

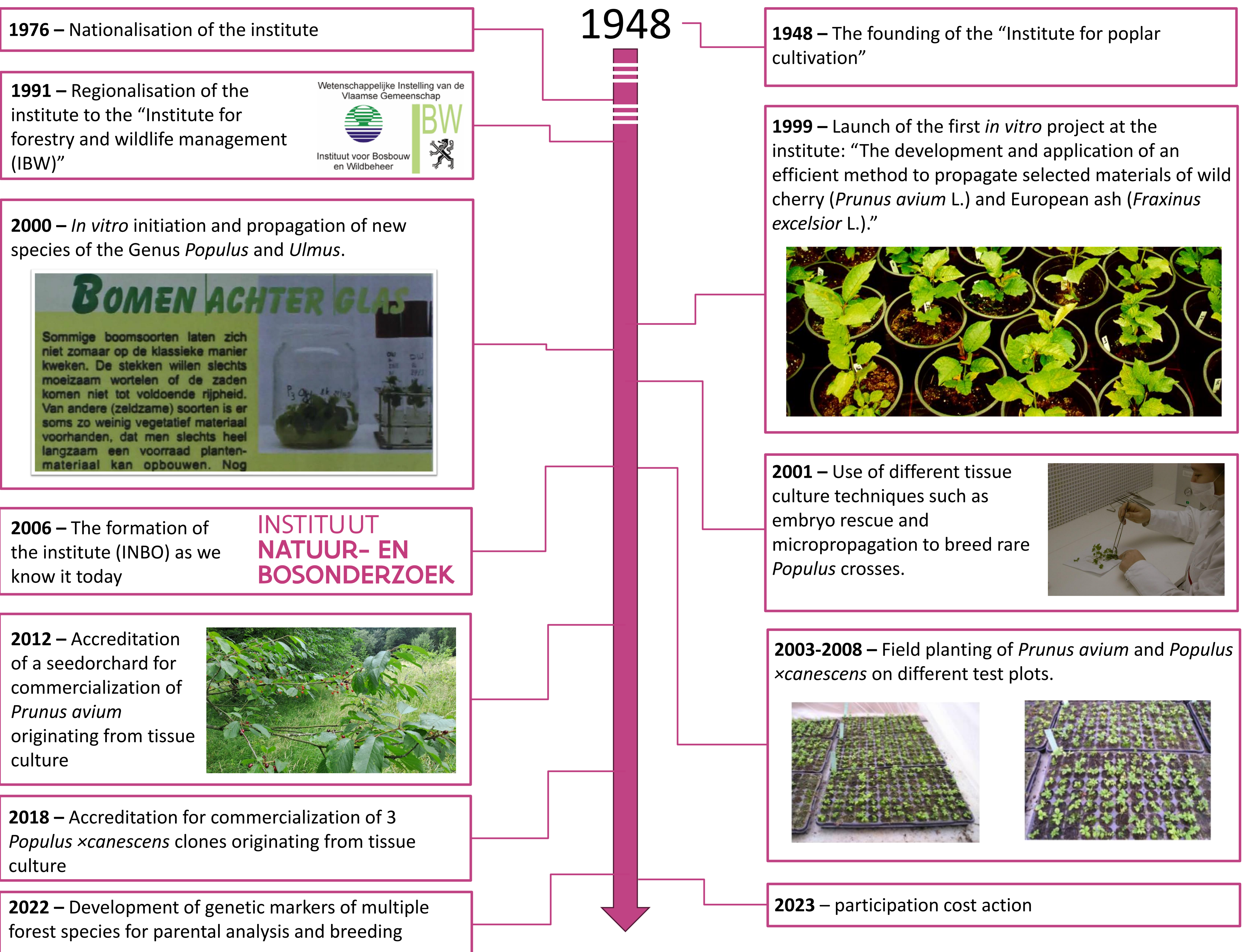
The history and present status of *in vitro* culture research at the institute of nature and forest research (INBO).

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The research institute of nature and forest (INBO) is a governmental research institute in Flanders, Belgium that tackles a diverse range of nature and forest related topics. These include different monitoring schemes, population dynamics, control of invasive species, wild management and population genomics but also the conservation and (biotechnological) improvement of different tree and shrub species for forestry. In the context of tree breeding and *in vitro* culture the institute has acquired a lot of expertise over the years.



INBO has more than **75 years** of experience with **tree breeding and field trials**. Initially the focus was on poplar but currently the institute involved in the selection of **more than 60 species** and hybrids for **forestry** in Flanders. Even in other parts of Europe, the poplar clones and Pinus varieties, selected or bred by the institute are in high demand. The **tissue culture lab** at the institute was established **25 years** ago, and supported the tree breeding greatly as **embryo rescue** and **micropropagation** were useful tools for doing rare crosses and difficult to propagate species. This resulted in several **commercially available clones**. These *in vitro* tools also allowed for safer **germplasm storage** and exchange. Currently a lot of research is done on selecting more **drought and disease tolerant** trees. As tree species don't stop at the border, the institute has a long history of **collaborations** with different **partners**

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