



PARTICIPATION REPORT
4th WORLD CONGRESS OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES
PERU

Presented to the Nordic Council of Ministers

March 2016

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

From March 14 to 17, 2016, the 4th World Congress of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (BR) was held in Lima, Peru.

Organized by UNESCO Man and Biosphere Program (MAB), the Peruvian Ministry

of the Environment (MINAM), its National Service for Natural Protected Areas (SERNANP) and the MAB National Committee of Peru, the 4th World Congress brought together all MAB National Committees, representatives of governments, BRs, local communities, United Nations agencies, NGOs, academic institutions and organizations. In short, more than 1,200 representatives from 120 countries attended this appointment, which is usually held every ten years.

The Congress addressed issues related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Development Program beyond 2015, such as education for sustainable development.

The event followed the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan (2008-2013) and Seville Strategy. It aimed at raising the new challenges to be met by launching an Action Plan (2016-2025) for BRs: the Lima Action Plan.

SOME BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

Many benefits and outcomes derived from NordMAB's participation at this world congress:

- An opportunity to connect with 1200 delegates from over 120 nations on biosphere reserve topics and themes;
- Visibility of our network on the world stage through workshops and presentations;
- Hosting of a workshop about youth engagement and presentation of NordMAB's Students on Ice initiative;
- Increased partnerships with universities, scientists, and Indigenous knowledge holders;
- Greater links developed with the EuroMAB network;
- Hearing about many interesting and innovative ideas that could be replicated in one's individual biosphere reserve;
- A chance to see one another in person and to strengthen a sense of belonging to the world network.

PROCEEDINGS: MARCH 14-17, 2016

MONDAY, MARCH 14th

11:45am Keynote – Mr. Xavier Sticker – France's Ambassador for the Environment

- Ambassador Sticker opened the congress, linking the event to Earth Day (April 22nd) and the Paris Climate Agreement.

- Biosphere reserves (BRs) have a duty to sustainable development. We have daily experience in sustainable development—we're steeped in the reality of what it means to work within its challenges. As a world network, we have influence. We can be a source of inspiration for the implementation of 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- People are looking for methods to implement the SDGs and we provide many practical examples from local perspectives. The network needs to be able to play this important role—to afford to do our work.
- MAB is an important platform for sharing pride of place and for sharing solutions for sustainable development. UNESCO is not only about biological diversity, but also about human and linguistic diversity.

Documentary Film on Peruvian Biosphere Reserves

- Reflection: The issues of BRs are all so incredibly different. It's important to support the development of the world network, especially in countries with less means than ours. One of our greatest strengths our network, our international reach. A video speaks more than a thousand words.

12:15pm - Mr. Pedro Gamboa Moquillaza, Director of the National Service of State-Protected Natural Areas (SERNANP)

- Protected areas are not just about conservation. BRs are a double-sided coin: conservation and development. It's not easy, but we're on the right path.
- The first function of BRs is conservation of biological and cultural diversity.
- Science (or research) is critical to the development of participatory governance in BRs—we can then make decisions based on evidence and influence policy-making.
- It's not just about scientific knowledge—also Indigenous and local knowledge.
- Collaboration between organizations and agencies has been increasing in recent years. When people clearly understand the benefits of BRs, collaboration and participation are easier.
- Example of Huascarán BR: Pilot project about the interface of science,

management and society.

3pm to 5pm – Presentation of 5 Working Papers Based on the 5 Strategic Action Areas of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Strategy 2015-2025

1. World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR): Scope, relevance, significance for sustainable development

- There are currently 651 biosphere reserves (BRs) in 120 countries. 40 new sites are being considered for designation later this week. (Note: The number of BRs increased to 669.)
- It is not just a number of sites; the overall area that BRs cover is significant. Total 1,027 million hectares (larger than China) of terrestrial, coastal and marine areas. All major ecosystem types present. 170 million people live in BRs. Incredible biological and cultural diversity and ways of knowing. A great variety of development contexts and development agendas.
- It is expected that there will be 1000 BRs around world from 150 countries (1.5 billion hectares) by 2030.
- The value of the WNBR is the connectedness and the groundtruth to real people, real communities, with real agendas.
- BRs should be platforms for generating new ideas, values, standards, knowledge, partnerships and solutions. We are creating something new—a solution for sustainable development.

