



Biodiversity 2020, Update of Belgium's National Strategy



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Overview of the Strategy

Belgium's National Biodiversity Strategy, updated in 2013, is the unique national document on biodiversity that is applicable both at federal and regional levels. It offers a framework to the different levels of government for the policy to follow and to initiate concrete projects. The Strategy should be integrated into the planning and activities of all sectors whose activities depend on biodiversity or could have an impact (positive and negative) on biodiversity.



Vision to 2050

"By 2050, our Biodiversity and the ecosystem services it provides - our natural capital - are valued, conserved, appropriately restored and wisely used for their intrinsic value and for their essential contribution to human well-being and economic prosperity, so that catastrophic changes caused by the loss of biodiversity are avoided."

General objective until 2020

"Contribute nationally and internationally to the achievement of the 2020 target of halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services, and restoring them insofar as feasible, while stepping up our contribution to averting global biodiversity loss."

15 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

85 proposed measures and 10 guiding principles for implementation

1. Identification, Monitoring	2. Threatening processes A	3. Management, Restoration B	4. Sustainable use of resources	5. Sectoral integration C
6. ABS Nagoya Protocol D	7. Scientific knowledge E	8. Education, Training, Awareness	9. Regulatory framework F	10. Coherence in implementation
11. International cooperation	12. Global biodiversity agenda	13. Global concern	14. Local authorities G	15. Mobilisation of resources H

NEW OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- A) Tackling emerging risks and the impact of internal trade of live specimens;
- B) Protecting and restoring biodiversity and associated ecosystem services through protected areas - green infrastructure - no net loss. Identify pathways of introduction of Invasive Alien Species;
- C) Phasing out perverse incentives and using guidelines on the integration of the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services, in development strategies, planning processes and reporting systems included. Developing an approach to include these values in national accounting;
- D) Implementing the Nagoya Protocol;
- E) Mapping ecosystem services in Belgium and assessing their values;
- F) Ensuring the implementation and enforcement of biodiversity legislation;
- G) Involving provinces, cities and other local authorities;
- H) Boosting the mobilization of resources (including through innovative mechanisms included) and enhancing capacities.

Governance
Monitoring and support mechanisms
Duration, reporting, evaluation and review

New challenges for biodiversity conservation

Ecosystem services: a cross-cutting issue

'Ecosystem services' and the benefits they provide for human well-being is an approach to empower and justify the preservation of biodiversity. This concept has gained importance since the publication of the UN report on the Evaluation of the Millennium Ecosystem (2005) and the initiative "The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity" (2010). Since then, it has been integrated in the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2011-2020 and in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2020. The objectives of the national Strategy cover:

- Study, evaluation, monitoring, conservation and restoration of ecosystem services
- Mapping and valuation of ES
- Study the socio-economic benefits of ES
- Integration in educational programmes



Development of ecological networks

At least 17 % of terrestrial and inland waters and 10 % of marine and coastal areas will be conserved through the development of effectively managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and are integrated into the wider land- and seascapes.

Green Infrastructure

Protected areas are necessary but are not sufficient to rehabilitate biodiversity and achieve a state of favourable conservation in the country, nor to maintain the provision of ecosystem services. Achieving the 2020 target implies notably the development of a « green infrastructure » focusing on the representativeness and effectiveness of the management on land and at sea.



Integration of biodiversity values

A new objective aims to *integrate biodiversity values into national (federal and regional) policies, programmes, planning processes and reporting systems, and develop an approach to support their incorporation into national accounting*. Belgium is contributing to international efforts in this area. An appropriate valuation of ecosystem goods and services will require a strengthening of exchanges of interdisciplinary expertise.

Integrated and consistent measures against Invasive Alien Species (IAS)

Several aspects of the threats of invasive alien species for biodiversity are covered in the Strategy:

- Identify and prioritize invasive alien species and their pathways
- Study the potential impact on biodiversity of internal trade of live animals and plants, and in making import and export decisions
- Control, eradicate and take measures to prevent their introduction and establishment



Ecosystem restoration and no-net-loss of biodiversity

The restoration of degraded areas and, in fine, the compensation of new degradations if they can not be avoided will also contribute to achieving the 2020 target:

- Ecosystems, their resilience and their services are maintained and enhanced by restoring at least 15 % of degraded ecosystems
- Define the framework and conditions to ensure no net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services

Want to read more? See www.biodiv.be

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