

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

International Coordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
Twenty-seventh session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room XII (Fontenoy Building)
8 – 12 June 2015

Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda: REPORT ON MAB COMMUNICATION AND BRANDING PROJECT (EUROMAB PILOT STUDY) AND NEXT STEPS

1. The report of the Evaluation of the Madrid Action Plan by IOS indicated that “Cooperation, management and communication with strengthening capacities and resources for managing and governing Biosphere Reserves are considered the highest priorities for the future” (paragraph 9, page 2 of the 195 EX/5 Part III).
2. The MAB Secretariat has been supporting the EuroMAB network with a communication and branding project to address some of these issues, with expertise from the communication company “WITHIN people”, which has been working with the EuroMAB Network during its last two regional meetings (in 2011 in Sweden; 2013 in Canada). Seed funding has been provided from UNESCO Regular Budget complemented by funds provided by four volunteer pilot biosphere reserves in the EuroMAB region.
3. The main objectives of the project are to determine and further clarify the common values and messages on biosphere reserves that can be used for communicating at both local and international levels and to support Member States in the implementation of their respective communication strategies with a tool kit. A workshop was held in UNESCO Paris on 31st October 2014 to define the objectives, scope and methodology of the project. Representatives from biosphere reserves of EuroMAB, and the colleagues from Public Information Department of UNESCO and the MAB Secretariat attended.
4. The Communication and Branding Biosphere project has been tested with four volunteer pilot biosphere reserves representing different languages, challenges, ecosystems and target audience. In each of these sites, a specific workshop has been held with local stakeholders, WITHIN and the MAB Secretariat: Bassin de la Dordogne Biosphere Reserve (France) in November 2014, Urdabai Biosphere Reserve (Spain) in January 2015; North Bull Biosphere Reserve (Ireland) in January 2015 and Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve (Canada) in February 2015.
5. In addition to the pilot sites workshops and the test of the tool kit in each site, an advisory group from EuroMAB was set up to provide guidance on the process and feedback on the tool kit before submission to the EuroMAB network at its next meeting in Estonia (19-22 May 2015). International members of the MAB community are contributing through interviews and by providing feedback at each step of the process, using the UNESCO online community platform. The project was presented to the MAB Strategy group at its first meeting in UNESCO Paris, last November 2014. Experts of the MAB Strategy group have been interviewed by WITHIN in order that the project is aligned with the on- going development of

the MAB Strategy. A short summary of this project is contained in document 196 EX/5 Part II and was presented at last Executive board session on the item “Possible ways to protect and strengthen brand recognition of biosphere reserves, world heritage properties, and proposed UNESCO global Geoparks » (pages 1-3).

6. The attached annex provides a project summary, presents some key findings such as common values and purpose of biosphere reserves and outlines the proposed content for the toolkit, along with the worksheets. Each page in the annex is draft and available for comments. The document will be shaped into a proper guidance document after consideration by the EuroMAB network in May 2015 and the MAB Council in June 2015.
7. The preliminary results of this project is highly relevant to the development of the new MAB strategy as regards communication, vision and mission of the MAB programme and it's World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
8. Next possible steps include broadening perspective to add depth to the communication tools by engaging other biosphere reserves in this work. The objective will be to test the tools within other local and socio-cultural contexts, as well as to train regional communication coordinators to be able to use the tools effectively. Biosphere reserves from other regions could be invited to become pilot, and go through a two-day session to use the tools to create communication strategies. This could be done at a regional meeting (IberoMAB; AfriMAB...) or within specific biosphere reserves. Financial commitment would need to be secured and would include professional support for specific communication challenges for the pilot site and or region. Finally, the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves (Lima (Peru) 14–17 March 2016) could offer a unique opportunity to train regional communication coordinators on the tools to achieve scale, consistency and widespread use across the world network.
9. **The MAB Council is invited to provide comments on the work achieved so far including the Took Kit, and to provide guidance on next steps of this project in connection with the development of the MAB Strategy.**



UNESCO MAB

Brand & Story Toolkit
DRAFT - March 2015

BRAND & STORY TOOLKIT

Guidance to creating a powerful story for biosphere reserves

The UNESCO MAB Brand & Story Toolkit will have three main sections:

Chapter 1

Introduces the wider context of communicating the biosphere reserve, the network, and the big shift in engagement

Chapter 2

Outlines the consistent framework for messaging for the biosphere reserve

Chapter 3

Step-by-step guidance on how to localise the biosphere reserve brand through stakeholder engagement

The toolkit will be UNESCO branded and in an accessible format for download by local biosphere reserve.



