



Source: MIRA based on the K.U.Leuven

Flanders is hermetically sealed

In many places, Flanders soil is sealed by houses, roads and other constructions. This implies the loss of its original functions such as agriculture or forestry. The sealing of natural soils also influences the hydrological status: water can no longer infiltrate and instead runs off via the paved surface. Because of this, flooding at the surface and drying out of the soil can occur. Moreover, the open space becomes fragmented by the presence of the paved surfaces. Fragmentation causes, among other things, spatial isolation and the reduction of the habitats of fauna and flora. It hereby places additional pressure on the biodiversity.

Paved surfaces in Flemish municipalities

186 000 ha or 13.8 % of the Flemish soil is sealed. There are still a few areas in Flanders where there are municipalities that have a sealing percentage lower than 8 %, especially in the Westhoek, South Limburg and Meetjesland. In municipalities located in the Flemish Diamond (Ghent, Antwerp, Leuven and Brussels) more than 12 % of the surface is sealed. The percentage of soil sealing along the coastline is relatively high as well, especially in comparison with the nearby Westhoek.