

# THE UNECE CONVENTION ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION, PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS (AARHUS CONVENTION)

## TASK FORCE ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION

### ELECTRONIC INFORMATION TOOLS: CASE STUDY BY BELGIUM (FLANDERS)

#### *ENVIRONMENT REPORT FLANDERS: A WEB BASED DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FLANDERS*

<https://en.milieurapport.be>

## I. Description

- **1. Brief description:** The Flanders Environment Agency delivers on a regular basis a description, analysis and assessment of as well the actual environmental state & policy and of the expected environmental development in case of both unchanged and alternative policy (scenario analysis & outlooks). This information is communicated to all stakeholders by a website (<https://www.milieurapport.be>), build around a catalog of circa 200 environmental indicators.

On a regular basis reports are produced as well. Those reports are the reflection of the scientific knowledge on environmental issues in Flanders, scattered in universities, scientific institutions and administrative services, coordinated by the Flemish Environment Agency (VMM).

- **2. Type:** public website
- **3. Scope:** regional, local
- **4. Working language(s):** mainly in Dutch (<https://www.milieurapport.be/>) and some highlights relevant to a larger, international audience in English (<https://en.milieurapport.be/>)
- **5. Target users:** policy makers, NGL's, general public
- **6. Starting year:** 1993
- **7. Budget and funding source:** circa 600 000 EUR (operating budget without personnel costs) – Flanders Environment Agency

- **8. Contact:**

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## II. Implementation

- **9. Policy, legal and institutional context:** Law of the Flanders Government: 'Decreet houdende algemene bepalingen inzake milieubeleid' - 05/04/1995
- **10. Partner organizations involved:** (see point 11)
- **11. Stakeholders involved, their expected benefits:**
  - Together with the specific staff for environmental reporting of VMM, a group of scientific writers is contacted to rearrange the available knowledge in order to make it applicable to the policy foundation. This usually involves comprehending the knowledge and completing it, as well as the development of indicators and models. Reporting within the compulsory time schedules of the policy preparation needs to be done in the frame of the DPSI-R-chain.
  - An independent steering group accompanies the environmental reporting process, and consists of:

- Members for the Flanders Council for Science and Innovation
  - Members for the Board of Officials-General
  - Members for the Environment and Nature Council of Flanders
  - Members for the Social and Economic Council of Flanders
  - Independent national and international experts
- **12. User needs and methods of their assessment:** Stakeholder consultation by internet, reflection by the steering group etc.
  - **13. Technology choice:** Website

### III. Evaluation

- **14. Results:** website (<https://www.milieurapport.be/>), set of open data (<https://www.milieurapport.be/milieudata/kernset>) and reports (<https://www.milieurapport.be/publicaties>)
- **15. Efficiency gains:** one platform for environmental information (indicators) in Flanders
- **16. Risks:** availability of data and information, scientific support
- **17. Challenges encountered (please indicate resolved or not):** bringing all the information and knowledge of the environment in Flanders together.
- **18. Lessons learned:** capacity building, all stakeholders involved
- **19. Conditions for successful replication:**
- **20. Overall assessment of the tool:** positive