



**Flanders in the UN and OECD Discussions on
Sustainable Development
An Assessment of Presence, Visibility and Policy Impact**

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Executive summary (in Dutch)

Sinds het begin van de jaren negentig hebben heel wat subnationale overheden een eigen internationaal beleid opgericht voor allerlei aangelegenheden en gebruikmakend van verschillende soorten diplomatieke instrumenten. Steeds meer zijn subnationale overheden ook internationaal actief op het vlak van duurzame ontwikkeling. Deze paper onderzoekt hoe Vlaanderen participeert in de mondiale besluitvorming over duurzame ontwikkeling. Meer specifiek worden de Commissie Duurzame Ontwikkeling (*Commission on Sustainable Development*, CSD) van de VN en de Jaarlijkse Vergadering van Duurzameontwikkelingsexperten (*Annual Meeting of Sustainable Development Experts*, AMSDE) van de OESO onder de loep genomen. Wat betreft mondiale debatten over duurzame ontwikkeling zijn de CSD en de AMSDE de voornaamste organen. Beide focussen ofwel op duurzameontwikkelingsbeleid zelf (bv. door de bespreking van duurzameontwikkelingsstrategieën) of kaarten domeinoverschrijdende kwesties aan die vaak nog geen thuis hebben binnen het kader van *International Environmental Governance* (bv. de kwesties water en duurzame consumptie en productie).

De paper werpt eerst een blik op het mondiale debat over duurzame ontwikkeling. In dit deel worden de discussies die plaatsvinden in de CSD en in de AMSDE besproken en wordt ingegaan op het belang van deze mondiale discussies voor Vlaanderen en op de impact er van op Vlaanderen. Vervolgens wordt de Vlaamse betrokkenheid in de CSD en in de AMSDE onderzocht. Dat deel start met een korte bespreking van de mechanismen die sinds het begin van de jaren negentig bij de Vlaamse overheid bestaan voor de opvolging van de mondiale besluitvorming inzake duurzame ontwikkeling. Daaropvolgend worden de routes geanalyseerd die Vlaanderen heeft gebruikt om betrokken te zijn bij de besluitvorming in de CSD en in de AMSDE. Deze analyse volgt de typologie van vier routes die reeds is uitgewerkt in de vorige *working papers* van project 4.¹ In een volgend deel wordt de Vlaamse betrokkenheid geëvalueerd: wat betekent het gebruik van deze routes voor de aanwezigheid, zichtbaarheid en beleidsimpact van Vlaanderen? In de beleidsnota's van 2004-2009 en 2009-2014 geeft de minister-president immers aan dat Vlaanderen moeten streven naar "meer zichtbaarheid, meer aanwezigheid en meer beleid van Vlaanderen in Europa en op mondiaal vlak rond duurzame ontwikkeling".

Een van de belangrijkste bevindingen van deze paper is dat Vlaanderen bijna alle opportuniteiten die het ter beschikking heeft, gebruikt om te kunnen participeren aan de mondiale debatten inzake duurzame ontwikkeling. De meeste van die opportuniteiten zijn een direct gevolg van de Belgische institutionele context en zijn bijgevolg beschikbaar voor alle Belgische subnationale overheden (bijvoorbeeld ook voor Wallonië). Toch is het hoofdzakelijk de Vlaamse overheid die het meeste gebruik maakt van de opportuniteiten die haar worden aangeboden. Het 'in foro interno, in foro externo' principe maakt het voor de Vlaamse overheid mogelijk om deel te nemen aan de nationale coördinatievergaderingen, om Europese coördinatievergaderingen bij te wonen en om deel uit te maken van de nationale delegatie voor CSD en AMSDE. Vlaanderen maakt dan ook het meest intensief en frequent gebruik van de intrastatelijke routes: het gebruikt in eerste instantie een multi-level route voor CSD en een nationale route voor AMSDE. Daarenboven verkiest Vlaanderen waar mogelijk de multi-level route boven de nationale route. De multi-level route impliceert dat alle overheidsniveaus

¹ Het betreft working paper n° 12 'The Flemish Subnational Government in the Decision-Making Process for the UN CSD. Case Study: CSD-16' en working paper n° 14 'Flanders in UN Decision-making for Sustainable Development. Exploring Routes to CSD-16 and CSD-17'.

(subnationaal, nationaal, Europees en mondiaal) betrokken zijn en dat meervoudige interacties plaatsvinden tussen al deze overheidsniveaus. Vlaanderen maakt slechts beperkt gebruik van de extrastatelijke routes. Dat komt enerzijds door de beperkingen die de Europese en mondiale institutionele contexten met zich meebrengen en anderzijds doordat Vlaanderen veel meer toegang heeft via de intrastatelijke routes.

Het onderzoek in deze paper toont ook aan dat Vlaanderen via de intrastatelijke routes de beste resultaten kan bereiken wat betreft de beoogde aanwezigheid, zichtbaarheid en beleidsimpact op het mondiale niveau. Als lid van de nationale delegatie was Vlaanderen *aanwezig* op bijna alle voorbije CSD en AMSDE vergaderingen, de voorbereidende vergaderingen op Europees en nationaal niveau inclusief. De *zichtbaarheid* van Vlaanderen is op het mondiale niveau het hoogst wanneer naar Vlaanderen wordt verwezen in een Belgisch statement of wanneer Vlaanderen actief deelneemt aan evenementen die georganiseerd worden door het netwerk nrg4SD tijdens de CSD sessies. Vlaanderen heeft in CSD en AMSDE immers geen spreekrecht en is bijgevolg op het mondiale niveau afhankelijk van Europese and Belgische vertegenwoordigers om haar stem uit te brengen. Op het Europese, maar hoofdzakelijk op het nationale niveau kan de Vlaamse zichtbaarheid het hoogst zijn. De directe *beleidsimpact* die Vlaanderen kan hebben op het mondiale beleid is zeer beperkt. Vlaanderen kan wel een beleidsimpact hebben op het Europese en op het nationale niveau door aanwezig te zijn op de vergaderingen en door een actieve rol op te nemen. Het bovenstaande geeft aan hoe belangrijk het is voor Vlaanderen dat er goed functionerende intrastatelijke arrangementen inzake samenwerking en coördinatie zijn bepaald binnen de Belgische institutionele context. Dat belang weerspiegelt zich ook in de Vlaamse wens om een sterkere samenwerking inzake duurzame ontwikkeling uit te tekenen met de andere Belgische overheden (subnationaal en federaal) en om een nationaal samenwerkingsakkoord inzake duurzame ontwikkeling uit te werken.

De Vlaamse overheid, en vooral haar administratie, volgt de mondiale discussies inzake duurzame ontwikkeling in de VN en in de OESO intensief op. Dat komt overeen met het grote belang dat in de Vlaamse beleidsdocumenten wordt toegeschreven aan deze discussies. Het wijkt echter af van het geringe politieke gewicht dat deze discussies in Vlaanderen hebben en van de beperkte impact die deze discussies hebben op het Vlaamse beleid. Voorlopige resultaten geven aan dat deze nauwgezette Vlaamse betrokkenheid verklaard kan worden door een sterk Vlaams verlangen om aanwezig te zijn op het mondiale (en op het Europese) niveau (door een zogenaamde ‘aanwezigheidspolitiek’) en door *identity politics*, om meer zichtbaarheid te krijgen op het mondiale niveau. De voorlopige resultaten suggereren tot slot ook dat meer politiek gewicht de impact van de mondiale discussies op het Vlaamse beleid kan verhogen.

