

Third National Report of Belgium to the Convention on Biological Diversity

D. THEMATIC AREAS

Forest Biological Diversity

General

174. Has your country incorporated relevant parts of the work programme into your national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national forest programmes?	
a) No	
b) Yes, please describe the process used	X
c) Yes, please describe constraints/obstacles encountered in the process	
d) Yes, please describe lessons learned	
e) Yes, please describe targets for priority actions in the programme of work	
Further comments on the incorporation of relevant parts of the work programme into your NBSAP and forest programmes	
<p>The Regions develop(ed) management guidelines and action plans for biodiversity conservation (Beheersvisie in the Flemish Region, Circulaire Biodiversité in the Walloon Region, Natura 2000 guidelines, etc.).</p> <p>Federal: the Government Agreement of 2003 addresses specifically the issue of forests. In this document, the government makes the commitment to promote timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way and to tackle illegal logging.</p> <p>Action 19 of the second Federal Plan for Sustainable Development (2004-2008) indicates how the Federal level can contribute to those commitments (promotion of timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way, identification of legislative options to control importation of illegally logged timber at EU and national level, include criteria related to SFM in public procurements, etc.). Due to lack of human resources, actions towards SFM and public procurement have started late.</p> <p>The following actions have been taken by the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment, DG Environment to implement the second Federal Plan for Sustainable Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - funding of a study identifying possible options to ban the import in the EU of timber and timber products harvested through illegal logging; - proposal to integrate SFM criteria in federal public procurement; - initial analysis of Belgian legislation in order to ban import of illegally produced timber in Belgium. <p>Belgium takes an active part in the ongoing EU discussions to implement the EU FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) action plan.</p> <p>An objective of the National Biodiversity Strategy (in preparation) will be dedicated to sustainable use of biodiversity in forestry.</p>	

Box LXVII.

Please indicate what recently applied tools (policy, planning, management, assessment and measurement) and measures, if any, your country is using to implement and assess the programme of work. Please indicate what tools and measures would assist the implementation.

Flemish Region: the relevant Flemish authorities have not yet evaluated the CBD work programme

on forest biological diversity in a systematic and co-ordinated way. This does not mean that there are no policy developments in the areas covered by the CBD work programme. Many of the items that are being dealt with in the work programme are well covered by existing forest policy measures (e.g. national forest and land-use programmes, impact of airborne pollution on forests, forest research, forest assessment, criteria and indicators for sustainable forestry management, forest conservation) or by recent developments. This results from the fact that the dynamics that drive the Flemish forest policy are mainly of a national or subnational nature.

The Flemish Forest Decree (1990) created the basis for a more plan-oriented forest policy. In principle long-term policy plans are adopted by the Flemish Government. On the basis of these more strategic plans, the Flemish forest services have to prepare implementation plans "taking into account the town and country planning, the land-use policy and the general environmental and nature policy". These implementation plans are then submitted to a broad consultation process and are finally to be adopted by the Flemish Government. Before deciding on the long-term policy plans and the implementation plans, the Flemish Government has to inform the Flemish Parliament.

A background study 'Long Term Forestry Plan' (June 1993) described the strategy for forest policy up to the year 2100. On the basis of this report a general policy document was drafted with the same name. This document defines the mission and the vision for forest policy in the Flemish Region for the long term based on a thorough multidisciplinary scientific study and political analysis of the situation of forests and forestry in the Flemish Region. The long-term policy plan was never formally adopted by the Government, but important principles and objectives (like expansion of the forest area) were already being integrated in other policy areas. An important example is the integration and decision by the Flemish Government to designate 10,000 ha as 'forest expansion areas' in the new land use plan (Ruimtelijk Structuurplan Vlaanderen).

The first step towards realisation of this strategy is formulated in the document 'Forestry Action Plan' (first draft: 1998). This plan defines more than 30 key-actions for the next five years and is more oriented towards the implementation of the vision and mission. Key terms in the Flemish forestry planning are quality and quantity. This implementation plan was advised by the Flemish High Council on Forests (10.02.1998), the Flemish High Council for Nature Conservation (03.03.1998) and the Flemish High Council on Hunting (18.03.1998). After several internal procedural rounds and redrafts, the document was not approved by the Flemish Government. One reason for this is that at that moment a lot of policy attention was given to the implementation of the new Decree on nature conservation (1997) and the development of the 'natural structure of the Flemish Region' both having a major impact on forestry in the Flemish Region.

This Forest Action Plan is part of the strategic Flemish Environmental Policy Plan 1997-2001, the second MINA plan. In the actual Environmental Policy Plan this issue is repeated and integrated in a specific 'policy project'. In 2003-2004 a new version of this Forest Action Plan was prepared by the administration since the first plan was almost fully completed and implemented. Thus at the moment, there is no policy plan that describes the sustainable forestry strategy for the Flemish Region in general.

To conclude, it can be mentioned that the forestry policy for the Flemish Region consists of the policy documents 'Long Term Forestry Plan' and 'Forestry Action Plan' that do exist as a guideline for the administration, but were never approved by government. An interesting characteristic of the Flemish case is that although the Forest Decree explicitly states that the Flemish Government adopts the long term policy plan after a consultation process with the high advisory council in which all relevant stakeholders are represented and although the Flemish Government has committed itself that it will approve this forest strategy (Long Term Forest Plan + Forest Action Plan) by means of binding actions in the Flemish Environmental Policy Plan, these documents still bear the label of drafts. Formally, these documents are not yet approved by the Flemish Government in their entirety, but several of the key proposals for action are being implemented by means of the yearly 'rolling' work programme of the Flemish Forest Service or by means of specific projects. Moreover the basic strategies and the basic goals for the Flemish Forest policy are being mentioned in highly important political agreements and documents like the basic Flemish Government Agreement and Declaration, the policy note of the responsible minister and the yearly policy letters and statements of the responsible minister as member of the Flemish Government.

