



Vlaanderen
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Kick-off LIFE B4B National Parks in Belgium

October 2023

AGENTSCHAP
NATUUR & BOS



Agenda

13h30 Welcome & Tour de table

13h40 National Parks in Wallonia by Stéphanie Zaros

14h10 National Parks in Flanders by Dries Desloover

Short break

14h50 Discussion

15h20 Wrap up

15h30 End



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Kick-off LIFE B4B National Parks in Belgium – Flanders

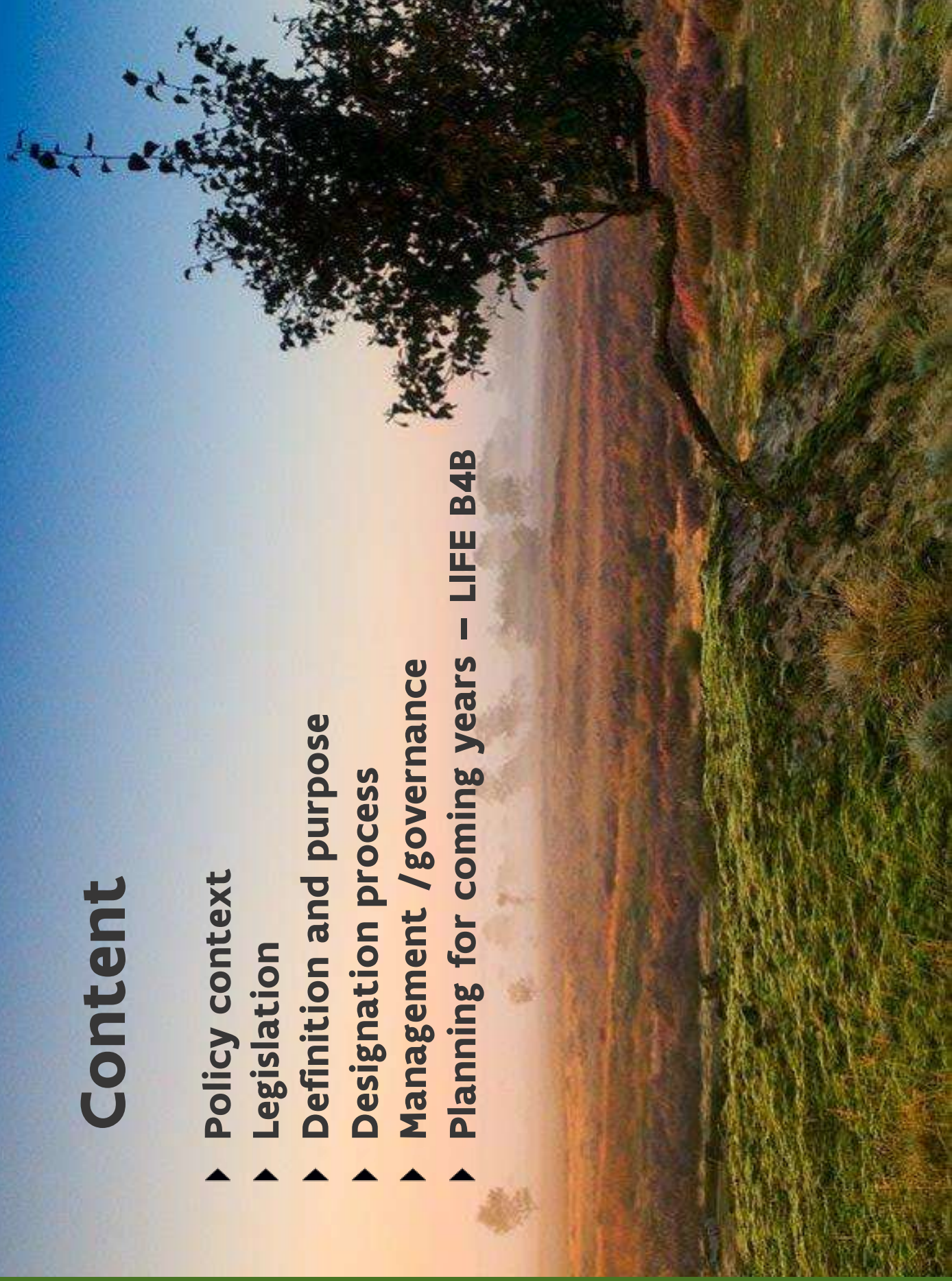
October 2023

Dries Desloover

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Content

- ▶ **Policy context**
- ▶ **Legislation**
- ▶ **Definition and purpose**
- ▶ **Designation process**
- ▶ **Management /governance**
- ▶ **Planning for coming years – LIFE B4B**

