

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							
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>							

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	
<i>If a developing country Party or Party with economy in transition -</i>	
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 lettres 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.