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of the 1990s many subnational governments have been establishing their own external relations, with regard to a wide range of issues using various kinds of diplomatic instruments (e.g. Aldecoa and Keating, 1999; Hocking, 1993). Increasingly, they also aim to be active on the international sustainable development scene. This paper focuses on the Belgian subnational entity of Flanders. The Belgian subnational entities (especially Flanders and Wallonia) are often considered as being unique with regard to their external policy-making capacities (Paquin, 2010). In particular, it looks at the Flemish involvement in global decision-making on sustainable development in the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) of the UN and in the Annual Meeting of Sustainable Development Experts (AMSDE) of the OECD. Those two multilateral bodies are the main bodies at the global level that discuss sustainable development issues, either by looking at sustainable development policy *an sich* or by dealing with specific policy issues that are considered to be important for sustainable development. They play an important role in, e.g. agenda-setting, the formulation of global sustainable development goals and for information-sharing on best practices and policy instruments. Subnational entities, like Flanders, are not directly represented in those global multilateral settings and thus need to find other ways if they want to be involved.

It comes as no surprise that the external policy activities of Flanders have already been the object of many studies. Crikemans (2010), for example, analyzed the external relations and (para-)diplomacy activities of Flanders. Other authors studied the possibilities for the Flemish government in multilateral organizations such as the WTO and the ILO (Vanden Berghe et al., 2001) and the Flemish involvement in EU and multilateral environmental policy (Geeraerts et al., 2004; Vos, 2001). On the contrary, the international sustainable development activities of Flanders have not yet been studied before. This paper aims to fill that gap in the literature and analyzes how Flanders accommodates the constitutional opportunities it disposes of to conduct an international sustainable development policy. It contributes to the literature on governance for sustainable development, multi-level governance and the external relations of subnational entities. First, the paper casts a glance on the global sustainable development debate, in particular on the discussions on sustainable development in the CSD and the AMSDE, and it reveals the importance and impact of those global discussions for Flanders. Then, the Flemish involvement in the UN and the OECD is examined. After a short discussion of the institutional follow-up mechanisms at the Flemish level, the routes Flanders has used to be involved in decision-making in the CSD and the AMSDE are analyzed. That analysis follows the typology of four routes subnational entities have to be involved in global multilateral decision-making (Geeraerts et al., 2004; Van den Brande, 2009a) and is based on the insights offered by the concept of multi-level governance (e.g. Bache and Flinders, 2005; Hooghe and Marks, 2001). Subsequently, an assessment of the Flemish involvement is made. What does the use of those routes mean for the Flemish involvement in the global sustainable development debate, in particular for the presence, visibility and policy impact of Flanders? The paper concludes with a short summary of the main findings.

Besides literature study, the paper is based on around 40 interviews² with officials and non-governmental actors from the Flemish, the federal, the European and the global level conducted between July 2007 and June 2010. Moreover, as a member of the Flemish/Belgian delegation the author has carried out various non-participatory observations with regard to the

² An overview of the conducted interviews can be found at the end of this paper.

whole multi-level decision-making process for CSD-16 (2008), CSD-17 (2009) and AMSDE (2009).

2. Situating the topic

2.1 The global sustainable development debate

The start of the global discussions on sustainable development is often marked by the publication of the Brundtland report, that resulted in 1987 from the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development (e.g. Bruyninckx, 2006, p. 267). In 1992, the Rio Summit placed sustainable development policy on the global agenda. Together with the Johannesburg Summit of 2002, both summits raised high-level political and public awareness for sustainable development issues. Between those global summits and after 2002, the global sustainable development agenda has primarily been defined by the work of the CSD. That commission has been the main global organization for discussing sustainable development issues on a yearly basis and it kept the global debate on sustainable development alive. In 1997, sustainable development also came on the agenda of the OECD (Eppel, 1999, p. 41; OECD, 2004). That can be seen as a result of the momentum created by Rio in 1992, in particular of the call of Agenda 21 for the promotion of sustainable development projects in all relevant intergovernmental organizations (UNCED, 1992, p. 278). From then on, the group of industrialized countries has discussed sustainable development in the OECD within various formats with different mandates. The current format is the AMSDE.³

The CSD and the AMSDE can be considered as the main global multilateral bodies that discuss sustainable development issues. Both organizations look at sustainable development as a meta-policy (e.g. through the discussion on the formulation of sustainable development strategies), but also consider cross-cutting policy issues that usually do not yet have a 'home' within the global framework of international environmental governance (e.g. water and sustainable consumption and production). The CSD has been established in 1993 as a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in order to follow-up the outcome of the Rio Summit, in particular the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration. At the Johannesburg Summit, the follow-up of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation was added to the mandate of the CSD (UNDESA, 2008a). Other tasks of the CSD are offering policy guidance and options for future activities, and promoting dialogue and building partnerships for sustainable development (UNDESA, 2010). The AMSDE aims to monitor how sustainable development is integrated in the work of the OECD and publishes its results in annual reports (e.g. OECD, 2008a). In addition, it aims to recommend future cross-cutting priority areas with regard to sustainable development to the OECD Council, to cooperate with other international organizations, such as the CSD (e.g. OECD, 2008b), and to share best practices on sustainable development among the OECD member states (AMSDE 2009; OECD, 2004; OECD, 2008d).

The CSD meets annually during two weeks in May, including a 3-day high-level ministerial segment. Since 2004, the agenda of the CSD is planned on the basis of two-yearly cycles. Each cycle consists of one review session (in the first year) and one policy session (in the second

³ In the OECD, sustainable development issues are also discussed within the Round Table on Sustainable Development (RTSD), which has been established in 1998 and has a rather informal setting (OECD, 2008c), and within the Global Forum on Sustainable Development, which is part of the OECD's outreach programme to non-OECD countries (OECD, 2009).

year) and focuses on a specific thematic cluster of issues and their inter-linkages. In addition, a cluster of twelve cross-cutting issues (e.g. education for sustainable development) is considered during each cycle.⁴ A review session evaluates the progress that has been made, identifies the obstacles and constraints and discusses the future challenges. During a policy session the actual negotiations take place. At that time the CSD aims to develop concrete policy recommendations for the thematic issues under discussion (Van den Brande, 2009b, p. 10). Since its establishment in 2004, the AMSDE has met yearly for a 2-day plenary session in October. Its statute is based on bi-annual mandates granted by the OECD Council (OECD, 2009, p. 33-34).

Finally, alternate to governmental representatives both bodies can be attended by actors from civil society and by other observers, such as international organizations. Yet, that kind of participation is much more extensive in the CSD than in the AMSDE. In the CSD, participation is allowed to observers, such as UN organizations and accredited NGOs. In addition, representatives of nine so-called *Major Groups*⁵ from civil society can participate at the discussions, which is very characteristic of the CSD process (UNDESA, 2008b). The AMSDE discussions can be attended by certain civil society actors from business and labour sectors and from NGOs, which reflects the dialogue and consultation the OECD increasingly undertakes with civil society organizations in various OECD discussions⁶ (OECD, 2010).