CHAPTER I

THE BIG SHIFT

**How our approach to engagement needs
to evolve**



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How do you make a complex idea simple?

How do tell a story that attracts & nurtures strong connections between your organisation, network and communities?



BIOSPHERE RESERVES ARE:

About people, by people, for people

A vehicle for people to organise around

Connect people across the world

Connecting culture, nature and economy

Understand heritage, create future

Explore better solutions in practice

Ways of living, not only ways of conserving

Shared values and language

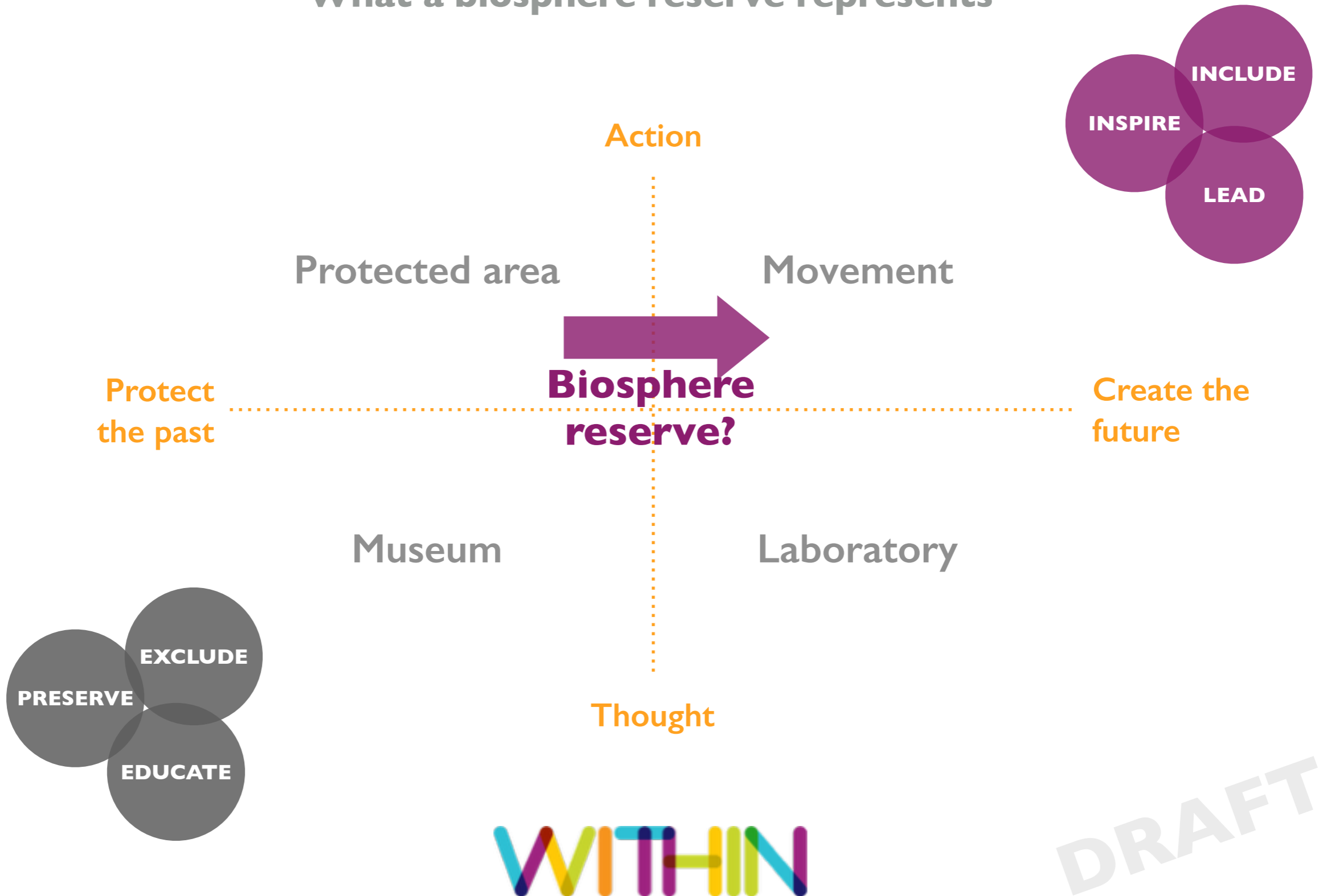
Fuelled by passion



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WHAT ARE WE?

