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International Co-ordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
Twenty-third session

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<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/about-mab/icc/icc/23rd-session-of-the-mab-council/>

FINAL REPORT

I. Introduction and Opening by the Chair of the MAB International Co-ordinating Council

1. Hosted by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the twenty-third session of the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme was held at the Radisson Blu Park Hotel & Conference Centre in Dresden/Radebeul (Germany) from the afternoon of 28 June to 1 July 2011.

2. Participants included representatives of the following Members of the ICC as elected by the UNESCO General Conference at its 34th and 35th sessions: Argentina, Austria, Bahrain, Benin, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Lebanon, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mali, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, and Zimbabwe.

3. In addition, observers from the following Member States were present: Bangladesh, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Namibia, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Sweden, Uganda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Vietnam.

4. The following international non-governmental organizations were present: the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat. The full list of participants is presented as Annex 1 to this report.

5. Mr Chung-II Choi, Adjunct Professor of Earth & Marine Sciences at Hanyang University (Republic of Korea), and Chairperson of the 23rd Session of the MAB-ICC, officially opened the meeting. He wished a heart-felt and very happy birthday to the MAB Programme which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Although the programme has reached its age of maturity, he characterized MAB as a young and dynamic programme that constantly keeps pace with emerging environmental, scientific and societal issues. The Chair of the MAB ICC was confident that MAB's anniversary would be duly reflected and commemorated at various occasions of this Council session.

II. Opening remarks

6. Ms Gretchen Kalonji, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, as the

representative of the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms Irina Bokova, warmly welcomed the MAB ICC delegates. She thanked the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the German Federal Agency for Nature Protection and the German National Commission for UNESCO for hosting the MAB ICC in Dresden.

7. Ms Kalonji underlined that visionary and innovative spirit of the MAB Programme that kept MAB so relevant after 40 years. By placing human beings in the centre of ecological sciences, the MAB Programme had made a decisive step to the advancement of scientific, political and social thought since the 1970s. MAB had definitively contributed to shaping the concept of sustainable development. While MAB is still by and large maintaining its 1971 objectives, the programme has also proven its ability to serve a changing world. Ms Kalonji referred to the large amount of scientific knowledge produced by the MAB Programme through its ecosystems related networks and scientific cooperation. A point in case is that MAB and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves are apt to address the global challenge of the 21st century as had been testified by the international conference “For Life, for the Future: Biosphere Reserves and Climate Change” held on 27 and 28 June 2011 in the same premises as the MAB ICC, and its ensuing *Dresden Declaration*.

8. Among the many results that MAB had achieved in its 40 years of existence, Ms Kalonji highlighted the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves which opened a new era for biosphere reserves management, and the Madrid Action Plan which sets relevant targets for biosphere reserve management and visibility for the period 2008-2013. The special status of biosphere reserves are now increasingly recognised within national legal frameworks. Ms Kalonji also underlined the positive trend of international cooperation through south-south, north-south or south-north-south partnerships.

9. Ms Kalonji informed that UNESCO was actively preparing its participation in the Rio+20 event through all its Sectors. She felt that the summit’s focus on “green economy” must be complemented with ethical and moral values and appeals for greening societies. Regarding capacity-building as an important part of the MAB Programme, she encouraged the emergence of a new generation of MAB young scientists. Ms Kalonji ended her opening remarks by expressing her confidence in the Council’s role in guiding and coordinating the MAB Programme. For the future, Ms Kalonji invited participants to meet again for the 50th anniversary of the MAB Programme.

10. Ms Gertrud Sahler, Head of the Department for Nature Conservation and Sustainable Use of Natural Resources of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, welcomed participants on behalf of the German Government expressing that Germany is very honoured that the highest decision making organ of the MAB Programme has accepted to assemble for its 23rd session in Germany. Her country is currently discussing ways of developing climate-friendly and secure energy resources, a domain that is also of importance to biosphere reserves. She felt that the strength of the MAB Programme resulted from its accumulated quality throughout forty years of experience. In particular the Seville Strategy for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves have given great impetus for the further development of the MAB Programme and biosphere reserves the world over. Ms Sahler hoped that participants of the MAB Council will gain insights into the work of the German biosphere reserves by participating in the planned field trip to the “Oberlausitzer Heide- und Teichlandschaft Biosphere Reserve” and wished the MAB Council every success for its deliberations.

III. Report by the Chair of the MAB International Co-ordinating Council

11. Prof. Chung-II Choi expressed his gratitude to the authorities of Germany – the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, the German Federal Agency for Nature Protection, and the German National Commission for UNESCO – for hosting this year's session of the MAB ICC in Dresden. After Madrid (Spain) in 2008, Jeju Island (Republic of Korea) in 2009, it was now the third time that the MAB Council met in a location outside UNESCO Headquarters. The Chair hoped that this trend would continue also in the future as a rotational venue of MAB Council sessions certainly added to the visibility of the prestigious MAB Programme in different countries and world regions.

12. The Chair also thanked the Germany authorities for having organized, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the MAB Programme, the international conference entitled "For Life, for the Future: Biosphere Reserves and Climate Change". The conference had adopted the *Dresden Declaration on Biosphere Reserves and Climate Change*, which had been drafted thanks to inputs provided by many conference participants including by the members of the MAB Bureau. Considering that the *Dresden Declaration* provided an important milestone in the future development of biosphere reserves, the Chair of the MAB ICC proposed that the MAB International Co-ordinating Council adopt the declaration. Accordingly, members of the MAB Council endorsed the *Dresden Declaration* by acclamation which is appended as Annex 2 to this report.

13. The Chair informed that the Bureau of the MAB-ICC had already met on Sunday, 26 June 2011 to discuss *inter alia* additional information received by the MAB Secretariat on new biosphere reserve proposals, as well as winners of the MAB Young Scientists Award Scheme. He indicated that the results of the Bureau's deliberations would be presented to the MAB Council at the time when discussing the relevant agenda items.

14. Prof. Choi then provided an overview on MAB Programme related activities in which he had been personally involved since the 22nd session of the MAB Council. Just before coming to Dresden, he had visited Rhön Biosphere Reserve in Germany, together with Dr. Nguyen Hoang Tri from MAB-Vietnam. The Chair considered such visits to biosphere reserves in other countries and regions as extremely useful to exchange information on biosphere reserve management in different contexts but with similar challenges. In fact promoting such exchange visits meets Target No. 28 of the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves and he encouraged all MAB National Committees to explore such exchange visits as an important way to spread the experience of biosphere reserves serving as learning places and platforms for sustainable development.

15. In late February 2011, Prof. Choi participated in the 6th meeting of the South-East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (SeaBRnet) held at Cibodas Biosphere Reserve (Indonesia), which focused on the overall topic "Are climate change and other emerging challenges being met through successful achievements of biosphere reserve functions?". Representatives of MAB National Committees and other participants from Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Rep. of Korea, Thailand and Vietnam, and an observer from Timor Leste also took part in this meeting.

16. Prof. Choi was pleased to announce that his country will host the 12th meeting of the East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (EABRN) which will take place in Shinan Dadohae Biosphere Reserve in September 2011. This meeting will address the theme "Implementation of the Madrid Action Plan in biosphere reserves of Asia and Pacific with a special focus on coastal and island biosphere reserves". He hoped that all members of the network will be able to attend: China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation. The Chair further informed that Iran will host the next meeting of the South and Central Asian MAB Network (SACAM) in November 2011, which will provide an opportunity for discussing different topics such as zoning and monitoring in biosphere reserves, traditional

knowledge, eco-jobs and local community participation in biosphere reserve management, as well as climate change. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are members of this network. He signalled his interest to participate in this meeting so as to provide fruitful linkages between western, central and eastern Asia.

17. While MAB collaboration within the Asia-Pacific region was at the heart of the Prof. Choi's function as a regional representative of Asia-Pacific within the MAB Bureau, he stated that he was also expanding collaborative efforts with other world regions. Currently, the authorities of the Republic of Korea are interested in supporting biosphere reserve activities in Africa in the field of "green economy" with the help of African MAB colleagues and the MAB Secretariat.

18. Mr Choi further informed that in December 2010 the first meeting of UNESCO's South - South Co-operation Programme for the Sustainable Development of the Humid Tropics had taken place at the Regional Integrated African School for Tropical Forestry (ERAIFT according to its French acronym) in Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo). This meeting was the follow-up of the Memorandum of Understanding signed at the 21st MAB ICC in Jeju (Republic of Korea) by the representatives of the Indonesian Government and MAB National Committee, the Representative of the University of Kinshasa, which hosts ERAIFT, and the Chairholder of the UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Development of the Humid Tropics, which is located at the Institute for Higher Amazon Studies at the Federal University of Para in Belem (Brazil). The meeting started a close cooperation between these institutes on capacity building, exchange of researchers, common projects and publications. The next meeting of UNESCO's South -South Co-operation Programme will take place in Indonesia later this year.

19. Prof. Choi then referred to another co-operation scheme, which has also been launched at the 21st MAB ICC in Jeju: the World Network of Coastal and Island Biosphere Reserves under the overall co-ordination of UNESCO-MAB. The network will soon be further formalized through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the governments of Spain and the Republic of Korea.-

20. In closing his report, the Chair felt that the MAB Programme and the biosphere reserves as implemented in different countries are very much "alive" and dynamic. As foreseen under agenda item 6 of the provisional agenda, he looked forward to listening to the reports on actions taken by Member States in the context of the MAB Programme.

IV. Adoption of the agenda and timetable

21. The Council adopted its agenda and time table as proposed by the Secretariat (see agenda appended as Annex 3 to this report).

V. Report by the Secretary of the MAB Programme

22. The Secretary of the MAB Programme, Mr N. Ishwaran, expressed his gratitude to the German Government for the generous support and co-operation provided in the organization of both the international conference as well as the 23rd session of the MAB ICC in Dresden. He then reported on actions undertaken to implement decisions and recommendations of the 22nd session of the MAB ICC held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, from 31 May to 4 June 2010 and other activities related to the MAB Programme that had taken place over the last year. The Secretary's Report is appended as Annex 4 to this report.

23. Many Council delegates expressed their gratitude to the German authorities for hosting the 23rd session of the MAB ICC in Dresden and thanked the MAB Secretariat for the timely organization of this event.

24. The MAB Council welcomed and endorsed the Secretary's suggestion to earmark 3 November 2011 as the "MAB and Biosphere Reserve Day" to be observed at the occasion of the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference which would feature exhibitions, films, presentations and food/beverages from biosphere reserves.

25. A number of delegates stressed the importance of using biosphere reserves in the context of sustainable development. In this context (and with regard to Decision 35C/31 adopted at the 35th session of the General Conference in 2009, requesting the Director General of UNESCO to promote the visibility and recognition of MAB and WNBR as platforms for sustainable development within UNESCO and the broader UN system, and to report on the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP) for Biosphere Reserves (2008-2013) to be submitted to the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference), the MAB Council decided to invite the UNESCO Executive Board and the General Conference to call upon Member States to consider investing appropriately in strengthening UNESCO National Commissions, MAB National Committees and Focal Points, and biosphere reserve authorities in order to improve implementation of MAP during 2011-2013 and linking those investments to the work of appropriate national and local sustainable development agencies.