2.2 Importance of the global discussions for Flanders

In Belgium, both the federal government and the subnational governments are responsible for sustainable development issues. That shared responsibility has been endorsed in 2007 by a constitutional article on sustainable development, which determines that sustainable development is a policy goal for all Belgian governments (Belgian Senate, 2007). Each government –federal as well as subnational– thus develops a sustainable development policy in accordance with its competences (Van den Bossche *et al.*, 2005: 1-2). Through the adoption of the ‘in foro interno, in foro externo’ principle with the state reform in 1993, the Belgian subnational governments can also conduct an international sustainable development policy. The principle permits them to carry out an external policy for those policy subjects for which they are internally competent (Geeraerts *et al.*, 2004, p. 19) and implies, for example, that each subnational government can include representatives in the national delegation for global meetings. The Belgian subnational entities are often considered as being unique with regard to their external policy-making capacities (Paquin, 2010). As a subnational entity with legislative

⁴ The most recent completed cycle, i.e. CSD-16 and 17 in 2008 and 2009, discussed the issues agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, Africa and the cluster of cross-cutting issues.

⁵ Agenda 21 defines the following nine Major Groups: women; children and youth; indigenous people; NGOs; local authorities; workers and trade unions; business and industry; scientific and technological communities; and farmers (UNCED, 1993).

⁶ Those actors are represented by BIAC (the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD) and TUAC (the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD). NGOs can also be present at the AMSDE meetings, although in general they mainly participate in the OECD informal activities (OECD 2010).

powers,⁷ the Belgian region of Flanders actively seeks legitimization at the international scene and aims to strengthen its presence and involvement in Europe, in the world and in multilateral organizations (Vlaamse Regering, 2004; 2009). According to the Flemish government, interactions between Flemish domestic policies and European and global policy developments are crucial for succeeding in being one of the most open regions in the world, which Flanders aims to be (Vlaamse Regering, 2009, p. 83). Since the institutionalization of sustainable development in Flanders in 2004 (Happaerts and Van den Brande, 2010, p. 18), it has become one of the policy goals of the Flemish government to be active with regard to sustainable development at the international level. The Flemish decree (2007) prescribes “the translation of European and international sustainable development policy into Flemish policies and a coordinated determination of the Flemish position within European and international sustainable development forums” (Vlaamse Regering, 2007). In the policy documents on sustainable development for the periods of government 2004-2009 and 2009-2014, the Flemish Minister-presidents state that Flanders pursues “a higher visibility, an increasing presence and more policy of Flanders in Europe and at the global level” (Leterme, 2004; Peeters, 2009). In the most recent policy document on sustainable development, the current Minister-president states that because of the anchoring of the Flemish sustainable development policy by decree, Flanders wants more possibilities to increase its presence in international forums and to take the floor for Belgium on sustainable development issues (Peeters, 2009, p. 28). Sustainable development is also one of the Flemish priorities with regard to the upcoming Belgian Presidency of the EU (Peeters, 2010, p. 6). Flanders wants an EU Presidency that promotes sustainable development when discussing broad EU strategies as well as when dealing with specific policy issues related to sustainable development.

The Flemish desire to be involved in the global sustainable development debate largely follows from the constitutional competences Flanders has within the Belgian institutional context. Being responsible for sustainable development policy and following the ‘in foro interno, in foro externo principle’ the Flemish government wants to define what has to be agreed at the global level and has to be implemented afterwards. Therefore, it is obvious for the Flemish government that it is present when policy and decision-making take place at the global level. However, the Flemish government also considers the CSD to be important as it is the only forum at the global level where sustainable development issues are being discussed among all UN member states and where the view of the developing countries (and of important groups, such as the BRIC group of Brazil, Russia, India and China) can be heard. Additional importance of the AMSDE discussions follows from the fact that, in general, the work of the OECD is highly appreciated by the Flemish government. That is, for example, reflected by frequent references to the OECD’s outcome documents in Flemish policy documents. The discussions in both the AMSDE and the CSD also indicate to Flemish policy-makers which specific sustainable development issues are at that time high on the global agenda (e.g. food security, green growth...). Moreover, some Flemish government officials

⁷ Flanders is a member of REGLEG or the ‘Group of Regions with Legislative Powers’. REGLEG mainly seeks to influence EU policy and decision-making and to realize a higher involvement of subnational entities with legislative powers (REGLEG, 2008). It consists of 73 subnational entities across eight EU Member States. However, in only three of these EU Member States, i.e. in Austria, Belgium and Germany, access to EU decision-making, in particular to the Council of Ministers, is domestically made possible (cf art. 203 of the Treaty establishing the European Community) (Börzel, 2002: 1-2; Jeffery, 2005: 37; REGLEG, 2008).

emphasize the advantages of a combined follow-up of the CSD and the AMSDE, as it strengthens the synergies among the many time-consuming international environmental governance processes and helps to avoid overlaps.

Despite its 'stated' importance, the CSD and the AMSDE discussions do not attract much political and public attention in Flanders. Flemish ministerial participation at the high-level segment of the CSD has been exceptional (only once at CSD-12 in 2004). Several times, the political climate in Flanders (and Belgium) has prevented Flemish ministers to attend the CSD session (e.g. in 2008 for CSD-16). Still less attention and political weight is given to the AMSDE, which has the status of being a meeting of experts producing scientific studies and surveys and of being a think tank for industrialized countries. The actual impact of the global discussions in the CSD and in the AMSDE on Flanders is rather limited. It is highly dependent on the extent to which the different departments of the Flemish government take up the outcome of the CSD or the AMSDE in their own work. Previous research has shown that in Flanders a higher impact resulted from the large scale global summits in Rio and Johannesburg and that the Flemish government is in general more receptive for EU policy and decision-making (Happaerts and Van den Brande, 2010). In this context, a clarification has to be made about the possible impact of the work of the CSD and the AMSDE. Both bodies are part of a multilateral organization that mainly produces soft law (e.g. policy recommendations in the CSD or general guidelines about sustainable development strategies in the AMSDE) instead of legally binding hard law (e.g. EU regulations).⁸ In addition, the impact of the AMSDE is still more limited because of its restricted mandate. The AMSDE is a place where OECD member states gather to discuss the orientation of the AMSDE's future work and to discuss and declassify documents drawn up by the AMSDE's project co-ordinator. In contrast to the AMSDE, actual negotiations are possible in the CSD. At the end, the two-year cycle results in policy recommendations that follow from actual negotiations between UN member states on the spot. The fact that both bodies only produce non-legally binding documents, partly explains the limited impact on Flemish sustainable development policy.

