



Biodiversity.be

Highlights Report 2021



Belgian Biodiversity Platform

For Science, Policy and Practice

With the support of BELSPO, Belgian Science Policy Office



FOREWORD

In 2021, the world descended into multiple crises. The world continued to lose biodiversity at an alarming rate with species, habitats and ecosystems threatened by land degradation, climate change, invasive alien species and pollution. Social unrest and conflict flared, and inequalities deepened as the COVID pandemic dragged on. Yet, as Belgian Biodiversity Platform, we managed to refocus our energy to the tasks at hand, and together with our Partners, we worked hard to deliver on our workplan.

We reinforced our commitment to the work we do as a science policy interface by entering a new strategic phase and with it set out new ambitions for the next four years. The BBPf continued to bring in, and coordinate Belgium's contribution to European and global biodiversity initiatives and events. This includes the European Biodiversity Partnership (Biodiversa+), the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the 8th IPBES Plenary, the GBIF 2021 work programme and more!

We are proud to announce that our work has even reached the ears of the Royal Palace where members of our team were invited to speak with His Majesty the King of Belgium. This was an honour and a pleasant affirmation that biodiversity and conservation exist in the forerunners of Belgium's monarchy.

Following on from the highly notable IPBES-IPCC workshop report, we fortified our work on the topical issue of biodiversity and climate change, with several activities supported by the Platform at national and European level.

As part of our networking and think tank activities, a particular highlight of 2021 was our event "New Policies, New Practices" (launching the new EU governance for biodiversity) co-organised with the European Commission. Although it was virtual, the event was highly successful, garnering over 200 attendees.

We invite you to discover these activities and much more in our 2021 Highlights report. Happy reading!!



*Dr Hilde Eggermont,
Strategic Coordinator of the
Belgian Biodiversity Platform*



*Divija Jata,
Operational Coordinator of the
Belgian Biodiversity Platform*

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The Belgian Biodiversity Platform (BBPf) is a science-policy interface body funded by the Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO) and is supported by a Cooperation Agreement^[1] between the federal and concerned federated authorities. Within the field of biodiversity, it acts as a broker between policy, science and practice. Biodiversity is a matter that falls under the competence of several different federated entities in Belgium.

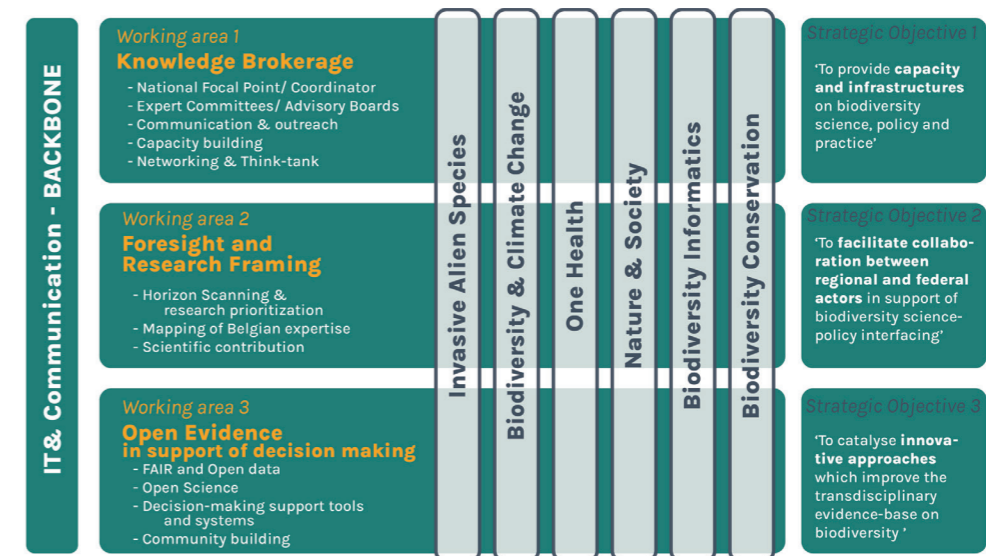
To carry out its work, the Platform has at its disposal a distributed team of biodiversity experts, supported by a team of IT experts and a communications officer, under the management of an executive secretary at BELSPO. In accordance with the Cooperation Agreement, the Platform's biodiversity experts are physically distributed over two Regional host institutes, the Service Public de Wallonie - Département d'Etude du Milieu Naturel et Agricole (SPW-DEMNA) and the Instituut voor Natuur en Bos Onderzoek (INBO) and one Federal host institute, the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (RBINS). The scientific host Institutions (RBINS, SPW-DEMNA and INBO) are strategically chosen for their capacity to offer the most appropriate working environment for the Platform to fulfil its mandate and the activities.

In 2021 the Platform entered a new 4 year phase and with it a revised and updated strategic plan. This strategy takes into account several new realities since the previous phase. While the general objectives and mandate of the Platform largely remain the same as before, the definite activities will indeed be determined by the new context.



Our Mission

“Decision making on biodiversity issues is ground on sound evidence and takes place through collaboration between actors”



Updated strategy for the Belgian Biodiversity Platform

We have broadened our work on topical issues including the new issue of Biodiversity and Climate Change and also having a dedicated topic on Biodiversity conservation. In light of the recent new global recognition for the interconnectedness between biodiversity and health, we have adapted a One Health approach to our work on this topic. Furthermore, the work we do on ecosystem services has been developed into an all encompassing topic on Nature and Society. We welcome you to look back and read about the highlights of our work in 2021.

[1] Cooperation Agreement between the Federal State, Flemish Region, Walloon Region, Brussels-Capital Region, Flemish Community, French Community, and German Speaking Community – first phase 2015-2021; renewed in 2021



Strategic objective:

To provide capacity and infrastructures on biodiversity science, policy and practice



1

**KNOWLEDGE
BROKERAGE**

IPBES BELGIAN FOCAL POINT

IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) facilitates the analysis and synthesis of existing scientific information on biodiversity and ecosystem services for decision-making purposes. Among other services, IPBES produces assessments that feed into the work of several international conventions, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as other international, European, and national initiatives.

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform acts as IPBES Belgian Focal Point. Our activities consist of engaging Belgian experts and stakeholders in the IPBES work programme, and ensuring uptake by policy makers. More info on the IPBES Belgian focal point can be found at <https://www.biodiversity.be/2501>.



*through the
Intergovernmental
Science-Policy
Platform on
Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Services
(IPBES)*

PARTICIPATION TO THE 8TH IPBES PLENARY SESSION

The BBPf headed the 8th Plenary Session of the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service (IPBES-8). The Platform coordinated Belgian positions on several key items including approval of the scoping reports of the Nexus Assessment (interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food, and health) and the Transformative Change Assessment. We also coordinated the debate on the IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored [Workshop Report on Biodiversity & Climate change](#), and the [IPBES Workshop report on Biodiversity & Pandemics](#). The BBPf also led the discussion on 'Improving the effectiveness of the IPBES' for the European Union and its Member States that are members of IPBES.

IPBES-8 took place from 14 to 24 of June 2021 in a virtual format with 100 governments and almost 900 registered participants. The Belgian delegation was composed of experts from various federal and regional agencies/organisations, including Department Omgeving (Flanders), Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos (ANB), Institute voor Natuur- en Bosonderzoek (INBO), the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences/Belgian Science Policy Office, and FPS Health and Environment.