26. In order to underline the importance of national and local level initiatives in the implementation of MAB and WNBR initiatives, Mr Ishwaran referred to Annex 1 to the working document SC-11/CONF.202/8, which is intended to replace the earlier document on "Guidelines for the Establishment of MAB National Committees". The International Support Group (ISG) established by the 21st session of the MAB ICC in 2009 had recommended that the ICC does not consider Annex 1 of SC-11/CONF.202/8 as a statutory text. Instead, the ISG had suggested that the Member States be invited to review this document and to provide suggestions for its revision and finalization so as to enable the Member States to use the document as a guide to implement MAB and WNBR activities at the national level. The MAB Council adopted the recommendations of the ISG.

27. Several delegates requested further information from the MAB Secretary regarding withdrawal or delisting of biosphere reserves. Mr Ishwaran pointed out that according to the Madrid Action Plan, all currently existing biosphere reserves should meet the criteria stipulated in the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves. He was cognizant of the fact that for some individual biosphere reserves it will be difficult to meet the deadline by the end of 2013 to render such biosphere reserves fully functional and invited the Council's reactions and guidance on this issue. However, these countries must inform the ICC about their plans for such sites before the end of 2013.

28. For many delegates, collaboration among the MAB Programme and other UNESCO scientific programmes, in particular the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), and other related UNESCO activities pertaining to conservation and sustainable development is very important. The MAB Secretary was glad to inform that collaboration between MAB and IHP as well as with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and especially with the World Heritage Centre regarding natural world heritage sites is proving to be increasingly fruitful and concrete examples of joint activities were provided.

29. Moreover, UNESCO-MAB's collaboration with the three Rio Conventions and the Commission on Sustainable Development, as well as with NGO partners, such as SCOPE (whose Secretariat is now housed by UNESCO), is becoming increasingly important also with a view to the preparations of the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012. In this context, some delegates cautioned not to replace the term "sustainable development" in the context of MAB with the relatively new term "green economy", since sustainable development also involved environmental and socio-cultural concerns.

30. In recalling UNESCO's priority actions for Africa and Small Island Developing States, some delegates informed the Council on the creation of the charter and statutes for the AfriMAB Network at its meeting held in Nairobi (Kenya) in September 2010. The AfriMAB Network wishes to collaborate with existing networks, development partners and the UNESCO MAB Secretariat for the strengthening of its capacities and the exchange of experience so as to assist promoting biosphere reserves on the African continent. One country suggested that some thought should be given as regards the adequate timing of organizing global MAB events (such as the sessions of the MAB ICC) and regional or sub-regional MAB meetings.

VI. Reports on actions undertaken by Member States in the context of MAB

A. National reports

31. MAB ICC Council members reported on their progress in implementing the MAB Programme since the 22nd MAB ICC. Written reports submitted in advance have been published on the MABNet and all written reports submitted to the Secretariat at the time of the 23rd session of the ICC will be added to this webpage. In the order of presentations, oral reports were given by Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Slovakia, Mexico, Mali, Indonesia, Spain, Norway, Italy, Republic of Korea, Germany, Russian Federation, Egypt, Argentina, Madagascar, Zimbabwe. Moreover, observers to the MAB ICC from Canada, France, and the United Kingdom also took the floor.

32. Delegates thanked the German authorities for their hospitality in hosting this meeting as well as the associated conference and the training session for African Biosphere Reserve managers. Many interventions highlighted improved communication as a global priority in order to raise awareness about the work of the WNBR. National efforts in this regard include national directories and notably the global directory presented at this meeting by Spain for the 40th anniversary of MAB which is designed to be a living instrument to be adapted and updated with the network. Other communication efforts in the past year include improved web pages, radio stations, cooperation with TV news networks, and national celebrations of the 40th anniversary including travelling exhibits. The importance of the economic development role of biosphere reserves was stressed by many delegates to build economically feasible sites where economic effects for sustainable tourism can be studied to incorporate perspectives of local populations and to develop responsible private sector partnerships.

33. Member States presented the education activities ongoing in their biosphere reserves in support of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Activities highlighted include the Biosphere Reserve Schools project, partnerships with the UNESCO Associated Schools Network, links between biosphere reserves and UNESCO chairs and finally two new graduate courses on management of biosphere reserves in France and Egypt. Research activities reported include surveys and databases developed on flora and fauna in biosphere reserves, research and publications specifically on the impact of climate change to biodiversity and various scientific meetings.

34. Actions to implement the Madrid Action Plan focused on revitalizing more effective MAB National Committees to encourage interaction between technical and political perspectives. Many countries reported that progress is being made on the periodic review process with a focus on zoning systems, integrated management plans, and extension or withdrawal of sites. A number of delegates mentioned activities to establish national biosphere reserve legislation. Transboundary activities in terms of review of existing transboundary biosphere reserves and proposals for transboundary extensions, international collaboration, partnerships and twinning were frequently mentioned. Several proposed biosphere reserves were presented including aspirations from ICC Members who do not currently have approved biosphere reserves in their countries, but have used their membership on the MAB ICC to build awareness and capacity in their countries. Many interventions acknowledged the support of the UNESCO MAB secretariat

and UNESCO field offices to successfully complete these activities.

B. Reports on regional, sub-regional, MAB/biosphere reserve, ecosystem and other thematic networks

35. Succinct reports on recent progress and actions of regional or interregional networks were presented, which are summarized below:

36. The IberoMAB Network is now working with 25 countries: 154 biosphere reserves in 21 countries represent 27% of the WNBR. The network organized its 13th meeting in El Salvador and the 14th in Mexico. The 14th conference held in November 2010, including 240 participants, 21 countries and more than 100 biosphere reserve representatives, focused on adaptive management, science, communication and follow-up on the Madrid Action Plan. The Puerto Morelos Declaration went to the subsequent UNFCCC COP-16 meeting highlighting the contribution of the WNBR to our understanding of the science, mitigation and adaptation to climate change. The network announced a new project on impacts of climate change on biodiversity utilizing community monitoring. The ten year action plan of IberoMAB in the framework of the Madrid Action Plan focuses in recovering values in biosphere reserves, adaptive land use management including challenges – climate, ecosystem services, urbanization, natural disasters.

37. The EuroMAB network will meet immediately following the 23rd MAB-ICC in Sweden to discuss the application of the Madrid Action Plan in European biosphere reserves.

38. The meeting was reminded that the Asian region currently has several subregional MAB networks. The East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (EABRN) held a training workshop in Remote Sensing and GIS for biosphere reserve management at the Centre for Earth Observation and the Digital Earth (CEODE) of the Chinese Academy of Science in cooperation with the MAB National Committee of China. The South East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (SeaBRnet) met in February 2011 with 79 participants representing 11 countries. This meeting highlighted the priorities of (a) Knowledge exchange on biosphere reserve functioning, climate change mitigation and related functions; (b) Identification of available and potential additional tools needed to attain climate change mitigation and related biosphere reserve functions; and (c) Drafting of priorities for a potential regional monitoring system.

39. The work of AfriMAB in the southern Africa region was reinforced at a meeting in Botswana. The AfriMAB network co-organized an International Expert Workshop on Managing Challenges of Biosphere Reserves in Africa concurrent to the 23rd MAB-ICC with the German Commission for UNESCO, the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, and the MAB Secretariat.

VII. Mid-term evaluation of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP)

40. As reflected in document SC-11/CONF.202/5, the MAB Secretariat provided a synthesis of the mid-term evaluation (2008 – 2010) of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP) for Biosphere Reserves based on the responses received from UNESCO Member States, MAB National Committees, individual biosphere reserves and the Secretariat's own assessment of the accomplishments of the MAP by the end of 2010. At the time of the MAB ICC, the MAB Secretariat had received responses from 47 countries covering 254 biosphere reserves (45% of all biosphere reserves). In several cases not all countries or individual biosphere reserves had responded to all 26 Actions which were due for reporting by 2010; on the other hand, some countries and biosphere reserves had also reported on Actions which are due for reporting by 2013 only.

41. The MAB Secretariat considered that thanks to the existence of the MAP, important progress had been achieved with regard to ensuring the enhanced functioning of biosphere reserves pertaining to such themes as conservation and management of individual sites, outreach to local communities, visibility of sites at the country level and the international arena, as well as forging study, research and other collaborative arrangements and partnerships including with the private sector, among individual biosphere reserves at the sub-regional and inter-regional levels. While the MAB-Secretariat at UNESCO Headquarters and in the UNESCO Field Offices encouraged site based actions at individual biosphere reserves and cooperation among biosphere reserves, UNESCO National Commissions, MAB National Committees and individual biosphere reserve focal points/managers need to take a greater leadership role to see to it that the Targets and Actions contained in the MAP are accomplished.

42. During the ensuing lively debate on this topic, some countries were apologetic that they had not yet undertaken the mid-term evaluation of the MAP, as in several cases it had taken time to translate the MAP into national languages so that the MAP and its purpose could be fully understood by biosphere reserve managers at the local level. In general, however, many delegates felt that the MAP was an important tool to reconsider the zonation for biosphere reserves and to spell out the benefits of conserving biodiversity for a multitude of benefits, including economic and social ones. Some countries felt that the research function of biosphere reserves was not fully addressed by the replies provided on reaching specific targets and actions of the MAP in this regard. They suggested a stronger involvement of other UNESCO intergovernmental and international programmes, including the Programme on Management of Social Transformations (MOST), in biosphere reserve related studies and appealed to MAB National Committees and UNESCO National Commissions to ensure strong collaboration among the various scientific programmes in biosphere reserves.

43. As MAB National Committees and UNESCO National Commissions have “responsibility for action” for the large majority of actions to be accomplished in the MAP, it is primarily at the national level that the success of the implementation of the MAP can be ensured. In this context MAB National Committees and UNESCO National Commissions were encouraged to play a stronger role as resource bodies in reaching the objectives of the MAP, possibly also through the support of UNESCO and other UN partners, such as UNDP.

44. The large majority of the MAB ICC members decided that an external evaluation on the accomplishments of the Madrid Action Plan be carried out towards the end of 2013/beginning of 2014, so that the results of the MAP can be submitted to the consideration of the MAB ICC at its session in 2014. Egypt suggested that the costs for the final evaluation of the MAP be covered through extra-budgetary resources and further suggested that also working groups within UNESCO (including with the help of UNESCO’s Internal Oversight Service) carry out the final evaluation of MAP. The observer from the United Kingdom suggested that the MAB Secretariat allocate funding from its budget to cover the external evaluation costs.

VIII. Proposals for new biosphere reserves and extensions/modifications to biosphere reserves that are part of the WNBR

45. Taking into account the recommendations of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves (16 to 18 February 2011) and the Bureau’s further deliberations thereon on 26 June 2011, the Council took the following decisions concerning approval and deferral of new proposals as well as approval of a selected number of extensions and name changes to biosphere reserves that are already part of the WNBR:

New nominations approved by the Council

Bras d'Or Lake, Canada

46. The Council welcomed this proposal located in Nova Scotia. The proposed biosphere reserve encompasses a salt-water estuary watershed "inland sea" with three passages to the Atlantic Ocean within an island of temperate forest. The proposed total area is 356,588 ha including the marine ecosystem. The Council noted the high diversity of local communities including First Nations and that four languages were spoken in the area. It welcomed the high collaborative process with the First Nations, the provincial and federal government agencies, citizens and academics in the preparation of the nomination. This process led to the development of a comprehensive management plan for the lake. The stakeholders are working together under the "Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association", which was created in 2005. Over 14,000 people are living in this area implementing several initiatives which are creating new jobs, encouraging business opportunities and demonstrating concrete solutions towards sustainable development.

