



# Biodiversity and climate change forum

## Report of the Kick-off meeting

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**Date:** 25 June 2008

**Present:** David Aubin, Estelle Balian, Erika Baus, Etienne Branquart, Caroline Dandois, Lionel Delvaux, Louis François, Boudewijn Goddeeris, Sandrine Godefroid, Jos Gysels, Martin Hermy, Joëlle Huysecom, Erik Matthysen, Marlène Moreau, Alain Peeters, Dominique Perrin, Marianne Schlessler, Hendrik Segers, Emmanuel Sérusiaux, Hans Van Dyck, Steven Vanholme, Ines Verleye

**Excused:** Kris Bachus, Jeroen Buysse, Luc De Bruyn, Laurence Delahaye, Marc Dufrêne, Anne Franklin, Machteld Gryseels, Alain Hambuckers, André Heughebaert, Gérard Jadoul, Els Martens, Marc Mormont, Ivan Nijs, Jacques Stein, Martine Stelandre, Christel Termol, Aline Van der Werf, Guido Van Huylenbroeck, Jean-Pascal Van Ypersele, Kris Verheyen

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*Meeting convenes at 9:30*

**NOTE:** A revised synopsis of the project is provided as a separate document.

### Remarks on the general procedure

#### **Outputs:**

The aim of Step 1 is to discuss strategic orientations for nature conservation/ management under changing climate. The output will be a report (result of the integration of the 3 WP contributions)

that is meant to be a **conceptual** document aiming to pass a message to Belgian actors in nature conservation/ management. It will set the scene (identify new threats and challenges), propose new strategic orientations for nature conservation under changing climate (based on current knowledge) and identify specific research needs that would help design new approaches and tools for nature conservation and management. This document is not meant to be an exhaustive review but a reference document that will notably serve as a basis for the second step of project.

The aim of Step 2 will be to discuss **practical/ technical** adaptations to sectoral practices (identify which instrument is to be used in each sector in order to reach the goals identified in Step 1). The output will be a recommendation document to the attention of sector representatives.

### ***Scope:***

The output of this project is meant to be useful to Belgian policy makers and stakeholders. Research or adaptation needs could be identified at a larger scale but the results should be relevant at the Belgian scale.

The scope of the project is not restricted to protected area; non-protected areas (agricultural lands, forests,...), where most of biodiversity occurs, will of course be considered in the project. Agriculture, forestry,... representatives will be closely involved in the second phase of the project.

The project is dealing with nature conservation in the sense of “biodiversity” conservation; biodiversity being considered at the 3 levels of complexity (genetic, specific, ecosystemic) and in the context of ecosystem services.

The issue of climate change impact on biodiversity in Belgian cooperation development projects is recognized as an important issue (high budgets are involved in Belgian development cooperation projects) that will undoubtedly be considered as a future project in the framework of the Biodiversity and climate change forum.

The impact of climate change mitigation measures on biodiversity is also recognized as an important issue that will undoubtedly be considered as a future project in the framework of the Biodiversity and climate change forum. It could be touched upon in the course of the current project although the main focus should remain on direct interactions between climate change and biodiversity.

### ***Links with existing initiatives***

A Walloon project on the impact of climate change on Walloon forest and recommendations to landlords is currently underway. Interactions with this project are foreseen.

### ***Drafting process***

Each WP will produce a synthesis document (about 5 pages long). Each WP can proceed independently but interactions between WP are essential. The forum section of the website can be used for discussions. The way a working group proceeds is under the responsibility of the work package leader. Either a discussion draft is provided by the leader and commented/ amended/ completed by the participants; alternatively the leader could distribute specific drafting tasks to participants.

### **Remark on WP3**

Since knowledge on the interactions between climate change and biodiversity is still sketchy, there is of course a large range of research needs in this field, from strictly fundamental to applied research. However, the specific aims of the present project is to (1) identify research priorities that would complement existing knowledge and help design new approaches and tools for nature conservation and management under changing climate; and (2) prepare ways to address these needs. The idea is not to draw up a full inventory of research needs. The work of WP3 should be closely linked to that of WP2.

### **General remarks**

Besides increase in mean temperature, the impact on biodiversity of other parameters of climate change should be considered, including UV radiation, night/day extremes, precipitation, CO2 concentrations,...

Evolutionary processes based conservation/ management strategies and translocation issues (including related uncertainties) are important issues to be discussed in this framework.

### **Practical remarks**

Pdfs of the ppt presentations will be available on our website soon.

A password-protected section of the website will be available to share pdfs of relevant scientific papers.

All participants will be automatically registered to the electronic forum of the website. (If you don't wish to be included in the mailing list, please unsubscribe).

### **Participation to Work Packages**

Here is a provisional list of contributors to WP. If you wish to contribute to one of the WP, please contact the WP leader.

#### **Contribution to WP1**

- E. Sérusiaux
- L. François
- S. Godefroid
- D. Perrin
- E. Matthysen

*Contact:* Etienne Branquart (E.Branquart@mrw.wallonie.be),  
Alain Hambuckers (alain.hambuckers@ulg.ac.be)

***Contribution to WP2***

- S. Vanholme
- J. Gysels
- E. Sérusiaux
- M. Hermy
- E. Matthysen

*Contact:* H. Van Dyck (Hans.Vandyck@uclouvain.be)

***Contribution to WP3***

- E. Sérusiaux
- L. François
- M. Hermy
- E. Matthysen

*Contact:* H. Segers (hendrik.segers@naturalsciences.be)

*Meeting ends at 12:30*