Eight session on the Plenary of the intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (@IPBES8). image: ipbes.net

CONTRIBUTION TO IPBES ASSESMENTS

Besides recruitment of experts by the IPBES Belgian Focal Point and the review of deliverables, several experts of the Belgian Biodiversity Platform also directly contributed to specific assessments under the IPBES Work Programme as authors and Coordinating Lead Authors (CLA). The latter produces designated sections or parts of chapters by overseeing and undertaking an expert evaluation of the best available knowledge from literature or other fully-justified unpublished sources.

Sander Jacobs, Biodiversity expert at the Platform contributed towards the [IPBES Values Assessment](#). Sander is the CLA of chapter 3 - Valuation Methods. Along with Prof. Mette Termansen and Dr. Tuyeni Heita Mwampamba and a team of over 20 international experts, Sander coordinated the assessment of valuation methods from all scientific disciplines and indigenous knowledge sources and how these can be improved and combined to better capture diverse values of nature policy decisions around the world. Similarly, Sonia Vanderhoeven acted as Lead author for Chapter 5 (Effectiveness of past and current programmes and tools for the global, national and local prevention and management of invasive alien species and their impacts) in the [IPBES Invasive alien species assessment](#).

A BELGIAN IPBES-LIKE ASSESSMENT

In 2021, the BBPf explored the need for a Belgian IPBES-like assessment, and proposed a governance structure adapted to the Belgian context as well as the resources needed to implement this.

This idea originated from a workshop that took place at the [BEES Market 2019](#) where the main outcome was to explore the set up of a Belgian IPBES-like assessment to bring added value to what is already existing. More specifically:

- Policy driven: The assessment would target clear policy questions, derived from policy bodies and administrations and formally approved by a policy board, providing the necessary political leverage to inform biodiversity-related policies, strategies and actions.
- Science based: It would be based on robust science, compiled and reviewed by leading Belgian experts, based on peer-reviewed scientific literature, existing reports and other relevant knowledge. There will

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(IPBES)*





be integration of multiple disciplines, including natural sciences, socio-economics and political sciences.

- It would form the basis for the new update of the Belgian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with a 2030 horizon. The latter would provide the framework to inform actions for more sustainable management of biodiversity across sectors that rely and have an impact on natural resources.
- The assessment would aim to be complementary to the formal reporting process for Natura2000 and the Convention of Biological Diversity, as it would provide information that is lacking: on status and trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services in Belgium; on the drivers affecting them; and on effectiveness of policy options.
- It would be based on an inclusive and transparent process which strengthens the science-policy-society interface by involving diverse government levels and stakeholders in the initiation, scoping, review and final adoption of its findings.

The proposal for such an assessment was put forward to several representatives of federal and regional competent authorities operating through formal bodies (most notably the Steering Group Biodiversity Convention, and Steering Group Nature). The urgency, relevance and importance of conducting a synthetic assessment was fully recognized by all bodies involved. Also, the general process of how this could be set up as a process had the necessary support. It clearly would be a helpful idea to look at the biodiversity crisis in an 'IPBES way' - regarding content (interdisciplinarity) as well as regarding proces (cross-policy approach).



Front cover of the proposal for the Belgian IPBES-like assessment.

However, increasing responsibilities in the Belgian Biodiversity Platform (ongoing and initiating IPBES processes, the coordination and involvement in the upcoming EU Biodiversity Partnership, and the base work of facilitating and organising exchange on several topical issues in biodiversity and economy, health, invasive species,...) combined with some shifts in personel, have urged us to take the hard but sensible decision not to embark on this journey ourselves for now. It's a real pity - but we lack the capacity to pull off such an initiative at this moment in time.

Yet, the exercise built on the new political context and highlighted the added-value compared to past and ongoing initiatives. We hope that putting this on the agenda of the Steering Groups Biodiversity/Nature and policy/research institutions has increased the attention to the importance of transdisciplinary IPBES-like national assessments, to complement existing reports and reinforce science-based policy support in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. We also hope to re-initiate the work once resources/capacity allow for this, and remain highly supportive to related initiatives.

For more details on the proposal download the report:

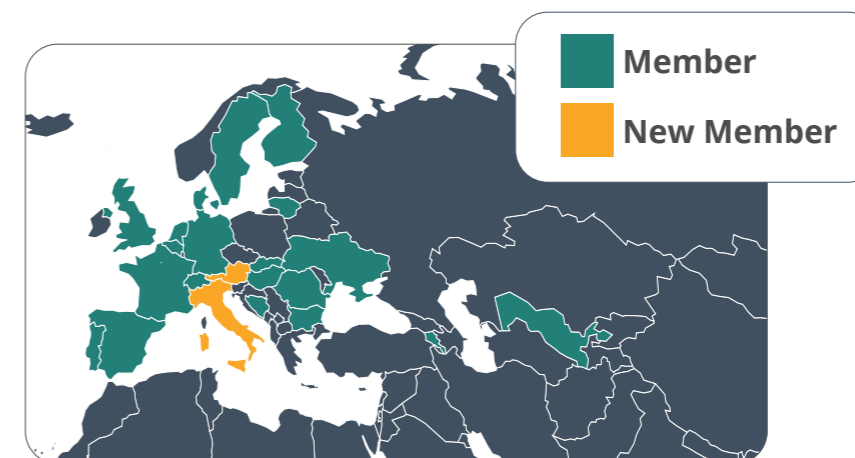
[version Français](#) / [Nederlandse versie](#).

ECA NETWORK



The Pan-European Stakeholder Consultations (PESC) provides a forum for collecting inputs on ongoing processes and deliverables. These consultations are organised on a regular basis by the European and Central Asia network of IPBES national focal points and national platforms, i.e. the ECA network. The Platform facilitates the ECA website and also the ECA newsletter ensuring the connectedness between the national platforms and focal points in this region.

In 2021, the ECA network expanded from 19 members to 21 members, by welcoming Italy & Austria. Following up on that, the network launched its first newsletter to its members at the end of 2021, and it organised its first Virtual Event for its members on the 8th of February 2022, which was attended by over 20 participants.



BELGIAN IUCN FOCAL POINT



The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is the world's oldest and largest environmental network. The Union has a unique membership composed of governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, as well as Indigenous People's Organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,300 Member organisations and the input of more than 15,000 experts. The Belgian Biodiversity Platform acts as IUCN Belgian Focal Point, and performs several strategic functions in the work of the Union.

In 2021 the Belgian Biodiversity Platform provided regular updates to IUCN members and the Belgian scientific communities on activities launched by IUCN. As in previous years, the IUCN Belgian focal point also contributed to regular interactions and exchange of best practices with other National Focal Points/National Committees in Europe through the 'Working Group of Regional and National Committees'.

*through the
International Union
For the Conservation
of Nature (IUCN)*



WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS



French President Emmanuel Macron gives an opening speech at the IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 IUCN World Conservation Congress was held in September 2021 in Marseille (France). Held once every four years, the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) brings together several thousand leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, indigenous people, business, and academia. The Congress aims to improve how we manage our natural environment for human, social and economic development, but this cannot be achieved by conservationists alone. The IUCN Congress is the place to put aside differences and work together to create good environmental governance, engaging all parts of society to share both the responsibilities and the benefits of conservation.