Corredor Biológico Nevados de Chillán-Laguna del Laja, Chile

47. The Council commended the Chilean authorities on the high quality of the proposal. It noted that the site is located in the northern part of the Patagonia region within the Central Chilean zone which is one of the global biodiversity hotspots also characterized by high abundance of endemic species. The Council welcomed the use of a biological corridor connecting the three core areas.

Mao'er Mountain, China

48. The Council commended the Chinese authorities for the very well prepared nomination. It recognized the scenic beauty of the nature reserve with mountain peaks reaching over 2,000m a.s.l., the abundance of sub-tropical broad-leaved, coniferous and bamboo forests and the occurrence of two endemic and rare species (*Hynobius Mao'er Mountainensis* and *Rana Mao'er Mountainensis*). It also noted that the transition zone is inhabited by Han Chinese and various ethnic minorities (including Miao, Yao, Zhuang, Dong, Yi and Hui) displaying a rich cultural diversity in the area. The Council further acknowledged that thanks to a GEF funded project, environmental protection and sustainable economic activities, including eco-tourism have been developed in the site.

Trifinio Fraternidad Biosphere Reserve, El Salvador/Guatemala/Honduras

49. The Council welcomed this proposal for the establishment of a tri-national biosphere reserve in Central America. It commended the National Authorities for the work achieved so far, as this biosphere reserve is considered a major contribution to the implementation of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.

50. After an expedited process, in which the three country parties worked together in a most efficient manner so as to respond to the Advisory Committee's queries thereon, the Council concluded that the resubmission of documents more than satisfied the earlier concerns of the Advisory Committee. The Council recognized and commended the high level of coordination of the three country parties, which had been coordinated at the level of the vice-presidents of the three countries concerned and which the Council considered to be a model for transboundary cooperation meeting target 30 of the Madrid Action Plan. In conclusion, the Council approved the Trifinio Fraternidad Biosphere Reserve to be included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Songor, Ghana

51. The Council congratulated the authorities of Ghana on the well prepared nomination. It recognized the importance of the site in terms of sustainable wetland and integrated coastal management and sustainable development of local communities. It acknowledged with appreciation the existence of the multi-stakeholder management committee for the site including government and community representatives.

52. The Council noted the challenges rising from intense aquaculture and growing tourism particularly in the buffer and transition zones and encouraged the authorities to provide information on the planned initiatives to address these challenges. The Council looks forward to receiving the updated version of the management plan expanding the focus of the management issues beyond those of the Songor Ramsar site to the whole biosphere reserve area.

Ramat Menashe, Israel

53. The Council noted that this proposal was a resubmission which was deferred in 2010. It welcomed the changes made in the zonation to take into account last recommendation of the MAB ICC and to fulfill the Statutory Framework as well as additional information provided as regards cooperation with the adjacent Mount Carmel Biosphere Reserve. The Council further encouraged the cooperation with adjacent Mount Carmel Biosphere Reserve.

54. After examining the additional information provided by the Israel authorities on the clarification on the legal status of the four core areas, all legally protected, the Council also took note of the letter sent by the Israel Defense Force to the Nature and Parks Authority to ensure conservation of the biodiversity in the core areas. The Council thus decided to approve the proposed Ramat Menashe Biosphere Reserve to be part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Mujib, Jordan

55. The council commended the Jordan authorities for the comprehensive nomination file. Named after the Wadi Mujib catchment, Mujib is part of the Dead Sea basin and Jordan Rift Valley landscape and extends on the eastern shores of the Dead Sea. The quite spectacular landscape of the area includes the lowest terrestrial point on earth (420 m below sea level). Human activities, including agricultural activities, fishing, hunting, grazing, agricultural and household uses, quarrying in small areas at the reserve boundaries, small scale settlements, wood cutting for fuel and herbal and medicinal plants collection have played certain role in shaping many of the reserve's habitats. The area is home to more than 90 rare plant species at the national level, one endemic fish species to the Dead Sea Basin and 24 species of mammals of national, regional and global conservation importance.

56. Noting the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and the Bureau that the site be approved pending the submission of additional information, the Council appreciated the information received by the MAB Secretariat from the Minister of Environment, Jordan, addressing the questions related to the zonation scheme and on safeguards to ensure that the biosphere reserve would not be unduly impacted by quarrying activities in the area. The zonation scheme has been revised by a number of stakeholders and agreed with the Ministry of Environment as outlined on the updated map provided. It implies an expanded transition area that will include villages. Concerning quarrying activities, the Council noted with satisfaction that Minister emphasized the role of the Royal Society for Conservation of Nature (Jordan) in addressing concerns related to quarrying and that no such projects are expected or allowed to be established inside the transition zone or at the edge of the reserve in order to minimize the impact of these or any related development activities. The Council expressed satisfaction with the information and the guarantees received and approved the inclusion of the site in the Network of Biosphere reserve.

Žuvintas, Lithuania

57. The Council welcomed this first proposal from Lithuania, located in the Southern part of the Middle Lithuanian Lowlands. It represents approximately 59 000 ha and includes lakes, wetlands, mires, peatbogs, pine woods. This great variety of habitats and vegetation makes this location very rich in biodiversity. The Committee noted the mixture of large and small land owners in the area with a population of 11,000 people. The main human activities include agriculture, forestry and fishing with recent development of eco-farming and tourism. The

Council also noted that the biosphere reserve is already inscribed in the national law as a specific category.

58. The Council approved the inclusion of this site in the World Network of Biosphere Reserve and recommended that the authorities ensure further involvement of local stakeholders in the management of the area and provide further information on the management and monitoring of the quality of water.

Baa Atoll, Republic of Maldives

59. The Council commended the authorities of the Republic of Maldives for the very well prepared nomination, the first in the country. It recognized that this site harbors globally significant biodiversity in its unique reefs and demonstrates a long history of human interaction with the environment. It also noted a coherent network of marine protected areas and community activities established in the framework of the GEF Atoll Ecosystem Conservation project and acknowledged the great potential of the site with regard to demonstration of sustainable development throughout the Maldives and the region relying on green economy and improved integrated management system.

60. The Council took note with satisfaction of the detailed information provided by the Minister of State for Housing and Environment of the Republic of Maldives on the legal protection and location of four core areas that had been gazetted already in the past, as well as on five additional core areas which have received a protected area status very recently. The Council, therefore, decided to approve this biosphere reserve as a cluster biosphere reserve with nine core areas.

Berlengas Archipelago, Portugal

61. The Council welcomed the re-submission of the nomination document. It noted that this proposal includes the Berlengas, a group of small islands and rocks, and the city of Peniche in the mainland. It also noted that the archipelago is regularly visited by tourists, fishermen and scientists leaving from Peniche to explore the unique geophysical and ecological settings. The Peniche's stakeholders participate in the management of the proposed biosphere reserve for promoting the sustainable development and conservation of the islands.

62. The Council suggested that local communities be more involved in education and training activities and decision-making processes. The Council encouraged the establishment of a final management plan as soon as possible to guarantee sustainable eco-tourism and cooperation with other biosphere reserves with a similar eco-tourism focus.

Santana Madeira, Portugal

63. The Council welcomed this proposal for a biosphere reserve. It noted its location in the Madeira archipelago. In particular, the Council appreciated that Santana is essentially a rural municipality where agriculture dominates with some tourism development. It features a rich fauna and flora that incorporates a high degree of endemism and an integral representation of the most relevant ecological units of Madeira, from the marine and coastal ecosystems to the high altitude vegetation, through the laurel forest, World Natural Heritage of UNESCO.

64. The Council commended the resubmission of documents by the proposed Santana Madeira Biosphere Reserve, which fulfilled the requirements for re-examining the zonation of the biosphere reserve. In conclusion, The Council approved the Santana Madeira Biosphere Reserve to be included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Volga-Akhtuba Floodplain, Russian Federation

65. The council welcomed this proposal which comprises a unique ecosystem, located in the Volga valley. The Volga-Akhtuba is representing a mosaic structure of landscapes, high-yield floodplain meadows, spawning grounds, oak groves and internationally important wetlands. The Council acknowledged the importance of both historical and cultural heritage in

the region. The proposed total size is 180,500 ha with 45,000 permanent inhabitants. Main activities include agriculture and fishing, tourism, and recreational use.

66. The Council also noted that this proposal would represent the 12th biosphere reserve located in the Volga river basin in the Russian Federation and welcomed the strong potential for cooperation among these biosphere reserves and further encouraged the cooperation with adjacent reserves and parks, especially at the east and south-east borders.

67. The Council welcomed the additional information provided by the Russian authorities including a comprehensive strategy and description of the process to involve local communities in the management of the site, as well as the statutes of the local community committee. The Council thus decided to approve the designation of this site as a biosphere reserve.

St. Mary's, Saint Kitts and Nevis

68. The Council commended the authorities of Saint Kitts and Nevis for the very well prepared nomination, the first in the country. It recognized the importance of the site in terms of biological diversity ranging from cloud forests to mangroves and coral reefs. It was also pleased to note the inclusion in the proposed biosphere reserve of the Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park World Heritage site which is of particular historical, cultural and architectural significance.

69. The Council commended the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the nomination process and acknowledged the support provided by the Jamaican and St. Kitts and Nevis's National Commissions for UNESCO. It encouraged the relevant authorities to strengthen the ecosystem based approach and to address issues related to the prevention of erosion.

Blekinge Archipelago, Sweden

70. The Council welcomed this proposal located in the southeast part of Sweden which comprises most of the coastal areas and archipelagos of Blekinge. The proposed area stretching over 200,000 ha comprises landscapes of Southeast Sweden, with granite coastlines and accompanying archipelagos containing a variety of islands and islets. The Council welcomed the importance of natural and cultural heritage as well as the strong commitment of local people to maintain the social and economic dynamics of the region, through innovative thinking and entrepreneurship, and the development of energy efficient and environmentally friendly technologies. It also highlighted the quality of the research and monitoring of the site, done jointly by municipalities and universities and the sustainable use of coastal areas.

71. The Council commended the high quality of the nomination file and process which should be considered as a model and shared within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Nedre Dalälven River Landscape, Sweden

72. The Council welcomed this proposal covering 308,000 ha and consisting of a mixture of wetlands, rivers, lakes, flood plains and productive forests, which includes Lake Hovran and Färnebofjärden Bay Ramsar site. The region is of high biodiversity and the river forms a clear border zone between the northern and southern flora and fauna of Northern Europe. The agriculture and forestry activities have evolved due to changes in steel and iron industries. The Council acknowledged the high dynamism of the region, with the development of more than 100 'Leader+ projects', designed for sustainable development. It also welcomed the high participatory governance system of the biosphere reserve as well as numerous partnerships with universities and research centres for monitoring.

73. The Council commended the Swedish authorities for the high quality of the nomination file that should serve as a model for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Oti-Keran/Oti-Mandouri, Togo

74. The Council congratulated the authorities of Togo for the well prepared nomination, the first in the country. It noted the importance of the site for its ecological and cultural values, encompassing two Ramsar sites (Parc National de la Kéran and Bassin versant de Oti-Mandouri) and the cultural landscape Tata de Koutammakou World Heritage site. The Council commended the authorities for the extensive involvement of the local communities in the nomination process and the management of the proposed site.