Walloon Region:

La Région wallonne a opté pour la certification forestière selon le système 'Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification' (PEFC), qui touche à 70% de la forêt soumise et 20,000 ha de forêt privée. Ce système implique la mise en œuvre d'un plan de progrès qui comporte un volet en matière de biodiversité. ainsi qu'une charte à laquelle doivent souscrire les propriétaires qui

souhaitent bénéficier de la certification.

Dans son plan stratégique, une des orientations de la Division Nature et Forêt est de réduire les investissements via une réduction des interventions. Elle préconise l'utilisation de techniques sylvicoles plus proche de la nature et de tester la méthode Pro Silva. Dans plusieurs cantonnements, des essais de sylviculture Pro Silva ont été mis en place (Habay-la-Neuve, Bouillon, Nassogne, Bièvre, Paliseul). Un projet INTERREG a également été mis en place avec l'asbl Forêt Wallonne. Dans ce cadre, une importante recherche sera réalisée pour rassembler le maximum d'information sur cette méthode et définir les outils nécessaires à son application. Des colloques, journées d'études, sites de références, excursions et formations seront organisés.

Une circulaire relative à la prise en compte de la biodiversité en forêt publique est en cours de finalisation et sera appliquée en 2005. Son but est de détailler et de préciser les mesures spécifiques en faveur du développement de la biodiversité forestière.

75% du réseau Natura 2000 wallon sont constitués de forêt. Cela représente un peu plus de 165,000 ha, soit environ 10% du territoire wallon. Deux tiers de cette surface sont occupés par des peuplements feuillus. Parmi les habitats forestiers d'intérêt communautaire, c'est la hêtraie à luzule qui est la mieux représentée dans le réseau wallon avec près de 40,000 ha. D'autres habitats sont présents sur des surfaces plus modestes mais ils jouent néanmoins un rôle certainement aussi important: érablière de ravin, aulnaie rivulaire et tourbière boisée notamment. Plusieurs espèces d'intérêt communautaire sont également présentes en forêt: cigogne noire, engoulevent, damier de la succise, etc.

The **Brussels Capital Region** has adopted management plans for its forests. Most important is the management plan for the Sonian forest, the largest forest of the Brussels Capital Region (10% of its surface). Major objectives of the management plans are:

- sustainable management;
- development of biodiversity.

Although lots of practical problems exist due to the heavy recreational pressure, as the forests in the Brussels Capital Region have to be considered as urban forests.

For the Sonian forest, the FSC-label was given in 2003. Biodiversity has also become more than an important matter due to the designation of Natura 2000 sites in the Brussels Capital Region: 14% of the Brussels Capital Region surface has been designated, of which 12% are forests. In the framework of the green network, special attention is also given to the development and special management of green corridors linking the forests.

Federal: the following actions have been taken by the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment - DG Environment in order to implement action 19 (promotion of timber products certified as being produced in a sustainable way, identification of legislative options to control importation of illegally logged timber at EU and national level, include criteria related to sustainable forestry management in public procurements, etc.) of the second FPSD:

- funding of an exploratory legal review of available policy options to restrict the import in the EU of timber and timber products harvested through illegal logging;
- proposal to integrate sustainable forestry management criteria in federal public procurement;
- initial analysis of Belgian legislation in order to ban import of illegally produced timber.

Box LXVIII.

Please indicate to what extent and how your country has involved indigenous and local communities, and respected their rights and interests, in implementing the programme of work.

Since Belgium has no indigenous and local communities as such following the terminology of the CBD, this question is not applicable inside the country.

Belgian Development Cooperation supports some sustainable forest management programmes in forest countries such as the DR of Congo, Peru, Ecuador, Tanzania, Kenya. These include the involvement of local stakeholders such as indigenous, forest dwellers and small farmer communities.

Box LXIX.

Please indicate what efforts your country has made towards capacity building in human and capital

resources for the implementation of the programme of work.

Flemish Region: institutional, human and financial resources needed to implement the programme of work are more or less stable, or tend to decrease.

Walloon Region: l'accord-cadre conclu entre la Région wallonne et deux facultés d'agronomie de la Région wallonne dans le domaine de la recherche coordonnée en matière de gestion durable des forêts est mis en œuvre.

Certaines actions de recherche ont pour but d'améliorer l'état de la biodiversité (Etude des techniques sylvicoles améliorant la biodiversité):

- étude et mise au point de techniques forestières permettant d'améliorer la biodiversité, devant aboutir à des propositions de gestion des milieux ouverts en forêt mais aussi à un appui scientifique à moyen terme à la Division Nature et Forêt pour l'application et le suivi de la Circulaire pour les normes de gestion de la biodiversité en forêt (voir explication sur cette circulaire plus bas);
- impact de la gestion forestière sur la biocénose en Région wallonne;
- changements climatiques et forêts de demain.

D'autres projets de recherche s'inscrivent dans une optique d'aide à la décision et à la gestion forestière:

- quantification des fonctions économiques, écologique et sociale de la forêt, dont une partie de l'action vise à l'estimation économique des biens et services non-marchands de la forêt (fonction récréative, rôle de puits de carbone, protection des eaux et du sol, régulation des cours d'eaux.

The **Belgian Forum on Forest Biodiversity** constitutes an interface between research and field management. One of the objectives is the identification of best management practices for biodiversity conservation in forest ecosystems. Workshops are organised.

Box LXX.

Please indicate how your country has collaborated and cooperated (e.g., south-south, north-south, south-north, north-north) with other governments, regional or international organisations in implementing the programme of work. Please also indicate what are the constraints and/or needs identified.

Flemish Region: there is no direct collaboration between the Flemish Government and other governments, regional or international organisations on forests and forest biological diversity. In 2002, the **Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests** was established which grants local forestry projects in six countries in Latin America. Recipient organisations are usually local NGO's or research institutes, but no governmental organisations due the absence of official collaboration treaty between the Government of the Flemish Region and all of those six countries (Bolivia, Brasil, Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Suriname). For more information on the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests, see www.groenhart.be. The existence of this Fund is also announced at the CPF Sourcebook on Funding for sustainable forestry management.

