

## Cyanobacterial blooms in Brussels (2011)

The exceptionally warm spring of this year resulted in the unusually early development of cyanobacterial blooms in the ponds of Brussels (see the examples below). Some ponds concerned are used for recreation, still the pond users are not informed about the potential danger. This shows the lack of appropriate bloom detection and warning system in Brussels and underestimation of the potential public health risks. It should be noted that all the blooms sampled in Brussels ponds turned out to be positive for Microcystin and its concentration at times exceeded  $1500 \mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ , which is more than 70 times the WHO guideline for recreational waters ( $20 \mu\text{g L}^{-1}$ ). The use of the fountains in the ponds with cyanobacterial blooms is particularly dangerous because it exposes mucous membranes of respiration organs to the toxins and thus greatly increases the likelihood of intoxication. As hepatotoxins are known tumor promoters, chronic exposure to doses that do not produce acute effects might also be very harmful to human health.



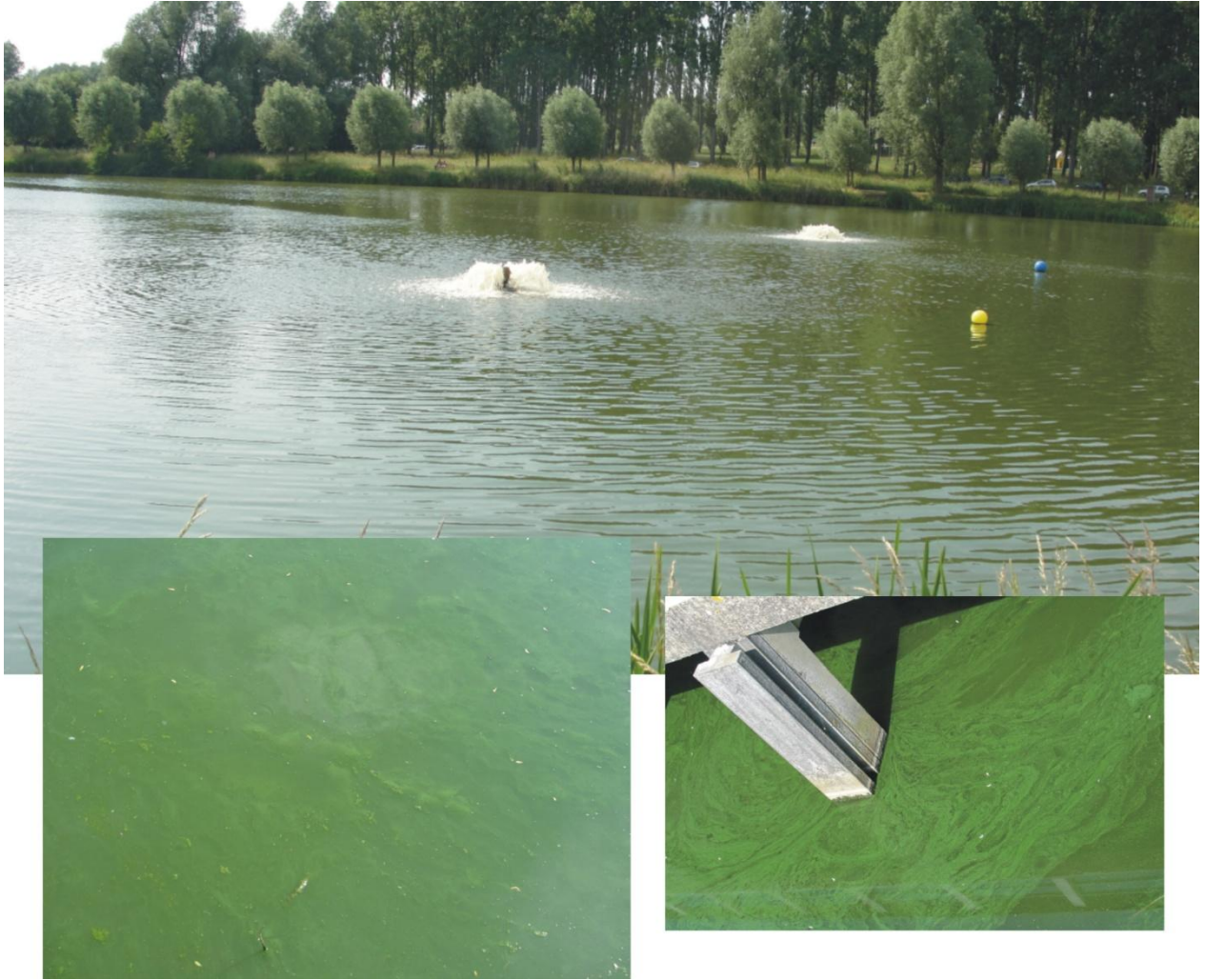
Bois de la Cambre



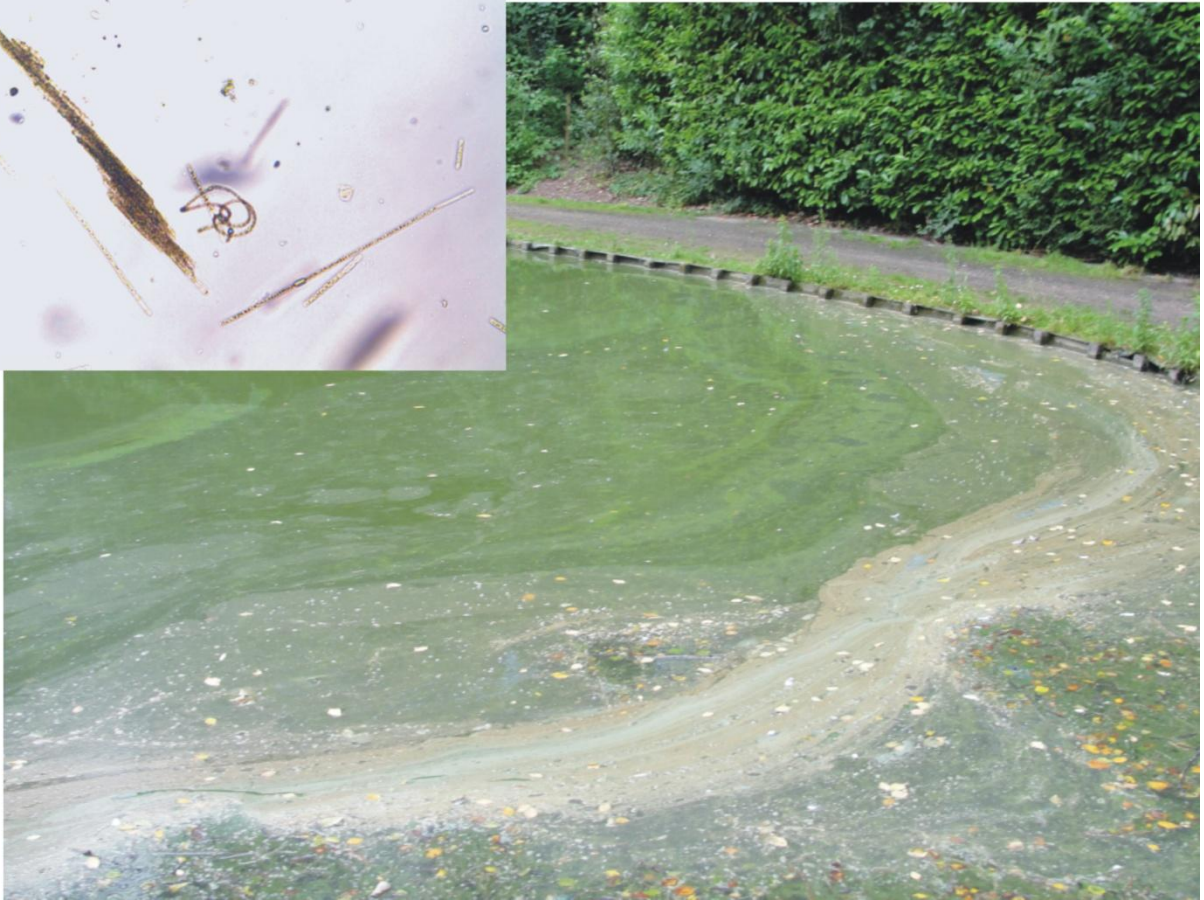
Etang d'ixelles



Neerpede Park



Neerpede Park



Ter Coigne (fishing pond)