

Country: Belgium

Committee: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Agenda Item: Strategies For Advancing Sustainable
Agricultural Practices In The Green Transition



The Kingdom of Belgium, presents its compliments and has the honour to submit their position paper to the FAO committee on the issue of Strategies For Advancing Sustainable Agricultural Practices In The Green Transition.

Belgium is located in Northwestern Europe. The country is bordered by the Netherlands to the north, Germany to the east, Luxembourg to the southeast, France to the south and the North Sea to the west. Belgium covers an area of 30.667 km² and Belgium has a population more than 11.7 million, which is increasing day by day. And these statistics will give us the population density which is 383 human by a km² (383/ km²). Belgium's population density is way higher than a average world and a average Europe country. The capital and the largest metropolitan region of this country is Brussels.

Belgium is a federal constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system. In federal constitutional monarchy the king is the head of state and the prime minister is the head of government in a multi-party system. Decision-making powers are divided between 3 levels of government: the federal government, 3 language-based communities (Flemish, French and German-speaking) and 3 regions (Flanders, Brussels Capital and Wallonia).

Legally they all are equal, but they have powers and responsibilities for different fields. Brussels is, together with Luxembourg City and Strasbourg, one of the three official seats of the European institutions. The Flemish Region (Flanders) in the north, the Walloon Region (Wallonia) in the south, and the Brussels-Capital Region in the middle of the country.

The Flemish community constitutes about 40 percent, the French community is about 60 percent, and the rest of the country which is German-speaking community is making up around 1 percent of the population.

The type of climate that dominates Belgium is maritime climate also known as the oceanic climate. The average lowest temperature in Belgium is 3 °C at January and the average highest temperature in Belgium is 18 °C at July, so Belgium has mild seasons. Also Belgium's average temperature by year is around 10 °C. Belgium has a fertile soil which is good for crops like sugar beets, vegetables and fruits. Rainfall distribution and humidity around country is sufficient. All these features makes Belgium functional for agriculture.

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Like every country, Belgium is having several challenges while using traditional and industrial agriculture. These challenges that mentioned down below are generally economic, social, cultural, educational, enviromental problems. These challenges can be seen as the reason for the question "Why should a country switch from traditional to sustainable agriculture?". Here are the issues that Belgium is facing with:

- Traditional agriculture systems are based on heavy tillage and the use of fertilisers to encourage plant growth. Excessive use of fertiliser can pollute water by depleting the oxygen in the water.

Polluted water can harm the environment, animals and plants.

- Permanently farming without crop rotation or soil enrichment depletes soil nutrients, leading to reduced fertility over time.

- Forest clearing for traditional agriculture decreases biodiversity, disrupts ecosystems, and adds to carbon emissions.

- Traditional farming typically relies on human labor and does not have access to modern tools and machinery, which can slow down processes and decrease productivity.

- Women frequently do most of the agricultural work in many farming communities but have limited access to resources and decision-making.

- Traditional agriculture frequently does not include soil conservation practices, agroforestry, or integrated pest management, which reduces its long-term sustainability.

- Agricultural practices can restrict the adoption of more efficient, sustainable, and profitable agricultural approaches.

The government and organisations should take these actions, which are also listed below; to improve the country's economic, environmental and social situation.

- The government should investigate organisations that support and try to practice sustainable agriculture.

- The government should support farmers financially and encourage them to use this system in agriculture.

- The government and organisations that about sustaniable agriculture should educate farmers about this new sustainable agriculture system.
- The government should protect natural resources for present and future generations.
- The goverment should have the statistics of traditional and sustainable agricultural practices so they can compare two agricultural systems to each other.

By taking these actions, the country has conserved natural resources as much as possible, made the highest possible profit and achieved the highest possible efficiency from agriculture.