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform headed the Belgian delegation at the WCC in Marseille 2021. The delegation was composed of experts from various federal and regional agencies/organisations, including Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos (ANB), Institute voor Natuur- en Bosonderzoek (INBO), the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences/Belgian Science Policy Office (RBINS/BELSPO), FPS Health and Environment and also included cabinet representatives (Advisor to Minister Zuhair Demir).

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS FORUM

The IUCN World Conservation Congress Forum (4 - 7 September 2021) was a landmark event in a hybrid format, convened under challenging circumstances because of the ongoing COVID pandemic.

The Forum was organised into seven thematic areas.

Managing landscapes for nature and people

Conserving freshwater to sustain life

Restoring ocean health

Accelerating climate change mitigation and adaptation

Upholding rights, ensuring effective and equitable governance

Leveraging economic and financial systems for sustainability

Advancing knowledge, learning, innovation and technology

HIGHLIGHTS OF BELGIAN PARTICIPATION DURING THE FORUM:

The Platform took part in several sessions:

- The high-level event on fighting against deforestation, was virtually attended by the federal environment minister (Zakia Khattabi). This event was organised by France as part of its presidency of the Amsterdam Declaration Partnership. Structured around a roundtable, the event focused on the future of European legislation on the fight against deforestation and on the international cooperation against deforestation, in particular the synergies between the Amsterdam Declaration Partnership and the Alliance for the Conservation of Rainforests.
- [CapDev2021](#) event at the Forum Exhibition, hosted by the IUCN Programme on African Protected Areas and Conservation (Papaco), was dedicated to the presentation of ongoing or planned initiatives on Capacity development for conservation. Representing RBINS, Luc Janssens de Bisthoven gave a presentation from CEBios on capacity building programme & EVAMAB, UNESCO- MAB project in Africa.



through the National Focal Point of the International Union For the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



- The Platform participated on the Task Force on Synthetic Biology and Biodiversity Conservation. Key issues were discussed on synbio applications not directly intended for conservation benefits. This session related to the IUCN Assessment of Synthetic Biology and Biodiversity Conservation (full assessment [here](#); accompanying synthesis and key messages [here](#)).
- Session held on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: A recipe for success. This session discussed the draft post 2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) to be adopted at CBD COP15.
- "Setting science based targets for species in the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework" was a session outlining the new [Species Threat Abatement & Restoration \(STAR\)](#) metric for breaking down the emerging post-2020 mission for biodiversity into science-based targets for a Country, Company or City.
- The event [Conserving at least 30% of the planet by 2030](#) discussed the critical role of protected and conserved areas under diverse governance and management regimes.
- The Platform participated in the inaugural meeting of the Steering Group for the Interregional Committee for Europe, North and Central Asia (ICENCA). Divija Jata (Belgian Biodiversity Platform) became a member of the Steering group representing West Europe. One of the primary roles of the Steering Group is facilitating cooperation among Members within a country and a region and supporting coordination with other components of IUCN and participation of Members in the programme and governance of IUCN.



Participants and speakers at the conference represented many different regions and cultures.

MEMBERS ASSEMBLY

The Members' Assembly is IUCN's highest decision-making body. During the Assembly, IUCN's more than 1300 state and government agency members, civil society and indigenous peoples' Member organisations from more than 160 countries vote on pressing conservation and sustainable development issues.

New Leadership: During the Congress, the Members elected IUCN's new leadership (Council) including Her Excellency Razan Al Mubarak (UAE) as the new President. IUCN Members also elected the Treasurer, Commission Chairs and Regional Councillors across eight global regions.

Our **BBPf Strategic Coordinator (Hilde Eggermont)** got re-elected as IUCN Councillor elected from West Europe, and also got appointed as IUCN Vice President for the period 2021-2025.

MOTIONS

Members from Belgian federal and federated institutes joined the Belgian delegation to participate on motions that were discussed during the congress.

Motions where Belgium participated:

Motion **034** - Integrated solutions to the climate change and biodiversity crises

Motion **040** - Develop and implement a transformational and effective post- 2020 global biodiversity framework

Motion **062** - Towards a Policy on Natural Capital

Motion **075** - IUCN Principles on Synthetic Biology and Biodiversity Conservation

Motion **101** - Setting area-based conservation targets based on evidence of what nature and people need to thrive

Motion **003** - Establishing a Climate Change Commission

Governance Motion **A**: Including subnational governments in IUCN's membership

For more information on what's happening in Belgium for the IUCN, contact [Divija Jata](#), primary contact for the IUCN Belgian National focal Point.

through the National Focal Point of the International Union For the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



through the National
Focal Point of the
International Union
For the Conservation
of Nature (IUCN)



IUCN NATURE 2030 PROGRAMME AND EUROPEAN WORK PLAN

Released in 2021 the IUCN Programme marks the culmination of many years of deliberation across the Union. Another outcome of interest from the World Conservation Congress is the European Work Plan. Both plans of actions set out an ambitious response to the environmental crises the world is facing. The new IUCN Programme defines broad areas of work and sets aspirational targets as well as indicators to measure success. The European workplan contributes to this programme by reflecting not only the actions foreseen in the European region but also the influence this region can have in the rest of the world.

As the Belgian National Focal Point for IUCN, the Platform works to strengthen conservation related actions in Belgium and promote success stories of the Belgian IUCN members. Following the five pathways described in the Global Programme, we aim to promote cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary collaborations across Belgium.



www.iucn.org/about/programme-work-and-reporting/programme



<https://www.iucn.org/resources/iucn-europe-work-plan-2021-2024>

BELGIAN DELEGATION FOR GBIF

The [Global Biodiversity Information Facility \(GBIF\)](#) is an international network and research infrastructure funded by the world's governments and aimed at providing anyone, anywhere, open access to data about all types of life on Earth. Based on a network of participating countries and organisations, GBIF provides data-holding institutions with common standards and open-source tools that enable them to share information about where and when species have been recorded. GBIF gives access to more than a billion occurrence data worldwide, which can be consulted using several search filters and obtained in a consistent format according to internationally recognised standards (Darwin Core).



The Belgian Biodiversity Platform (BBPf) is the [Belgian node for GBIF](#), contributing to the regional and global successes of this key Biodiversity Data Infrastructure for Research and Science Policy. The Platform will also continue its recurring collaborations with other European nodes through the Capacity Enhancement Support Programme but also abroad through Biodiversity Information for Development (BID) and/or Biodiversity Information Fund for Asia (BIFA). Seeking synergies with the IPBES NFP is also amongst our priorities.

through the
Global Biodiversity
Information Facility
(GBIF)



PARTICIPATION TO THE GBIF 2021 WORK PROGRAMME

Aligned with the GBIF Strategic Plan the Platform participated in the GBIF 2021 Work Programme which aims to serve the needs of GBIF's global community and infrastructure into the next decade.

The Platform took part in the following priorities for the work programme:

1. Empower Global Network

Ensure that governments, researchers and users are equipped and supported to share, improve and use data through the GBIF network, regardless of geography, language or institutional affiliation.

