

Bern Convention

Official reference	Convention on the conservation of European wildlife and natural habitats	
Official website	www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/nature/bern/default_en.asp	
Relevant dates	Document	19/09/1979
	Entry into force	1/06/1982
	Ratification by Belgium	20/04/1989
	Ratification by Flanders	15/05/2009
Policy level	International	
Type of instrument	Convention	
Geographical reach	Countries that are part of the Council of Europe and the EU, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia	
(Legal) coverage in the BNS	Flemish region, internal waters, territorial sea, exclusive economic zone	
International contact point	Standing Committee of the Bern Convention	
Competent authority in Belgium	Federal: FPS Health, Food chain safety and Environment; DG Environment Flemish authorities: Policy domain Environment, Nature and Energy (LNE)	
Federal ratification	Wet van 20 april 1989 houdende goedkeuring van het Verdrag inzake het behoud van wilde dieren en planten en hun natuurlijk leefmilieu in Europa en van de Bijlagen I, II, III en IV, opgemaakt te Bern op 19 september 1979	
Flemish ratification	Besluit van de Vlaamse Regering van 15 mei 2009 met betrekking tot soortenbescherming en soortenbeheer (aangehaald als: het Soortenbesluit)	

// abstract:

The aim of this convention is the conservation of wildlife, flora and their natural habitats, with special attention for those habitats that extend across several States and therefore require cooperation between States. Special attention is given to endangered and vulnerable species, including migratory species.

The Parties are required to adopt the measures necessary for the protection of the natural habitats of the fauna and flora, as specified in the Appendices I, II and III of the convention. Cooperation and coordination between states is considered favourable as it increases the effectiveness of the convention and is therefore highly emphasised in the convention.

The Convention Parties, as stipulated in the convention, have to advocate national policies that promote the protection of the mentioned fauna and flora. Moreover, the Contracting Parties have to promote education programmes and spread general information on the species specified in the three Appendices and their habitats. A standing committee is established, consisting of one or more deputies of the Convention Parties. The tasks of the standing committee are to monitor the application of the convention, examine the amendments proposed by the Parties, and act as a settlement body for disputes between the Parties.

The *Habitats Directive* (92/43/EEC; p.74) and the Natura 2000 network result from the obligations of the EU regarding habitat protection in the context of the Bern Convention, to which the EU is a Convention Party. The Emerald Network (Bern Convention) and the Natura 2000 network are therefore based on the same principles, with the former de facto being an extension towards non-EU Member States.