing a press conference dedicated to the issue of invasive alien species in Belgium. The conference was organized on 19 May 2009 at the National Botanic Garden of Belgium. Two ministers and other speakers presented the subject and the actions taken to tackle the issue of IAS at federal and regional level. An elaborated press file was prepared containing several case studies on IAS in Belgium. The conference had mainly an impact in the written press and on the radio around the date of 22 May. TV records in the fields will be used for dedicated programmes. More information on the press conference, press documents, presentations and pictures can be found on the following webpage of the Belgian CHM:
<http://www.biodiv.be/implementation/ibd/ibd2009>.

In anticipation of this press conference, the Belgian Biodiversity Research Platform organized a scientific conference entitled 'Science facing aliens' to assess the state of the art of scientific knowledge on invasive alien species in Belgium. It covered a broad range of topics, e.g. the mechanisms and evolution of species invasiveness, the environmental impacts of invasions together with the assessment and the management of risks. More information on this scientific conference can be found at http://ias.biodiversity.be/ias/outputs/200905_science_facing_alien.

In addition to the press and scientific conferences, the Belgian CBD National Focal Point compiled a French and Dutch press release on biodiversity and IAS-related activities organized in Belgium on and around the date of 22 May 2009. This press release can also be found on the webpage <http://www.biodiv.be/implementation/ibd/ibd2009>.

One of these IAS-related activities is the DANAH LIFE-project for nature and forest restoration and management on military areas - a cooperation between the Agency for Nature and Forest (Flemish government) and the Ministry of Defence. An important action is the wide-spread removal of alien tree species. DANAH organised an international conference from 18-20 May, and had several press conferences on the agenda. More information can be found on the webpage: <http://www.danah.be>.

On 19 May the green areas managers of the 19 municipalities in Brussels-Capital Region were invited for a special training day on invasive alien species in urban areas and fight means available. The Nature, Water and Forest Section of the public body 'Brussels Environment' provided the training and focussed on the identification, ecology and management of the main invasive alien species of the Region: giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), Egyptian goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*), harlequin ladybird (*Harmonia axyridis*) and ring-necked parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*). The training day was repeated on 16 June for colleagues of Brussels Environment.

In Wallonia, the cross-border Contract of River of the Haute-Sûre organized a day of discovery entitled "La Sûre d'amont en aval". On May 31, the public was invited to discover the basin of the Sûre from its source down to the dam of Esch-sur-Sûre by crossing numerous wetlands protected under the Ramsar Convention. The impacts of invasive alien species were highlighted along the walk. Programme available on www.crhs.eu.

Finally, I have the pleasure to join in annexe of this letter copies of the press file, the abstract book of the scientific conference and the press release jointly prepared on the occasion of the IBD 2009.

Yours sincerely,



Anne Franklin
Belgian CBD National Focal Point
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural
Sciences

Annexes: - press release of IAS-related activities in Belgium;
- press file of the joint celebration of IBD2009;
- abstract book of the scientific conference.

Copy to: C. Collin (FPS DG Env.), E. Branquart (BBPF), E. Martens (LNE),
M. Gryseels (IBGE), C. Debruyne (SPW).