In 2021 the Belgian Node coordinated Biodiversity Beyond Species, a project undertaken by five francophone nodes aiming to strengthen their skills in publication of DNA-derived Data. The outcomes of this ongoing project are: the translation of Publishing DNA-derived data through biodiversity data platforms and publication of DNA-derived datasets. The project should deliver a webinar for french-speaking audiences.

By coordinating national, regional and thematic networks, participant nodes play an essential role in helping GBIF engage the broadest possible community of institutions, initiatives and individuals engaged in biodiversity informatics. In 2021 François Malherbe updated the Belgian Biodiversity Data portal to a CKAN Data portal, a lightweight solution for national nodes.



In 2021, as the Belgian GBIF node, the Platform continued to collaborate with the activities of LifeWatch.BE and the Belgian IPBES National Focal Point (also led by the Platform).

2. Enhance Biodiversity Information Infrastructure

The [GBIF Registry of Scientific Collections \(GRSciCol\)](#) is a registry of scientific collections built on GRSciColl, a comprehensive, community-curated clearinghouse of collections information originally developed by Consortium of the Barcode of Life (CBOL).

To support the integration of all biodiversity information as an interconnected digital knowledgebase, the Platform data team (Maxime, Dimitri and André) did an initial cleanup of Belgian institutions and contacts.

GBIF GLOBAL NODES MEETING

Global Nodes Meetings are an opportunity for all GBIF nodes to come together to learn from each other, discuss ideas, develop best practices, share their concerns, define recommendations and set priorities. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Nodes Steering Group (NSG) decided to hold the first-ever virtual global nodes meeting in 2021.

The meeting format combined pre-recorded presentations and online discussion forums with live sessions focusing on interactions between nodes and with the secretariat. It was a good opportunity to discuss the strategic plan, and to get an update on some latest tools such as regional IPTs, GRSciCol, online trainings, Living Atlases, or Hosted Portals and to share our best practices on Data mobilisation, Data use for decision making and training materials.

"I was impressed by the sessions on the future richer data model, the resource mobilisation strategy and the potential for the thematic approach of data mobilisation. These topics will certainly be on the top of the agenda for the upcoming NSG meetings. At the end of the week, the OBIS session offered an excellent overview of what is going on in the marine data. GBIF is about to start a new strategic period where nodes, technologies, partnerships and people skills will undoubtedly evolve. This global nodes meeting gave us some hints and avenues for the nodes community to work together more efficiently to achieve GBIF's mission"

André Heughebaert, Nodes Committee Chair

See [GNM2021](#) report for more

PARTICIPATION TO GBIF NETWORK ACTIVITIES



<https://docs.gbif.org/course-data-mobilization/en/index.en.html>

[Biodiversity Information for Development](#) (BID) is an EU funded project co-ordinated by GBIF whose aim is to increase data mobilisation capacity in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific regions.

In May 2021 Dimitri Brosens was a mentor for the GBIF BID-Africa workshop. The topic was Data mobilisation and the workshop was held virtually. The course was aimed at grant recipients of the Biodiversity Information for Development programme. Representatives of the funded projects could follow a combination of theoretical and practical sessions on an introduction to GBIF. The role of the mentors was to conduct exercise sessions with small groups (French/English). Support was also provided with translation of new/refreshed online materials prior to the course.

In February 2021 Maxime Coupremagne volunteered as a reviewer for GBIF-led programmes. This involved reviewing and scoring proposals for the [Biodiversity Information Fund for Asia](#). In addition, "Publishing DNA-derived data through biodiversity data platforms" guidelines were translated into french.

In May 2021 Dimitri Brosens volunteered as a reviewer for GBIF-led programmes. This involved reviewing and scoring proposals for the BID Caribbean call (concept notes phase 1 and full proposals, phase 2).

In 2020 and 2021 Dimitri Brosens took part in the 'NLBIF evaluation committee (Dutch GBIF node)' for the NLBIF call. This involved reviewing and scoring proposals for the NLBIF call 2020 & 2021. [Here](#) (in Dutch) are the projects accepted for this period. Every year, NLBIF makes a budget available through the NLBIF call to make a financial contribution to submitted project proposals. Submitted proposals were reviewed and evaluated based on the GBIF strategic plan and annual work programme.



28TH GBIF GOVERNING BOARD MEETING (GB28)

The Governing Board is the means by which GBIF Participants make collective decisions. Currently meeting once a year, it consists of delegations from each Participant country and organisation.

In October 2021 this Governing Board approved, amongst other things, the new Strategic Plan 2023-2027 and Belgium's bid to host the next in-person meeting in October 2022. André Heughebaert's role as Nodes Committee Chair ended with the election of Anne-Sophie Archambeau to this position.

See [GB28 approved executive summary](#) for more.

GBIF BELGIUM 2021 COUNTRY REPORT

As expected, Belgium continues to perform very well and its contribution to this global initiative exceeds many larger countries:

- Belgian Biodiversity Information Facility (BIF) is a vivid [network of 23 institutions](#)
- Belgian BIF publishes data from 244 countries, territories and islands including 42,402,735 occurrences in 326 occurrence datasets.
- Researchers from Belgium contributed to 24 peer-reviewed articles citing GBIF use during 2021 and a total of 166 articles since 2008.
- Institutions from Belgium published 2,332,828 new occurrence records during 2021 out of a total of 285,499,295 occurrence records added globally to GBIF.org

See [Belgium country report GBIF.org](#) for more

In February 2022, we analysed how Belgium behaves in terms of GBIF data publication, availability and usage when compared to our neighbouring countries(Germany, France, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). In general, Belgium behaves very well, especially when taking into account our country's size in terms of population or GDP.

See [Belgium compared to neighbouring countries 2021](#) analysis for more details.



BIODIVERSA+ PARTNER

Biodiversa+ is the new European co-funded biodiversity partnership supporting excellent research on biodiversity with an impact for policy and society (2021-2028). It was jointly developed by [Biodiversa](#) and the European Commission (DG Research & Innovation and DG Environment) and was officially launched in November during a physical event in Brussels, co-organized by the BBPf. The BBPf, on behalf of the Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO), has a central role in Biodiversa+ hosting the new Chair and Coordinator of the Partnership, as well as the Biodiversa+ Communication Officer. Moreover, the BBPf supports various tasks across the Biodiversa+ Portfolio, building on its long-lasting experience in the predecessor Biodiversa, including as part of the Biodiversa Coordination Team.



through Biodiversa+



EUROPEAN BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR 2030



image: European Commission

Biodiversa+ is part of the [European Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#) that aims to put Europe's biodiversity on a path to recovery by 2030. The Partnership aims to connect science, policy and practice for transformative change. It currently gathers 73 research programmers, funders and environmental policy actors from 36 European and associated countries to work on 5 main objectives:

1. Plan and support research and innovation on biodiversity through a shared strategy, annual joint calls for research projects and capacity building activities
2. Set up a network of harmonised schemes to improve monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services across Europe
3. Contribute to high-end knowledge for deploying Nature-based Solutions and valuation of biodiversity in the private sector
4. Ensure efficient science-based support for policy-making and implementation in Europe
5. Strengthen the relevance and impact of pan-European research on biodiversity in a global context

Biodiversa+ Executive Summary [here](#)

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION WITH JOINT PROGRAMME INITIATIVES

- Strategic workshop between Biodiversa and JPI Climate:** The aim of the workshop was to explore future collaboration opportunities between Biodiversa/Biodiversa+ and JPI Climate at the interface between biodiversity and climate change (in the context of the [BiodivClim COFUND action on Biodiversity and Climate Change](#), coordinated by BBPf on behalf of Belspo). The workshop took place online on the 13th April 2021. Invited participants were Biodiversa and JPI Climate Governing Board and Advisory Board members, as well as a few experts and stakeholders, including representatives from FACCE-JPI and from the European Commission. The BBPf organised the workshop with support from the JPI Climate Secretariat, hosted by Belspo.