The **Walloon Region** financed following projects:

Burkina Faso

- support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant);
- rehabilitation of the dams of Barka, Kouzougou and Naggio (SHER grant);
- scientific valorisation of the Nazinga ranch (Nature+ grant);
- preservation and protection of the forest gallery in the Sourou valley (FUL & Coprod grants).

Morocco

- development of an information system and internet server on biodiversity (UMH grant);
- support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant);
- establishment of a thematic House of the Cedar.

Romania

- support to the computerisation of forest management (UCL grant);
- analysis and protection of pristine forests (UCL grants).

Mauritania

- extension of the green belt of Nouackchott (FAO grant).

Congo

- reactivation of the hunting domain of Bombo Lumene (Nature+ grant).

The **Brussels Capital Region** developed a CDM-project: a large scale afforesting in a degraded savanna around Nioki (Democratic Republic of Congo), category (JI/CDM). The afforesting project is using indigenous species and in accordance with the local communities with aim to reach the FSC label. The study started in 2003, the concrete afforesting is expected by the end of 2006. The expected date for the project termination is 60 years. The estimated amount of Certified Emission Reduction generated by the project is 44000 tCO per year during the first CP, not yet estimated for the next CP. The project involves mainly public funds from the Brussels Capital Region.

The Brussels Capital Region collaborates with the Flemish and Walloon Regions for the management of the Sonian forest (as it is situated on the three regions). A project of development of interregional management plan (long term vision) is in preparation.

Belgian Development Cooperation:

DR Congo

- management of 5 world heritage sites, through support to UNESCO;
- sustainable forest management in the DR of Congo, through support to WWF and ICCN.

Peru

- plan binacional: sustainable management of the buffer zone around the Tabaconas Namballe natural sanctuary.

Ecuador

- plan binacional: sustainable management of the buffer zone around the Podocarpus National Park.

Kenya

- district forestry development programme & integrated natural resources management in Ukambani.

Tanzania

- community-based sustainable management of natural resources in selected villages on the North-Eastern border of Selous Game Reserve.

Expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity

Programme element 1 – Conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing	
175. Is your country applying the ecosystem approach to the management of all types of forests?	
a) No (please provide reasons below)	
b) No, but potential measures being identified (please provide details below)	
c) Yes (please provide details below)	X
Comments on application of the ecosystem approach to management of forests (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impact on forest management, constraints, needs, tools, and targets).	
<p>Flemish Region: a thorough and detailed analyses of the ecosystem approach was not fully carried out. In general terms, the main principles of the Flemish forest policy are compatible with the so-called 'ecosystem approach'. As in many countries and as was analysed by the UNFF and the MCPFE-process, both worlds tend to use a different language to address the same issues. The biodiversity issue in the Flemish Region must be viewed in the light of the forest history. Most of the biodiversity has been lost over centuries due to massive deforestation, a very intensive forest use and especially a continuous removal of dead wood and organic material during centuries. The remaining forest is very scattered and often incomplete from biological point of view. Therefore, the acquirement and protection</p>	

of the few remaining old-growth or semi-natural forests is a key element in the policy towards protection of biodiversity in Flemish forests.

Nevertheless forests will play an important role in the Flemish Ecological Network (FEN: 125,000 ha of areas with main function of conservation and development of nature which will form a coherent ecological network), to be designated by the year 2002 according to the Decree on nature conservation.

There are several measures that promote the attention for nature conservation measures in Flemish forests. For the development of the new nature conservation policy plan and the implementation of new instruments (e.g. the development of the Flemish Ecological Network) these integration mechanisms still have to prove their effectiveness. The practical consequences and possible restrictions for forestry in these areas are unclear at the moment.

Sustainable forest management should not only consider the conservation of biodiversity but also the other forest functions. This is a constant concern of the educational and public awareness programmes. By promoting the Pro Silva close-to-nature management principles towards local communities, forest owners and environmental NGO's, the Forest and Green Areas Division aims at the conservation and appropriate enhancement of biological diversity on the operational level within a clear ecosystem approach.

Walloon Region:

Deux outils fondamentaux ont été élaborés pour la certification PEFC:

- au niveau régional, un plan de progrès, décliné en objectifs, actions et cibles, a été défini par un groupe de travail où sont représentés les propriétaires et gestionnaires publics et privés, les scientifiques, les intervenants en forêt, les mouvements environnementaux et les 'usagers' de la forêt;
- au niveau des propriétés, la 'Charte pour la gestion forestière durable en Région wallonne' a été élaborée : elle définit les engagements individuels concrets des propriétaires qui souhaitent s'inscrire dans le processus.

Le plan de progrès s'articule autour de six axes pour l'ensemble de la Région Wallonne:

- développer les aménagements forestiers intégrés;
- intensifier l'étude du fonctionnement des écosystèmes, le suivi des dépérissements, et les moyens de lutte à y apporter;
- limiter au strict nécessaire les intrants en forêt, tels que phytocides, pesticides et engrais;
- améliorer la biodiversité en forêt aux niveaux des gènes, des espèces et des écosystèmes;
- développer l'information et la formation des propriétaires, des gestionnaires et des intervenants en forêt à la gestion durable;
- améliorer l'accueil du public en forêt dans le respect des écosystèmes.

