

Third National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity

C. ARTICLES OF THE CONVENTION

Article 17 - Exchange of information

127. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On Article 17(1), has your country taken measures to facilitate the exchange of information from publicly available sources with a view to assist with the implementation of the Convention and promote technical and scientific cooperation?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place	
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place	X

The following question (127) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

128. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On Article 17(1), do these measures take into account the special needs of developing countries and include the categories of information listed in Article 17(2), such as technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on?	
a) No	
b) Yes, but they do not include the categories of information listed in Article 17(2), such as technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on	
c) Yes, and they include categories of information listed in Article 17 (2), such as technical, scientific and socio-economic research, training and surveying programmes, specialised knowledge, repatriation of information and so on	X

Box LVII.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this article and associated decisions specifically focusing on:

- outcomes and impacts of actions taken;
- contribution to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention;
- contribution to progress towards the 2010 target;
- progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
- contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
- constraints encountered in implementation.

The initiatives on information exchange mentioned and described in the Second National Report (p. 97-99) are still functional and have added more information on their sites. The digitalisation of taxonomical collections in Belgium is continuing and the information from the different collections is made public through the BeBIF portal.

Since the Second National Report, much work has been done on Natura 2000 and among others on the exchange of information in relation to this programme. Webpages:

Flemish Region: www.instnat.be/content/page.asp?pid=EUR_NA_Natura2000

Brussels Capital Region: www.ibgebim.be/english/contenu/content.asp?ref=1374

Walloon Region: mrw.wallonie.be/dgrne/sibw/sites/Natura2000/home.html

The Belgian Science Policy supports the **Belgian Biodiversity Platform** (BBPF) whose main aims are:

- to elaborate and regularly update a reference database on Belgian research institutions, scientific and experts as well as research projects, collections and databases related to biodiversity. The Platform acts as the national node of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), whose goal is to make biodiversity related data freely and easily available to all. The platform strives to build a bioinformatics infrastructure to integrate Belgian biodiversity resources within a unified environment;
- to perform an analysis of the current biodiversity research in Belgium: identification of strengths and gaps and by this, to actively contribute to the definition of a national research strategy on biodiversity. The platform acts as national node of the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBRS), whose objective is to improve the effectiveness and relevance of the biodiversity research in Europe;
- to enhance the dialogue and facilitate exchanges of information among scientists and between national researchers and policy-makers, notably via the development of discussion thematic Forums : forest biodiversity, freshwater biodiversity, invasive species, systematics and taxonomy. Website: www.biodiversity.be.

Projects not mentioned in the Second National Report with special emphasis on information relevant to developing countries:

- the Albertine rift, a mountainous region situated in the middle of the African continent is a biodiversity hotspot. It includes the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi and the western part of Uganda and of Tanzania. A database on its birds, butterflies, Rubiaceae and fish is developed and accessible via projects.bebif.be/enbi/albertinerift/birds;
- the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences acts as the Belgian representative in the European Network for Biodiversity Information (ENBI) coordinated by the University of Amsterdam. The RBINS ensures the follow-up of studies and advancement made at European level to better valorise the digitised collections.