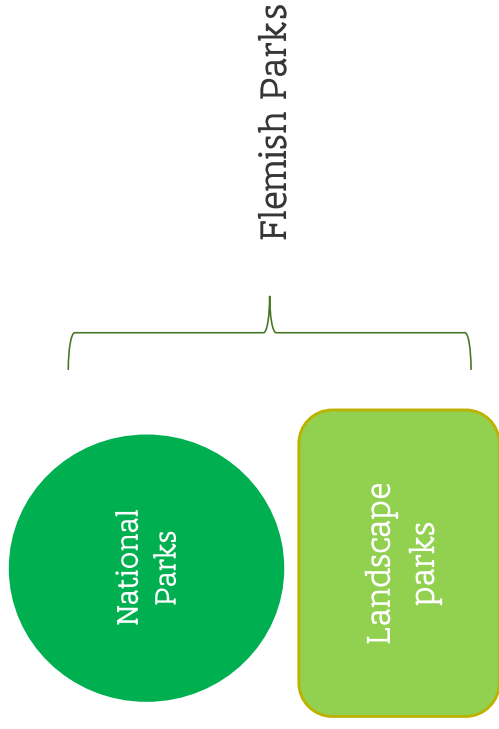


Policy context (1)

- ▶ **Coalition agreement 2019-2024**
 - Designation of at least four Flemish Parks: extensive areas with international appeal, exceptional nature and unique experience value
 - Creation of landscape parks: integrated vision

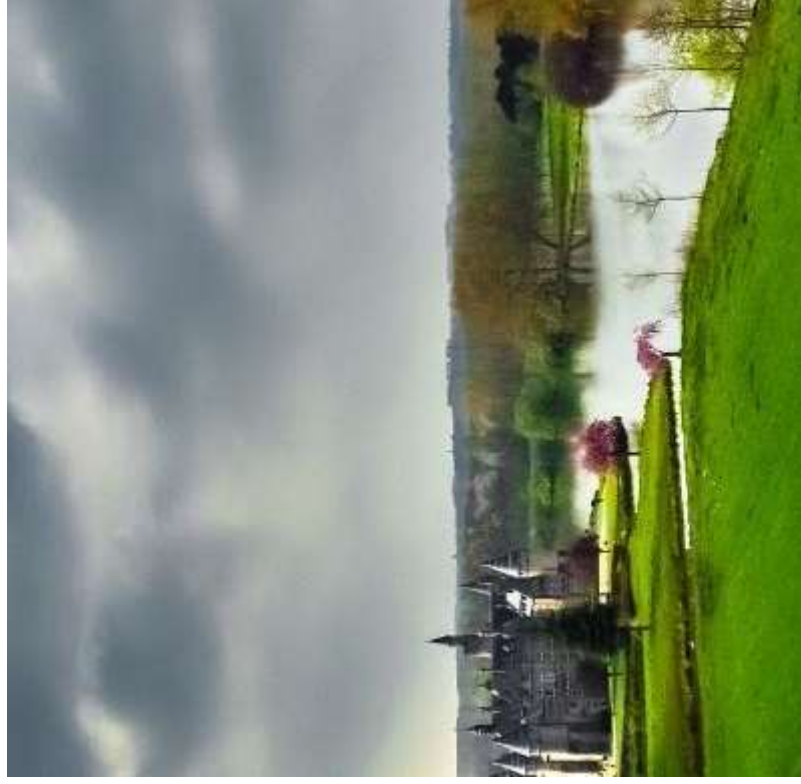


- ▶ **Need for credible high-quality Flemish park policy**
- ▶ **Parks as a means for area-oriented programs**