2. Inclusive, dynamic and results-oriented collaboration and networking within UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)

- Guidelines are needed to ensure efficient collaboration and dialogue at the international scale. Meeting the 2030 SDGs depends on strong partnerships within the network (WNBR).
- Without strong partnerships between government, industry, and residents, sustainable development is not possible. Common values and a common vision are required.
- The Madrid Action Plan (2008-2013) made certain recommendations a

priority. The Lima Action Plan also emphasizes the need for partnerships. Intellectually, our goals are fabulous. Practically speaking, more work needs to be done.

- We need greater representation of the world within the network, in countries that do not have the means. Government needs to fund biosphere reserves. France is putting \$20Million (euros? USD?) towards their BR network.
- Biosphere reserves also need more support from UNESCO.
- To be more dynamic, we need to include more stakeholders in the management of biospheres (private industry, for example). We also need to engage youth.

3. Effective External Partnerships and Sustainable Funding for the Man and the Biosphere Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)

- We need to strengthen the capacity for managing and governance of BRs.
- We need to increase management capacity through training, workshops and toolkits to help with the planning and structure of the organization and structural development of BRs.
- The new MAB Strategy identifies that partnerships are key. Under the world network and sub-networks, there are good experiences and examples of cooperation in research and knowledge exchange.
- When looking at the regional networks, we recognize that there is a long way to go to establish functional funding models and capacity. It's a matter of finding more resources and also expending them more efficiently.
- The MAB Secretariat can be a stronger facilitator between BRs and potential private sponsors. Sub-networks and national networks can help with this. Menorca in Spain is one good example.
- We need to consider revenue as a regular activity—not just conservation. Development of business plans must happen. Most BRs don't have one. The MAB Secretariat can provide workshops and training. BR networks

should consider the potential of better understanding good existing examples.

- *Suggestions and Recommendations for Partnerships and Funding:*
- Capacity building and training programmes directed to BR managers and relevant stakeholders should be developed and adapted to cover each specific level (global, region), geography and specific needs, in line with the MAB Strategic Objectives and with the technical and scientific support from the MAB Secretariat.
- Individual BRs and Networks should establish governance mechanisms and minimum infrastructure and administration capacity enabling them to establish formal partnerships with sponsors and donors and to have direct access access to funding programs.
- BRs and networks should link closer with the MAB Secretariat that can play as a facilitator and/or management tool through existing extra-budgetary mechanisms, such as the Funds in trust or Special accounts.
- Regional and thematic networks shall promote the inclusion and participation in their activities by national authorities (ministries, local government, national UNESCO commissions, MAB National Committees, the private sector, and other civil society organizations).
- BRs and networks should better explore ways of engaging with local and regional governments and the private sector, bringing them not only as financial providers but also as partners in development initiatives, enabling job creation and business opportunities based on the BR sites and surrounding communities.
- Communication is an essential tool for spreading BR and network activities aiming to attract new members and external partners, including potential sponsors and other sources of funding.
- The use of the BR designation as a solid, respected, and attractive brand should be explored, preceded by the establishment of common principles and standards, in order to ensure consistency, credibility and mutual recognition by the different networks.
- Partnerships between individual BRs or within networks should widen their scope and include not only projects but also the development of plans and

- strategies as well as the participation of external actors in the network's initiatives.
- BRs should look for opportunities to act as service providers through demonstrative activities linking and promoting the participation of their surrounding communities in different initiatives, and in particular those linked with the SDGs and other international and multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Commission, and the United Nations Convention on Climate Change.
 - BRs should position themselves as attractive entering points, at the local level, for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to engage and participate in global and international programs. Most of the SMEs don't have the skills, size, and/or capacity to address and act on global issues such as biodiversity conservation and climate change, which can be done through cooperation with biosphere reserves.