75. The Council also noted the great potential for transboundary collaboration and strongly encouraged the authorities to develop joint activities with the neighbouring sites in Benin, Burkina Faso, and Niger (WAP complex).

Roztochya, Ukraine

76. The Council noted that this proposal was a resubmission, which was deferred in 2009. The updated proposal now excludes the international centre for peacekeeping and security (a military polygon of NATO) from the transition area. The total size of the proposed site is now 74,800 ha with main activities including agriculture, stock-breeding and fish farming. The Council took note of the changes brought to the zonation, following the MAB Council's recommendation, and acknowledged that the new zonation was meeting the Statutory Framework criteria.

77. The Council recommended to the Ukrainian authorities to complete the integrated management plan, in close cooperation with local stakeholders and to pursue cooperation with Poland in order to establish a transboundary biosphere reserve.

Bura'a, Yemen

78. The Council welcomed the nomination of Bura'a which is named after the region's impressive granite massif, Jabal Bura'a. Ranging from 200 - 2,200m above sea level, Bura'a is a rugged mountainous area intersected by several deep valleys rich in rare, vulnerable and endemic plant species. The Council noted that the region also hosts a rich fauna, including a large number of bird species, and several reptiles, such as fresh water turtles and the Yemeni monitor lizard. Among income opportunities provided in the area are farmers active in traditional agroforestry systems practices.

79. The representatives of countries whose biosphere reserves have been approved for inclusion in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves expressed their joy and gratitude to the Council members and expressed their commitment to ensure that the management of their biosphere reserves will be implemented according to the principles of the Seville Strategy, the Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves.

Nominations deferred by the Council**Fazao-Malfakassa, Togo**

80. The Council welcomed the submission of this proposal acknowledging the importance of the site for biodiversity conservation, as well as its potential for sustainable economic development of local communities.

81. However, the Council noted lack of information on the involvement of local communities both in the nomination process as well as the management of the proposed biosphere reserve. Also, it noted lack of information on the specific activities envisaged to ensure development and education functions of the proposed site. The Council encouraged the authorities of Togo to re-submit a new proposal in conformity with Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework for biosphere reserves. In particular the revised proposal should include clear information on:

- the involvement of local communities in the nomination and management processes; and
- the planned educational activities as well as on ensuring sustainable economic and social development of local communities.

Hawf, Yemen

82. The Council welcomed this proposal and noted that the site is situated in the Al Mahara Governorate near the borders with the Sultanate of Oman. Although the region is dry, it nevertheless includes important forest areas and is host to large mammals, such as the Arabian leopard, ibex, gazelles, wolves, hyenas, foxes, wild cats and porcupines. Some 230 plant species have been recorded to occur in the forest.

83. While acknowledging the importance of the area, particularly for conservation of the endangered mammal species, the Council requested additional justifications for the zonation (especially its sharp border to the west) and consideration of including marine areas in the site as the region extends to the Arab Sea with important coastal and marine biodiversity resources. The Council strongly encouraged Yemen to resubmit a revised version of the nomination for the next Advisory Committee meeting. It also encouraged the relevant authorities of Yemen to consider collaboration on the biosphere reserve concept with the Sultanate of Oman in the transboundary area of the proposed site.

84. Regarding new approvals, the Bureau noted that some nomination did not include a management plan (Corredor Biológico Nevados de Chillán-Laguna del Laja, Chile; Berlengas Archipelago, Portugal; Oti-Keran/Oti-Mandouri, Togo; Roztochya, Ukraine). While recognizing that often the preparation of a management plan is subject to the nomination of a biosphere reserve by UNESCO and therefore is prepared at the very end of the entire designation process, the Bureau requested that the countries provide the respective management plans for the 24th session of the MAB ICC to be held in 2012.

Extensions and renaming of sites already included in the WNBR approved by the Council

Dong Nai Biosphere Reserve, Vietnam – Extension and renaming (former Cat Tien)

85. The Council welcomed the very well prepared proposal for extension and renaming of the former Cat Tien Biosphere Reserve designated in 2001. It noted the addition of two new core zones, which brings the total area of the site to 966,563 ha, and recognized that the rationale of extending the site is based on the great challenges due to socio-economic development demands. The Council also noted the potential of the proposed name change in terms of increasing the collaboration among different stakeholders and strengthening coordination and management processes at the provincial level. It acknowledged that the implementation of concrete activities reconciling multi-goal conservation and development efforts will be done under the guidance of the People's Committee of Dong Nai Province.

86. The Council endorsed the extension and renaming of the former Cat Tien Biosphere Reserve into Dong Nai Biosphere Reserve.

Extensions and renaming of sites already included in the WNBR deferred by the Council

Pietrosul Mare, Romania – Proposed extension and renaming as The Rodnei Mountains Biosphere Reserve

87. The Council took note of the letters sent to the Secretariat informing about the changes in size and name. However, as highlighted by the Advisory Committee and the Bureau, the council noted that the site was not fulfilling the Statutory Framework criteria and that there was

not enough information provided since the last periodic review made in 1998, which was already lacking key information and data on the site.

88. The Council therefore requested the Romanian authorities to provide comprehensive information on the site, as well as description of actions that would be taken to ensure that the site can fulfill the Statutory Framework criteria by sending an updated periodic review report before 2013 to meet Target 9 of the Madrid Action Plan.

Withdrawal of sites

89. The members of the MAB ICC were informed that Australia decided to withdraw Macquarie Island Biosphere Reserve (designated in 1977) as this site was deemed not being able to meet the criteria of the 1995 Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

90. With 18 new biosphere reserves being added to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and 1 being withdrawn, the WNBR is now composed of 580 Biosphere Reserves in 114 countries, including the first sites in four new countries, namely Lithuania, Maldives, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Togo. Moreover, the first tri-national biosphere reserve in Central America - shared by El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras – has been designated.

91. M. Ishwaran, the Secretary of the MAB Programme, informed the Council that during the second meeting of the Steering Committee of the Japanese funded West Polesie Project, the delegate of Ukraine informed participants that his country had agreed to sign the trilateral agreement with Belarus and Poland as per government decree dated 9 June 2011, No 515-p. The inclusion of the transboundary biosphere reserve in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves was now pending the signing of this trilateral agreement. As soon as the MAB Secretariat receives the signed agreement, it will inform the MAB Council accordingly. The delegate from Ukraine, speaking also on behalf of Belarus and Poland, expressed his warm gratitude to the Japanese authorities and to the MAB Secretariat for their support to the West Polesie region through the Japanese funds-in-trust project.

IX. a) Periodic review of biosphere reserves

92. After the MAB Secretariat had introduced document SC-11/CONF.202/7, the MAB Council endorsed the periodic review recommendations formulated by the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves as stated below:

Grosses Walsertal Biosphere Reserve, Austria

93. The Advisory Committee welcomed the report provided by the Austrian authorities as well as the progress made since 2000. It noted the numerous sustainable development activities achieved including the “e5 programme for energy-efficient communities” established in 1998 with the aim to make the biosphere reserve 100% self-sufficient with renewable energy (i.e. use the regional resources of renewable energy and minimize energy consumption); the creation of new jobs and sources of income for the biosphere reserve inhabitants; and the partnerships with business and private enterprises for sustainable development.

94. The Advisory Committee noted that the site meets the Statutory Framework criteria. It also noted that there was insufficient information on the biosphere reserve biodiversity conservation function and the link between that function and the sustainable development activities described. It recommended that additional information be provided. Upon reception of the additional information, it also suggested that this site be considered as a representative site within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, especially for its initiatives to

demonstrate sustainability activities.

Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Reserve, Canada

95. The Advisory Committee welcomed the report provided by the Canadian authorities and noted that the review was conducted by two external reviewers and based on interviews with local communities, scientists and the biosphere reserve staff.

96. The Committee noted the achievements made as regards sustainable development, particularly with the design of community projects, a watershed development with a hydro station that is 75% owned by First Nations, locally managed community forests, and projects for addressing local food issues. It also noted that the biosphere reserve has developed a Standard of conduct for research to be carried out in the site.

97. The Committee acknowledged the good social dynamics in the area, and the many inspiring initiatives in terms of training and networking. The Committee was concerned by the issues reported related to biodiversity conservation, mainly the impacts of fish farms on the marine ecosystems and mining explorations (copper-molybdenum).

98. The Advisory Committee noted that the site is satisfactorily meeting the Statutory Framework criteria and requested additional information for monitoring the conservation objective of the core area as the report mentions that the size may be too small in area.

Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve, Canada

99. The Advisory Committee welcomed the report provided by the Canadian authorities and noted that the review was conducted by two external reviewers and based on interviews with local communities, scientists and the biosphere reserve staff.

100. The Committee welcomed the positive achievements reported. The Committee also expressed concerns about changes occurring since the biosphere designation in 2000: particularly the extensive urban development and the rapid increase of the population, especially of older age groups who place specific demands on social and medical services in the region; this, coupled with high demand for land and recreation activities with expensive "trophy style" private home development, as well as growth in tourism, place pressure on the physical and social infrastructures and on the protection of ecosystems (old growth forests, coastal wetlands, marine, terrestrial and aquatic). The report describes several environmental, social and governance issues involving First Nations and local communities indicating a decrease in the biosphere reserve integrity. This observation indicates that the site was not satisfactorily meeting the Statutory Framework Criteria and recommended that the Mountain Arrowsmith Biosphere Foundation (MABF) prepare and implement an overall strategy and action plan that addresses the critical issues mentioned in the report to meet the biosphere reserve standards by 2013.

Belovezhskaya Pushcha Biosphere Reserve, Belarus

101. The Advisory Committee welcomed the second periodic report that covers the period from 1998-2011. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the three recommendations made by the MAB Bureau in 1998 have been implemented by the Belarus authorities:

1. research programmes were initiated on socio economic aspects;
2. a management plan for the biosphere reserve was adopted in 2009; and
3. a cooperation agreement was signed with the Bialowieza Biosphere Reserve in Poland.

102. The Committee also noted that there is a plan for enlarging the core area size in the near future.

103. The Advisory Committee considered that the site was fulfilling the Statutory Framework criteria and recommended that the Belarus authorities ensure that the results of the socio-economic research programmes are translated into concrete development opportunities for the local communities and that the Committee be notified when a proposal to change the core area size is completed.

Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve, Belarus

104. The Advisory Committee welcomed this second periodic report that covers the period of 1998-2011. The Committee noted the satisfactory results as regards the conservation and logistics functions of the biosphere reserve and expressed concern about the strong depopulation trend mentioned in the report and lack of progress on the recommendation of the 2008 MAB International Co-ordinating Council regarding the implementation of the biosphere reserve sustainable development function.

105. The Advisory Committee, therefore, noted that the site was still not fulfilling the biosphere reserve Statutory Framework criteria and requested that the Belarus authorities fully address the recommendations suggested by the 2008 MAB International Co-ordinating Council including a plan to implement the sustainable development functions by 2013 in order to meet Target 9 of the Madrid Action Plan. The Belarusian authorities are encouraged to request technical support from UNESCO, regional networks as well as the Advisory Committee members to develop this plan.

Vosges du Nord/Pfälzerwald Biosphere Reserve, France/Germany

106. The Advisory Committee welcomed this first trans-boundary periodic review report which was jointly undertaken by the French and German MAB National Committees in cooperation with the managers of both sites. Both sites undertook national periodic reviews separately in 2000 and 2004, respectively.