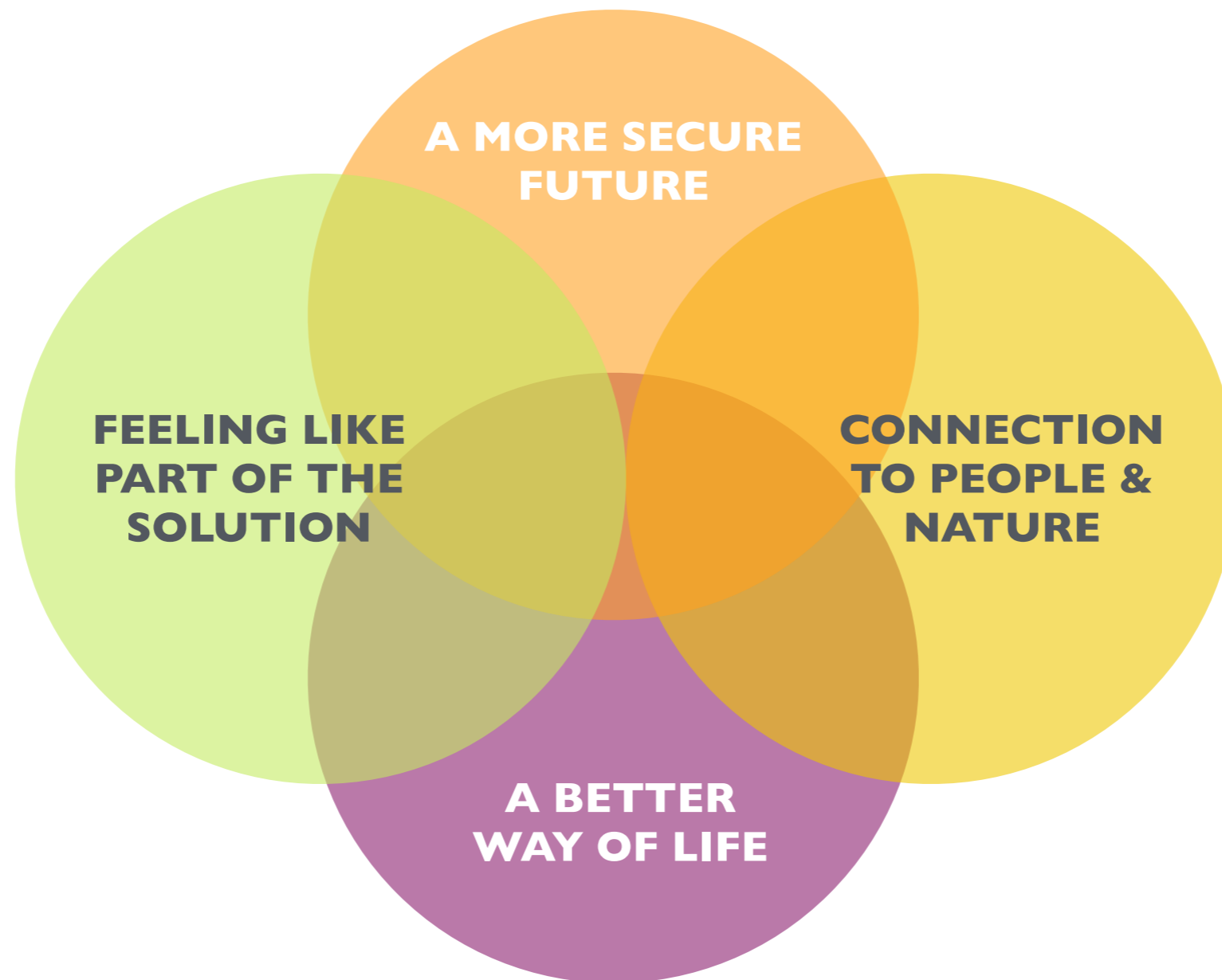
What a biosphere reserve represents



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