4. Comprehensive, Modern, Open and Transparent Communication, Information and Data Sharing

- Can we imagine world where there is a network where people are working together to inspire a positive future by connecting people and nature today?
- The Communications toolkit for BRs was introduced to the world network—a presentation that had been given at EuroMAB in May 2015
- Modelling solutions and a network that makes us realize that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.
- Participants were encouraged to participate weekly in the #ProudToShare social media campaign on Facebook.

5. Effective Governance of and within MAB and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)

- A generally accepted definition of good governance includes predictable policy, acting for public good, transparent processes, and the involvement of civil society.

- In many cases, UNESCO's MAB falls on the good side of the spectrum of governance. MAB cannot fulfill its mission without good governance. Governance is one of the five strategic areas (E) of the Lima Action Plan.
- There are four levels of governance within UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB): International (MAB ICC), regional (sub-networks), national (associations and national commissions and committees), and biosphere level.
- ICC reviews nominations and periodic reviews of BRs. Member states are responsible for ensuring that BRs are functioning properly. National MAB Committees overview this. BRs have a wide range of governance modalities. BR governance needs to meet the needs of a diversity of sectors and groups.
- Good governance is achieved through innovation and implementation.

Dr. Martin Price spoke briefly about the background and development of the Lima Action Plan

- 1971 – Establishment of the MAB Programme with 14 Project Areas
- 1984 – Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves (243 BRs in 65 countries)
- 1995 – Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework for the WNBR (324 BRs in 82 countries)
- 2008 – Madrid Action Plan (531 BRs in 105 countries)
 - The global context continues to evolve.
 - Over 40 years, protected areas have been viewed differently. MAB doesn't just focus on protected areas, but on everything around it.
 - Global change is an issue that includes climate change, loss of biodiversity, population, industrialization...
 - Different international accords are relevant to biosphere reserves: Rio 1992, Johannesburg 2002, Rio 2012
- 2014: UNESCO Medium-Term strategy
- 2015: 2030 Agenda for SD & Paris Agreement on Climate Change
- The Lima Action Plan (LAP) is meant to activate the MAB Strategy 2015-2025.
- The LAP is a relatively small document. The plan is proposed to the

WNBR for endorsement and will go to the ICC at the end of the week for adoption.

- Total of 62 actions and 29 outcomes.
- “This is the dawn of a new era for MAB.”

Remarks by the Chair of the MAB ICC – Sergio Guevara Sada

- The Lima Action Plan is a good document—participatory, transparent, well designed. It’s not perfect but it’s a good working document.
- A few changes may improve clarity around the implementation of the plan. We want this document to help guide us.

TUESDAY MARCH 15th

9:30am to 1:00pm – Network Sessions: EuroMAB, AfriMAB, ArabMAB, IberoMAB...

- Canada is part of the EuroMAB Network
- First hour facilitated by Meriem Bouamrame. Final changes to the Lima Action Plan suggested by participants. Only minor alterations to existing points were accepted.
- Suggested changes included greater recognition of Indigenous and local knowledge (in addition to scientific knowledge) and several technicalities to improve clarity. The group was urged to think as a regional network, not as individual BRs or as nations.
- The second part of the morning was dedicated to group discussions and facilitated by Jeff and Laurie from the Communications firm Within.
- The following questions were discussed within the framework of the Lima Action Plan:
 - What has EuroMAB been good at as a network?
 - Where should EuroMAB focus its efforts in the future?
 - What is one commitment we should make as a network?
- Canada emphasized the importance of recognizing Indigenous knowledge

holders as well as scientists within the plan. Seven of the Canadians met over lunch to craft the wording of the suggested revision. In the final Plan, the word “Indigenous” was not used in Action B7.1 but ICC President, Dr. Martin Price, did acknowledge the value of Indigenous knowledge at the final plenary session.

- A one-page report is supposed to be disseminated on the outcomes of this session.

