

# 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)

#### [NATURE OUTLOOK 2050: INSPIRATION FOR THE NATURE OF THE FUTURE](https://www.natuurrapport.be/natuurverkenning-2050)

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## I. Description

- **1. Brief description:** Nature Outlook 2050 is based on four different visions of the future regarding nature, which were previously developed for Europe, adapted to the Flemish context, with the help of a broad group of stakeholders.
- **2. Type:** governmental website, Flanders regional authority
- **3. Scope:** international, sub-regional
- **4. Working language(s):** Dutch, English executive summary
- **5. Target users:** General public, regional and local communities, NGO's
- **6. Starting year:** 2018
- **7. Budget and funding source:** Over period of 2 year > 16 FTE and 90Keuro
- **8. Contact:**

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## II. Implementation

- **9. Policy, legal and institutional context:** The Nature Outlook 2050
- **10. Partner organizations involved:** broad range of stakeholders in Flanders:
- **11. Stakeholders involved, their expected benefits:** various governmental organizations, politicians, scientific world (Belgium and the Netherlands), NGO's, local communities (provinces, large cities and municipalities)
- **12. User needs and methods of their assessment:** Info-sessions, workshops, online application interaction
- **13. Technology choice:** interactive website

## III. Evaluation

- **14. Results:** 1 synthesis report (Dutch version) (1215 downloads), English version synthesis report (140 downloads), 5 technical reports, website (6728 views) containing 20 highly detailed images and short intro videos representing the different perspectives. 10 presentations
- **15. Efficiency gains:** We integrated the review process throughout the entire process, gaining 3 months and the end of the process.
- **16. Risks:** The images can be freely downloaded and therefore be used outside the context they were made in.
- **17. Challenges encountered (please indicate resolved or not):** Here a list of the most important challenges:

- Calculations by external partner were more complex than anticipated and therefore took more time, compromising the planning: resolved
- Switch of copywriter in the middle of the editing process: resolved but took a lot of effort to review the texts
- Essential comments on text came in while the text was already with the graphic designer: partially resolved
- **18. Lessons learned:**
  - Perspectives can stimulate an open discussion about a cross-sector and value-laden subject like green infrastructure and help to avoid polarisation.
  - Longer and more in-depth research is needed to get a better picture of the effects of scenario studies on the individual and societal learning process and policy.
  - Going through a collective process of scenario development demands a lot of time and commitment from the participants. It is by no means evident to guarantee a constant and balanced representation of all values and knowledge types during such a lengthy process.
  - Different goals require different scenario types. A study that intends to provide inspiration for the strategic formation of policy and visions cannot at the same time provide concrete recommendations at an operational policy level.
  - An interaction between qualitative storylines and quantitative modeling helps to make the perspectives more consistent and explicit and allows for better visualization of their consequences.
- **19. Conditions for successful replication:** Given the fact that the participatory process was an essential part of the end product, unique to time, product and participants, it can't be exactly replicated.
- **20. Overall assessment of the tool:** The Nature Outlook 2050 got a lot of reaction from a very wide audience, creating a lot of discussion. Given that one of the goals was to inspire and support the debate on green infrastructure, we can say we achieved this goal. It is too soon however to tell whether or not the ideas have been picked up by policymakers.