La Division Nature et Forêt joue un rôle fondamental dans la mise en œuvre de ce plan, spécialement pour les aspects suivants:

- la révision des plans d'aménagement des forêts soumises, sur base d'une circulaire de 1997 (voir ci dessous 'Objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts') qui consacre le principe de gestion multifonctionnelle et donc d'un équilibre optimal entre les fonctions de production, de protection des sols et des eaux, de conservation de la biodiversité, et les fonctions sociales. A ce jour, près de la moitié des surfaces forestières ont été dotée d'un nouvel aménagement;
- la mise en œuvre d'activités de recherche en relation avec la gestion durable: un deuxième accord-cadre de cinq ans a été conclu en 2004 avec les deux facultés forestières de Wallonie pour mener ces recherches; des contrats spécifiques permettent également le suivi sanitaire en application des règlements européens, ainsi que de poursuivre le troisième objectif du plan de progrès;
- la mise en œuvre de Natura 2000 dans les 150,000 ha de forêts inscrites dans le réseau; du personnel supplémentaire a été engagé pour définir les arrêtés et plan de gestion et proposer des méthodes concrètes de gestion; un important programme de sélection de peuplements à graines a en outre permis de tripler en quelques années le nombre de ces peuplements et d'en sélectionner également pour les espèces secondaires ou d'accompagnement; les subventions aux propriétaires publics et privés ont également été revues dans le sens d'une plus grande diversité, d'un choix d'essences mieux adaptées et d'une sylviculture plus dynamique;
- l'établissement de programmes de formations internes à la gestion durable, et la mise à disposition de moyens de vulgarisation pour les propriétaires publics et privés;
- l'établissement de balisages et de cartes pour le tourisme lent en milieu forestier, en collaboration avec les communes et les offices de tourisme.

Enfin, l'Inventaire permanent des ressources forestières, réalisé par une cellule spécialisée de la Direction des ressources forestières, constitue l'outil fondamental d'évaluation de la politique de gestion des forêts; son taux d'échantillonnage élevé, sa permanence et le large éventail d'informations récoltées permettront de déterminer l'évolution des indicateurs de gestion durable au niveau régional.

Objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts:

- favoriser les essences indigènes à potentiel biologique élevé, les espèces ligneuses rares, les peuplements mélangés ainsi que les écotypes locaux;
- favoriser les peuplements mélangés à structure irrégulière et diversifier les régimes/traitements à l'échelle des grands massifs forestiers;
- favoriser le développement de lisières progressives bien étagées en périphérie et à l'intérieur des massifs forestiers; maintenir et restaurer des zones ouvertes extensives au sein des massifs;
- augmenter les volumes de bois mort, accroître la disponibilité en cavités et en arbres sur-âgés; permettre au bois mort de jouer son rôle dans l'entretien de la fertilité des sols forestiers;
- mettre en place un réseau d'aires forestières protégées de manière à conserver les habitats les plus représentatifs et les espèces les plus vulnérables. Ce réseau devrait couvrir de 8.000-10.000 ha dans les forêts soumises;
- adapter les travaux forestiers et les travaux d'infrastructure de manière à limiter leur impact sur la biodiversité;
- ajuster la charge de grands ongulés à la capacité d'accueil du milieu forestier et améliorer cette dernière par la mise en place d'aires naturelles de gagnage et de remise.

De plus cette Circulaire prévoit l'identification des zones du réseau écologique forestier (zones centrales de conservation, zones de développement de la nature, autres zones). Ce zonage devra apparaître clairement dans tous les nouveaux plans d'aménagement forestier. Il devra notamment être établi sur base des différents statuts de conservation existants (réserves forestières, zones Natura 2000, etc.).

Brussels Capital Region: sustainable forestry management is the major guideline for the development and implementation of forest management plans (e.g. management plan of the Sonian Forest, the Brussels Capital Region most important forest, covering 10% of the Regions' surface). This forest received the FSC certificate.

The objective to increase biodiversity is one of the main objectives in the Brussels Capital Region forests, as they have all been declared SAC and thus Natura 2000 site, and is integrated in the regional management plans.

Most important technical actions to increase biodiversity are:

- adaptation of the (very limited) economical function of wood exploitation;
- integration of FSC-principles;
- management gives much importance to avoid soil damage;
- high importance is given to dead wood: increasing amount of dead wood in all forms;
- more very old trees are left;
- more diversity in plantation: more (indigenous) tree species are used for new afforesting;
- special attention is given to special vegetation elements (in particular protection of spring flowers and old woodland vegetation species);
- special attention is given to nature management of fauna;
- special attention is given to management of edges of the forest;
- where possible, green corridors are developed and managed to link forests and relics of forests.

However, the high recreational pressure and very large number of visitors are important obstacles to maintain and increase biodiversity.

176. Has your country undertaken measures to reduce the threats to, and mitigate its impacts on forest biodiversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please specify below the major threats identified in relation to each objective of goal 2 and the measures undertaken to address priority actions

b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on measures to reduce threats to, and mitigate the impacts of threatening processes on forest biodiversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: see general environmental and nature policies. Striving for a high quality of the components of the environment is amongst the priorities of these policies. See also question 177.

A specific regulation on deforestation tries to avoid and minimise the impact of deforestation. See the Belgian report to UNFF-2.

Walloon Region: objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans le Plan de progrès et dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts en relation avec les menaces évoquées dans le goal 2:

- espèces exotiques envahissantes: favoriser les essences indigènes à potentiel biologique élevé, les espèces ligneuses rares, les peuplements mélangés ainsi que les écotypes locaux;
- pollution: limiter au strict nécessaire les intrants en forêt, tels que phytocides, pesticides et engrais;
- perte des perturbations naturelles: augmenter les volumes de bois mort, accroître la disponibilité en cavités et en arbres sur-âgés; permettre au bois mort de jouer son rôle dans l'entretien de la fertilité des sols forestiers; favoriser le développement de lisières progressives bien étagées en périphérie et à l'intérieur des massifs forestiers; maintenir et restaurer des zones ouvertes extensives au sein des massifs;
- fragmentation: mettre en place un réseau d'aires forestières protégées de manière à conserver les habitats les plus représentatifs et les espèces les plus vulnérables. Ce réseau devrait couvrir de 8,000-10,000 ha dans les forêts soumises.