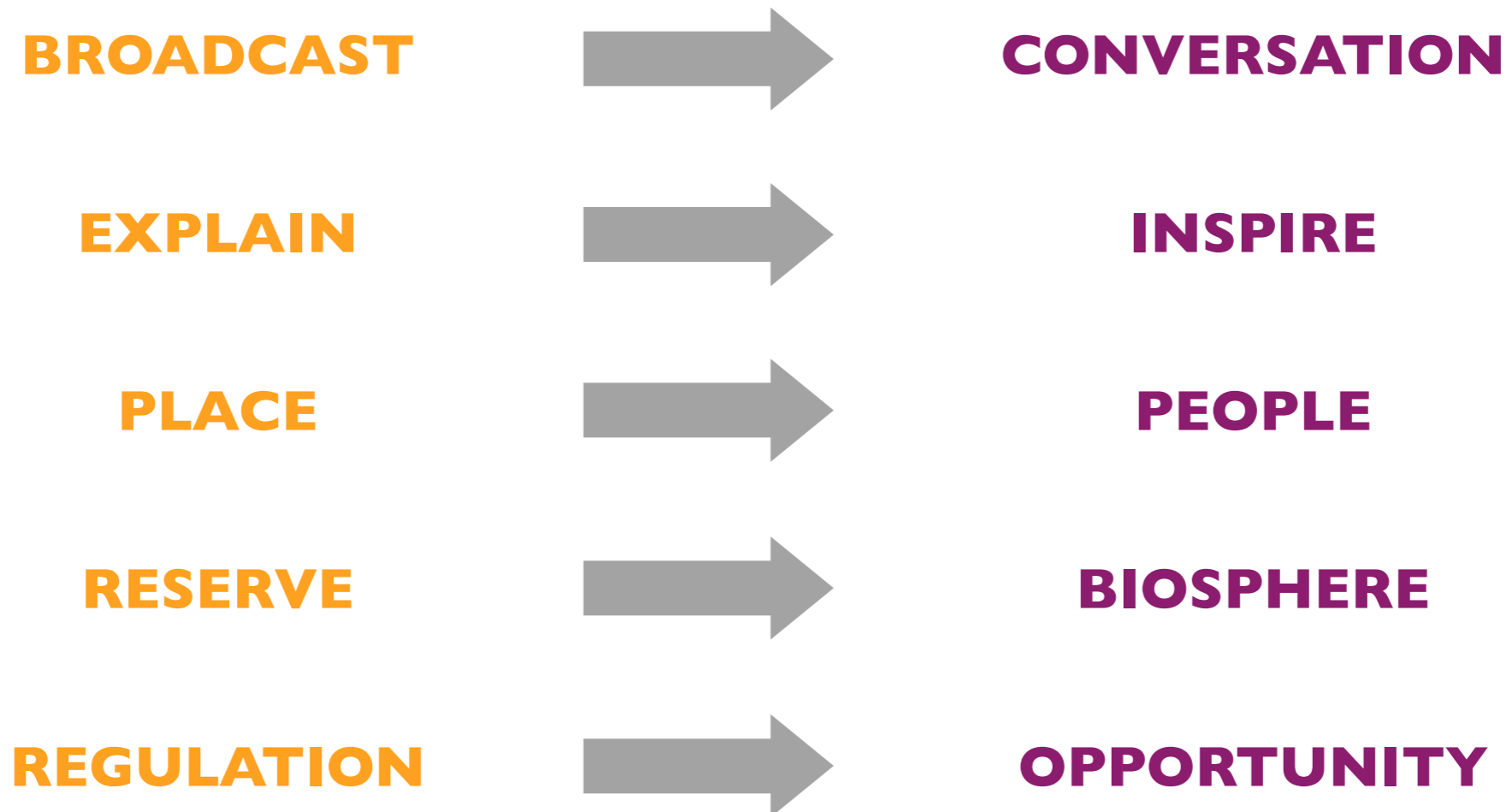
WHAT IS THE OUTCOME WE WANT?

And what would be missing if we didn't exist?