3pm to 6pm – Thematic Workshops: Mountains, Climate Change, Drylands, Forests, Urban Areas, Islands and Coastal Zones, Ecological Restoration Plan

- Dr. David Witty and Ms. Monica Shore presented in the Mountains Workshop on the weather station and snow pillow that have been installed on Mt. Arrowsmith and that will be fully functional by the end of 2016.
- The main points of the MABR’s presentation (10 minutes) were about the need for regional collaboration between government, private industry, universities and other partners to fund and complete a project of such magnitude, and about the need for an active international network of mountain biosphere reserves to share and compare data and trends around water and climate.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16th 9am to 12:30pm – Seven Workshops on Specific Themes in the Working Documents and the Draft Lima Action Plan

The themes of the seven workshops were:

- a. Governance
- b. Economics in and around biosphere reserves
- c. Scientific networking*
- d. Youth engagement
- e. The biosphere reserve brand
- f. Tourism g. Extractive industry in biosphere reserves

*The MABR and Dr. Maureen Reed (Canada) presented at the Scientific Networking session

Dr. Martin Price chaired the session and made the following opening remarks:

- Since 1971, there have been many networks of scientists working on various project areas.
- Since 1990, biosphere reserves have been the focus of the MAB Programme.
- The connectivity of scientists within MAB has been lost. There are many scientists who work within BRs with coordinators, community members, managers, and stakeholders.
- The benefits of creating a network are collaborative research, sharing and finding best practices, funding research projects through partnership development with one another, more publications, and training exchanges of scientists and students.
- The MAB Strategy 3.2 specifically states that a network must be established.
- The objectives of the workshop are to review our experiences of collaboration and networking within and across BRs, to consider opportunities for networking with UNESCO and other international structures/networks, to consider proposals for new initiatives, to discuss benefits, opportunities, and to report to the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB).

Dr. Pamela Shaw was the first speaker. The following key points were made:

- Undergraduate and graduate students at the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI) have invested over 500 hours toward the development of a comprehensive bibliography of research pertaining to biosphere reserves since 2000.

- Further work is needed to complete the bibliography in other languages and networks.
- The existing bibliography will be made available to all those interested.
- MABRRI will be launching a new international journal of biosphere reserve research. (This was warmly received, with a great deal of interest from attendees, some of whom will form the journal's editorial board.)

Dr. Martin Price noted that this journal will fill an important gap that has existed since the former Man and the Biosphere newsletter called InfoMAB folded. There were five other speakers on a variety of scientific research projects. One-page summaries of all workshops will be compiled and shared with participants in the weeks to come.

2:30pm to 6pm – Second Round of Workshops

- a. Transboundary biosphere reserves and international cooperation in biosphere reserves
- b. Synergies between multi-designations in BRs
- c. The silk road: Transcontinental BR network
- d. Private sector partnerships
- e. Learning for sustainable development
- f. Cultural and biological diversity
- g. Designing interdisciplinary university courses for BRs* (next page)

THURSDAY MARCH 17th

9am to 1pm - Plenary session: Presentation and discussion of the results of the workshops and side events on the Draft Lima Action Plan

- Dr. Martin Price introduced the final changes to the Lima Action Plan
- There was a panel of rapporteurs who presented key messages and innovative proposals from the seven different themes that had been the focus of workshops and side events over the previous two days.
 - Canada was well represented by several panelists speaking to issues in the Lima Action Plan.

- Dr. Lisen Schultz from a Swedish university summarized the Scientific Networking workshop and specifically noted that Vancouver Island University will be publishing an international journal on biosphere reserve research through the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region Research Institute (MABRRI).
- Dr. David Witty spoke to the need to recognize the importance of Indigenous knowledge within the Lima Action Plan.
- Another participant called for a need to be able to clearly communicate what biosphere reserves are to a “taxi driver.” If we can’t do that, we’re not getting it right.

1pm to 6pm – Endorsement and Discussion of the Implementation of the Lima Action Plan

- The attendees endorsed the Lima Action Plan, which reflects the Man and Biosphere Strategy 2015-2025, and guides the actions of all networks, committees, and national commissions that are involved in the management of biosphere reserves.
- There were four separate speakers on key areas of the action plan: Youth involvement, Indigenous communities, local governance, and private sector partnerships.
- The Lima Declaration was orated, word for word, by the Hon. Sergio Guevara Sada, President of the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of UNESCO’s Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.
- The day concluded with a closing ceremony with four speakers who spoke to the importance of the Lima Declaration and its attached Action Plan. A speech by Peru’s Minister of Environment concluded the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves.