

BIODIVERSITY NEWSFLASH

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▶ **BEES Christmas Market on 15th of December 2015 : register now !**

We would like to remind you that the Belgian community of practice on Ecosystem Services (BEES) invites you to the second edition of the BEES Christmas Market, on Tuesday 15th of December 2015. We welcome you to the Palace of the Royal Flemish Academy of Sciences and Arts, with the Belgian Biodiversity Platform, the MAES working group of the European Commission, the LNE department and ANB as co-hosts.

Over 100 people and organisations have now registered. They are from Flanders, Wallonia, Brussels and many other EU countries. Over 50 stands from international and local scientific projects, different policy levels and administrations, practice and business will await you in convivial atmosphere.

Please register quickly as places and stands are limited.



The Christmas market facilitates exchange of contacts, ideas, practices and products on ecosystem services and natural capital related work in a friendly market-like atmosphere. We bring together people from academia, public administration, European Commission, business and civil society, as well as representatives of Ecosystem Services communities of practice abroad.

The market will end with live music, a drink and an optional dinner from 18h to 20h, kindly offered by the European Commission MAES initiative.

- ➔ Register [here](#)
- ➔ Where ? at the [Palace of the Royal Flemish Academy of Sciences and Arts](#)
- ➔ When ? on Tuesday, 15 December 2015, registration opens at 13:30 (stand holders: 12:00h)
- ➔ More info about the BEES community [here](#) or contact [Sander Jacobs](#)

► Report on the first IPBES Belgian expert meeting



On 30th October, the Belgian Biodiversity Platform organized a first (informal) IPBES Belgian expert meeting. The meeting was mainly targeting people engaged in the implementation of the IPBES workprogramme as Belgian expert (for scoping exercises, actual assessments and/or reviewing processes), and/or supporting the Belgian IPBES NFP activities.

The purpose of the meeting was threefold:

1. Sharing best practices, discuss working modalities, synergies amongst assessments, and practical issues (time management)
2. Improve the general understanding of the IPBES process
3. Provide suggestions to improve the implementation/quality/usefulness of the assessments, and the functioning of bodies involved in IPBES (national focal points, secretariat,...)

- ➡ *Report is available [here](#)*
- ➡ *To receive updates from the Belgian IPBES National Focal Point, subscribe [here](#)*
- ➡ *Contact : [Hilde Eggermont](#)*

► IAS Expert Registry

The IAS Expert Registry is one of the tools of the [Belgian Forum on Invasive Species](#). It allows to keep track of the experts and practitioner's community active on IAS in Belgium. It also serves as a basis for the identification and selection of experts within the framework of activities related to the Belgian implementation of the EU Regulation on IAS.

Additionally, the registry aims to bring together management expertise on specific species by allowing practitioners (nature reserve managers, people from governmental bodies or private companies, social economy etc. working in IAS eradication and control). This way, this register will serve to bridge the gap between science, policy and management in the field.

Taxonomic specialists, field managers, specialists in cost / benefit analysis, database managers, environmental lawyers ... The needed expertise is very diverse!

You may not realize that your expertise might be useful in tackling invasive species!

- ➡ *Register as expert [here](#)*
- ➡ *More information on the Registry [here](#)*
- ➡ *Contact : [Sonia Vanderhoeven](#)*



► Democratic Republic of Congo becomes GBIF Associate Participant

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has become the latest country to join the [GBIF](#) network.

The central African country's entry into the GBIF community as an Associate Participant brings the total number of national members to 54, including 14 countries from Africa.

DRC is Africa's second largest country by area, and is among 17 so-called 'megadiverse' countries that collectively harbour the majority of the world's species. The two other African countries in this group, Madagascar and South Africa, are already GBIF Participants.

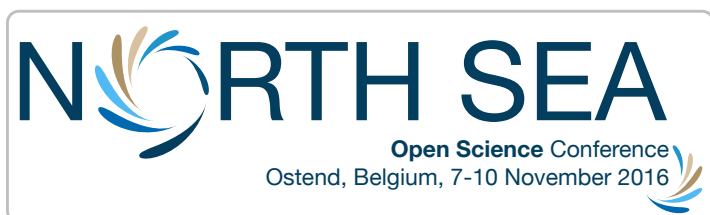
As of November 2015, users of [GBIF.org](#) already have access to more than half a million occurrence records relating to some 16,000 species located in DRC, published by institutions from 33 countries. More than half of these records are shared by institutions in Belgium, including several collections from the [Royal Museum of Central Africa](#).

The University of Kinshasa will host the GBIF node for DRC.

➡ *Contact : [André Heughebaert](#)*



► Save the Date : North Sea Open Science Conference, 7-10 November 2016



Interdisciplinary Science in support of Marine Management

Sustainable management of the marine environment poses numerous challenges that need addressing in anticipation of the expansion of Europe's Maritime Policy and Blue Growth initiatives. In parallel, several legal instruments are put in place to maintain or achieve good environmental status, and to protect or restore highly valued ecosystem assets. The implementation of these legal instruments requires vast scientific knowledge to scientifically underpin ecosystem assessments and management solutions.