Brussels Capital Region:

- limitation of noise pollution;
- limitation of water pollution: special attention is given to prevent water pollution, originating from motorways;
- limitation of general pollution: no use of pesticides;
- invasive exotic species: special attention is given to their management to prevent extension; eradication is performed where and when possible;
- creation of non accessible forest and nature reserves to develop biodiversity islands in the forest;
- integration of biodiversity aspects in general forest management (see question 175).

177. Is your country undertaking any measures to protect, recover and restore forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 3 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on measures to protect, recover and restore forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: the Flemish Decree on Forest (1990; last amended in 2005) stresses the importance of forest conservation and regulates forest management in this way (fire prevention; use

of chemical pesticides, herbicides or fungicides; conservation of the herbaceous vegetation, protection against exploitation damage, etc.).

A special form of forest conservation is made possible through the forest reserves. Special and typical forest types (old growth forests) with a natural vegetation type can be appointed or recognised as a forest reserve. There are two kinds of forest reserves: integral forest reserves, in which only measurements are taken to avoid external disturbance and directed forest reserves, in which the aim is achieving a specific situation by means of a specific management.

The system of forest conservation with respect to internal facts is based on the management plan. Every act not foreseen in an approved management plan is forbidden unless a special permit is delivered by the Division of Forests and Green Areas. Forest conservation in a wider sense (including external pressure) is monitored by means of a yearly forest health and vitality assessment in the framework of the ICP-Forests monitoring programme and the EC Forest Focus Regulation. The expulsion of air pollutants is regulated by means of the Flemish Environmental Regulations.

Since the Flemish Region is poor in forests, afforestation and expansion of the forest cover is an important issue in forest policy and land use management. Ecologically sound afforestation programmes are promoted explicitly.

The protection of several species, vegetation types and ecosystems is regulated by the National Act on Nature Conservation of 1973 and the Flemish Decree on Nature Conservation (October 1997). Nature reserves (can also include forest ecosystems) are specially managed in order to preserve threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems.

Walloon Region: Circulaire Biodiversité en Forêt. Objectifs des mesures de gestion développés dans la Circulaire Biodiversité en forêts:

- favoriser les essences indigènes à potentiel biologique élevé, les espèces ligneuses rares, les peuplements mélangés ainsi que les écotypes locaux;
- favoriser les peuplements mélangés à structure irrégulière et diversifier les régimes/traitements à l'échelle des grands massifs forestiers;
- favoriser le développement de lisières progressives bien étagées en périphérie et à l'intérieur des massifs forestiers; maintenir et restaurer des zones ouvertes extensives au sein des massifs;
- augmenter les volumes de bois mort, accroître la disponibilité en cavités et en arbres sur-âgés; permettre au bois mort de jouer son rôle dans l'entretien de la fertilité des sols forestiers;
- mettre en place un réseau d'aires forestières protégées de manière à conserver les habitats les plus représentatifs et les espèces les plus vulnérables. Ce réseau devrait couvrir de 8.000-10.000 ha dans les forêts soumises;
- adapter les travaux forestiers et les travaux d'infrastructure de manière à limiter leur impact sur la biodiversité;
- ajuster la charge de grands ongulés à la capacité d'accueil du milieu forestier et améliorer cette dernière par la mise en place d'aires naturelles de gagnage et de remise.

75% du réseau Natura 2000 wallon sont constitués de forêt. Cela représente un peu plus de 165.000 ha, soit environ 10% du territoire wallon. Deux tiers de cette surface sont occupés par des peuplements feuillus. Parmi les habitats forestiers d'intérêt communautaire, c'est la hêtraie à luzule qui est la mieux représentée dans le réseau wallon avec près de 40.000 ha. D'autres habitats sont présents sur des surfaces plus modestes mais ils jouent néanmoins un rôle certainement aussi important: érablière de ravin, aulnaie rivulaire et tourbière boisée notamment. Plusieurs espèces d'intérêt communautaire sont également présentes en forêt: cigogne noire, engoulevent, damier de la succise, etc.

Brussels Capital Region: see question 175.

178. Is your country undertaking any measures to promote the sustainable use of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please specify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 4 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities

b) No		Please provide reasons below
Further comments on the promotion of the sustainable use of forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).		
<p>Flemish Region: sustainable use of forest biological diversity is the driving force behind the actual Flemish Forest Policy (e.g. development of criteria for sustainable forest management, development and implementation of a forest management vision based on close to nature forest management principles, promotion of FSC-certification).</p> <p>Walloon Region: forest management guidelines in public forests, eco-certification, etc. (see above)</p> <p>Brussels Capital Region: sustainable forest management is the major guideline for the development and implementation of forest management plans (e.g. management plan of the Sonian Forest, the Brussels Capital Region most important forest, 10% of the Regions' surface). This forest received the FSC certificate. See also question 175.</p> <p>In implementation of action 19 (protection of forests) of the Federal Plan for Sustainable Development, the Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Security and Environment, DG Environment is working on the promotion of timber originating from sustainably managed forests through the public procurements and awareness activities towards administrations and citizens (distribution of folders is foreseen at the end of 2005).</p>		

179. Is your country undertaking any measures to promote access and benefit-sharing of forest genetic resources?		
Options	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Details
a) Yes	x	Please specify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 5 and describe measures undertaken
b) No		Please provide reasons below
Further comments on the promotion of access and benefit-sharing of forest genetic resources. (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets)		
<p>Flemish Region: as stated in the Flemish Order of 03.10.2003, the Institute for Forestry and Game Management is responsible for the management of the approved basic forest material in the Flemish Region. This implies following tasks: preparing application forms for approval of the material, observing the approved basic material on a regular basis, managing the register of approved basic material of the Flemish Region and producing the list of Flemish basic material.</p> <p>This list is a summary of the register and is set up by the rules of the Commission Regulation 1597/2002 and in consultation with the Walloon and Brussels Capital Regions. The register is the source of all information on approved basic material. Consultation of the Flemish register is only possible after written application, addressed to the general manager of the Institute.</p> <p>Next to the species mentioned in the European Council Directive 1999/105/EC, a list of tree and shrub species was added in the Flemish Order. It concerns species that are mainly used for ecological purposes. The certification of forest reproductive material of these species is optional. For now, basic material of a few of these species is mentioned in the national list in a separate table: <i>Corylus avellana</i> L., <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Jacq., <i>Prunus spinosa</i> L., <i>Rhamnus frangula</i> L. and <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> L. These are autochthonous seed sources and stands under the category 'source-identified'.</p>		

A specific long term project was established in order to stimulate and promote the use of these autochthonous trees and shrub species.