107. The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made, as well as the implementation of many joint activities for sustainable development including the creation of a high quality joint website, joint scientific and education programmes, and the success among inhabitants of the trans-boundary rural markets of products. It also welcomed the report form based on the Pamplona recommendations.

108. The Advisory Committee congratulated both countries for undertaking the joint periodic review and establishing the report on the implementation of the Pamplona recommendations. It further requested that the authorities of the two countries jointly produce the zonation map, a possible joint mechanism/system for trans-boundary governance and a coordinated management plan and submit them to the Advisory Committee. The Committee recommends that future joint periodic review forms be based on the Pamplona recommendations.

Miramare Biosphere Reserve, Italy

109. The Advisory Committee welcomed this second report and referred to the previous recommendation made by the MAB Bureau in 1999 which indicated that the site did not fulfil the biosphere reserve criteria as it was too small and that the development function was missing.

110. The Committee underlined the high quality of the research being undertaken and the importance of the site for the Mediterranean marine ecosystem, and noted the effort to extend the site. However the extension map was not clear enough and the rationale for the extension was not clearly defined.

111. The Advisory Committee noted that the site was still not fulfilling the BR criteria and requested the Italian authorities to resubmit a report which clearly demonstrate the rationale for extension, a new zonation map and demonstrate the implementation of sustainable development practices. The Committee requested that implementation of the

recommendations and the report be completed by 2013 so that the biosphere reserve achieves Target 9 of the Madrid Action Plan.

Bardenas Reales Biosphere Reserve, Spain

112. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report submitted by the Spanish authorities and noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria. However, the Committee recognized the lack of a coherent management plan for the whole biosphere reserve area, as well as lack of coordination between the management of the core area and buffer and transition zones. It also noted the growing pressure on natural resources including through tourism activities.

113. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended developing and implementing a coherent management plan addressing the issues of growing pressures by 2013 at the latest. It also recommended to increase public awareness about the biosphere reserve concept and values and to establish research activities focused on restoration and protection of the whole ecosystem.

114. Finally, the Committee recommended the relevant authorities to seek advice from the Spanish biosphere reserve managers committee and the Spanish scientific committee to improve the overall functioning of this biosphere reserve.

Cabo de Gata-Níjar Biosphere Reserve, Spain

115. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report submitted by the Spanish authorities and noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

116. The Committee encouraged the Spanish authorities to increase the visibility of the biosphere reserve and to initiate and support ecologically sound restoration of the reconverted industrial area.

Montseny Biosphere Reserve, Spain

117. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report submitted by the Spanish authorities and noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

118. Following the MAB Bureau recommendations from the first periodic review submitted in 2000, the Committee encouraged the Spanish authorities to provide additional information on the management plan for the biosphere reserve and its implementation.

Ordesa-Viñamala Biosphere Reserve, Spain

119. The Advisory Committee welcomed the second periodic report submitted by the Spanish authorities and acknowledged the efforts made since the last periodic review report submitted in 2000.

120. The Advisory Committee highlighted the important ecological values of the site and its potential for meeting the biosphere reserve criteria. However, in spite of the progress made since the last periodic review submitted in 2000, the Advisory Committee recognized that the site was still not fulfilling the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves. It therefore strongly recommended the extension of the site in line with the recommendations formulated by the MAB Bureau in 2000. The Committee requested that implementation of the recommendations be completed by 2013 so that the biosphere reserve achieves Target 9 of the Madrid Action Plan.

Somiedo Biosphere Reserve, Spain

121. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report submitted by the Spanish authorities and noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

122. The Committee particularly welcomed the detailed information provided on sustainable development achievements and is looking forward to receiving additional information on the conservation status of the biological diversity in the biosphere reserve.

Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve, Spain

123. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report submitted by the Spanish authorities and noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

124. The Advisory Committee commended the quality of the report as well as impressive progress made since the submission of the first periodic review in 2000.

125. The Committee encouraged the Spanish authorities to make available and disseminate good practices developed by the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve and reported in the periodic review as an example of research applied on the biosphere reserve management to serve as examples for other biosphere reserves in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Queen Elizabeth Biosphere Reserve, Uganda

126. The Advisory Committee congratulated the Ugandan authorities on the well prepared periodic review and appreciated that it was conducted through a consultative process. It recognized that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria for a biosphere reserve and fulfils the three biosphere reserve functions in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework.

127. The Committee looks forward to receiving information on the management plan for the biosphere reserve which was due for revision in 2005 and encourages the transboundary collaboration with Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DCR). In this context, the Committee requested the MAB Secretariat to explore with the authorities of DCR the possibility of designating Virunga as a biosphere reserve.

128. The Committee further requested the Ugandan authorities to provide information on the current oil and gas exploration in the biosphere reserve, potential threats posed by possible oil extraction and plans to address those threats.

Mount Kulal Biosphere Reserve, Kenya

129. The Committee welcomed the very well prepared periodic review and noted with satisfaction that the site meets the criteria for biosphere reserve and fulfils the three biosphere reserve functions in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework.

130. The Advisory Committee strongly commended the efforts of the local communities in managing the area as a biosphere reserve. However, with growing external pressures, the Committee acknowledged the need to mobilize support to the local communities to continue to manage the site in the future, including through development of a written management plan, research activities and capacity building at local level.

131. The Committee also noted an increase of 8.900 ha in the size of the core area and requested the relevant authorities to provide:

- explanation concerning the increase in size of the core area, and
- a revised map clearly indicating the delimitation of core area and buffer and transition zones.

El Tuparro Biosphere Reserve, Colombia

132. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report submitted by the Colombian authorities and noted that the site is fulfilling the three functions of a biosphere reserve in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

133. However, the Committee recommended that the Colombian authorities provide a clear zonation map, a management plan for the whole site, and a guideline for research agenda.

Cinturón Andino Biosphere Reserve, Colombia

134. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared periodic review report submitted by the Colombian authorities. It recognized the significance of the biosphere reserve and noted the achievements made in terms of biodiversity conservation. The Committee considered that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

135. However, the Committee recommended that the Colombian authorities provide a clear zonation map, a management plan for the whole site and a guideline for research agenda.

Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta Biosphere Reserve, Colombia

136. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared periodic review report submitted by the Colombian authorities. It recognized the important value of this biosphere and noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

137. However, the Committee recommended that the Colombian authorities provide a clear zonation map, a management plan for the whole site and a guideline for research agenda.

Ciénaga de Santa Marta Biosphere Reserve, Colombia

138. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared periodic review report submitted by the Colombian authorities and noted that the site is satisfactorily meeting the Statutory Framework criteria and the three functions of a biosphere reserve.

139. However, the Committee recommended that the Colombian authorities provide a clear zonation map, a management plan for the whole site and a guideline for research agenda.

Seaflower Biosphere Reserve, Colombia

140. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared periodic review report submitted by the Colombian authorities. It noted that the site fulfils the biosphere reserve criteria in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

Cuba**Buenavista Biosphere Reserve****Ciénaga de Zapata Biosphere Reserve**

141. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared periodic reviews submitted by the Cuban authorities. It considered that both sites fulfil the three functions of biosphere reserves in line with the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework for Biosphere Reserves. It also noted that there had been little variation in terms of external pressures on the sites with low level of encroachment.

142. The Advisory Committee finally noted the efficient management system established in both sites and allowing for the proper biosphere reserve functioning.

China

143. For all periodic reports submitted by the Chinese authorities, the Advisory Committee was very impressed by the procedure used to assess the status of the five sites: each biosphere reserve had benefitted from a national periodic review seminar that had been

attended by conservation experts, scientists, government officials, local community residents, business representatives and delegates from other national biosphere reserves, who made pertinent recommendations on each site.

144. The Advisory Committee suggested that this procedure be considered as a model for all periodic review assessments which, if possible, should also include the participation of biosphere reserve experts from other countries of the region.

Baishuijiang Biosphere Reserve, China

145. The Advisory Committee welcomed this well-prepared report on Baishuijiang Biosphere Reserve (designated in 2000), which had been prepared following an on-site periodic review seminar held from 1 – 4 September 2010.

146. The Advisory Committee endorsed the detailed findings of the review seminar and invited the MAB Secretariat to inform the Chinese authorities thereof. In brief, these recommendations are:

- Further improve the management system of the nature reserve by integrating the reform of collective forest ownership system and the establishment of an ecological compensation system.
- Strengthen the application of advanced technology and the transformation of scientific achievements.
- Promote alternative livelihoods and energy conservation projects.
- Improve the ways and mechanisms for community participation in the biosphere reserve.
- Strengthen management of the site in accordance with the law to stop the progress of illegal activities in the reserve.
- Further strengthen domestic and international cooperation to create a sound model for the WNBR.

147. Moreover, the Advisory Committee recommended that clarification be provided on the spatial extent of the buffer and transition zones, as their surface areas in the periodic review report were larger than in the original nomination form.

Gaoligong Mountain Biosphere Reserve, China

148. The Advisory Committee welcomed this well-prepared report on the Gaoligong Mountain Biosphere Reserve (designated in 2000), which had been prepared following an on-site periodic review seminar held from 17 – 20 August 2010.

149. The Advisory Committee endorsed the detailed findings of the review seminar and invited the MAB Secretariat to inform the Chinese authorities thereof. Briefly, these recommendations are:

- Further enhance and thus build a unified management system.
- Combine daily patrolling with scientific research and monitoring thus perfecting scientific research and monitoring.
- Enhance the concept of “People in Gaoligong Mountainous Region” to create community identity and to improve the mechanisms for social participation in managing the site.
- Further strengthen scientific communication between domestic and foreign partners in the context of the WNBR.

150. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recommended that clarification be provided regarding the spatial extent of the zonation of the biosphere reserve and that a detailed map showing the different zones be provided. In particular, the Advisory Committee noted that the core zone was now three times larger than in the original nomination form and that the buffer

zone had more than doubled in size. On the other hand, the transition zone was now considerably smaller than that indicated in 2000.

151. The Advisory Committee felt that the changes in the zonation required a new nomination and recommended that the Chinese authorities submit a revised Biosphere Reserve Nomination dossier for consideration in 2012.

Huanglong Biosphere Reserve, China

152. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared report on Huanglong Biosphere Reserve (designated in 2000), which had been prepared following an on-site periodic review seminar held from 4 – 7 September 2010. The Advisory Committee endorsed the detailed findings of the review seminar and invited the MAB Secretariat to inform the Chinese authorities thereof. In brief these recommendations are:

- Further improve the management system of the nature reserve by integrating the reform of collective forest ownership system and the establishment of an ecological compensation system.
- Strengthen the construction of protection-related infrastructure and ensure technical support capacity-building so that routine patrolling can also cover scientific monitoring of the site.
- Improve the construction and management of the animal corridors in the transit roads in the reserve.
- Intensify law enforcement to prohibit illegal mining, logging and other unlawful activities in the reserve.
- Consolidate the co-management mechanism between the local community and the adjacent protected areas.
- Further strengthen scientific communication between domestic and foreign partners in the context of the WNBR.

153. The Advisory Committee also recommended that information be provided on the spatial extent of the buffer and transition zones which according to the figures provided in the periodic review report deviated substantially from those indicated in the original nomination form.