3. Flanders in the UN and in the OECD

3.1 Institutional follow-up mechanisms at the Flemish level

The Flemish involvement in global decision-making for sustainable development can be traced back to the mid-90s. The 'in foro interno, in foro externo' principle had been introduced for a couple of years and the federal and subnational governments of Belgium had signed various cooperation agreements with regard to international decision-making, for example on the representation of Belgium in international organizations (Belgisch Staatsblad, 1994a) and on international environmental policy (Belgisch Staatsblad, 1995). Sustainable development was at that time seen as a part of environmental policy and like for many other governments sustainable development policy was mainly followed-up by the Environment Ministry. In 1996, the Europe and Environment Division was set up within the Flemish environment administration and one of its tasks was the follow-up of the global sustainable development

⁸ According to Snyder, *soft law* refers to the "rules of conduct which in principle have no legally binding force but which nevertheless may have practical effects" (Snyder, cited in Trubek et al., 2005, p. 1). Abbott and Snidal define *hard law*, in contrast, as "legally binding obligations that are precise (or can be made precise through adjudication or the issuance of detailed regulations) and that delegate authority for interpreting or implementing the law" (Abbott and Snidal, 2000, p. 421).

debate, in particular the negotiations resulting from the Rio Summit. While between 1993 and 1995 the CSD was followed-up on a rather informal basis, from 1996 on the follow-up of the CSD by the environment administration became more formalized. When in 1997 sustainable development came on the OECD agenda, those discussions also became part of the environment administration's international agenda. One of the results of the 'in foro interno, in foro externo principle', was the participation of Flemish officials of the environment administration in the national delegation to the CSD and to the OECD. The momentum created by the Johannesburg Summit in 2002, gave the impetus to some environment officials to start an informal working group on sustainable development, partly to coordinate the Flemish position for the CSD and the OECD between the different departments of the Flemish administration. In 2003 and 2004, the CSD figured about six times a year on the agenda of the working group, the OECD about three times.

After the institutionalization of sustainable development in 2004 at the level of the Flemish government, the Flemish follow-up of the CSD and OECD negotiations changed. Like many other horizontal policy issues, sustainable development was assigned to the responsibilities of the Minister-president. From then on, a small 'sustainable development team' within the Minister-president's administration would preside the (in 2005 formalized) interdepartmental working group on sustainable development (abbreviated the WGDO). One of the tasks of the team is to coordinate within the working group the formulation of a Flemish position for the CSD and the AMSDE and to appoint a representative for defending the Flemish position at the higher levels. In the first years after the reallocation it was mainly the environment administration that was responsible for the representation of Flanders in the global sustainable development discussions. Because of their acquired expertise and institutional memory, they still keep on playing a very important role.

Recently, the follow-up of the CSD and the AMSDE is managed slightly different as the sustainable development team is steadily strengthening its follow-up of global decision-making.⁹ A request for input of the Flemish government about the CSD or AMSDE discussions is firstly dealt with by the team and subsequently by the executive committee of the working group. That committee consists of representatives from the economic, social, environmental and international departments of the Flemish administration, is presided by the sustainable development team and gathers monthly. It prepares the agenda of the working group and is the formal body in which the daily functioning of the Flemish government with regard sustainable development is discussed. It also coordinates a Flemish position and if necessary it presents that position to the other members of the working group. Most commonly that occurs via e-mail by the use of a specific e-mail list 'international' which gathers those policy officials that want to be consulted for all international issues. For CSD it is more frequently the case that input is asked from the whole working group during its meetings. With regard to the appointment of a Flemish representative at the national and international level, it is informally agreed that the working group can appoint an official from another

⁹ It is interesting to note that the international sustainable development activities of Flanders are coordinated by the Minister-president's administration, while almost all other external policy activities of Flanders are the responsibility of the Flemish international relations administration. In the beginning of 2010, a Strategic Consultative body for International Affairs (SOIA) has been set up within the international relations administration for interdepartmental coordination on international policy issues. International sustainable development issues remain the responsibility of the Minister-president's administration, but the latter informs the SOIA about its activities.

Flemish department in order to represent the Flemish position, if that would be more appropriate content-wise. Between 2005 and 2009, the CSD figured in average two to three times a year on the agenda of the working group and the AMSDE/OECD zero to once a year. One of the explanations for this smaller amount of time dedicated by the working group to the discussions on the CSD and the AMSDE could be the handling of part of the work by the executive committee. In addition, in the first few years after its formalization the working group had to spend much of its time on the optimizing of its functioning and also had to focus its limited resources on the development of a Flemish sustainable development strategy. Yet, it could also be seen as an indicator of the rather limited importance and political weight that is given within the whole Flemish administration to the global discussions in the CSD and the AMSDE, especially in comparison with other, internal Flemish sustainable development policy issues. In general, participation at global meetings is not intensively supported at the Flemish level, except by the environment administration which considers international negotiations to be very important.

3.2 Flemish routes to global decision-making

A desire to be involved at the global level does obviously not always result in an actual involvement in practice. The previous sections have shown that the Belgian institutional context offers Flanders many opportunities to be involved in national, European and global decision-making. This section analyzes which opportunities exactly Flanders has made use of up to now in order to be involved in the CSD and the AMSDE and also looks at the limitations to its involvement. Starting from a multi-level governance perspective (Van den Brande et al., 2008) and following the typology elaborated in the previous working papers (see Van den Brande, 2009a; and Van den Brande, 2009b), Flanders can make use of four routes to be involved in global decision-making for sustainable development. Two of them are intra-state routes, i.e. the multi-level and the national route, the other two are extra-state routes, i.e. the European and the direct route. For each of those routes it will be analyzed to what extent Flanders has used the route for CSD (see also Van den Brande, 2009a) and for AMSDE and which opportunities and limitations it has experienced.

3.2.1 Multi-level route

Flanders is in general very favourable to the EU and its institutions. That can be because of the impact the EU has on Flemish policy (e.g. Bursens and Deforche, 2008) or because of the fact that EU commitments can be easily agreed upon within the sometimes difficult Belgian political context. Yet the EU also plays an important role at the global level and being involved in the negotiations on the EU position for global negotiations opens many doors, e.g. a small country like Belgium could gain a bigger weight in the global negotiations. It thus comes at no surprise that in order to be involved in the global sustainable development debate, Flanders in first instance tries to use a multi-level route that goes through the national level and through the EU.

For the CSD discussions, that route has been the most frequently used in comparison to the other routes. It mainly implies that Flanders participates in the Belgian delegation for the EU and the CSD negotiations. Since 1993, the EU has been attending the CSD sessions as a group (Kaasa, 2007, p. 116). The preparation of the EU position at CSD runs through different coordinating bodies at multiple levels, i.e. the working group on sustainable development (WGDO) at the Flemish level, the body dealing with the national coordination on sustainable development (COORMULTI) at the national level and the Working Party on International

Environmental Issues dealing with global issues (WPIEI Global) at the European level. The coordination leads to a common point of view at each level, which is defended externally at the higher level. The multi-level route offers Flanders (but also the other Belgian subnational entities) many opportunities to be involved in the decision-making process. Some of them have been used intensively by Flanders, others rather remained in the background. First, Flanders often takes up a 'pilot' position within the national coordination meetings. A *pilot* is a federal or subnational official who is made responsible for the internal, Belgian, supervision of an individual dossier and who can only be appointed for those thematic issues that belong to the responsibilities of his government. It is a Flemish aim to be a pilot when it concerns a Flemish responsibility and to assure that the Flemish position is taken into account. Second, as members of the national delegation Flemish officials attend the formal (and also the informal¹⁰) EU coordination meetings and receive direct information about the EU process. Finally, the Flemish government is also present at the CSD meeting as a member of the Belgian delegation. That creates the opportunity to be present (on the spot) at the time the final positions are defined. As part of the multi-level route (and next to being part of the national delegation), Flanders can also approach the federal government on EU and CSD negotiations or it can appoint a Flemish attaché responsible for sustainable development to the Flemish Representation to the Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU. Both possibilities have only been used in a limited way. From 2001 on, for example, different approaches have been used within the Flemish Representation to follow-up sustainable development issues in the EU. Yet, at the moment of writing none of them was intended for the follow-up of the EU preparatory decision-making on the CSD. In general, well functioning intra-Belgian coordination mechanisms made the use of the two other possibilities unnecessary. Although those mechanisms are rather informally agreed and not based on a formal cooperation agreement,¹¹ which arranges the national coordination on international sustainable development policy, they are generally highly appreciated by many policy-makers.

