

BELGIUM submission in response to CBD Notification 2018-019: Mainstreaming of biodiversity and other strategic actions to enhance implementation: request for submission of relevant information

Dear Mrs Cristiana Paşca Palmer,

On 25 January you issued a notification inviting us to provide input for documentation being prepared for the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), on the topic of “Mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors and other strategic actions to enhance implementation.”, focussing on current policies, tools, and practices of Parties with respect to mainstreaming biodiversity in the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing, and health.

Belgium is pleased to be able to provide such input taking into account the high relevance we attribute to the subject. Below you will find information on a number of case studies and practical examples of the mainstreaming of biodiversity into the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, and manufacturing and processing, and health, for your consideration in your preparation for deliberations on this issue at the second meeting of the SBI:

- Belgium has established a Community of Practice on Biodiversity & Health (COPBH), composed of members representing various fields, including Science, Policy, Consultants, NGOs, and media. The goal of the Community is to enhance biodiversity & health related science, policy and practice in Belgium. The COPBH facilitates an online expert registry and newsletter. In 2016 the COPBH coordinated the organization of the European One Health/Ecohealth workshop in Brussels, which illustrates how the COPBH enhances international contacts for Belgian experts and practitioners. It further inspires research programs in relation to health and biodiversity topics, both at the Belgian and international level, e.g., by having produced an overview of research needs and gaps informing a Belgian research funding program addressing biodiversity & health issues (BeISPO BRAIN project call). Further the COPBH works on mainstreaming & awareness raising by offering introductory presentations, such as in 2017 in the Flemish Parliament, and support with state of the art overviews of scientific knowledge and practice projects. The COPBH also contributes to Belgian delegations to international processes such as the EU MAES, IPBES and CBD, focusing mainly on health related issues. Finally it focusses strongly on mainstreaming biodiversity in the Belgian National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP).
- build a strong network and stimulate capacity building; produce an overview of the current state of Belgian knowledge regarding Biodiversity and Public Health; respond to the demands of policy makers and stakeholders regarding Biodiversity and Public Health expertise at a Belgian level, as well as the international level within and beyond the context of the establishment of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). It has a strong focus on mainstreaming biodiversity in the National Environment and Health Action Plan (NEHAP).

See <http://www.biodiversity.be/health/> and <https://www.nehap.be/en/welcome-nehap-belgium>

In Flanders a cooperation with the health sector, in particular a health insurance company is ongoing for training so-called “nature-wellness coaches” and bringing patients into contact

with nature. . A Green Deal of the Government of Flanders is being developed by the Agency for Nature & Forests in cooperation with the relevant actors. On the local level several actions are already taken by NGO's and some local authorities, to integrate nature and health (see <https://www.natuurpunt.be/pagina/natuur-en-gezondheid>). The Agency for Nature & Forests further actively stimulates the development of green spaces and green elements in urban areas through project calls: see <http://www.natuurinjebuurt.be/>

- Currently, federal and regional authorities in charge of the protection of the environment are developing an online decision support tool for biodiversity, called 'biodiversity decision tree'.

The aim of this tool is to facilitate the choice of biodiversity actions that companies can undertake according to their location and their field of activity. The tool will provide in a single web platform, information/description of biodiversity actions which could be developed as well as useful contacts to work on this issue and examples of best practices.

This tool will therefore not only be a tool for decision support but also an information exchange platform allowing companies to highlight their actions in the area of biodiversity. This possibility of adding examples of best practices that will serve to illustrate the actions identified by the decision tree is considered as an important added value for awareness raising among companies.

The development of the tool is planned on 3 years (1. Development phase, 2. Pilot phase, 3. Online phase). The end of the Development phase is foreseen at the beginning of 2019 with the launch of the Pilot phase. The website will be available in its pilot version beginning of 2019.

- The Interreg 2B Connect project is enhancing the biodiversity on 135ha in 10 business parks in Flanders and the Netherlands. In this way, the habitat of more than 77 plant and animal species will be improved between 2014 and 2019. Moreover, the project is developing a practical and online calculation tool and is training consultants to provide customized, ecological advice towards companies. The list of the first consultants is now available on the website: <http://www.2b-connect.be/>
- Between 2014 and 2018, the LIFE Green4Grey project is installing ecological corridors in 6 business parks in Flanders. Within this project, an 'inspirational guide to biodiverse business parks' has also been developed in Dutch, and it is freely downloadable on http://green4grey.be/sites/default/files/inspiratiegids_bedrijven.pdf
- Currently, the Government of Flanders is preparing a Green Deal on 'business and biodiversity' to enhance the biodiversity in business parks. More information is available on <https://www.lne.be/bedrijven-en-biodiversiteit>
- The Government of Flanders is further developing of on-line tool for assessing the impact of new road infrastructure on nature and biodiversity, or optimising mainstreaming of biodiversity values in works on existing road infrastructure: <https://ruimtemodel.vlaanderen/c/VITO%20OntsnipperingsTool/>;
- There is an extensive and long-term cooperation of the Agency for Nature & Forests with the administration of the waterways and Port Authority of Antwerp, with the goal to enhance and re-develop natural flooding areas along the Scheldt river by integrating socio-ecological objectives into waterways infrastructures: <https://www.natuurenbos.be/sigmaplan>
- The SIBELCO sand & gravel mining company integrates nature values in the rehabilitation of used mining sites (<http://www.togetherfornature.be/het-project/partners/>), and also established specific sites for the conservation of wild bee populations -

[https://twitter.com/sibelcogroup/status/947970794369400832;](https://twitter.com/sibelcogroup/status/947970794369400832)

<http://www.honeybeevalley.eu/partners/certified-partner>

- Local company groups work together in their industrial zone to enhance greening of the area for biodiversity, climate change adaptation/mitigation and overall wellness of staff and visitors – sometimes using flagship species for their communication and awareness activities: <http://www.locdevlinder.be/>