Biodiversa page for the event: <https://www.biodiversa.org/1916>. It includes links to the presentations and the report of the workshop.

- Strategic workshop between Biodiversa and FACCE-JPI:** In April 2018, Biodiversa and FACCE-JPI organised a joint workshop, which led to the identification of shared (thematic) priorities between both bodies in relation to biodiversity, climate change and food production. Since 2018, the European landscape has evolved with the preparation of Horizon Europe and its Partnerships (including Biodiversa+), and the Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas (SRIA) of both initiatives have evolved. In this context, the two initiatives decided to organise a new joint workshop to update their shared priorities and go a step further, identifying common needs in the area and activities that could be implemented to fill these needs. The Joint Workshop was co-organised by BBPf (on behalf of Belspo) in the context of the BiodivClim COFUND Action.



INFORMATION WEBINAR ON THE IPBES NEXUS ASSESSMENT

The 8th session of IPBES that took place in June 2021 approved the scoping report, and thus the undertaking of a nexus assessment of the interlinkages among biodiversity, water, food and health. Biodiversa organized a [webinar](#) for project scientists to learn more about IPBES, the ongoing Nexus Assessment, and how to get involved. The webinar was co-organised by BBPf (on behalf of Belspo) in the context of the BiodivClim COFUND Action.

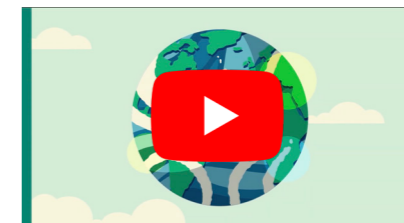
Find more information on the [Biodiversa-IPBES involvement here](#).

BIODIVERSA+ PRIZE FOR EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT

The BiodivERSA Prize for Excellence and Impact is awarded on a yearly basis since 2018 to showcase the achievements of BiodivERSA-funded projects that have produced excellent science with concrete impact for policy and/or society.

To this date, six projects have won the Prize and the results of their research have been featured in two animated movies, produced by the motion company [Squarefish](#).

- The ENABLE “Enabling Green and Blue Infrastructure Potential in Complex Social-Ecological Regions: A System Approach for Assessing Local Solutions” project.
- The SPONFOREST “Unravelling the potential of spontaneous forest establishment for improving ecosystem functions and services in dynamic landscapes” project, which investigated the potential of spontaneous forest regrowth in abandoned farmland areas in Europe and its benefits for biodiversity and ecosystem service.



The projects won the 5th edition of the BiodivERSA Prize for Excellence and Impact. The award ceremony took place during the Biodiversa+ launch event in November 2021. The development of the videoprize was led by BBPf, on behalf of BELSPO. More info: <https://www.biodiversa.org/1550>

BIODIVERSA+ POLICY BRIEFS

The BBPf co-coordinated the production of three Biodiversa policy briefs. The briefs illustrate the high relevance and impact of Biodiversa's work, and of the research it funds across Europe.



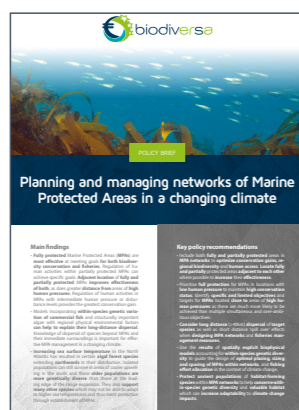
- **"Small scale fisheries and co-management schemes"**

demonstrates that co-management options and strong governance such as granting exclusive rights for fishing benefit both the performance of the small-scale fisheries themselves, but also contribute to their social and environmental sustainability.



- **"How soil biodiversity can strengthen resilience and ecosystem"**

presents information on how soil biodiversity supports a wide range of ecosystem services, and influences crop properties beyond productivity, but that its benefits are often not well-known or underestimated.



- **"Planning and managing networks of Marine Protected Areas in a changing climate"**

summarises the research showing that effectiveness of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) depend on their management objectives, their level of protection, and the proximity to other areas with various human pressures.

The policy briefs are based on the findings of several Biodiversa-funded projects, and were produced in collaboration with the researchers from those projects.

More info: <https://www.biodiversa.org/501>

BIODIVCLIM MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

On behalf of BELSPO, The BBPf contributed to the organisation of the BiodivERSA Data Management workshop aimed at the projects funded under the joint call on "Biodiversity and its influence on animal, human, and plant health" (BiodivHealth), and the projects funded under the joint COFUND call on "Biodiversity and Climate Change" (BiodivClim).

The Call addressed the following major themes:

- Relationship between biological diversity and animal, human and/or plant health: effects and underlying mechanisms
- Understanding and predicting the integrated effects of global change factors on biodiversity-related health issues
- Valuing/qualifying biodiversity benefits to animal, human and plant health, and promoting health-friendly biodiversity status as well as biodiversity-based health status

The workshop took place online on the 3rd of June 2021. The objectives were to provide the participants with the necessary tools and support to write and/or improve and implement their Data Management Plans, as well as to present open science concepts and encourage the projects to make their data as open as possible.

The BBPf contributed with an advisory role during the organisation phase, and with a facilitation/moderation role during the workshop.

EXPERT COMMITTEE/ADVISORY BOARD

The Platform takes part in several expert committees and advisory boards at regional, national and international levels. Here is a selection of some where we participated in this year:

Expert to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and its Subsidiary Body (SBSTTA)

In preparation for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15), the CBD Secretariat convened the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-24) in virtual mode during May-June 2021. The outcomes of these meetings have informed the development of the first draft of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) for the period 2021-2030. The BBPf supported the agenda items related to the relationship between the CBD and IPBES, as Biodiversity & Health.



Expert in Vlaamse UNESCO Commissie - WG Geoparks & Biospheres (Kempen Broeck biosphere)

The Flemish Unesco Commission (VUC) was established by the Flemish Government to promote the link between the Flemish Community and Unesco, with specific information and advisory tasks. The commission also provides support to various Unesco networks, committees and recognitions in Flanders and acts as a formal contact point for Unesco.

The BBPf was part of a working group, advising on the application of Schelde - Delta as Geopark, and Kempen-Broek as Biosphere reserve (read more [here](#)). Both applications are still ongoing.