In contrast to the CSD case, the multi-level route is only used in a very limited way for the AMSDE negotiations. That can be explained by the fact that the EU member states are individually represented at the AMSDE and not by the EU Presidency or the European Commission. In fact, only 19 of the 27 EU member states are member of the OECD, which makes it difficult for the EU to speak with one 'EU-voice' at the OECD. Next to those 19 EU member states, the AMSDE meeting is also attended by the European Commission. The latter has the right to speak and vote, except for budgetary matters (European Commission, 2010). However, it represents the position of the European Commission and certainly not of all EU member states. The organization of an EU coordination meeting beforehand, in Brussels or on the spot, very much depends on the intentions of the EU Presidency. It has indeed happened that an EU Presidency decided to organize a coordination meeting, mainly to hear the member states' positions on a specific matter. In general, however, usually no EU coordination meeting takes place and member state positions are not necessarily attuned to each other. Consequently, the European and global institutional contexts hinder Flanders to opt for a multi-level route to be involved in the AMSDE.

¹⁰ In its internal decision-making for CSD the EU makes use of a rather informal system of lead countries (Delreux and Van den Brande, 2010).

¹¹ In its most recent policy note (2009-2014), the Flemish Minister-president notes that he wants to start the discussions on the establishment of a cooperation agreement on sustainable development in the current term (Peeters, 2009).

3.2.2 National route

By influencing the national negotiations on a Belgian statement for the CSD or the AMSDE, Flanders can be involved in the global sustainable development debate. The national route offers Flanders opportunities for being involved in the CSD as well as in the AMSDE discussions. An important difference between both cases though, is that while it can be considered as a second best option for the CSD case, it is the main route for Flanders to be involved in the AMSDE.

As a member state of the OECD, Belgium takes part at the OECD discussions on sustainable development since the very beginning. The Belgian position for the AMSDE is prepared by means of a national coordination meeting in the week before the AMSDE gathers. The organization of that meeting is in the hands of the Commissioner of the Federal Planning Office as the Belgian pilot for the AMSDE dossier. Although the organization of the national coordination meeting is not formalized by a cooperation agreement or by law, most policy-makers seem to appreciate the current way of coordination. On the spot, coordination takes place if necessary. It has to be emphasized, however, that a member state position for AMSDE usually does not entail crucial political decisions, but in most cases deals with the scientific work of the AMSDE or with its future work. That kind of position is therefore also easier to reach a compromise on. The Belgian institutional context makes it possible for Flanders to participate at the coordination meeting and take part at the AMSDE meeting on the spot. From the start, a Flemish representative has been appointed to follow-up the OECD discussions on sustainable development at the national and at the OECD level. Yet, a high turnover of Flemish experts (and consequently a lack of continuity) has been a limit to the institutional memory and expertise those Flemish experts can build up. In sum, the Flemish government highly depends on the national route to be involved in the OECD discussions on sustainable development. From the start, it has also used that national route, though to a varying degree.

In order to be involved in the CSD, Flanders also aims to have an influence on the Belgian statement for the CSD meeting. Although the EU statement covers its member states, all of them can still express themselves by a national statement. The Belgian statements are prepared at the national level, involving the same federal and subnational decision-makers and decision-making bodies as in the multi-level route. Flanders usually makes use of the national route whenever an opportunity occurs. Indeed, in general only few national statements are formulated in Belgium. The delivery of a Belgian statement for CSD requires an intensive internal coordination process in which various actors need to be involved. The Belgian institutional context requires that a consensus is reached. That either results in a kind of compromise that can be the explicit sum of federal and subnational interests, or in the absence of a Belgian position when no compromise is reached. In addition, many EU member states (including Belgium) restrain from delivering national statements, because it is discouraged by the EU Presidency and the European Commission.

3.2.3 European route

Although Flanders is in general favourable to the EU and its institutions, the European route is used only to a very limited extent. By trying to influence the EU institutions and opting for a route that bypasses the state, Flanders would in theory be able to have an impact. The academic literature indeed often points at the different ways of subnational mobilization towards the EU (e.g. Bomberg and Peterson, 1998; Jeffery, 2000). That could be for instance by approaching members of the European Commission, the European Parliament or of the

Committee of the Regions or even by campaigning for direct representation in the Council of Ministers. For being involved in the AMSDE, all of these options are not applicable mainly because there is no joint role put aside for the EU and the member states in the AMSDE. For example, approaching European Commission officials has no use since the Commission represents its own, Commission's, view in the AMSDE.

The case of the CSD offers more opportunities, although some of them are also limited because of the European institutional context. The most used opportunity is the one of approaching members of the European Commission during the decision-making process. In general, the role of the European Commission is limited with regard to CSD. The Commission does not prepare European legislative proposals or Commission communications on the subject, but it is involved in the internal EU preparations for the CSD negotiations. It is that kind of involvement that can be interesting for Flanders and in that regard the Flemish government also maintains links with Commission officials. The European Commission is primarily an important actor to approach for those CSD topics that are EU (i.e. European Community) responsibilities as well as subnational, Flemish, responsibilities. When the EU discussed the issues agriculture and rural development during the CSD-16/17 cycle, a Flemish delegate was the national pilot for the topic and attended the formal EU coordination meetings in the WPIEI Global and the informal meetings in the corridors. That made it possible for the Flemish delegate to approach European Commission officials and to defend the position of the Belgian subnational governments. Yet, it has to be noticed that European Commission officials assume that that Flemish pilot defends a Belgian position. Moreover, Commission officials usually not distinguish within a country's delegation whether its members are federal or subnational. That is even more the case when it concerns experts and administrative officials in comparison to ministers.

