

**Belgian Biodiversity Platform  
2007 Conference**

# **Biodiversity and Climate Change**

**21-22 May 2007  
Brussels, Belgium**

**FINAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

## Introduction

The Belgian Biodiversity Platform decided to dedicate its 2007 conference to the topical issue “Biodiversity and Climate Change”. The theme of the meeting, which intends to bring together scientists as well as policy makers interested in the topic, accords with that of the 2007 International Day for Biological Diversity (IBD - 22 May), as proposed by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and complements the designation of 2007 as the International Polar Year.

## The New Great Threat to Biodiversity

Climate change is a growing concern to society. Since the mid-1800s global temperatures have increased by about 0.6°C, impacting the entire world, from low-lying islands in the tropics to the vast Polar Regions. Current climate change predictions estimate further increases in temperatures of 1.4°C to 5.8°C by 2100. This will undoubtedly have severe consequences on biodiversity. Climate change is already forcing living organisms and ecosystems to adapt either through shifting habitat, changing life cycles, or the development of new physical traits. Those species that are unable to adapt are facing extinction. In fact, predictions estimate that up to 1 million species may become extinct as a result of climate change.

## The Biodiversity Safety Net

The links between biodiversity and climate change run both ways: biodiversity is threatened by human-induced climate change but, biodiversity resources can reduce the impacts of climate change on people and production. The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity can strengthen ecosystem resilience, improving the ability of ecosystems to provide critical services in the face of increasing climatic pressures. These range from reducing the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> released in the atmosphere, to mitigating the impacts of climate change effects such as, flooding and drought, famine, and on health.

Recognizing this, the Belgian Biodiversity Platform organizes a meeting with an open science conference on Biodiversity and Climate Change. The goal of this meeting is twofold:

- ✓ The open science conference will offer an overview of the scientific knowledge on present and predicted impacts of climate change on biodiversity, with a focus on research being conducted in Belgium;
- ✓ Preceding the science conference a consultation of sectorial organizations will be held in order to assess the importance and impact to society of climate-mediated changes in biodiversity. The results of this consultation will be presented and debated during a round table discussion, and suggestions for research priorities will be formulated in order to optimise the relevance and coherence of the Belgian research policy. In addition, the conference will suggest targeted research and

conservation actions to be taken in Belgium to mitigate the impact of climate change on biodiversity.

The open science conference is scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup>; the outcome of the conference will be presented at a public event during the 2007 Biodiversity Day on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The **venue of the meeting is the International Press Centre Residence Palace (<http://presscenter.org>)**. The number of participants **is limited to 140 pers.** Therefore, late registration may have to be refused.

## Symposium format

The open science conference consists of parallel oral and poster sessions. The oral session consists of three subsequent plenary sessions, each of which will include an invited review presentation (40 minutes, including discussion) and contributed presentations (15 minutes, including discussion). Posters will be exhibited during the entire two days of the event. The outcome of the consultation will be treated in a round table discussion, and recommendations for adaptation measures will be presented to policy makers and the administration during a public event on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Simultaneous translation (FR-NL) will be available during this public event.

## Preliminary Programme

### Monday May 21: Science meeting

8.30-9.00: Arrival & Registration

9.00-9.10: Welcome

9.10-9.50: Plenary session I: Climate change

10.10-12.30: Plenary session II: Impact on Biodiversity

12.30-14.00: Lunch, poster session and meeting with experts

14.00-16.00: Plenary session III: Projections and adaptation

16.20-17.30: Open round table discussion, preparation of conclusion of the Science meeting

#### **Confirmed speakers:**

*Prof. Dr Andreas Fischlin, ETH Zurich, Switzerland*

*PD Dr. Gian-Reto Walther, University of Bayreuth, Germany*

*Prof. Dr Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium*

### Tuesday May 22: Public event

13.30-14.00: Arrival & Registration

14.00-14.10 : Welcome

14.10-14.20: Presentation of scientific recommendations

14.20-16.50: Debate: Climate Change *versus* Biodiversity?