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Policy context (1)



- ▶ Label National Park/Landscape Park
= Opportunity for regional development
 - Bottom up process based on local strengths, opportunities and needs
 - Holistic and integrating approach
 - Synergies and efficiency gains
 - Locally anchored and dynamic
 - Structural support as leverage
 - Label is one of the strongest brands for tourism worldwide
- ▶ Stimulating policy, no new restrictions based on label

Legislation on National Parks

- ▶ **Decree concerning Flemish Parks and general landscape management**

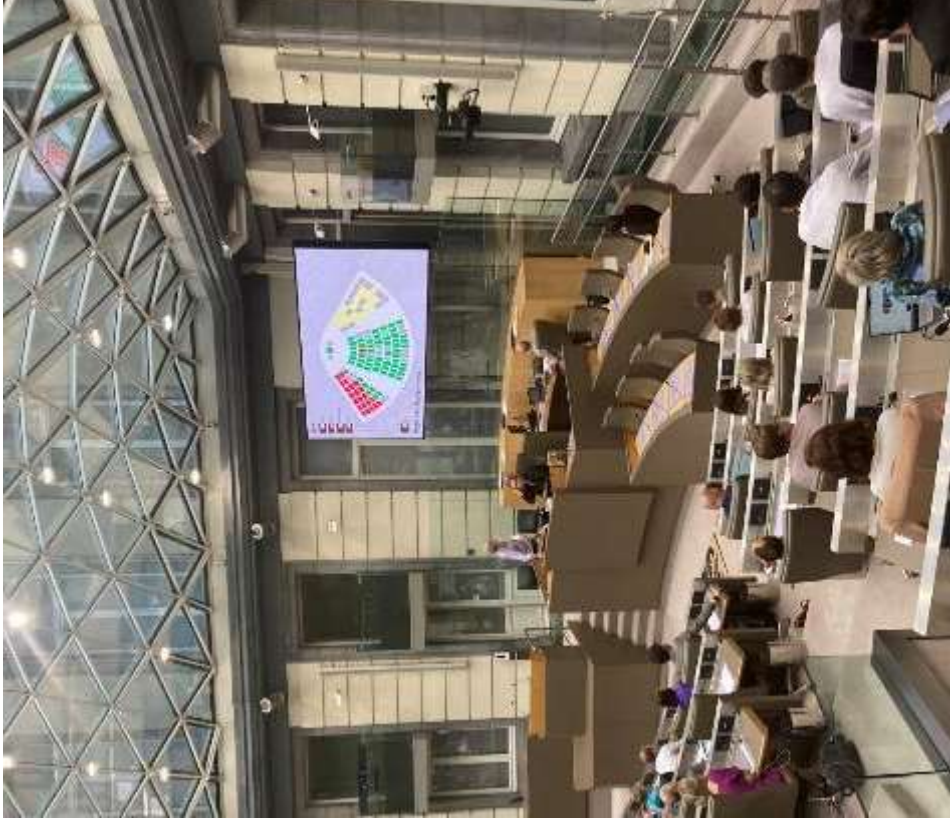
→ Voted on 7/06/2023

→ Published

- ▶ **Decision of the Flemish government**

→ Adopted 14/07/2023

- ▶ **Ministerial decision commission of experts**



Legislation on National Parks

Decree on Flemish Parks	Decision Flemish Government
Definition and purpose	Additional criteria
Designation by the Flemish Government	Procedure for designation: park note (concept note), management plan and operational plan
Management and role park bureau	Advisory body = commission of experts
No additional restrictions	Procedure for adopting plans
Designation is for	Reporting, evaluation
	Finance, subsidies

Definition National Park Vlaanderen – art 4

- ▶ **A National Park Flanders is an area of sufficient size that has exceptional natural quality and an international appearance**
 - Perimeter is coherent and can be divided into zones with at least one core zone
 - The core zone has a defined protection status based on spatial planning, SPA/SAC (NATURA 2000), Military zone or maritime component
- ▶ **Total surface of the core zone is at least 5.000 ha at start, after 24 years it should be minimal 10.000 ha**
- ▶ **At least half of the core zone is under nature management plan type 3 of 4; after 24 years this should be 75%**



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Purpose of National Parks Flanders – art 4

1. Conservation and development of nature, biological diversity and the natural environment of the nature core zones
2. Conservation, management and development of the cultural values, including heritage value and landscape quality
3. Developing and promoting tourism and recreation in and around the park, creating added value for nature conservation, local communities, entrepreneurs and visitors
4. Contributing to sustainable economic and social development of the local resident communities and activities in the area.