Walloon Region:

Comptoir à graine: une des missions du comptoir forestier est de récolter les graines dans les peuplements semenciers belges et principalement wallons, dans un souci de qualité génétique et de biodiversité.

Le comptoir forestier doit également jouer un rôle dans la gestion des ressources génétiques forestières: installations de plantations conservatoires, archivage informatisé des provenances, sauvegarde génétique de provenances menacées, etc.

Un projet de recherche est en cours pour ce comptoir forestier: appui à la sélection de matériel de base. Projet ayant pour objectif d'augmenter les disponibilités en matériel génétique et s'orientant selon trois axes:

- l'action principale concerne la création de vergers à graines de douglas dans lesquels la sélection des individus portera sur les qualités technologiques de leur bois en même temps que les caractéristiques de croissance;
- le projet s'attachera ensuite à la mise à jour du Catalogue des Matériels de Base, document de référence reprenant l'ensemble des matériels de reproduction disponible. Une attention particulière sera portée aux peuplements à graines de hêtre victimes des attaques récentes de scolytes;
- enfin, ce projet s'intéresse aussi à la sélection d'individus isolés de pommiers ou de poiriers sauvages en vue de leur multiplication afin de répondre à la demande croissante d'essences secondaires à vocation écologique.

Brussels Capital Region: for the Sonian forest, special attention is given to preserve the specific genetic characteristics of the Sonian beech, the most important tree species in the forest. Only certified beech trees (origin Sonian forest) may be used for plantation.

Programme element 2 – Institutional and socio-economic enabling environment

180. Is your country undertaking any measures to enhance the institutional enabling environment for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, including access and benefit-sharing?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of Goal 1 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the enhancement of the institutional enabling environment for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, including access and benefit-sharing (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: to ensure a better service to the public, the Flemish public administration will be undergoing major transformations. The challenge for each Government is to continuously improve its service provision to the public and to organise its functioning in such a way that it can easily respond to new challenges. The Flemish Government has also made a priority of administrative innovation and the optimisation of public administration. To this end it launched the large-scale and ambitious innovation project, 'Better Administrative Policy', in 2000.

The administrative innovation process is based on the relationship between the Flemish government and the public in the 21st century society. The 'Better Administrative Policy' therefore is a combination of initiatives and projects involving several actors. The basic principles of the

reorganisation were written down in a detailed report entitled: 'Better governance. An outlook on a transparent organisational model for the Flemish public administration'. There will be 13 separate ministries, accounting for about 12,000 civil servants. Each ministry will contain a well-outlined portfolio of competences.

One of the 13 autonomous ministries will be Environment, Nature and Energy. Within this ministry a specialised agency will be created out of the two administrative divisions: the forests and green areas division and the nature division. This fusion could boost synergies between forests policy and the nature conservation policies by placing these within the same unity. A similar fusion is foreseen with the research institutes.

181. Is your country undertaking any measures to address socio-economic failures and distortions that lead to decisions that result in loss of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of Goal 2 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on review of socio-economic failures and distortions that lead to decisions that result in loss of forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: different policy measures are in place aiming to balance the financial rentability of the forest management so that less direct economic interesting investments or activities can be financed. This is mainly organised through a system of financial subventions or compensations. Another policy measure is the establishment of the so-called forest groupings that are organisations of forest owners aiming to organise the forest management at a larger scale through which the level of efficiency is raised. Meanwhile the forest owners and managers are informed about sustainable forest management and projects that stimulate the development of forest biological diversity can be planned and implemented more efficiently.

182. Is your country undertaking any measures to increase public education, participation and awareness in relation to forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 3 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on measures to increase public education, participation and awareness in relation to forest biological diversity (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Flemish Region: in 1992, a specialised educational centre was set up in order to stimulate the public education and the training of the work force in forestry (public and private). Forest biological diversity issues are amongst the priority topics of the activities of this centre. See www.inverde.be (only in dutch).

The Flemish Forest Service manages 10 forest visitor centres. The Forest Service also publishes several brochures about forestry items, including biodiversity in forests. Since 1979, the Flemish Forest Service organises each first or second week of October a sensitising campaign 'the Forest Week'. Each year a specific theme is brought to the attention of the broad public by means of field trips, exhibitions and other public events. In 1994 sustainable forestry was highlighted with the slogan 'A Forest Forever...'. In 1995 the focus was on the protection of biological diversity in forests.

Forestry in a highly populated area as the Flemish Region faces several challenges. The challenge is to find new models to integrate various interests and demands of the society and solve complex forest management problems. The eight level ladder of Arnstein helps to reflect how participation is carried out. However, when discussing participation, clearly the ultimate perspective is the goal to achieve sustainable forestry. Sustainable forestry has roughly three pillars: silvicultural aspects, environmental and nature conservation aspects and social aspects. Participation should be an instrument that helps to achieve sustainable forestry.

In the process of development of a contemporary vision on management of public forests in the Flemish Region, the vision evolved that the need for participation in formulation of international policy formulation originated from the necessity to express the needs of indigenous people and communities actually living in the woods. In such cases, a decision on forest management has direct consequences on the way of life and on employment of those people. Their participation in the decision-making is an essential part of sustainable forestry today.