154. The Advisory Committee thus recommended that a revised Biosphere Reserve Nomination form be submitted to the MAB Secretariat for consideration by the Advisory Committee at its next meeting in 2012.

Jiuzhaigou Valley Biosphere Reserve, China

155. The Advisory Committee welcomed the periodic review report on Jiuzhaigou Valley Biosphere Reserve (designated in 1997), which had benefited from a national seminar held from 14 – 17 September 2009.

156. The Advisory Committee endorsed the detailed findings of the review seminar and invited the MAB Secretariat to inform the Chinese authorities hereof. In brief these recommendations with additional observations made by the Advisory Committee are:

- Improve the data collection system and monitoring related to water resources in the biosphere reserve.
- Assess the tourism carrying capacity of the site and as a result of the study control the number of visitors and visiting hours or adopt tourist diversion measures.
- Diversify the income basis relying mostly on nature tourism by exploring also cultural assets that the site offers for visitors.
- Based on scientific knowledge, enhance education, public awareness and quality eco-tourism for the benefit of nature and sustainable development.

157. The Advisory Committee recommended that a clear indication of the spatial extent of the core, buffer and transition zones be submitted to the MAB Secretariat as the figures for the three zones indicated in the report slightly differed from the original nomination form and that a revised detailed map on the zonation be submitted to the MAB Secretariat.

Shankou Mangrove Biosphere Reserve, China

158. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared report on Shankou Mangrove Biosphere Reserve (designated in 2000), which had been prepared following an on-site periodic review seminar held from 21 – 23 July 2010.

159. The Advisory Committee endorsed the detailed findings of the review seminar and invited the MAB Secretariat to inform the Chinese authorities thereof. In brief the recommendations are:

- Strengthen biosphere reserve planning and capacity building to further improve the overall management system of the site.
- Explore multiple channels for livelihood improvements based on a local economic and sustainable development.
- Establish an ecological monitoring and evaluation system so as to develop appropriate management and governance measures.
- Implement demonstration projects that combine environmental restoration, conservation and reasonable resource utilization.
- Strengthen promotion of the site through education and awareness-raising with the active participation of the community and its cultural traditions.
- Further enhance experience-sharing especially through international cooperation and regional communication.

160. The Advisory Committee noted that minor changes in the extent of the core, buffer and transition zones had occurred vis-à-vis the figures provided in the original nomination form and invited the MAB Secretariat to update the figures in the MAB database.

Ranong Biosphere Reserve, Thailand

161. The Advisory Committee welcomed the report submitted by the Thai authorities on the Ranong Biosphere Reserve (designated in 1997). It noted especially that authorities and local communities participated in meeting and training activities related to this site. The government is stepping up efforts to rehabilitate the degraded forest in the abandoned tin mining area, shrimp farm area and ex-concession areas.

162. The Advisory Committee recommended that a management plan should be set up in order to mediate negative effects on this area, such as pollution, soil erosion, and loss of biodiversity. Capacity building should be enhanced through training of managers and by incorporating learning experiences from other biosphere reserves.

163. The Advisory Committee invited the local authorities to provide the UNESCO-MAB Secretariat at its earliest convenience with a clear zonation map including the spatial extend of each zone, a summary of the management plan, and information about promoting sustainable development and community involvement.

Cibodas Biosphere Reserve, Indonesia

164. The Advisory Committee welcomed the report submitted by the Indonesian authorities on the Cibodas Biosphere Reserve (designated in 1997). It noted especially the well developed research activities, clear zonation system, and environmental education as particular successes of the site. The Advisory Committee also noted that there are many development activities in place related to tourism and expressed its hope that these would not jeopardize the conservation function of the biosphere reserve.

165. The Advisory Committee recommended improving the coordination and communication mechanisms between the protected area authorities and the local government for managing the buffer and transition zones. The Advisory Committee also recommended to enhance the capacity building aiming at poverty reduction in and around this site.

Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere Reserve, Vietnam

166. The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared report submitted by the Vietnamese authorities on the Can Gio Biosphere Reserve (designated in 2000). It noted the importance of this site as well as its cultural and biological values, with many habitat types and endangered plant and animal associations. The Advisory Committee expressed its satisfaction that some of the biosphere reserve criteria were not only fulfilled but also contributed to significant improvements including research, training and monitoring programmes. This site in general fulfilled the three functions of the biosphere reserve.

167. The Advisory Committee recommended that a field assessment for this site was needed in order to analyze effects of pollution on agriculture and aquaculture, and to propose pollution mitigation schemes. Moreover, it recommended to further use the concept of biosphere reserve on the site's institutional arrangements and the stakeholders' participation to manage this site.

Djurdjura Biosphere Reserve, Algeria

168. The Advisory Committee welcomed the report submitted by the Algerian authorities, rich in information concerning the present state of the biosphere reserve and the activities carried-out therein. The Committee took note with satisfaction that the management plan of the reserve is being implemented in close cooperation with local people and that the reserve fulfils the function for which it has been designated as a biosphere reserve. This being said, the Committee recognized that the report spells-out a number of challenges related to human activities that threaten the integrity of the biosphere reserve. Fortunately, according to the report, the government has put in place a national programme in support of biosphere reserves to mitigate these challenges, including through research, education, monitoring and awareness raising.

169. The Committee recommended in this context that research be targeted and translated into concrete and applicable management tools and actions. The Committee also recommended that opportunities would seem to exist for improving benefit sharing among the tourism sector and the reserve. At present, tourism revenues seem not to be captured to any larger extent by the reserve.

170. Finally, the Committee also recommended that efforts be made to better clarify the distinct roles of the core and the buffer zones. At present, many activities, including infrastructure better suited for the buffer zones are found in the core.

Omayed Biosphere Reserve, Egypt

171. The Advisory Committee acknowledged the report submitted by the Egyptian authorities and recommended that the report be complemented with additional information relating to management challenges and threats, such as coastal infrastructure developments and urban sprawl.

172. The Committee also recommended the relevant authorities to consider revising the zonation scheme of the reserve to better reflect the protected nature of the Mediterranean coastal part now included as a transition area in the site.

General observations and remarks

173. For future reports, the delegate of Egypt proposed listings of the obstacles and defects preventing biosphere reserves from fulfilling their three functions arranged in a descending order to improve dealing with them.

174. Following the endorsement by the MAB ICC of the periodic review recommendations made by the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves, the observer of France presented a report on behalf of Professor Robert Barbault, Chairperson of the electronic working group entrusted with the updating of the Nomination Form and the Periodic Review Form for biosphere reserves, which had been set up following an earlier decision of the Council. The report informed the MAB ICC on the objectives of the review process, including :

- Both forms should enable the Council to better assess if the sites fulfill the Statutory Framework criteria;
- Both forms should provide accurate data to enable the Council with support of the Secretariat, to produce global statistics and to promote and valorize work achieved on sustainable development;
- The Periodic Review Form should be designed for assessing progress made and results achieved as compared to the Nomination Form;
- Both forms should highlight the consultative and participatory processes undertaken;
- Both forms should be designed to be useful for biosphere reserve managers and Member States, including for assisting them to fulfill their national, regional and international commitments as regards biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

175. France further reported that both forms remain accurate and so efforts should be made to improve them to ensure continuity. Main results of the working group include changes made for sections 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 of the nomination proposal after a brief review of the other parts. Sections 11 and 12 were merged into one section named *natural characteristics*. A new part will be focusing on main characteristics of the project for the biosphere reserve, in order to describe the sustainable development objective and the process to reach it.

176. Due to lack of time, the Periodic Review Form was not adequately discussed but it was agreed to start by using the review form designed by Canada. Further work will include improvement of the governance aspects in the Nomination Form, and on criteria for obtaining useful data for monitoring on sustainable development as well as updating the Periodic Review Form accordingly. The report is attached as Annex 5 to this report.

177. After this presentation of the report, the Secretariat informed the Council that the updated forms will be shared on-line for three months in order for Members States to provide their comments and inputs to the electronic working group. After inclusion of the comments, the revised forms will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee at its next meeting in early 2012. The recommendations and the proposed updated forms will thus be presented to the Council at its next session.

IX. b) Support/study sites for the MAB Programme

178. The MAB Secretariat introduced document SC-11/CONF.202/12 which summarizes the recommendations of the Expert Meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters on 21 February 2011 on the proposed creation of a new MAB category of *Support/study sites for the MAB Programme* for those pre-Seville Biosphere Reserves which cannot meet the criteria of the Seville Strategy by 2013 but which demonstrate scientific and/or societal value for the MAB Programme and for which a Member State wishes to retain an international UNESCO designated status.

179. Thanks to funding provided by MAB-Austria, an expert meeting on this issue had been organized at UNESCO Headquarters on 21 February 2011, composed of members of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves, representatives of the Austrian MAB National Committee, and the MAB Secretariat. Its purpose was to discuss the desirability of and modalities for establishing a new category of sites different to those listed within World Network of Biosphere Reserves under the UNESCO-MAB Programme.

180. The expert meeting recommended to the MAB ICC that:

(a) The term "MAB Research Sites" (which had been the meeting's working term) should be avoided as research (one of the main functions of a biosphere reserve) is a fundamental component of all biosphere reserves.

(b) Those pre-Seville designated biosphere reserves having a core zone for research and protection only and which cannot meet the criteria of the Seville Strategy by 2013 should be withdrawn from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

(c) Those pre-Seville Biosphere Reserves which cannot meet the criteria of the Seville Strategy by 2013, but which have demonstrated scientific and/or societal value for the MAB Programme and for which a Member State wishes to retain an international UNESCO designated status, may constitute a new category. These sites would not be part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The new category could be labeled support/study sites for the MAB Programme, for example to:

- provide scientific data/monitoring for biosphere reserves and for study themes of local, national and international interests;*
- focus on a specific theme, such as on climate change, through networking with other similar support/study sites and biosphere reserves, particularly those in developing countries;*
- study sustainable development, and encourage cooperation with biosphere reserves.*

(d) For these support/study sites, selection criteria should be established by the Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves.

181. In line with the recommendations of the expert meeting, the Council reiterated that every attempt should be made so that all existing biosphere reserves meet the criteria of the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework in line with Madrid Action Plan by the end of 2013. Only for those sites that cannot meet the criteria further reflection should be given whether they can be moved into a separate category (such as, for example, practiced under the Ramsar Convention) and preferably within the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. With this in mind, the MAB ICC decided that the Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves in collaboration with the MAB Secretariat give in-depth thought to this issue and prepare draft selection criteria at its next meeting in early 2012, and submit the draft selection criteria to the MAB Council for its consideration at its 24th session in 2012.

X. Progress report on the review and updating of statutory documents of MAB and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)

182. The Secretariat informed that document SC-11/CONF.202/8 is based on the recommendations of the International Support Group (ISG) submitted for consideration by the 23rd session of the ICC. The ICC decided that the document entitled "Implementing the MAB Programme and Promoting Actions of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) at the National Level" is not of a statutory nature. It is intended to guide national level thinking and action to improve the implementation of the MAB Programme and the activities of the WNBR.

The ICC adopted the document with a view to receiving country reports on its relevance and applicability at the 24th session of the Council in 2012.

183. The Council as per the recommendations of the ISG, decided to defer considerations on any amendments to the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves until the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan is completed in 2013 and an evaluation of its implementation is undertaken in 2014.