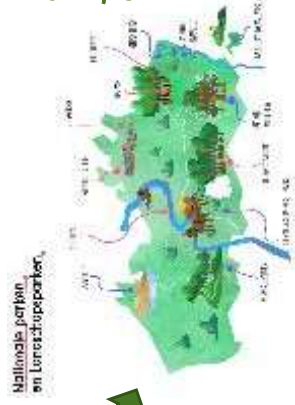
Procedure for designation of National parks in Flanders



Launch of call
April 2021



Long list obv. park notes
September 2021
10 candidates NPF
evaluated



Shortlist
januari 2022
6 candidates



National Parks
Decision Flemish
Government
Q3 2023



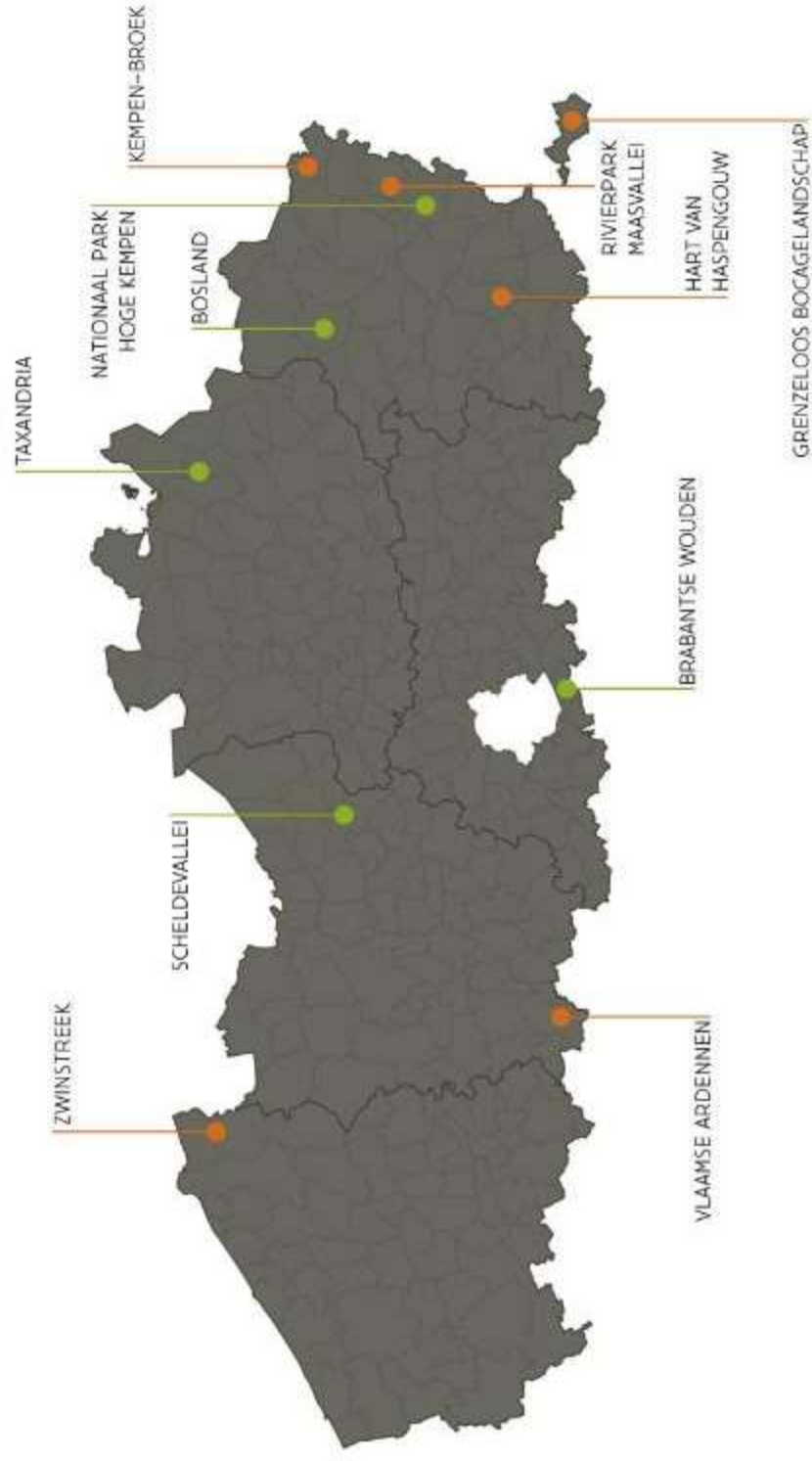
Commission
Q3 2023



Guidance process
Design MP and OP
Febr. '22 – May '23
6 candidates

Update dossiers

KANDIDATEN NATIONALE PARKEN EN LANDSCHAPSPARKEN



BRON: Agentschap Natuur & Bos en Vlaamse Landmaatschappij - 1 juni 2023

Governance – coordination office

▶ Flemish Government → coordination through Flemish parks bureau

- From the start involved
- Cross-entity collaboration between funding institutions
- Memorandum of Understanding
 - x Resources allocation
 - x Program
 - x Tasks
 - x Budget

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Governance – coordination office

Supporting parks through:

- I. General coordination of Flemish parks policy
- II. Implementation of the planning cycle of the Flemish Parks
- III. Facilitating knowledge sharing, cross-pollination and consultation with and between the Flemish Parks
- IV. Generic communication, marketing and brand development



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Governance – park level

- ▶ **Park bureau** → new or existing legal body
- ▶ **Local communities are in driving seat (majority of votes)**
 - Ngo and nature organisations are represented
 - As other stakeholders
- ▶ **In charge of management of the park**
 - Coordinates implementation of the MP and OP
 - Take initiatives for new projects
 - Facilitation / mediation between partners
 - Agenda setting
 - Communication
- ▶ **Budget / yearly basis (excl. Investment costs)**
 - 6 FTE
 - Projectbudget 180k euro – create leverage
 - Operational budget 100k euro



