

# Third National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity

## C. ARTICLES OF THE CONVENTION

### Article 18 - Technical and scientific cooperation

<b>128.</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On Article 18(1), has your country taken measures to promote international technical and scientific cooperation in the field of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity?	
a) No	
b) No, but potential measures are under review	
c) Yes, some measures are in place (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures are in place (please provide details below)	
Further information on the measures to promote international technical and scientific cooperation.	
<p>The <b>National Botanic Garden of Belgium</b> has the largest botanical collections from Central Africa in the world, as well as large historical holdings from other tropical countries, e.g. Brazil and Mexico. It develops training programmes for students from developing countries and initiatives to transfer its tropical biodiversity data to the countries of origin, <i>inter alia</i> in the framework of the 'African Plant Initiative' funded by the Mellon Foundation.</p> <p>The African Biodiversity Information Centre (ABIC), situated at the <b>Royal Museum for Central Africa</b>, is supported by the Belgian Development Cooperation. 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 transfer of collection information. ABIC engages in co-operation agreements with the source institutions of the students to ensure support for the valorisation of the transferred information after the training. Internships are individually adapted to meet the needs and requirements of the applicants.</p> <p>Belgium's National Focal Point to the GTI, situated at the <b>Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences</b>, is financially supported by the Belgian Development Cooperation. This museum and research institute harbours zoological collections (roughly 37 million specimens), a tissue bank for sequence analyses, a library of global importance, well-equipped research facilities and well-trained scientific and curatorial staff. The Belgian Focal Point to the GTI offers training in taxonomy and collection management for selected students from developing countries worldwide. This tuition, provided in collaboration with the Royal Museum for Central Africa (Tervuren, Belgium), cuts across all levels and aims at professional taxonomists, postgraduate, graduate and undergraduate students, technicians and parataxonomists. Training for the individual includes traditional and molecular approaches to taxon identification and classification while institutional support includes reference centre and website development. In addition the Belgian GTI NFP offers access to collections and gives support for taxonomy based research projects carried out in developing countries. Valorisation of archives and collections relating to partner countries, as well as creating public awareness and education, complements the training offers.</p> <p>The <b>B CHM</b> is not only promoting technical and scientific cooperation through the training of national CHM focal points of partner countries but tries to stimulate this as well through regional and subregional initiatives. The participants to the regional CHM training for Central Africa formulated a proposal to develop a sub-regional portal to promote the cooperation between the countries.</p> <p><b>Flemish Region:</b> financial and technical support is given in the framework of CMS to a programme on the conservation of the Sahelo-Saharan antelopes in Tunisia, in cooperation with the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences and with France. Financial support is also provided through the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests.</p>	

See also information provided under article 5.

**129.**  On Article 18(4), has your country encouraged and developed methods of cooperation for the development and use of technologies, including indigenous and traditional technologies, in pursuance of the objectives of this Convention?

a) No	
b) No, but relevant methods are under development	
c) Yes, methods are in place	X

**130.**  On Article 18(5), 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?

a) No	
b) Yes (please provide some examples below)	X

Examples for the establishment of joint research programmes and joint ventures for the development of technologies relevant to the objectives of the Convention.

In the framework of the Earth Observation research programme of the **Belgian Science Policy Office**, 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.

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

**Flemish Region:** the Institute of Nature Conservation is an active member of the ALTER-net project 'A Long-term Biodiversity, Ecosystem and Awareness Research Network'. The project, which involves 24 research institutes in Europe, was launched in 2004 and aims to develop a Network of Excellence (NoE). This NoE will create a European long-term inter-disciplinary facility for research on the complex relationship between ecosystems, biodiversity and society. It will provide scientific support for policy assessment and development on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the European Union, and a facility for information retrieval and reporting on biodiversity-related issues. The project runs over a period of five years ([www.alter-net.info](http://www.alter-net.info)).

**131.** Has your country established links to non-governmental organisations, private sector and other institutions holding important databases or undertaking significant work on biological diversity through the CHM? (decision V/14)

a) No	
b) No, but coordination with relevant NGOs, private sector and other institutions under way	
c) Yes, links established with relevant NGOs, private sector and institutions	X

**The following question (132) is for DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

**132.** Has your country further developed the CHM to assist developing countries and countries with

economies in transition to gain access to information in the field of scientific and technical cooperation? (decision V/14)	
a) No	
b) Yes, by using funding opportunities	X
c) Yes, by means of access to, and transfer of technology	X
d) Yes, by using research cooperation facilities	X
e) Yes, by using repatriation of information	X
f) Yes, by using training opportunities	X
g) Yes, by using promotion of contacts with relevant institutions, organisations and the private sector	X
h) Yes, by using other means (please specify below)	
Further comments on CHM developments to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to gain access to information in the field of scientific and technical cooperation.	
<p>b) using funding opportunities: the Belgian Development Cooperation has funded the organisation by the Secretariat of the Convention of several regional meetings for the CHM.</p> <p>c) see information under article 16.</p> <p>d) using research cooperation facilities: several initiatives are mentioned in the sections on capacity building (among others under articles 15 and 16) to promote the access to research facilities in Belgium by researchers from developing countries.</p> <p>e) access to information: mainly by making information available through BeBIF, ABIC, MetaFro, B CHM, etc. and by the NBGB (see also information under article 17).</p> <p>f) training opportunities: the B CHM organised, with funding from the Belgian Development Cooperation, several training courses for the CHM-NFPs of developing countries in the use of web publishing tools for the creation of national CHMs. National CHMs from 20 developing countries are hosted at the B CHM server to promote the access to information on scientific and technical cooperation from developing countries. During the period 2003-2005 the B CHM and BCH organised three training courses for BCH-NFPs from partner countries in the utilisation of the central BCH portal.</p> <p>A regional workshop for CHM-NFPs has been organised in December 2003, in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention. Fifteen participants exchanged experiences on the implementation of the national CHMs and how to further technical and scientific cooperation between their countries.</p> <p>A sub-regional CHM training workshop for Central African partner countries has been organised in January 2005, in Bujumbura (Burundi). This workshop was organised in collaboration with Burundi, Rwanda and the Secretariat for the Convention. About 15 partners to the national CHMs from five countries received training on how to exchange information through the internet.</p>	

<b>133.</b> Has your country used CHM to make information available more useful for researchers and decision-makers? (decision V/14)	
a) No	
b) No, but relevant initiatives under consideration	
c) Yes (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on development of relevant initiatives.

The Belgian CHM is a portal for information related to the implementation of the CBD in Belgium. The B CHM receives many requests related to the Convention from researchers and decision makers. If the information is not available on related sites the B CHM makes the information available on its own site. There are also collaborations with the Belgian Biodiversity Platform.

See box XLV for information on other initiatives.

**134.** Has your country developed, provided and shared services and tools to enhance and facilitate the implementation of the CHM and further improve synergies among biodiversity-related Conventions? (decision V/14)

a) No

b) Yes (please specify services and tools below)

X

Further comments on services and tools to enhance and facilitate the implementation of CHM and further improve synergies among biodiversity-related Conventions.

The Belgian CHM is offering services as mentioned in the Second National Report (p. 100-101). It has developed a standardised web model to facilitate the implementation of the CHM by partner countries and to promote interoperability between CHMs in the near future. Belgium participated actively in the 'Informal Meeting on Interoperability of Information among the Three Rio and Other Environmental Conventions', Montreal, November 2004. National level discussions are ongoing towards developing a joint website with the NFP for the Desertification Convention.

**Box LVIII.**

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

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