This conference aims at highlighting state-of-the-art knowledge, solutions and prospects to enlarge the scientific basis for an ecosystem-based management of the North Sea. We see two main pillars with associated themes to structure the content of the conference:

- (1) Scientific fundament, comprising spatio-temporal patterns and marine ecosystem processes;
- (2) Science for management and policy, comprising ecosystem assessment, assessment tools, and socio-economic relevance

The conference is open to fundamental and applied research, lessons-learned from both successes and failures in marine management, and innovative measurement and data handling concepts from within and beyond the North Sea. The conference will equally cover biodiversity and physico-chemical environmental aspects of the North Sea, and particularly welcomes integration of different disciplines. We anticipate attracting ~300 scientists from North Sea-bordering countries and beyond.

We would be honoured if you would be willing to participate in our scientific committee and look forward in making this conference a success!

- ➡ *The conference will take place in Ostend (Belgium), on 7-10 November 2016*
- ➡ *Presenters will be offered the possibility to publish in a special issue of the scientific journal *Hydrobiologia**
- ➡ *More information : northsea2016@biodiversity.be*



► Two new papers on Nature-Based solutions

Colleagues from the Belgian Biodiversity Platform have contributed to two new papers on Nature-Based solutions. The opinions voiced in these papers reflect their personal views.

Paper 1 : Nature-based Solutions: New Influence for Environmental Management and Research in Europe



Greening roofs or walls to cool down city areas during summer, to capture storm water, to abate pollution, and to increase human well-being while enhancing biodiversity: nature-based solutions (NBS) refer to the sustainable management and use of nature for tackling societal challenges. Building on and complementing traditional biodiversity conservation and management strategies, NBS integrate science, policy, and practice and create biodiversity benefits in terms of diverse, well-managed ecosystems.

With this paper, to which the Belgian Biodiversity Platform highly contributed, the authors do not intend to provide an in-depth review of all concepts related to NBS, nor to nail down a strict definition.

Rather, they aim to sharpen the term, in particular by proposing a typology of NBS, and reflect on its added value with respect to existing terms and concepts, its possible drawbacks in case of misuse, and perceived future challenges for research and management.

As such, the hope is to spur further discussion, and contribute to sharpening the term allowing for a better evaluation of its true potential.

➡ **H. Eggermont, E. Balian, J.M.N. Azevedo, V. Beumer, T. Brodin, J. Claudet, B. Fady, M. Grube, H. Keune, P. Lamarque, K. Reuter, M. Smith, C. van Ham, W.W. Weisser, X. Le Roux.** 2015. *Nature-based Solutions: New Influence for Environmental Management and Research in Europe*. *GAIA Ecological Perspectives*, 24/4: 243-248

Paper 2 : Nature-Based Solutions for Europe's Sustainable Development



Pursuing economic targets of job creation, growth and innovation while tackling global environmental challenges has long been seen as impossible. However, any long-term economic competitiveness and security

depends on the extent to which natural resources are used sustainably. Therefore, the European Union is investing in nature-based solutions to achieve this double goal. The difference between the prevailing economic model and a sustainable resource use has long seemed insurmountable.

While many debates are paralyzed or radicalized, nature-based solutions could offer a transition path with realistic, incremental steps towards a sustainable economy as envisaged by the EU Horizon 2020 vision.

This paper outlines the basics of a nature-based scenario for Europe, and proposes criteria to focus, guide and evaluate the implementation of nature-based solutions, geared at production of wide socio-economic benefits, provision of jobs, and low-carbon technology innovations.

➡ **Sander Jacobs and Joachim Maes**

➡ **More information [here](#)**

► Ecosystem services and human health - awareness and attitudes

The first report of the analysis of 2014 Survey by the Ecosystem Service Partnership's Thematic Group on health is now available!

The aim of this survey is to gain a clearer view on how human health perspectives are addressed by people working in the field of ecosystem services research, policy and practice (what we call the "ecosystem services community"). With this report, we hope to gauge the degree of awareness and interest in the topic, and to improve the understanding of the needs of those who aim to address links between ecosystems and human health in their working area. The report also throws light on the main opportunities, barriers and challenges in this field.

The survey captures perspectives from any stakeholder in the ecosystem services community, not just those working on health issues. All responses have been treated confidentially and will not be attributable to individuals or to their organisation. The results are used for research only and not for any commercial purposes.

➔ Report available [here](#)

➔ On behalf of the ESP Thematic Working Group on Public Health & partners: [Hans Keune](#), [Conor Kretsch](#), [Bram Oosterbroek](#), [Kati Vierikko](#) & [Pim Martens](#).



'Biodiversity Newsflash' is published whenever the need arises to inform the Belgian biodiversity research community on new developments in biodiversity research policies.

The [Belgian Biodiversity Platform](#) is an initiative by the [Belgian Science Policy Office \(BELSPO\)](#)

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