In a densely populated (436 inhabitants per square km) and highly urbanised Region as the Flemish one with a forest area of 10%, the situation is different. The social impact of forest management activities is mainly in the field of active or passive recreation. There will be no lives, villages or jobs lost because of inadequate forest management activities. However concern among people about the way forests are managed is high.

In this context, participation will always be a kind of placation (Arnstein level 5). On the one hand, a balance has to be found between the long-term goals and vision of forestry and the short-term demands of the parties concerned. On the other hand, a balance has to be found between different demands of different user groups of the forest.

The basic principles used by the forest administration are:

- a higher involvement of all kinds of user groups in the management of and daily activities in the forest creates support for other items of the forest policy (protection and expansion of forests);
- an adequate consultation process focuses the attention of the forest managers to local sensitiveness;
- a multifunctional use of small forests means that every use or function also imposes restrictions. This is not always understood by local inhabitants and there is always a risk that participation leads to polarisation. However, participation may not be an alibi not to take up responsibilities or only to defend personal gains.

On local level, the making of a forest management plan is a key moment. The forest manager makes a draft plan. Participation starts on the basis of this draft. A set of minimum requirements exist (at least one information meeting is organised in the early planning stage, contacting local advisory counsels, etc.) and where before there would be some informal meetings with experts or nature organisations, this is now formalised by writing a report and adding it to the management plan.

In the Flemish context, participation could be defined as the active engagement between several groups (government, individuals, organisations, companies, etc.) about a common object or project. A well carried out participation process has following characteristics: exchange of ideas, setting out the rules of the game, evaluation of well-argued possibilities, giving of feed-back after the decisions are made.

Essentially here is that participation on itself does not lead to decisions but can help to obtain better decisions. 'Can help' because the road of a participatory process is full of pitfalls. First of all, it can cost a lot of time, energy and money. Sometimes viewpoints of the people or groups involved are extremely opposing. The most radical opponents can block the whole process, disappear from the process or find another way to achieve their own goals. Sometimes too much is at stake (e.g. occurrence of a rare species) to leave its fate in the hands of a consensus oriented process. Last but not least people are different, everybody has strong and weak points. Some people lack experience in negotiation or in formulating their opinion. The result could be an imbalance between actual demands of the society and the outcome of a participation process.

Brussels Capital Region:

Public education: for the Sonian forest, there is the Information Centre of the Sonian Forest, which is given information to the public, in particular on nature and biodiversity aspects, and which organizes or provides training sessions, guided tours, information for students of all levels, etc.

Awareness and public participation: a participative platform Sonian forest has been created to bring together all kind of people, structures, users and NGO's to discuss specific problems linked to the use of the forest and protection of biodiversity aspects. There has also been a public consultation on the management plan.

Programme element 3 – Knowledge, assessment and monitoring

183. Is your country undertaking any measures to characterise forest ecosystems at various scales in order to improve the assessment of the status and trends of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of Goal 1 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on characterisation of forest ecosystems at various scales (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Walloon Region: Inventaire Permanent des Ressources Forestières de Wallonie. Includes forest typology and use of some composition and structural biodiversity indicators.

Flemish Region: measures are summarised in the Nature Report (NARA), a bi-annual publication of the Institute of Nature Conservation, which reports on the state of nature in the Flemish Region. The most recent report was published in May 2005 (Dumortier M., De Bruyn L., Hens M., Peymen J., Schneiders A., Van Daele T., Van Reeth W., Weyembergh G. en Kuijken E., 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud nr. 24, Brussel).

Based on the information collected through the first regional forest inventory (mainly based on systematic phyto-sociological mapping), a new eco-typology of forests was derived. This typology is now used in the general forest management planning in order to characterise the forest in function of the possible natural vegetation.

Brussels Capital Region:

- there is a general monitoring programme going on for species of fauna and flora, with special interest to the forest species;
- there is a starting monitoring programme for specific habitats and species in the framework of the Habitats Directive;
- there is a monitoring programme going on for nature and forest reserves;
- a permanent forest inventory, which also integrates biodiversity parameters (dead wood, species, floral vegetation, humus, soil, etc.), will start in 2006.

184. Is your country undertaking any measures to improve knowledge on, and methods for, the assessment of the status and trends of forest biological diversity?

Options	X	Details
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a) Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 2 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Please provide reasons below

Further comments on improvement of knowledge on and methods for the assessment of the status and trends (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Walloon Region: study of key structural and compositional components of forest biodiversity. Surveys of some taxonomic groups (birds, butterflies, plants, saproxylic beetles, etc.). These are however rarely designed and standardised to allow a comparison of forest biodiversity through space and time at a global scale.

Flemish Region: measures are described in the Nature Report (NARA), a bi-annual publication of the Institute of Nature Conservation, which reports on the state of nature in the Flemish Region. The most recent report was published in May 2005 (Dumortier M., De Bruyn L., Hens M., Peymen J., Schneiders A., Van Daele T., Van Reeth W., Weyembergh G. en Kuijken E., 2005. Natuurrapport 2005. Toestand van de natuur in Vlaanderen: cijfers voor het beleid. Mededeling van het Instituut voor Natuurbehoud nr. 24, Brussel).

In the new system of forest management planning, a detailed system for forest inventories was established which pays a lot of attention to biodiversity. This systematic type of forest habitat description gives a solid structure to the methodology for forest habitat inventories. Repetition of this inventory at regular intervals gives a good basis for monitoring the status and trends of forest biological diversity (amongst other issues more relevant to forest management). Methodologies were developed at the Forest and Green Areas Division of the Ministry of the Flemish Community, in collaboration with universities and the Flemish research institutes.

