

Third National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity

F. COMMENTS ON THE FORMAT

Box LXXV.

Please provide below recommendations on how to improve this reporting format.

- the reporting format makes it extremely difficult for countries with multiple levels of authorities and an institutional fragmentation of competences to fill in the report adequately. The fact that only an 'x' (no other signs) is allowed in the appropriate case(s) constitutes an extra burden;
- questions are often too vague, difficult to interpret and to answer in a concise and efficient manner;
- together with the high number of questions, the nature of a number of questions and boxes (for example the boxes at the end of each article) ask for many data and answers, making the burden to report very heavy;
- the redundancy of questions is annoying. This redundancy includes similar questions within this report, or questions already answered in the second national report or in thematic reports;
- the heavy burden of work: during office hours only, filling in the report took approximately 120 person/days, equalling more than half a year office work of one full time senior officer. When taking evening and weekend work into account, this increases to more than nine months;
- as a response to all difficulties mentioned above, and in order to reduce the reporting burden, Belgium strongly supports (i) a shortened format for national reporting and (ii) decisions to harmonise national reporting of biodiversity-related treaties.