The other options within the European route have not yet offered many opportunities for Flanders, which could also explain why they have not been used before by Flanders. First of all, because there is no EU legislative process with regard to CSD matters, the involvement of the European Parliament and of the Committee of the Regions is limited to non-existent. The European Parliament has sent a delegation of Members of European Parliament (MEPs) to CSD before, but MEPs who attended the CSD were merely observers of the process and could not even attend the EU coordination meetings (a privilege Flemish officials do have within the Belgian delegation). Both for the European Parliament as for the Committee of the Regions the level of political attention devoted to the CSD sessions also seems to be crucial for getting their interest. The Committee of the Regions, for example, has never been involved in CSD matters. That could be due to limited capacity, but also to the low level of political weight and interest that is generally attributed to the CSD, especially when it has to compete with discussions on climate change that are nowadays high on the political agenda. Finally, the Environment Council only has a limited role with regard to CSD, i.e. for debriefing about the CSD negotiations by the EU Presidency and not for adopting positions papers on CSD or for preparing Environment Council conclusions on CSD. The highest EU preparatory decision-making body for CSD is the WPIEI Global (Delreux and Van den Brande, 2010, p. 9). Campaigning for direct representation in the Council of Ministers would thus not create an extra opportunity for Flanders with regard to CSD. Moreover, because of the limited role of the Environment Council, the Flemish government can also not enjoy the benefits of increased access to the EU institutions resulting from the European and national institutional context. According to Article 203 of the Treaty establishing the European Community a subnational minister can represent the Belgian state in the European Council of Ministers as

long as that minister defends state interests. Within Belgium, a cooperation agreement has formally fixed the attendance of the Belgian ministers (federal and subnational) in the different Council formations (Belgisch Staatsblad, 1994b).

3.2.4 Direct route

An attractive way for a subnational government to be involved in global decision-making would of course be a direct way, in which both the EU and the state are bypassed. Such kind of direct route is, however, not evident. There has to be a kind of access point at the global level. That access point is more present in the case of the CSD than in the case of AMSDE. Characteristic for CSD is the fact that it can be attended by a wide range of actors. The AMSDE is more limited in that regard, which makes a direct representation of subnational governments rather impossible (cf *infra*).

An obvious example of a direct route to decision-making is through the participation in transnational networks of subnational governments. Those networks can try to exert pressure on global decision-making, for example by aiming for direct representation in the global organization. With regard to CSD, it is important to discuss the role of the Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD) (see also Happaerts et al., 2010). That Network has been established in 2003 and wants to be a voice for subnational governments and to represent them at the global level, especially in the CSD, UNFCCC and UNEP. It is trying to obtain an observer status to ECOSOC,¹² which would clear the way for direct representation and participation at the CSD meetings. Up to now, however, nrg4SD's participation at the CSD meetings has remained limited. While nrg4SD has participated at the CSD from 2003 to 2007 through side-events and the Partnerships Fair of CSD, it has not attended the most recent CSD sessions. According to nrg4SD's Secretariat that can be explained by the timing of the meetings and by the limited resources of the network, which were spent on the topic of climate change and the negotiations in the context of UNFCCC. Flanders is one of the co-founders of nrg4SD and has been actively involved in the Network from the very beginning. Although Flanders wants to have a voice at the global level, nrg4SD's added value for Flanders in that regard has remained limited to a so-called identity politics (Happaerts et al., 2010). By having Flemish representatives operating at the global level, Flanders uses the Network to create an international personality. For example, the events nrg4SD organizes at CSD and the Flemish presence at CSD as part of the national delegation, make it possible for Flanders to attend those events, to present its best practices or to even represent nrg4SD. However, until now Flanders has only taken up an active role at CSD-12 in the context of nrg4SD's participation at the CSD Partnerships Fair. Because of the large access Flanders has through intra-state routes, Flanders does not use the Network to have an influence on the global negotiations. Moreover, according to Flemish officials, nrg4SD has not yet offered Flanders many opportunities to influence international processes in general. The future will have to point out whether nrg4SD will offer new opportunities to Flanders to have a voice at the global level.

The AMSDE meetings can be attended by civil society actors from business and labour sectors. Besides those actors, access is also granted to representatives from NGOs and to international organizations or other observers on an ad hoc basis. Clearly, that does not offer

¹² Currently, nrg4SD aims to obtain the observer status through its membership of FOGAR, the Forum of Global Associations of Regions, which aspires to be recognized by the UN as an intergovernmental organization (Happaerts et al., 2010, p. 135).

many opportunities for the Flemish government to be directly involved. Once again, it also confirms that the routes to the AMSDE for Flanders are limited, in this case because of the institutional context of the OECD.

4. Assessing the Flemish involvement

What does the use of those routes mean for the Flemish involvement in the global sustainable development debate? In particular, it can be interesting to examine how the involvement in the CSD and the AMSDE is related to the presence, visibility and policy impact of Flanders at the global level, which has been emphasized by the Flemish Minister-Presidents in their policy documents on sustainable development.

Flanders has been officially *present* at almost all meetings of the CSD and of the AMSDE. That was facilitated by its membership of the Belgian national delegation, which directly results from the ‘in foro interno, in foro externo’ principle. That principle indeed makes it possible for all Belgian subnational governments to include subnational representatives in the national delegation for global meetings. For both cases, the Flemish presence at global meetings seems thus to be facilitated the most by its use of the multi-level route and the national route. The direct route also offers Flanders possibilities to be present at CSD through its participation in nrg4SD. Yet, Flanders has not used that option, since it has more access options to the CSD discussions as a member of a governmental delegation. With regard to its presence, it is also important to look at the whole multi-level process. As a consequence of the Belgian ‘in foro interno, in foro externo’ principle Flanders has also been frequently present at the national coordination meetings for CSD and AMSDE and at the EU coordination meeting for the CSD.

Next to being present, Flanders also wants to be *visible* at the global level. The global and the European institutional contexts, however, limit the possibilities for Flanders to be visible in the CSD and the AMSDE. The highest visibility would be reached when Flanders has the right to speak and represent its own interests at the global level. At CSD, states as well as intergovernmental organizations or civil society organizations that are accredited to the UN and ECOSOC have the right to speak. Since nrg4SD is not yet accredited to ECOSOC, the most effective way that Flanders has to express its voice is that of the EU representative (through the multi-level route). In fact, at CSD a crucial role is put aside for negotiating groups, such as the EU or G-77/China. The EU representative therefore brings the position of all EU member states at CSD. Flanders can also express its voice through the Belgian representative (via the national route). Its visibility is indeed increased when reference is made to the Flemish competences in a national statement. Belgian statements at CSD are rare. Yet, it occurs that the national delegation prepares a statement for CSD, in particular mostly for its high-level ministerial segment. Very often, such a statement at least mentions the Belgian regions or includes Flemish best practices. Because of the lack of a cooperation agreement on sustainable development much confusion exists about who has to deliver the Belgian statement in case both a federal and a subnational minister would attend the high-level segment of CSD. However again, until now only once a Flemish minister has attended that high-level segment. nrg4SD has not yet been useful for Flanders to directly express its voice at CSD, but the Network has to a certain extent benefited the Flemish visibility by the organization of events at CSD which Flanders could attend or at which it could present its best practices. In the AMSDE, Flemish interests are expressed through the Belgian (federal) representative (national route). Yet, the discussions in the AMSDE are rather about experts’ opinions about the scientific studies than about strict positions of member states. The highest

visibility of Flanders in the AMSDE could thus be reached by a presentation on, for example, Flemish best practices during the meeting. Because the AMSDE has no high-level segment, only experts and not ministers attend the AMSDE. The visibility of Flanders also has to be assessed at the other levels of the process. At the European level (during the coordination meeting for the CSD), Flanders has no right to speak, but it can benefit from its presence at those meeting to take up an active role, for example, during informal EU preparatory meetings. Of all levels, the highest visibility is of course possible at the national level, where Flanders has the right to speak during the coordination meetings and take up a pilot position (in the case of CSD).