Geopark Schelde-Delta
photo credit: Arjan Hertog



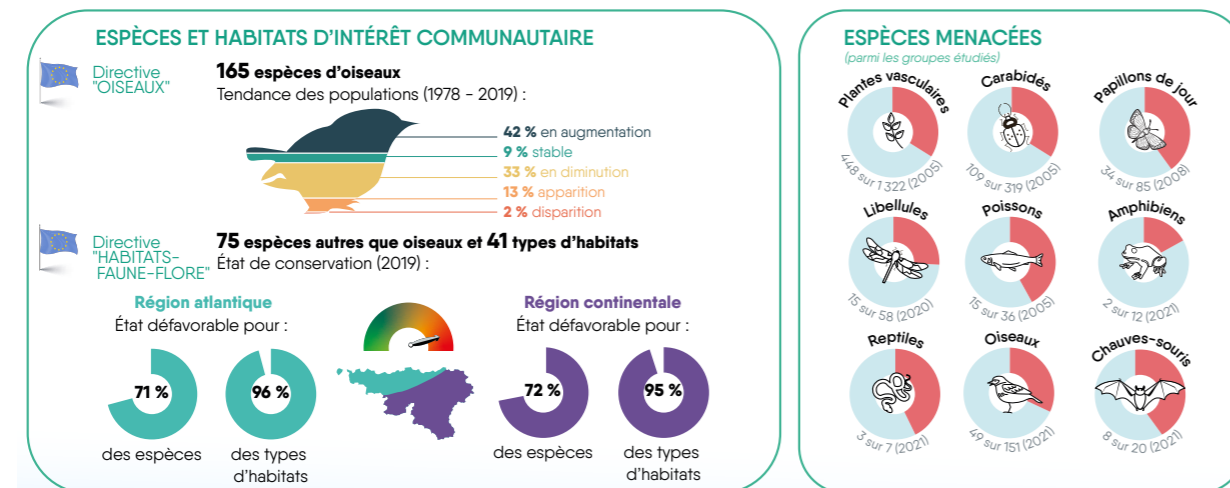
Biosphere reserve Kempen-Broek
photo credit: Erwin Christis

Expert in Etat de l'Environnement Wallon

In 2021 the government of Walloon released a [report](#) on the current state of the environment of Wallonia. The report showcases 10 infographics that include environmental, socio-economic and administrative indicators of the situation and performance in Wallonia.

That Platform acted as reviewer for the Etat de l'Environnement Wallon particularly on the infographic on 'Faune, flore et habitats'.

Infograph from the report 'L'environnement Wallon en 10 infographies':



Species and habitats of conservation interest

Threatened species

Expert to the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC)



The EOSC provides European researchers, innovators, companies and citizens with a federated and open multi-disciplinary environment where they can publish, find and reuse data, tools and services for research, innovation and educational purposes. The Platform has had a role in the [FAIR Working Group](#), which implements FAIR data principles by defining the corresponding requirements for the development of EOSC services, in order to foster cross-disciplinary interoperability. This year the Platform's role in this working group has come to an end. We have now joined the [Technical Interoperability of Data and Services Task Force](#). The Task Force will take the EOSC Interoperability Framework (EIF) recommendations around technical architecture as their starting point to help develop the EOSC Core and Exchange.

Superior Health Council

The Belgian Superior Health Council is an independent advisory body which produces scientific advisory reports aiming at providing guidance to decision makers and health professionals. Thanks to its network of experts and in-house staff, the Council produces impartial and independent advisory reports that are based on a multidisciplinary assessment of the state of the art of science.



In 2021 the Platform led the working group for the advisory report on nature and human health in an urban setting. This scientific advisory report synthesizes current knowledge and on-going Belgian research on the linkages between nature and human health, aiming to assist in promoting beneficial interactions while minimising detrimental ones.

The report concluded that there is ample room for improvement of health by accounting for nature-health interlinkages, in parallel to the ongoing development of scientific understanding. This improvement results from increasing the health benefits as well as reducing the negative health impacts. These improvements could also go beyond human health and reach urban species and ecosystems. Therefore, the Council proposes to use the available knowledge in local, national and international governance to further health.

Read the report [here](https://www.health.belgium.be/en/report-9436-green-and-blue-cities): <https://www.health.belgium.be/en/report-9436-green-and-blue-cities>

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Publication of Policy Briefs

As part of our outreach activities, the Platform mobilises and supports the publications of policy briefs. These are designed to help policy makers keep themselves up to date with the latest environmental research findings needed to design, implement and regulate effective policies. In most cases the Platform is approached by scientists and/or institutes who are exploring the evidence around emerging environmental issues.

Belgian One Health lessons from the COVID-19 crisis



One Health Belgian Network

In January 2021 the Platform along with Sciensano and the Federal Public Service for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment (FPS) policy brief produced a policy brief looking at the key Belgian One Health lessons from the COVID-19 crisis. This brief was developed as a result of a survey conducted the previous year, where participants were asked about their experiences with COVID19, lessons learnt from early warnings and perspectives on the EU Green Deal. The policy brief was also supported by the Chief veterinary Officer in Belgium and the President of the FPS Health.

Evaluation of the effects of pesticides on Belgian bee populations

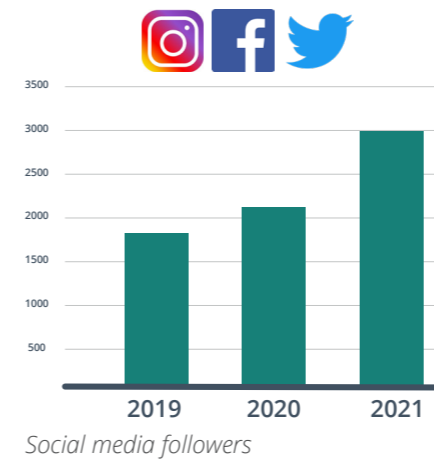
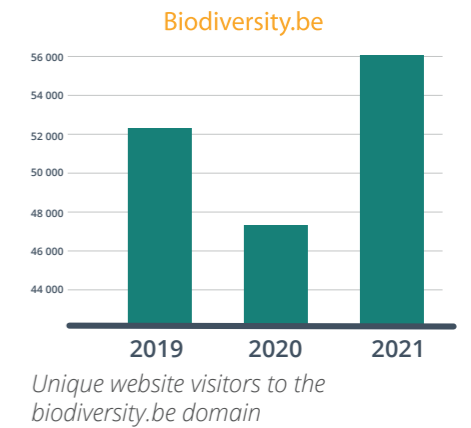
Over the summer of 2021, the Platform once again collaborated with FPS and this time produced a [policy brief](#) which looked at the effects of pesticides on Belgian Bee Populations. The work was done in collaboration with the Federal Task Force on Bees and the national Working Group on Pollinators. Its content is based on studies commissioned by the Federal Authority in the framework of the second federal Bee Action Plan (2017-2019) complemented by additional scientific literature.



Policy brief on pesticides and Belgian bee populations

Platform Communication

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform has always had a strong social media presence for quick news, updates and sharing our activities easy and accessible to a broad audience in a informal setting. BBPf was already active on twitter, facebook and instagram, where our audience has experienced a continuous growth, since september 2021 we can also be found on linkedin.



2021 showed an increase in social media followers (now up to 3004; versus 2112 in 2020 and 1800 in 2019) and website visitors (56,391 in 2021; versus 47,359 in 2020 and 52,506 in 2019).

We also maintained a dedicated monthly newsletter biodiversity newsflash with around 3500 subscribers. The newsletter includes news on topics where the platform contributed, initiatives of our close partners and generally relevant biodiversity topics often with a focus on Belgium.