5 BIG SHIFTS

How communication needs to change



CHAPTER 2

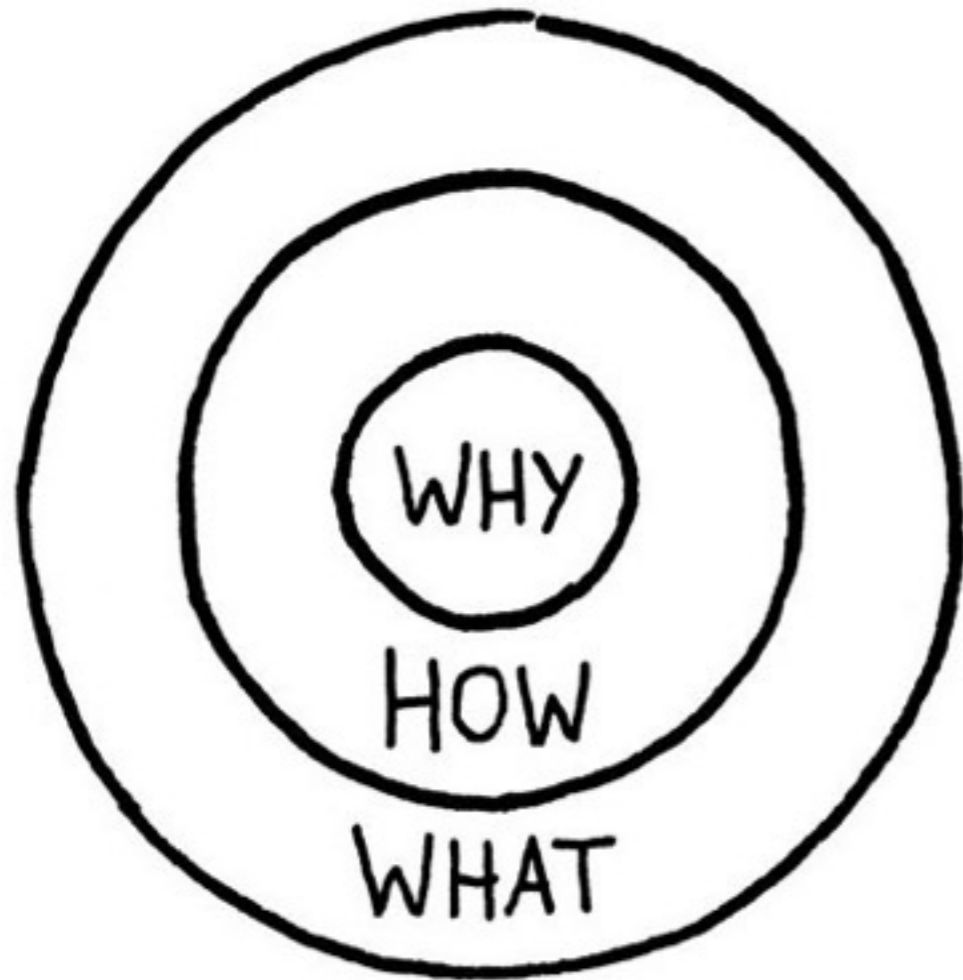
THE BIOSPHERE RESERVE BRAND

How we create a common framework of
understanding



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OUR FRAMEWORK



Brand Architecture:

WHY Our Purpose

The "North Star" of the brand

HOW Our Values

Describes our unique way of doing things

WHAT Our Proposition

Describes the offer

What it gives us:

The core expression - the universal understanding of why biosphere reserves are important to people.

The actionable values common to every biosphere reserve.

The easy to remember, relevant and engaging way to describe what a biosphere reserve is.



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WHAT IS A BIOSPHERE RESERVE?

We are a place where people share a way of living with nature

We equip people with knowledge and tools to create change

We are building a more secure future together

We are a network of people across the world



PROPOSITION

A UNESCO biosphere reserve is a place where people share a way of living with nature that builds a future we're proud of.

The UNESCO biosphere reserve network connects communities around the world who are pioneering a positive future for people and nature.



OUR VALUES

The core values of a biosphere reserve and our network

Champion life

We celebrate people and nature

Empower people

We enable participation

Model solutions

We explore new ways everyday

Belong together

We are part of something bigger



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Champion life

We create the conditions for people and nature to thrive together.

We believe that people's wellbeing and the health and diversity of nature are inextricably linked.

People are a part of their environments which have in turn been shaped by local cultures.

So we find ways to celebrate and advance culture, nature and economy together.



Empower people

**We are a movement of people building a future
that we can trust**

We know that people are most powerful when they are informed,
inspired and have the tools to make change happen.

The only way to build a future that is self-sufficient, secure and
happy is to help people believe it is possible, and help them
participate in making it happen.



Model solutions

We explore new ways of living everyday that solve global challenges

Our solutions are built on a strong scientific foundation and understanding of local cultures, traditions and ecology, which we translate it into actions everyday.

This allows us to make the most of local expertise, and live in a way that tackles global challenges.

By doing this, we model the future we want to see.



Belong together

Our success depends on the strength of the relationships we create.