The highest *policy impact* of Flanders for CSD as well as for AMSDE is possible at the national level. While being present at the national coordination meetings and possibly taking up an active role, Flanders has its direct say about the national position for the EU meetings (multi-level route) and for the global meetings (national route). In this context, it has to be noticed that the negotiations at all those levels primarily concern the drafting of texts, in which each word is weighed against another. In first instance, it is all about carefully scanning the text on its conformity with or deviation of the own position. For AMSDE, Flanders only has to pass one level, namely the national level, and for that reason its possible impact on the final result (taking into account the nature of the AMSDE discussions) could be bigger. In order to have an impact on the final outcome of CSD Flanders has to go through the national and especially the European level. A concrete example concerns the negotiations at one of the previous sessions of the CSD, where Flemish representatives urged the EU representative to recommend the use of the word 'subnational' in the final text. The impact Flanders can have at the global level itself is thus rather limited because of the different levels that are involved in the process.

5. Conclusion

This paper can conclude by stating that in order to be involved in the global sustainable development debate, Flanders uses almost all opportunities it disposes of. The most opportunities result from the Belgian institutional context. Of course, all Belgian subnational entities (for example also Wallonia) can make use of those constitutional opportunities, but it is primarily the Flemish government that aims to use them to the largest extent. Through the 'in foro interno, in foro externo' principle, Flanders can take part in the national coordination meetings, it can attend the EU coordination meetings for CSD, and it can participate in the delegation for the CSD and AMSDE. That implies that Flanders uses the intra-state routes the most intensively and frequently: it uses a multi-level route for CSD and a national route for AMSDE. In fact, as far as possible a multi-level route is preferred to a national route. In that case, the subnational, national, European and global levels are involved and multiple interactions take place between all those levels. The use of the extra-state routes is limited, because of the European institutional and global institutional context on the one hand, because Flanders can have more access through the intra-state routes on the other hand. The research also shows that through the intra-state routes Flanders can achieve the best results with regard to its presence, visibility and policy impact at the global level. As part of the national delegation, Flanders has been present at almost all CSD and AMSDE meetings, including the preparatory meetings at the lower levels. As Flanders has no right to speak at the global level, it has to express its voice through the EU or Belgian representatives. Its visibility at the global level can be increased when reference is made to Flanders in a Belgian statement or when Flanders participates at the events organized by nrg4SD during the CSD sessions. At the EU,

and especially at the national level, the Flemish visibility can be the highest. The policy impact Flanders can have at the global level is rather limited, but it can have an impact on the European and the national level when it is present at the meetings and takes up an active role. In sum, Flanders thus has the most opportunities and achieves the best results through the use of the intra-state routes. The latter reveals how important it is for Flanders that good functioning intra-state arrangements about cooperation and coordination are laid down within the Belgian institutional context. That is also reflected by the Flemish wish to have a stronger cooperation on sustainable development with the other Belgian subnational entities and the federal government and to work out a national cooperation agreement on sustainable development (Peeters, 2009).

The Flemish government, in particular its administration, intensively follows-up the global discussions on sustainable development in the UN and the OECD. That corresponds to the high level of importance that is attributed to the global sustainable development discussions in the Flemish policy documents. However, it deviates from the low level of political weight given to those discussions in Flanders and from the limited policy impact those discussions have on Flemish policy. Some preliminary results indicate that this meticulous Flemish involvement can be explained by a solid Flemish desire to be present at the global (and at the European) level (i.e. a 'politics of attendance') and by a so-called identity politics. In addition, those results suggest that a higher level of political weight could increase the policy impact of the discussions in the CSD and the AMSDE on Flanders. Not only in Flanders, but also at the higher levels, the discussions in the CSD and in the AMSDE do not attract a lot of political and public attention. In the UN, as well as in the OECD, a revival of the global sustainable development discussions seems to be needed. Already for a couple of years much discussion exists about an improvement of the functioning of the CSD. Not surprisingly, the institutional framework for sustainable development will be one of the main topics of the upcoming Rio +20 Summit (2012). A similar process is going on with regard to the AMSDE. Because of discussions in the OECD about the future financing of the AMSDE and the usefulness the AMSDE's work it is uncertain whether the AMSDE's mandate will be continued by the OECD Council in December 2010. The future will have to point out how those discussions will influence the Flemish involvement in the global sustainable development debate.

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Annex 1 Interviews¹³

BAS, Luc	26 July 2007 12 January 2010 4 June 2010	Policy advisor (2001-2006) at Flemish Government; Department of the Environment, Nature and Energy; Division of International Environmental Policy
BAETENS, Ine		Policy officer at Flemish Government; Services for General Governmental Policy; Sustainable Development Team
BOGAERT, Tim		Attaché at Federal Government of Belgium; Federal Public Planning Service on Sustainable Development
BRAUNS, Carsten	18 November 2009	Administrator at Committee of the Regions; Directorate for Consultative Works - DEVE Commission
CHASEK, Pamela	6 May 2009	Executive Director at International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) - Reporting Services; Earth Negotiations Bulletin
CLAERBOUT, Frederik	17 May 2010	Policy officer at Flemish Government; Services for General Governmental Policy; Sustainable Development Team
DANIELS, Johan		Flemish Youth Representative to CSD-15
DECROOS, Marjan	31 March 2008	Environment attaché at Flemish Representation; Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU
DE MULDER, Jan	25 May 2009	Public Governance attaché at Flemish Representation; Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU Policy advisor at Flemish Government; Public Governance Department Legal advisor (1994-2007) at Flemish Government; Department of the Environment, Nature and Energy; Division of General Environmental and Nature Policy
DE SMEDT, Jan	29 August 2007	Director at the secretariat of the Federal Council for Sustainable Development, Belgium
DEVELTERE, Lisa		Flemish Youth Representative to CSD-16 and CSD-17
DODDS, Felix	8 May 2009	Executive Director at Stakeholder Forum for a sustainable future
GOUZEE, Nadine		Coordinator at Federal Planning Bureau, Belgium; Task Force Sustainable Development
GURBAN, Gyorgyi	21 September 2009	Policy Officer at European Commission; DG Environment

¹³ Many of the information resulted from informal talks when taking part in the Belgian delegation during the non-participatory observations of CSD-16, CSD-17 and AMSDE 2009. For members of the Belgian delegation no interview date is noted in the list of respondents.