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belgian biodiversity platform



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Invitation from the Royal Palace of Brussels



We are very pleased to share that members of the Platform were invited to the Royal Palace of Brussels for a reception with His Majesty the King to discuss the importance of biodiversity (what is it, why do we need it), and the new political context: the European Biodiversity Strategy 2030; the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the role Belgium is playing in the negotiations.

Our strategic coordinator, Hilde Eggermont, meets King Philippe of Belgium

NETWORKING AND THINK TANK ACTIVITIES

Launch of new EU Biodiversity Governance

In December 2021, together with the European Commission, the Belgian Biodiversity Platform hosted the virtual event "New Policies, New Practices", launching new EU Biodiversity governance. This virtual event was originally intended to be the morning programme for the 7th Biodiversity X-Mas Market. However, due to developments in the Covid-19 pandemic, plans had to be pivoted towards a different format.

The goal of this launch event was to introduce the new landscape and the opportunities that the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 is bringing for policy, research and practice with its new governance framework.

A series of high-level presentations explored the new Biodiversity Strategy and showcased the strengthening of the knowledge base for policy and decision-making through new monitoring and review mechanisms and related opportunities (research funding, science-based policy support, implementation, monitoring, governance...).

The virtual event was attended by around 250 people. [More information](#) on the event can be found on our website (biodiversity.be/5623).

Belgian One Health Network Conference 2021: Joining Belgian forces for a One Health Green Deal

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform coordinates and maintains the Belgian One Health Network. The network integrates a variety of expertise, including fields concerned with human and animal health, biodiversity, social and economic sciences, and anthropology. One Health is gaining increased attention, recognition, conceptualizations and challenges, both in the realm of science, policy and society. The aim of the Belgian One Health network is to support collaboration, capacity building and communication among Belgian actors.

One Health is an integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals and ecosystems.

It recognizes the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants, and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are closely linked and inter-dependent.

The approach mobilizes multiple sectors, disciplines and communities at varying levels of society to work together to foster well-being and tackle threats to health and ecosystems, while addressing the collective need for clean water, energy and air, safe and nutritious food, taking action on climate change, and contributing to sustainable development.

One Health Definition by the **OHHLEP** (One Health Level Expert Panel)

Source: World Health Organisation (2021, December 1), *Tripartite and UNEP support OHHLEP's definition of "One Health"*. <https://www.who.int/news/item/01-12-2021-tripartite-and-unep-support-ohhlep-s-definition-of-one-health>

In November 2021 together with the Federal Public Office for Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, and Sciensano, the Platform invited Belgian scientists, policy makers and civil society to discuss how the Green Deal can be best supported in our country from a One Health perspective.

The Green Deal is a new growth strategy that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050 and where economic growth is decoupled from resource use. It also aims to protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital, and protect the health and well-being of citizens from environment-related risks and impacts.

It provides for the inclusion and strengthening of synergies from different sectors including climate, energy, transport, industrial policy, agriculture, biodiversity, building renovation, circular economy or even product policy in which the interconnection between the different sectors is essential.

These activities will potentially trigger substantial change in research and education, therefore public participation and confidence in the transition is paramount if policies are to work and be accepted. For the Green Deal to be a success a new pact is needed, bringing together civil society, national, regional, local authorities, knowledge institutes and industry, to collaborate closely with the EU's institutions and consultative bodies.

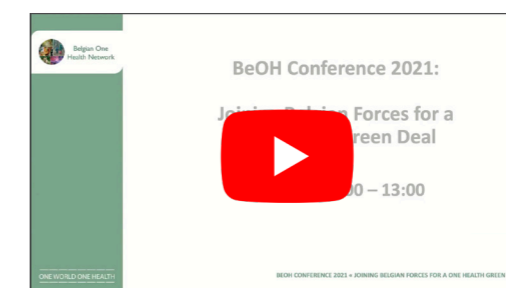
The overall objective of this event was to stimulate a greater cooperation and synergy between experts working in various fields, policy makers and civil society in order to enable and operationalize a One Health approach in support of the European Green deal. This event also aimed to strengthen and enlarge the Belgian One Health network (BeOH) and its relevance to science, policy and practice.

The conference focused on four specific topics within the Green Deal:

- Farm to Fork
- Circular Economy
- Biodiversity
- Climate Resilience

Speakers included experts from the EU Commission, representatives of environmental NGOs at the CESE Wallonia Board, Wildlife Conservation Society, and statements from Federal Ministers.

Missed the conference? find info [here](#).



2

**FORESIGHT AND
RESEARCH
FRAMING**



Strategic objective:

To facilitate collaboration between regional and federal actors in support of biodiversity science-policy interfacing

PUBLICATIONS

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform (BBPf) (co-)authored 7 publications.

Our team of scientists carries out research tasks and helps in organising the successful delivery of a publication. This includes reports, strategies, booklets and peer-reviewed publications. Several of these have great outreach (e.g. Superior Health Council Report, the Biodiversa+ Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda).

- ◇ Parker-Allie F, Pando F, Telenius A, Ganglo JC, Vélez D, Gibbons MJ, Talavan A, Raymond M, Russell L, Talukdar G, Vargas M, Radji R, Koivula H, Heughebaert A, Endresen D, Amariles-García D, Osawa T. **"Towards a Post-Graduate Level Curriculum for Biodiversity Informatics. Perspectives from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Community"** Biodiversity Data Journal (2021), doi: 10.3897/BDJ.9.e68010



- ◇ Verbrugge L., Dawson M.I., Gettys L.A., Leuven R.S.E.W., Marchante H., Marchante E, Nummi P, Rutenfrans A., Schneider K. and Vanderhoeven S. **"Novel tools and best practices for education about invasive alien species."** Management of biological Invasions (2021), doi: 10.3391/mbi.2021.12.1.02

- ◇ Robertson P.A, Mill A.C., Adriaens T., Moore N., Vanderhoeven S., Essl F., Booy O. **"Risk Management Assessment Improves the Cost-Effectiveness of Invasive Species Prioritisation."** Biology 2021, 10, 1320. <https://doi.org/10.3390/biology10121320>

- ◇ Keune Hans, Passchier Wim, Vanwambeke Sophie, Aerts Raf, De Blust Gerrit, Fallon Catherine, Loots Ilse, Nelen Vera, Pauluis Jean, Plusquin Michelle, Van den Broeck Kris, Van Dijck Hans, van Kamp Irene, Van Larebeke Nicolas. **"Green and blue cities : nature and human health in an urban setting."** Superior Health Council report.