184. The Statutes of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves and the proposed amendments that were derived from discussions of the ISG as presented in Annexes 2 and 3, respectively. All amendments, except for the question of the desirability of allowing observers from Member States to attend the meetings of the Advisory Committee (Article 3, paragraphs 4 and 5) were agreed upon by consensus by ICC Members. Concerning the other paragraphs, the majority of the ICC voted to keep paragraph 6 as it stands and to delete paragraph 7. In consequence the new Article 3 reads:

Article 3

1. The Committee shall be composed of twelve members, serving in a personal capacity. The members shall be appointed by the Director-General, after consultation with the Member States and or the National Committees/focal points for the MAB Programme of the countries concerned.
2. The terms of office of members shall be four years. Terms of office of members may be renewed for one additional period of four years by the Director General. In event of death or resignation of a member of the Committee, the Director-General shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.
3. The members of the Committee shall be selected for their scientific qualifications and for their experience in promoting and implementing the biosphere reserve concept. Special attention shall be given to gender balance. Membership of the Committee shall be in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical representation and take account of the bio-geographical diversity of the UNESCO Member States.
4. The Director-General may invite to sessions of the Committee, as consultant-observers, persons who by reason of their functions or knowledge can assist the work of the Committee.

The Director-General may extend invitations to send observes to meetings of the Advisory Committee to:

- a) Organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has not concluded mutual representation agreements;
- b) Intergovernmental organizations; and
- c) International non-governmental organizations, in accordance with Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with international non-governmental organizations.

The United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has concluded mutual representation agreements may send representatives to meetings of the Committee.

185. The Statutes of the MAB Programme and proposed amendments that were derived from discussions of the ISG are shown in Annexes 4 and 5 of document SC-11/CONF.202/8, respectively. All amendments except for the issue of the eligibility of Member States for re-election into the Council more than once (see Article 2, paragraph 4) were agreed upon by consensus of ICC Members.

186. In Article II, paragraph 1, one change was included and the revised paragraph now reads as follows:

Article II

1. The Council shall be composed of thirty-four Member States of UNESCO, elected by the General Conference at its ordinary sessions, taking due account of equitable geographical distribution, of the need to ensure appropriate rotation, of the representativeness of these States from the viewpoint of ecology, biological diversity and cultural diversity in the regional groups of UNESCO, and contributions to sustainable development within the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (hereinafter the "MAB Programme").

187. Concerning Article II, paragraph 4, the majority of ICC Members decided to keep it in its original version. It read as follows:

4. Members of the Council are immediately eligible for re-election.

188. Finally, the Secretary of the MAB Programme informed that the amended Statutes of the Advisory Committee (Annex 6 of the final MAB ICC report) will be submitted to the next Executive Board session in September/October 2011. The amended Statutes of the International Coordinating Council of the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) (Annex 7 of the final MAB ICC report) will be submitted to the next session of the General Conference of UNESCO for final adoption.

XI. MAB Young Scientists Award Scheme

189. The Council endorsed the ten winners for the 2011 MAB Young Scientists Award as selected by the MAB Bureau. The winners and the topics of their research studies are:

Home country (research country)	Winner	Project title
Russian Federation	Ms Maria PUKINSKAYA	The long-term dynamic of spruce forests after storm damage in the Central Forest State Nature Biosphere Reserve
Indonesia	Mr Aah Ahmad ALMULQU	Carbon stock estimation in dryland forest (case study in the Komodo National Park, East Nusa Tenggara)
Thailand	Ms Jariya SAKAYAROJ	Butt rot disease in mangrove forests in Thailand
Madagascar	Ms Herisoa RAZAKANIRINA	Ecomorphology and viability of mangroves in north-western Madagascar in the context of climate change
Bulgaria	Mr Jordan HRISTOV	Enhanced balanced relationship between humans and biosphere reserves in the Central Balkan National Park in Bulgaria
Argentina	Mr Raimundo Elias GOMEZ	Practices and local representations regarding the sustainability and conservation of protected areas in populations living in buffer zones of the Yaboti Biosphere Reserve
Belgium - RDC	Ms Elizabeth KEARSLEY	Study of leaf biomass in the MAB reserve of Yangambi in RDC

Mexico	Mr David PAZ-GARCIA	Status of the morphological and genetic diversity of coral reefs and their symbiots in three biosphere reserves from the Mexican Pacific
Colombia	Mr Juan Carlos SILVA TAMAYO	Holocene paleoclimatic reconstruction of the NW of South America : a multi proxy and multi archive approach
Costa Rica	Ms Laura RIBA-HERNANDEZ	Diversity and altitudinal variation of owls in secondary tropical forest of the South Pacific slope of Costa Rica, their relation with vegetation structure

190. The Council also endorsed the selection by the MAB Bureau of the two winners for the Special MAB Young Scientists Awards supported by the Austrian MAB National Committee. The two winners are:

- Mr. Horacio SIROLLI and Mr. Luciano IRIBARREN from Argentina for the study on “Strategy of sustainable production and environmental education for the conservation of native forests of the Delta del Parana Biosphere Reserve”, and
- Choe YONG MIN from the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea for the study on “Assessment of the eco-environmental changes in forest ecosystem by climate change in Mount Paektu biosphere reserve”.

191. The MAB Secretariat recalled that the amount given to each winner of the MAB Young Scientists Award was up to a maximum of US\$ 5,000. Delegates pointed out that the relative value of this amount had diminished over time and should be increased to US\$ 10,000. In the light of the expected financial austerity for the next biennium in UNESCO’s budget, the Secretariat suggested that increasing individual awards would decrease the total number of awards to five per year. Hence, the Council decided to allocate ten awards per year with a maximum amount of US\$ 5,000 per award. The Secretariat also suggested that Member States may wish to follow the example of MAB-Austria which had provided funding for two additional MAB Young Scientists Awards in 2010 and 2011, respectively. A trust fund could be established at UNESCO into which contributions for this successful scheme could be made. Delegates reacted very favorably to this suggestion and encouraged the Secretary to send letters to Member States inviting them to provide funding for this purpose. One delegate was of the opinion that the selection of a specific theme (e.g. regarding forestry in 2011 for the awards funded by MAB-Austria) should be avoided as it complicated the selection process of the award winners. Finally, delegates decided that the results of the MAB Young Scientists laureates should be published and their experiences widely shared, such as on the UNESCO MAB website and through the UNESCO regional offices.

XII. Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management

192. The Secretariat briefly introduced document SC-11/CONF.202/10 and indicated that it had received 10 files from 10 countries. Eight files met the criteria for consideration. The Members of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves recommended Mr Nizar Hani (Lebanon) for the 2011 Michel Batisse Award for his case study on the Shouf Biosphere Reserve. This recommendation was transmitted electronically to all Members of the Bureau of the MAB-ICC Bureau in April 2011 who have unanimously endorsed it. Mr Nizar Hani presented his case study to the 23rd session of the MAB ICC which was enthusiastically received by the delegates present at the meeting. The Council requested that the results of Mr Hani’s work be widely publicised and marketed, and shared with other biosphere reserves,

especially at the next AfriMAB meeting. The Chair awarded the certificate for the Michel Batisse Award to Mr. Hani from Lebanon.

XIII. Date and venue of the 24th session of the MAB-ICC

193. The MAB Secretary suggested that the 24th session of the MAB ICC, which will take place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, could be scheduled shortly after the Rio+20 Conference (4-6 June 2012) such as in early July. This would allow the 24th MAB-ICC session to take stock of and to prepare follow-up actions to the outcomes of Rio+20.

194. The Council subsequently decided that the 24th session of the MAB ICC preferably should be held at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris (as had been decided before) shortly after the Rio+20 conference (such as in early July 2012) on dates that do not overlap with those of other relevant events and entrusted the MAB Secretariat to suggest, before end of August 2011, a set of appropriate dates for the 24th session of the MAB ICC in 2012.

XIV. Other matters

195. The Delegate of India recalled the importance of the International Support Group (ISG) in terms of providing opportunities for Member States and the MAB Secretariat to discuss MAB matters more in-depth in-between the formal Council sessions. India, supported by Spain, said it would welcome Egypt as the Chair for the ISG to continue the work of the ISG in the future addressing in particular matters such as MAB contributions to Rio + 20 and others as appropriate.

196. The MAB Secretary recalled that the International Support Group (ISG) had been established at the 21st MAB ICC to advise the MAB Secretariat on the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP) and other relevant aspects of the MAB Programme and that it is open to the participation of all Member States which have their Delegations at UNESCO Headquarters. The Support group had met 4 times last year. The Secretary also recalled the invitation extended by the Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, Ms Gretchen Kalonji, to Member States to share their views with the Secretariat on how UNESCO could best prepare for Rio+20 and its follow-up. He suggested that the ISG usefully could address this issue.

197. The distinguished delegate of Egypt said it would be an honour and pleasure to continue as ISG Chair and that the Rio+20 preparations and the role of MAB and biosphere reserves therein is an important issue that the ISG could help address.

198. The Council decided to entrust the ISG with discussing Rio+20 with the view of preparing recommendations on how MAB and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves could be best mobilized for the success of the conference and in its follow-up.

199. The Council decided to include at its 24th session an agenda item on strengthening the roles of regional networks.

200. Moreover, the Council decided that collaboration with other international relevant conventions, and related programmes in the field of biodiversity conservation be put on the agenda of the next MAB ICC.

201. In response to a question of the distinguished delegate of Benin regarding the legal status of ERAIFT, the MAB Secretary informed that a feasibility study on the creation of ERAIFT as a Category 1 Centre of UNESCO is currently in preparation which he hoped to receive soon. He also expressed the hope that the Director General of UNESCO will include in

the Agenda of the 187th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO in September-October 2011 the examination of this feasibility study to declare ERAIFT as a UNESCO Category I Centre.

202. In response to a suggestion made by the distinguished delegate of the Russian Federation, the MAB Secretary stated that his report for the 24th session of the MAB ICC consisting of two parts will include both activities implemented and those foreseen for the future as well as detailed budgetary and other relevant information.

203. Seeking enhanced visibility for the MAB Programme and opportunities for partnership, exchanges of exposure and capacity-building, the delegate of India suggested that the Secretariat explore the possibilities and the modalities of twinning arrangements between biosphere reserves, and to encourage the establishment of such arrangements in consultation with countries willing to participate therein.

XV. Adoption of the report

204. Mr Valery Neronov, Rapporteur of the MAB ICC, presented the draft report of the 23rd session of the ICC to the Member and Observer Delegates section by section. Modifications, additions and deletions introduced by the Delegations were noted, and in a few cases Member States submitted written texts to replace the wording in the draft report. The draft report was adopted with the modifications, additions and deletions proposed by ICC Member and Observer Delegations during the review of the report on 1st July 2011, the last day of the 23rd session of the MAB-ICC held in Dresden/Radebeul (Germany) from 28 June to 1 July 2011.

XVI. Closure of the meeting

205. The Chair thanked the German authorities for hosting the 23rd session of the MAB International Coordinating Council. He also expressed his gratitude to MAB-Austria for organizing a side event on 29 June 2011 regarding the book launch of the publication "Biosphere Reserve in the Mountains of the World – Excellence in the Clouds?". Prof. Choi wished all ICC and Observer Delegations an enjoyable time in Dresden before departing to their respective home countries.