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LIFE B4B

WP3 Protected Areas

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T3.2. Creation of NP and LSP in Flanders (D3.3.)



Phase 1 (years 1-3) Creation of a network of Flemish parks and establish a coordination office (FPB)

- ▶ enhance area designated as core zone (protected areas)
- ▶ explore new implementation instruments
 - spatial planning
 - agricultural transition
 - land-use change and NATURA 2000
- ▶ develop indicators to make sure master plans are effectively implemented / baseline assessment
- ▶ feedback to the policy level



T3.2. Creation of NP and LSP in Flanders

Phase 2 (years 4-6)

- ▶ **Spatial planning and zonation to enable land-use change** (based on T3.1 spatial planning + rewilding study & T3.7 VAPEO)
- ▶ **Fostering innovation with 7 pilot projects**
 - 3x nature inclusive agriculture (based on T4.10)
 - effluents of road infrastructure (BW –T5.2 environ pressure)
 - rewilding (T3.1 rewilding study)
 - reducing light pollution (BW - T5.2)
 - reducing climate change (T5.2)
- ▶ **Replicate and upscale outcomes**
 - Within Flanders / Wallonia
 - Networking activities with other European Parks
- ▶ **A communication plan/strategy and tools to brand Natura2000 in National Parks: development and implementation** (BW - T5.4 guidance tool recreation)

An aerial photograph of a river delta system. A large, light-colored sandbar dominates the center, with several channels of water flowing around it. The surrounding areas are lush with green trees and vegetation. The sky is clear and bright.

Discussion

How do the regions (want to) coordinate and manage their parks, how can we learn from each other?

On which topics can we work together in Belgium to support our parks and exchange knowledge during the LIFE B4B project?