Superior Health Council

- ◇ Bouland Catherine, Fraeyman Norbert, Godderis Lode, Hens Luc, Int Panis Luc, Keune Hans, Romain Anne-Claude, Steurbaut Walter, Stranger Marianne, Vaes Bert. **"Milieu- en duurzaamheidsaspecten van de COVID-19 pandemie."** Superior Health Council report (2021)



- ◇ Braubach Matthias, Kendrovski Vladimir, Jarosinska Dorota, Mudu Pierpaolo, Andreucci Maria Beatrice, Beute Femke, Davies Zoe, de Vries Sjerp, Glanville Julie, Keune Hans, Lammel Annamaria, Marselle Melissa, O'Brien Liz, Olszewska Agnieszka, Remmen Roy, Russo Alessio. **"Green and blue spaces and mental health: new evidence and perspectives for action"** WHO-Europe (2021)



- ◇ Eggermont H., Le Roux X., Tannerfeldt M., Enfedaque, J., Zaunberger, K. & Biodiversa+ partners. **"Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda, Biodiversa+, 108 pp."** Biodiversa+ Booklet (2021) www.biodiversa.org/1913/download



HORIZON SCANNING AND RESEARCH PRIORITISATION

Hosting the Chair/Coordinator of Biodiversa+, the BBPf led the drafting of the Biodiversa+ SRIA on behalf of Belspo

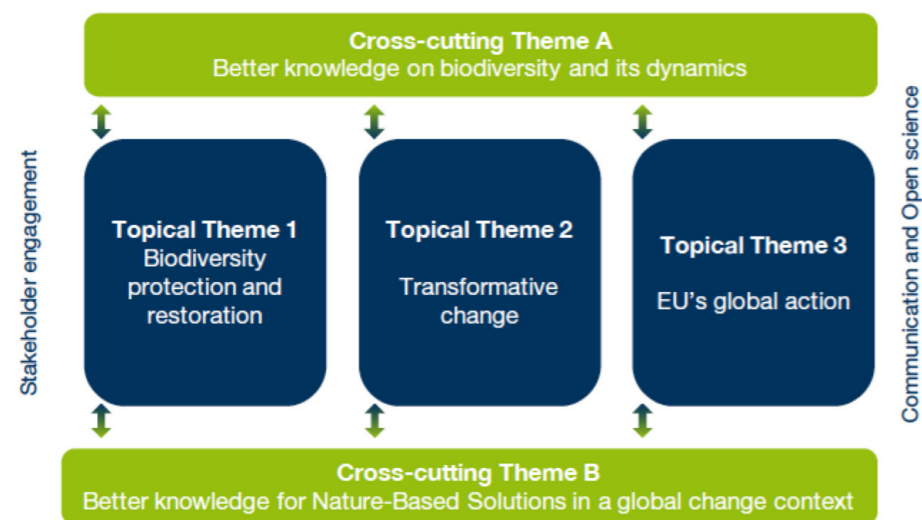
The BBPf also led the drafting of the [Biodiversa+ Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda \(SRIA\)](#). The SRIA presents the long-term strategic vision of Biodiversa+, including broad research themes that will guide a broad range of activities over the coming years. It has been prepared by the Biodiversa+ coordination team and all Biodiversa+ partners. An open consultation was also organised calling for a review of the agenda by key academic and non-academic organisations in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and Nature-based Solutions research.



cover of the SRIA report

The SRIA identifies three Topical Themes and associated knowledge needs, and two Cross-cutting themes. The themes closely align with the core themes of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030; they are action oriented with high societal impact, and ground breaking for science. They promote synergies between sectors, actors and policies; and are supporting the EU's long-term strategic research agenda for biodiversity.

More info on the SRIA strategy [here](#).



The SRIA identifies three Topical Themes and associated knowledge needs, and two Cross-cutting themes dealing with general issues that are relevant to all the Topical Themes.



A honey bee collecting nectar from a flower, carrying pollen on its leg. (Image by ©Frans Eggermont)



Strategic objective:

To catalyse innovative approaches which improve the transdisciplinary evidence-base on biodiversity

3

OPEN EVIDENCE
in support of
decision making

DECISION MAKING SUPPORT TOOLS AND SYSTEMS

Reaching Integrated and Prompt Action in Response to Invasive Alien Species (RIPARIAS project)

2021 marked the start of Life RIPARIAS. With a running period of six years, the project is co-funded by the LIFE programme of the European Union and the three Belgian regional authorities (LIFE19 NAT/BE/000953).



It aims at developing a decision workflow based on scientific data and knowledge to establish priorities for action and to provide effective guidance to decision makers and managers. The Platform is responsible for the website development and the international outreach for the project, which resulted in a series of online publications in 2021 to publicise the project in different contexts.

The platform is also in charge of developing an online tool that provides spatially explicit support to assist program managers and policy makers in establishing priorities for IAS management programs and actions. This implies the definition of management objectives at the river basin scale, species and site prioritisation, as well as the choice of cost-effective techniques adapted to site conditions.

To identify the criteria needed to establish the tool an online one-day technical meeting was organised by the platform in March 2021 with 25 participants.



Ludwigia Peplodes, an invasive waterplant in Belgium. image by Celine Prevot (DEMNA)

Building a data-driven framework to inform policy on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) : TrIAS

2021 marked the end of the Belpso-funded TrIAS project. Invasive species are a significant problem for conservation of biodiversity and are a constant challenge for wildlife management and policy implementation. The number of species, the large area and the dynamics make providing up-to-date information difficult due to issues of data mobilisation, poor interoperability of data, slow data workflows and the sheer complexity of ecological processes. Raw data on all species needs to be gathered, processed and analysed to support sound decision-making on invasive species, and the results of the whole decision making process communicated to all stakeholders. Furthermore, this process needs to be adaptable to new techniques, changing circumstances and to future scenarios. TrIAS addressed all of these challenges by implementing Open Science workflows in all the partner organisations with the aim of changing the way biodiversity monitoring is done, leading to systems that can be run rapidly, regularly, transparently and repeatedly.

TrIAS has generated a large number of outputs the highlights of which are summarised here :

- Thirteen checklists and twenty occurrence datasets published to GBIF.
- More than 31 thousand taxon records published.
- An openly published dataset on alien species in protected areas in Belgium.
- Novel fine resolution climate scenarios data for Europe specifically created for species distribution modelling.
- A novel method created for aggregating biodiversity data.
- Novel policy indicators at national and regional level to report on the state of invasions.
- Novel indicators designed and created to track species invasions.
- A novel and automated prioritisation method to select new and emerging alien species for risk assessment.
- A novel and fully automated pipeline for species distribution modelling tailored to risk assessment.
- The risk assessment protocol Harmonia+ adapted for marine species
- Twenty-two risk assessments of emerging alien species in Belgium.

The Platform has played a key role throughout the project, not only leading one of the work packages but also ensuring continuity between the different packages and, above all, ensuring relevance to the policy, and management perspectives of the IAS at both Belgian and international levels.



OUR TEAM

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Strategic Coordinator
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Jorge Ventocilla
Biodiversity Expert

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Coralie Verhaegen
Communication Officer

PARTNERS



BELGIAN SCIENCE POLICY OFFICE

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform is grateful to our funder, the Belgian Science Policy Office ([BELSPO](#)) for supporting our work.

We are also thankful to our host institutes for hosting our team in their premises:



• The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences ([RBINS](#))



• The Research Institute Nature and Forest ([INBO](#))



• The Departement de l'Etude du milieu naturel et agricole ([DEMNA](#))

The initiatives mentioned above are also members of our Steering Committee, which is also composed of the following members. We would like to thank all of them for the strategic guidance they provide us with:



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©Frans Eggermont: cover page photo of *Papilio machaon*

©Icons purchased on The Noun Project

A report compiled and designed by Divija Jata, Communication Coordinator & Leendert Plaetinck communication officer of the Belgian Biodiversity Platform Edited by Hilde Eggermont and the Belgian Biodiversity Platform team members



*A common water frog (Pelophylax kl. esculentus) who is hiding between the plants, peaks out of the water.
(image by Robin Bosteels, Natuurpunt)*



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