

At the forefront of conservation: integrating science and amphibian reintroductions in Flanders, Belgium.

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In Flanders, Belgium, several amphibian species are declining. Loss of -, and decreasing quality of habitats are the main drivers. To reverse this trend, species-specific action plans have been implemented by the government. Currently, reintroduction efforts are ongoing for common midwife toad *Alytes obstetricans* and common spadefoot toad *Pelobates fuscus*. Both species have been lost from much of their former range in Flanders, warranting the use of reintroductions as a last resort to restore populations and attain a favourable conservation status. Next to these two projects, a population of great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) was translocated following an ex-situ breeding program. Captive breeding (*A. obstetricans* and *T. cristatus*) and headstarting (*P. fuscus*) methods have been optimized, congruent with supporting research focused towards increasing larval growth and survival in an effort to maximize reintroduction success. The aforementioned reintroduction programs follow an integrated approach, combining genetic data and habitat restoration with translocations and post-release monitoring. While the reintroduction programs are still in the early stages, we report on the successes, setbacks and pitfalls of our efforts.