16.00-17.30: Reception

#### **Confirmed speakers:**

*Serge De Gheldere (Ambassador of Al Gore)*

*Dr. Martin Sharman (Scientific Officer, unit Research DG DI-4 Biodiversity and Ecosystems, European Commission)*

## Contributions

Contributors to the oral and poster sessions are urged to clearly indicate their preference on the registration form. The scientific committee will decide on acceptance of a contribution as oral or poster presentation.

Time allotted to regular contributions is 15 minutes plus five minutes for discussion, and this schedule will be strictly adhered to. Contributors are requested to submit the materials for their presentation to the organizers before the start of the session. Projection of power point presentations will be possible; requests for additional equipment (overhead projector, slide projector) or information should be sent to the organizers at least a week in advance of the meeting.

Posters (max. dimensions 0.8m x 1.4m; A0 size) will have the same status as the oral presentations in the proceedings of the conference. Contributors are asked to provide handouts (A4 size) of their presentation. Alternatively, the organizers can provide handouts if poster files are submitted at least one week before the beginning of the symposium. This can be done by mailing the file as attached document to an e-mail or on CD-rom, to the secretariat.

Abstracts containing a title, author name(s), address(es) and a text of maximum 300 words should be sent as text-only file in an email attachment to the coordinator **before March 31<sup>st</sup> 2007**. The abstracts will be published as a programme and abstract booklet, and will also be made available on the web site of the Belgian Biodiversity Platform.

## Proceedings

Papers (no page limit) or extended abstracts (max. 3 printed pages, 5 manuscript pages) of communications presented at the symposium can be submitted for publication in the Proceedings. Manuscripts must be in English, and must be delivered to the symposium secretariat **before the start of the symposium**. Instructions to authors will be available on the web page of the meeting ([www.biodiversity.be/change](http://www.biodiversity.be/change)). Contributors are requested to submit an electronic version of their oral or poster presentation for inclusion in the extended electronic version of the proceedings.

All papers will be rigorously refereed. Manuscripts drawn from oral and poster presentations will have the same status in the proceedings. The Proceedings will be published as a Special Publication of the Belgian Biodiversity Platform.

## Registration and Fee

Registration can be done by filling in the form on the web site of the Belgian Biodiversity Platform (<http://www.biodiversity.be/change>). Your registration will only become effective after payment of the registration fees (**€25 before March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007, €50 after March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007, to be paid to** account nr 679-0091681-16 (IRSNB-KBIN, B-1000 Brussels, IBAN: BE72 679 0091681 16, BIC: PCHQBEBB), clearly mentioning your name and "*Biodiversity and Climate Change Symposium*". Payment of the registration fee entitles to full participation to the conference including a symposium package, and one copy of the Proceedings. The number of participants is limited because of logistic reasons; late registrations may have to be refused.



## Deadlines

- 31 March 2007: abstracts and registration;
- 22 May 2007: ppt of presentations (oral and posters), manuscripts of full contributions or extended abstracts.

## Scientific committee

**Prof. Dr Chantal De Ridder**  
Université Libre de Bruxelles

**Prof. Dr Louis François**  
Université de Liège

**Prof. Dr Martin Hermy**  
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven

**Prof. Dr Ivan Nijs**  
Universiteit Antwerpen

**Prof. Dr Jean-Pascal van Ypersele**  
Université Catholique de Louvain

**Prof. Dr Dirk Verschuren**  
Universiteit Gent

## Organization



## Belgian Biodiversity Platform

### Coordinator:

Hendrik Segers  
Royal Belgian Museum of Natural Sciences  
Vautierstraat 29 Rue Vautier, B-1000 Brussels  
[hendrik.segers@naturalsciences.be](mailto:hendrik.segers@naturalsciences.be)  
Tel: +32 2 627 4310 Fax: +32 2 646 4433

### Symposium secretariat:

Aline Van der Werf  
Belgian Federal Science Policy  
Rue de la Science 8 Wetenschapsstraat,  
B-1000 Brussels  
[Aline.Vanderwerf@belspo.be](mailto:Aline.Vanderwerf@belspo.be)  
Tel: +32 2 238 3671 Fax: +32 2 230 5912