KUBO, Naoko	4 June 2010	Policy Co-ordinator AMSDE at OECD, General Secretariat, sustainable development (2009-2010) and Environment Directorate (2010-)
LAKY, Zsuzsanna	24 November 2009	Administrator at European Parliament, Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI); Secretariat
LEONET, Yves-Marie	1 July 2009	Secretariat-General of EU Council Secretariat; DG I – Environment
MAZIJN, Bernard	12 May 2009	Chair (2009-2010) of the Annual Meeting of Sustainable Development Experts of the OECD
MERCKX, Remy		Head of Division at Flemish Government; Department of the Environment, Nature and Energy; Division of International Environmental Policy
OSBORN, Derek	29 September 2009	Vice-President at European Economic and Social Committee; Sustainable Development Observatory President of Stakeholder Forum for a sustainable future
PERSOONS, May	12 November 2009	Sustainable Development attaché (2006-2008) at Flemish Representation; Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU
PIENKOWSKI, Jerzy	21 May 2010	Administrator at European Commission; DG Environment
POPPELIER, Guido	12 October 2009	Environment attaché (2001-2003) at Flemish Representation; Permanent Representation of Belgium to the EU Advisor (2004-2007) at Federal Government of Belgium; Cabinet of Federal State Secretary Van Weert
RENDERS, Roos		Policy adviser at Flemish Government; Department of the Environment, Nature and Energy; Division of International Environmental Policy
RIJNHOUT, Leida		Co-ordinator (2000-2009) at Vlaams Overleg Duurzame Ontwikkeling (VODO) vzw
SCHUTHOF, Ruud	13 May 2009	Executive and Policy Assistant to the Secretary General at ICLEI; World Secretariat
STEPHENS, Rachel	19 November 2009	Liaison Officer at nrg4SD
STIELSTRA, Hans	21 September 2009	Head of Unit at European Commission; DG Environment
VANDEN BILCKE, Chris		Head of Division at Federal Government of Belgium; Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation; Cell M4.1 Sustainable Development and Environment

VANEYCKEN, Sven	22 September 2009	Adviser at Federal Government of Belgium; Cabinet of Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Public Service, Public Enterprises and Institutional Reforms; Policy officer (2003-2008) at Federal Government of Belgium; Federal Public Planning Service Sustainable Development
VAN WEERT, Els	9 September 2009	State Secretary of Sustainable Development and Social Economy (2004-2007) at Federal Government of Belgium
VATANEN, Lea	18 November 2009	Policy Co-ordinator at European Commission; DG Secretariat-General
VATURI, Tonya	7 & 11 May 2009	Programme Officer at United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs; Division for Sustainable Development
VERBEKE, Griet		Policy adviser at Flemish Government; Department of the Environment, Nature and Energy; Division of International Environmental Policy
VEREECKEN, Frank	8 June 2010	Senior Advisor at Flemish Government; Department of Economy, Science and Innovation
VERHEEKE, Jan	28 August 2009	Secretary ad interim at Minaraad Adviser (2004-2009) at Flemish Government; Cabinet of Minister of Environment and Nature
VISSER, Robert	4 June 2010	Acting Director at OECD, Environment Directorate
WAGNER, Lynn	7 May 2009	Manager/Editor at International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) - Reporting Services; Knowledge Management Products
WALPOT, Oda	31 August 2007	Task Holder at Flemish Government (2005-2009); Services for General Governmental Policy; Coordination Cell Sustainable Development
ZUINEN, Natasha	19 May 2010	Advisor at the Belgian Federal Planning Bureau; Task Force Sustainable Development

Annex 2 Belgian delegation for the CSD-16 session

NAME	FUNCTION
BADJI, Moussa	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation, Expert, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Brussels
BOCQUET, Anne	Youth Council of the French speaking community, Brussels
DE CRUYNAERE, Pieter	Belgian Federal Council for Sustainable Development, Secretariat, Scientific Staff, Brussels
DE KERKHOVE, Bruno	Ministry of the Walloon Region, Namur
DETAILLE, Christine	Counselor, Permanent Representation of Belgium to the UN, New York
DEVELTERE, Lisa	Flemish Youth Council, Brussels
DEWIEST, Annie	Government of the French speaking community, General Secretariat, Director of the Sustainable Development Department, Brussels
GOUZEE, Nadine	Federal Planning Bureau, Coordinator of the Sustainable Development Task Force, Brussels
HOUBA, Delphine	Federal Planning Bureau, Sustainable Development Task Force, Expert, Brussels
MERCKX, Remy	Flemish Government, Environment, Nature and Energy Department, Head of the International Environmental Policy Division, Brussels
MINEUR, Dominique	First Secretary, Permanent Representation of Belgium to the UN, New York
NIESSEN, Daniel	Youth Council of the German speaking community, Brussels
RENDERS, Roos	Flemish Government, Environment, Nature and Energy Department, International Environmental Policy Division, Chief Multilateral Organizations, Brussels
RIJNHOUT, Leida	Flemish Platform on Sustainable Development, Director, Brussels
VAN HAUWERMEIREN, Saar	Flemish Platform on Sustainable Development, Policy worker, Brussels
VANDEN BILCKE, Christian	Environment and Sustainable Development Desk, Advisor, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Brussels
VANDERMOSTEN, Gert	Flemish Platform on Sustainable Development, Policy worker, Brussels
VERBEKE, Griet	Flemish Government, Environment, Nature and Energy Department, International Environmental Policy Division, Advisor Multilateral Organizations, Brussels
VERBEKE, Johan	Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belgium to the UN, New York
WAUTHIER, Jean-Marie	Ministry of the Walloon Region, Namur

Annex 3 Belgian delegation for the CSD-17 session

NAME	FUNCTION
BADJI, Moussa	Directorate-General for Development Cooperation, Expert, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Brussels
BAETENS, Ine	Flemish Government, General Governmental Policy Service, Policy Officer, Brussels
BOSNY, Christopher	Youth Council of the French speaking community, Brussels
DEBROEY, Karin	Christian Trade Union of Belgium (ACV)
DE KERKHOVE, Bruno	Ministry of the Walloon Region, Namur
DETAILLE, Christine	Counselor, Permanent Representation of Belgium to the UN, New York
DEVELTERE, Lisa	Flemish Youth Council, Brussels
DEWIEEST, Annie	Government of the French speaking community, General Secretariat, Director of the Sustainable Development Department, Brussels
GOUZEE, Nadine	Federal Planning Bureau, Coordinator of the Sustainable Development Task Force, Brussels
GRAULS, Jan	Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Belgium to the UN, New York
MERCKX, Remy	Flemish Government, Environment, Nature and Energy Department, Head of the International Environmental Policy Division, Brussels
NIESSEN, Daniel	Youth Council of the German speaking community, Brussels
RIJNHOUT, Leida	Flemish Platform on Sustainable Development, Director, Brussels
VANDEN BILCKE, Christian	Environment and Sustainable Development Desk, Advisor, Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs, Brussels
VAN GIJSEGHEM, Dirk	Flemish Government, Agriculture and Fisheries Department, Head of Monitoring and Study Division, Brussels
VERBEKE, Griet	Flemish Government, Environment, Nature and Energy Department, International Environmental Policy Division, Advisor Multilateral Organizations, Brussels
WAUTHIER, Jean-Marie	Ministry of the Walloon Region, Namur

Annex 4 Belgian delegation for the AMSDE 2009

NAME	FUNCTION
BOGAERT, Tim	Attaché at Federal Government of Belgium; Federal Public Planning Service on Sustainable Development, Brussels
GILBERT, Valérie	Attaché at Federal Government of Belgium; Federal Public Service Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, Brussels
PEETERMANS, Michel	Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Representation of Belgium to the OECD; Paris
VANDEN BILCKE, Christian	Head of Division at Federal Government of Belgium; Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation; Environment and Sustainable Development Desk, Brussels
VEREECKEN, Frank	Advisor at Flemish Government; Department of Economy, Science and Innovation, Brussels
ZUINEN, Natacha	Advisor at the Belgian Federal Planning Bureau; Task Force Sustainable Development, Brussels