Walloon Region: dans le cadre de l'inventaire forestier permanent, les arbres morts sur pied et les bois abandonnés au sol sont mesurés et font l'objet d'estimations en nombres de pieds et en volumes pour les premiers, en volumes pour les seconds. Ces relevés constituent un bel exemple d'indicateurs multi-critères car ils répondent simultanément à plusieurs critères: critère 1 (stock de carbone), critère 2 (santé de la forêt), critère 3 (fonctions de production) et critère 4 (biodiversité).

Le projet Xylobios vise à étudier les rôles et impacts des organismes saproxyliques dans les forêts feuillues belges. Il vise à développer une expertise taxonomique belge sur les organismes saproxylophages, à déterminer leur rôle dans la décomposition du bois mort et le fonctionnement des écosystèmes forestiers, à préciser leurs préférences d'habitat et leurs exigences écologiques, à sensibiliser l'opinion publique et les gestionnaires forestiers à l'importance de ces organismes tout en donnant à ces derniers des outils d'aide à la décision en matière d'aménagement.

Brussels Capital Region: thanks to the monitoring programmes on flora, fauna and habitats, specific knowledge on forest biodiversity is increasing and these data help to evaluate and eventually redirect management practices.

A specific monitoring programme is also going on in the only integral nature reserve of the Sonian forest, to help understanding ecosystem functioning in an urban forest without human management.

185. Is your country undertaking any measures to improve the understanding of the role of forest biodiversity and ecosystem functioning?

Options	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Details
a) Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 3 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities

b) No		Please provide reasons below
Further comments on the improvement of the understanding of the role of forest biodiversity and ecosystem functioning (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).		
<p>Flemish Region: intensive research programme in relation to this are ongoing at the Institute for Forestry and Game Management. Beside several specific research projects, the forest reserves are the most important tool to this end. By the beginning of 2005, 2,112 ha of forests have the status of forest reserve (1.4% of total forest surface). The target set by the Flemish Environmental Action Plan 1997-2001 was 3,000 ha at the end of 2001. In the original text of the Flemish Forest Decree the title of Chapter II, Section V was 'the scientific forest function and the forest reserves'. Forest reserves were meant to be the 'instruments' or the 'laboratories' for the forest ecosystem research. After the modification of 1999, forest reserves have a more differentiated objective including nature conservation.</p> <p>Main objectives are stated in article 22 of the Flemish Forest Decree: in the forest reserves, growth and development are left free or an attempt is made to maintain or create natural forest vegetation types and special forest types. The following forests may be designated or recognised as forest reserves (article 4 of the Decree of the Flemish Government of 20.01.1993):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forests or parts of forests which are principally composed of species characteristic of the area, growing either spontaneously or planted, possessing great natural value or which may be adapted to achieve a great natural value or where a spontaneous evolution may produce a great natural value; - forests or parts of forests with typical communities of forest plants, forest species or growth forms. <p>The management of integral forest reserves consists in taking all necessary measures to resist damaging influences as far as possible, among other things by limiting access, forbidding hunting and regulating scientific research (article 7 of the Decree of the Flemish Government of 20.01.1993). In each forest reserve an intensive monitoring programme is set up.</p> <p>Walloon Region: Certaines actions de recherche de l'accord cadre ont pour but d'améliorer l'état de la biodiversité (Etude des techniques sylvicoles améliorant la biodiversité):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'étude et mise au point de techniques forestières permettant d'améliorer la biodiversité' devant aboutir à des propositions de gestion des milieux ouverts en forêt mais aussi à un appui scientifique à moyen terme à la Division Nature et Forêt pour l'application et le suivi de la Circulaire pour les normes de gestion de la biodiversité en forêt (voir explication sur cette circulaire plus bas); - 'impact de la gestion forestière sur la biocénose en Région wallonne'; - 'changements climatiques et forêts de demain'. <p>Un autre projet de recherche de l'accord cadre s'inscrit dans une optique d'aide à la décision et à la gestion forestière:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'quantification des fonctions économiques, écologique et sociale de la forêt' dont une partie de l'action vise à l'estimation économique des biens et services non-marchands de la forêt (fonction récréative, rôle de puits de carbone, protection des eaux et du sol, régulation des cours d'eaux. <p>Un exemple d'autres recherches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'expertise biologique de sites dans le cadre de la mise en oeuvre du réseau Natura 2000 en Région wallonne dans le bassin de la Lesse et de la Basse Semois'. Ce projet vise à: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • établir les propositions des périmètres des sites Natura 2000 dans les bassins de la Lesse et de la Basse Semois (1ère phase du projet); • élaborer et tester une typologie des habitats forestiers wallons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ intégrant à la fois les approches wallonnes et européennes; ○ associée à une clé pratique de détermination des habitats sur le terrain; ○ destinée à servir de référence dans le cadre de la rédaction des arrêtés de désignation des sites Natura 2000. • définir les bases d'une méthodologie d'estimation de l'état de conservation des habitats 		

- forestiers;
- intervenir dans la réalisation des premiers arrêtés de désignation des sites Natura 2000 en Région wallonne.

Brussels Capital Region: see answers under questions 183 and 184. The Region is also implicated in the Xylobios project.

Second multi-annual scientific support plan for a sustainable development policy (**Federal Science Policy Office**): Xylobios and Fefocon projects.

186. Is your country undertaking any measures at national level to improve the infrastructure for data and information management for accurate assessment and monitoring of global forest biodiversity?

Options	X	Details
a) Yes	X	Please identify priority actions in relation to each objective of goal 4 and describe measures undertaken to address these priorities
b) No		Please provide reasons below

Further comments on the improvement of the infrastructure for data and information management (including effectiveness of actions taken, lessons learned, impacts on forest biodiversity, constraints, needs, tools and targets).

Walloon Region: peu développé. Information ponctuelle de l'inventaire permanent et du système d'information sur la biodiversité en Wallonie (SIBW).

Brussels Capital Region: there is no special infrastructure for data and information management on forest biodiversity. These data are integrated in a global GIS on biodiversity of the Brussels Capital Region.

Box LXXI.

Please elaborate below on the implementation of this programme of work 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.