It's these powerful connections that mean we can achieve outcomes together that we could not achieve alone.

Connecting people across disciplines, cultures and borders. Reconnecting people to each other, and to nature. Connecting the values and heritage from our past with hopes we have for our future.

And it is through these connections that each of us can feel part of something bigger than ourselves.



WHAT PROBLEM ARE WE SOLVING?

DISCONNECTION

*People from nature
Local from global
Conservation from economy
Challenge from solution
Past from future*

WITHIN

Life is an amazing series of connections.

**Between people, between people and nature,
between knowledge and action, across time and
place.**

**If these connections break, we put our collective
quality of life at risk. If we keep them strong, we
build a future that inspires us.**

**UNESCO biosphere reserves connect people and
nature to inspire a positive future today.**



OUR PURPOSE

UNESCO biosphere reserves exist to...

**Inspire a positive future by
connecting people and nature today**



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Our role is to use the power of science and the wonder of nature to inspire change

The impact we have is to create a secure future that we can look forward to

Inspire a positive future by connecting people and nature today

From our network to our sites, our role is to reconnect people and the economy with their environment

We're making this future real now and everyday



DRAFT BRAND FRAMEWORK

WHY

Inspire a positive future by connecting people and nature today

HOW

Champion
life

Empower
people

Model
solutions

Belong
together

WHAT

A UNESCO biosphere reserve is a place where people share a way of living with nature that builds a future we're proud of



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CHAPTER 3

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

Worksheets for building your strategy



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CREATING A STRATEGY FOR ENGAGEMENT

The toolkit provides step-by-step guidance on how to run a multi-stakeholder session designed to create an engagement strategy to meet local communication objectives.

The session agenda and worksheets have been tested with four pilot biospheres. We are in the process of developing the guidance for the session, which will include tips for getting the best results.



SESSION AGENDA

| Time | Session Section | Outcome |
|---------|--|---|
| 30 min | Agenda & Expectations Introduction by biosphere reserve team to set out the agenda for the session. The participants introduce themselves and share their expectations for the session. | Aligned expectations |
| 30 min | Review: Biosphere Reserve Brand Framework Presentation of the outline of the biosphere brand framework. Time for Q&A. | Understanding of the biosphere reserve brand and story idea |
| 15 min | Coffee Break | |
| 30 min | Setting Objectives Discussion on the key objectives of communication and engagement. | Communication objectives |
| 30 min | Audiences Working session in small groups to map out the key audience segments and their specific needs. Which audience is most important to deliver the main objective? What do they care about most? A look at the barriers and solutions to communication challenges. | Agreement on a target audience |
| 30 min | Lunch | |
| 1 hour | Messages & Communication Tactics Using the biosphere reserve brand values, choosing the right messages and tactics to reach audiences. | A set of messages and tactics that express the brand values |
| 1 hour | Putting the Plan Together Consolidating and sharing the outputs of the session. Agreement on one communication plan. | Alignment on the communication plan |
| 30 mins | Summary Agreement on the next steps and the key learnings of the day | Momentum for the |



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OBJECTIVES

What is our reason for engaging audiences on the biosphere reserve?

What is the objective for engagement?

AUDIENCE

What is the engagement objective?

Who is the main audience to engage?

What do they care about most?

What is stopping them?

What stories would inspire them?

GROUP:

MESSAGING

WHO IS THE BEST MESSENGER?

WHAT ARE THE KEY MESSAGES?

1:

2:

3:

GROUP:

BIOSPHERE
STORY TELLING KIT
WORKSHEET 3



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ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

CHAMPION LIFE

WHAT TACTICS COULD WE USE THAT WOULD CELEBRATE THE BIOSPHERE RESERVE?

EMPOWER PEOPLE

WHAT TACTICS COULD WE USE THAT WOULD GET THE AUDIENCE PARTICIPATING?

WHAT ARE THE ACTIVITIES?

1:

2:

3:

MODEL SOLUTIONS

WHAT TACTICS COULD WE USE THAT WOULD SHOW HOW THE BIOSPHERE RESERVE WORKS?

BELONG TOGETHER

WHAT TACTICS COULD WE USE THAT WOULD SHOW OUR AUDIENCE THEY WERE PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER?

GROUP:

THE PLAN

To achieve our objective of:

We'll engage:

By saying:

Through these tactics:

To a measured outcome of:

**MEASURED
OPINION OR
FEELING:**

**MEASURED
ACTION:**

GROUP:

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