

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

## C. ARTICLES OF THE CONVENTION

### Article 8(j) - Traditional knowledge and related provisions

#### GURTS

57. Has your country created and developed capacity-building programmes to involve and enable smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities, and other relevant stakeholders to effectively participate in decision-making processes related to genetic use restriction technologies?	
a) No	X
b) No, but some programmes are under development	
c) Yes, some programmes are in place (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, comprehensive programmes are in place (please provide details below)	
Further comments on capacity-building programmes to involve and enable smallholder farmers, indigenous and local communities and other relevant stakeholders to effectively participate in decision-making processes related to GURTS.	
No relevant action of the Development Cooperation stakeholders from partner developing countries in this area.	

#### Status and Trends

58. Has your country supported indigenous and local communities in undertaking field studies to determine the status, trends and threats related to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities? (decision VII/16)	
a) No	
b) No, but support to relevant studies is being considered	
c) Yes (please provide information on the studies undertaken)	X
Further information on the studies undertaken to determine the status, trends and threats related to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, and priority actions identified.	
<p>The Plant Production Department of the <b>Ghent University</b> is doing some research on ethnobotany. Ethnobotany is the study of the traditional use of plants by traditional people living in subtropical and tropical areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America. A next step is the local domestication of promising plants. Activities in tropical agriculture aim at an increase of efficiency under systems of low external input.</p> <p>No relevant action of the <b>Belgian Development Cooperation</b> stakeholders from partner developing countries in this area. Some support to indigenous and local communities exists, mainly through NGO development cooperation, but essentially in education and institutional strengthening of local organisations.</p> <p>Some of the ongoing projects supported by the <b>Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests</b> are particularly emphasising this aspect.</p>	

### Akwé:Kon Guidelines

<b>59.</b> Has your country initiated a legal and institutional review of matters related to cultural, environmental and social impact assessment, with a view to incorporating the Akwé:Kon Guidelines into national legislation, policies, and procedures?	
a) No	X
b) No, but review is under way	
c) Yes, a review undertaken (please provide details on the review)	
Further information on the review.	

<b>60.</b> Has your country used the Akwé:Kon Guidelines in any project proposed to take place on sacred sites and/or land and waters traditionally occupied by indigenous and local communities? (decision VII/16)	
a) No	X
b) No, but a review of the Akwé: Kon guidelines is under way	
c) Yes, to some extent (please provide details below)	
d) Yes, to a significant extent (please provide details below)	
Further information on the projects where the Akwé:Kon Guidelines are applied.	

### Capacity Building and Participation of Indigenous and Local Communities

<b>61.</b> Has your country undertaken any measures to enhance and strengthen the capacity of indigenous and local communities to be effectively involved in decision-making related to the use of their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity? (decision V/16)	
a) No	
b) No, but some programmes being developed	
c) Yes, some measures taken (please provide details below)	X
d) Yes, comprehensive measures taken (please provide details below)	
Further information on the measures to enhance and strengthen the capacity of indigenous and local communities.	
<p><b>Flemish Region:</b> this is being addressed in the framework of international cooperation projects such as the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests and the Sahelo-Saharan Antelopes programme.</p> <p>Potential actions foreseen in the Global Programme (2003-2007) for Biological Diversity and Development Cooperation at the <b>Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences</b> for example include the valorisation of orally transmitted knowledge.</p> <p>Involvement of local communities in decision-making is targeted in two biodiversity protection and sustainable use programmes in Tanzania which receive support from the <b>Belgian Development Cooperation:</b> Selous game reserve and Kilombero Ramsar Site.</p> <p>In the framework of the 'Plan Binacional' involving Ecuador and Peru, the Belgian cooperation supports a natural resources sustainable management programme in either country. These include a significant component targeting the participation of local communities (either indigenous or 'mestizos') to decision-making processes and the valorisation of their traditional knowledge.</p>	

**62.** Has your country developed appropriate mechanisms, guidelines, legislation or other initiatives to foster and promote the effective participation of indigenous and local communities in decision making, policy planning and development and implementation of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at international, regional, subregional, national and local levels? (decision V/16)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant mechanisms, guidelines and legislation are under development	
c) Yes, some mechanisms, guidelines and legislation are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further information on the mechanisms, guidelines and legislation developed.

**Belgian Development Cooperation:** ownership by the host country is one of the most relevant criteria of pertinence for assessing the viability of any new development cooperation programme proposal. Within this ownership criteria, the participation of indigenous or local communities in decision-making and planning processes is considered with attention. As well at the identification stage as at the mid- or end of term evaluation stages, this aspect is assessed, so that in case of insufficient fulfilment, recommendations may be formulated for further improvement.

The more local the level is, the more the participation of local and indigenous communities is ensured. At higher levels nonetheless (distrital, national, etc.) this is more difficult due to the competition with more powerful interests. It also depends from one partner country to the other.

See also under question 61.

**63.** Has your country developed mechanisms for promoting the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities with specific provisions for the full, active and effective participation of women in all elements of the programme of work? (decision V/16, annex)

a) No	
b) No, but relevant mechanisms are being developed	
c) Yes, mechanisms are in place (please provide details below)	X

Further comments on the mechanisms for promoting the full and effective participation of women of indigenous and local communities in all elements of the programme of work.

**Belgian Development Cooperation:** for any development cooperation programme at its identification stage, a quality control include assessing the proposal towards a number of criteria of pertinence, among which the gender aspect, *i.e.* promoting the equality of rights between men and women. Insufficient fulfilment of this criteria may lead to recommendations to reformulate the proposal or, in few cases, to rejecting the proposal.

See also under question 61. Women are not explicitly mentioned, but are most certainly fully eligible.

### Support to implementation

**64.** Has your country established national, subregional and/or regional indigenous and local community biodiversity advisory committees?

a) No	NA
b) No, but relevant work is under way	
c) Yes	

**65.** Has your country assisted indigenous and local community organisations to hold regional meetings to discuss the outcomes of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties and to prepare for meetings under the Convention?

a) No

X

b) Yes (please provide details about the outcome of meetings)

Further information on the outcome of regional meetings.

**66.** Has your country supported, financially and otherwise, indigenous and local communities in formulating their own community development and biodiversity conservation plans that will enable such communities to adopt a culturally appropriate strategic, integrated and phased approach to their development needs in line with community goals and objectives?

a) No

b) Yes, to some extent (please provide details below)

X

c) Yes, to a significant extent (please provide details below)

Further information on the support provided.

The **Belgian Development Cooperation** directly supports the 'Fondo Indígena' for Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia. Nonetheless, its actions are not specifically steered to biodiversity conservation or sustainable use, but rather to the promotion and the rescue of indigenous culture and language (e.g. through bilingual education) and the socio-political rights.

The Belgian Development Cooperation indirectly supports, through NGO's, a large number of local associations (peasants, indigenous, youth organisations, etc.) in several countries. Here too, there is hardly any focus on biodiversity issues, but rather on socio-cultural, economic and political aspects. Biodiversity-related issues might be underlying in some of these, but this would need a finer analysis.

**Box XLVII.**

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.