206. The Secretary of the MAB Programme thanked the Chair for his excellent leadership in the conduct of the 23rd session of the MAB ICC, as well as the German authorities and the Free State of Saxony as hosts of this year's Council session. In particular he thanked all ICC members for their active participation in the Council's deliberations. He also commended the staff of the UNESCO MAB Secretariat and the UNESCO field offices for their work in preparing and conducting the session. Finally, he thanked the English, French, German and Spanish interpreters for their facilitating the Council's discussions. Mr Ishwaran informed that the report with its amendments will be uploaded on the UNESCO MAB website for 2 weeks, i.e. until 15 July 2011, so that necessary changes, in particular regarding the list of participants, can be effected and invited all Council participants to inform the MAB Secretariat (preferably by e-mail: t.schaaf@unesco.org) of any necessary changes. The report will then be finalized through the approval of the Rapporteur by the end of July 2011.

207. Subsequently, the Chair declared the 23rd session of the MAB-ICC closed.

Annex 1:

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION /
ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ÉDUCATION, LA SCIENCE
ET LA CULTURE**

**International Coordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme /
Conseil international de coordination du Programme sur l'Homme et la biosphère (MAB)**

Twenty-third session / Vingt-troisième session

Radisson Blu Park Hotel & Conference Centre, Dresden Radebeul (Germany/Allemagne)

28 June – 1 July 2011
28 juin – 1 juillet 2011

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/about-mab/icc/icc/23rd-session-of-the-mab-council/>

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Annex 2:**Dresden Declaration on Biosphere Reserves and Climate Change**

28 June 2011

We, the participants of the international conference "For life, for the future: Biosphere reserves and climate change", held in Dresden on 27 and 28 June 2011, issue the following declaration:

Climate change mitigation, adaptation to climate change and the conservation of biological diversity are among today's key environmental challenges. Rising to these challenges requires strong political commitment and decisive action worldwide. In many cases we already have the knowledge and technology to change our development path. We now have to mobilise our resources and creativity in order to further intensify action towards sustainable development - including changes in our behaviour.

The International Coordinating Council of the UNESCO "Man and the Biosphere" (MAB) Programme convened for the first time in 1971 and laid the foundations for a new type of conservation area - biosphere reserves. It declared the harmonious development of man and nature to be its key goal. The idea of biosphere reserves has met with growing approval worldwide and over the past four decades has become a great success. Biosphere reserves represent a global network of model regions in which sustainable forms of use and options for adaptation to changing ecological, economic and social conditions can be tested, involving all stakeholders.

The world network of over 560 biosphere reserves in more than 100 countries, established in the framework of the UNESCO MAB Programme, adds the wealth of experience gathered over 40 years in and with model regions for sustainable development to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and aims to make a substantial contribution to these processes as well as to the conservation of biological diversity. We expect current global climate protection measures to also satisfy the urgent necessities of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use.

Since its establishment the MAB Programme has pursued innovative approaches in research, monitoring, education and capacity building, management and in implementing model projects. These approaches go far beyond nature conservation and are suitable as models for a sustainable way of life. Biosphere reserves are thus an important element of safeguarding a liveable earth for the future of generations to come.

Biosphere reserves are an effective instrument for mitigating climate change and serve as models for adaptation to the impacts of this change. This applies particularly in the domains of sustainable land use, green economies, safeguarding ecosystem services, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energies. Biosphere reserves are learning sites for sustainable development.

With reference to the goals of the Seville Strategy (1995) and the Madrid Action Plan (2008), the conference participants call on the States represented in the MAB Programme to give greater weight to biosphere reserves in their strategies on climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to transfer approaches developed in biosphere reserves to other regions.

On this basis we consider the following measures to be required:

At policy level in the Member States

- (1) Place greater focus on the capacities of the MAB Programme and biosphere reserves for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change, and improve integrating their contributions into national and international climate strategies and policies,
- (2) Incorporate the idea of biosphere reserves into development cooperation to a greater degree, and support corresponding projects that link poverty eradication, biodiversity conservation and climate protection in developing countries,
- (3) Establish adequate legislative, administrative and institutional frameworks at national and/or local level for biosphere reserves, equip these with appropriate competences, and provide adequate funding and staff for the administration of biosphere reserves and their functions,
- (4) Further develop biosphere reserves as model regions for sustainable development, and deploy good practices and experience gained as widely as possible,
- (5) Support problem-oriented, interdisciplinary and applied research, monitoring and evaluation, including traditional knowledge, in relation to climate change and its impacts on biosphere reserves, and incorporate the outcomes of these activities into national and international research programmes and projects,
- (6) Support innovative economic instruments and activities that combine climate change mitigation and adaptation, with maintenance of the integrity of ecosystems and biodiversity as well as social development, including the needs of local and indigenous communities, in particular in the context of extraction of natural resources and the generation of energy,
- (7) Promote the role of land use in carbon sequestration, in particular in forests through implementing and assessing the voluntary carbon programme REDD+ in biosphere reserves, to improve learning about impacts, markets, and practices, as well as to develop improved methodologies and disseminate the lessons learned,
- (8) Promote more understandable communication of the concept of biosphere reserves and the processes required to that end.

At practical level in the biosphere reserves

- (9) Intensify efforts to develop innovative approaches for climate change mitigation and adaptation (including financing models), implement these approaches, adapt management plans accordingly and integrate these with existing sustainable development approaches, and use these to strengthen the regions,
- (10) Draw up and implement management plans to adapt to a changing climate, based on a vulnerability analysis, taking into account the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and involving the local population,
- (11) Integrate traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and modern scientific findings to strengthen climate change research,
- (12) Intensify efforts to use biosphere reserves as learning sites for sustainable development, that communicate how biodiversity conservation sustains the flow of ecosystem services and supports the creation of economic opportunities,

- (13) Further develop and reinforce international cooperation on sharing experience, effective methods, and joint projects - including in the framework of partnerships,
- (14) Develop and strengthen partnerships with the private sector in order to identify, develop and promote local, national and international markets for sustainably produced products and services, and to advance climate-friendly economic practices in these areas.

At UNESCO level

- (15) Comprehensively support and use the MAB Programme and biosphere reserves in line with the UNESCO Strategy for Action on Climate Change and the UNESCO Climate Change Initiative, not only as reference sites for a better understanding of the impacts of climate change, in particular in regions specifically targeted by UNESCO, priority Africa and SIDS,
- (16) Further develop the World Network of Biosphere Reserves as one of UNESCO's key assets: as reference regions for a better understanding of the impacts of climate change on human societies, cultural and biological diversity, ecosystem services and the world's natural and cultural heritage, and consider including biosphere reserves into global, coordinated interdisciplinary research programmes on climate change,
- (17) Foster international exchange on best practices and promote South-South and North-South-South partnerships on technology sharing and best practice through twinning,
- (18) Cooperate with other UNESCO and UN intergovernmental programmes and conventions, in particular the three Rio conventions, the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20, and other relevant international and national organisations and agencies so that they make greater use of these biosphere reserves as research, learning and pilot regions for sustainability processes,
- (19) Support Member States, politically and financially, in the designation and successful management of new biosphere reserves, particularly transboundary reserves.

Conclusion

The conference participants call for the provision of adequate financial, organizational and staff capacities to implement the recommendations contained in this Declaration.

The conference participants invite the International Coordinating Council of the MAB Programme to endorse this Declaration at its 23rd session and to present it to the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference in autumn 2011.

Annex 3:

AGENDA of the 23rd Session of the MAB International Co-ordinating Council

1. Opening by the Chair of the ICC
2. Opening remarks of the Representative of the Director-General of UNESCO
3. Report by the Chair of the ICC
4. Adoption of the agenda and timetable
5. Report by the Secretary of the MAB Programme
6. Reports on actions undertaken by Member States in the context of MAB
7. Mid-term evaluation of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP)
8. Proposals for new biosphere reserves and extensions/modifications to biosphere reserves that are part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)
9. a) Periodic review of biosphere reserves, and b) Support/study sites for the MAB Programme
10. Progress report on the review and updating of statutory documents of MAB and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)
11. MAB Young Scientists Award Scheme
12. Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserves Management
13. Date and venue of the 24th session of the MAB-ICC
14. Other matters
15. Adoption of the report
16. Closure of the session

Annex 4:**REPORT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE MAB PROGRAMME**

1. This report briefly reviews salient outcomes of activities undertaken by the Secretariat of the MAB Programme, with a particular emphasis on actions undertaken to implement decisions and recommendations of the 22nd session of the International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) of the MAB Programme held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, from 31 May to 4 June 2010. The report is based on information that the Secretariat has up to 31 May 2011. At the time of when the Secretary of the MAB Programme will introduce this report to the ICC on 28 June 2011 he may add new information that may become available during the intervening period.

2. The MAB ICC will meet for its 23rd session in Dresden, Germany, 40 years after it first met at UNESCO in 1971. To commemorate the 40th anniversary of the MAB Programme the 23rd session of the Council will be preceded by an International Expert Conference on the theme: "For Life, For the Future: Biosphere Reserves and Climate Change" on 27th and the morning of the 28th of June, 2011. This international conference will adopt a Dresden Declaration providing guidance for the future of the MAB Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) during the remaining years of this decade of the new millennium. The Secretariat of the MAB Programme would like to express its sincere gratitude and appreciations to the German Government for the generous support and the excellent co-operation provided in the organization of both the international conference as well as the 23rd session of the MAB ICC.

3. Commemorative activities for the 40th anniversary of the MAB Programme are being implemented by many ICC Member and Observer States; these are likely to be included in Member States presentations of their reports as part of agenda item 6 – Reports on Actions Undertaken by Member States in the Context of the MAB Programme. Representatives of the many regional MAB and Biosphere Reserve (BR) networks as well as selected ecosystem networks are also due to present their reports under the same agenda item. In planning activities for the 40th commemorative year in 2011, the MAB Secretariat sent out a questionnaire to Member States seeking ideas and suggestions, as recommended by the ICC at its last session held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, in 2010. A special website integrated within the MABNet provides details (<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/mab40/>) of the various activities that are being implemented to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the MAB Programme. The Secretariat welcomes comments and suggestions of the ICC Member and Observer States to further improve the presentation of the web-based information as well to enhance the scope of activities undertaken.

4. The 40th anniversary of the MAB Programme and its achievements, particularly the importance of the activities of the WNBR in the context of UNESCO preparations for and follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference in 2012 attracted mention from several Members of the 186th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO that met at UNESCO Headquarters in May 2011. The Secretariat seeks the guidance of the ICC and observer Delegations on ways and means of building up on this interest in strengthening and improving the visibility of the MAB Programme and its WNBR further, particularly as part of discussions during the 187th session of the Executive Board (September-October 2011) and the 36th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO (October-November 2011) on programming and budgetary priorities for the biennium 2012-2013. The MAB Secretariat has negotiated with the UNESCO General Conference Secretariat to set aside 3 November 2011 during the General Conference as a special day for MAB and WNBR in recognition of the 40th anniversary of the MAB Programme. Exhibits, films and presentations are planned and a reception featuring food and beverages and specialties from biosphere reserves is foreseen. The Secretariat seeks the agreement of the

ICC to formally announce 3 November 2011 as the “MAB and biosphere reserve day” during the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference and to invite all UNESCO Member States to collaborate with the Secretariat to organize events that not only reflect on MAB’s past achievements but also project its future dedicated to sustainable development practice.

5. The 35th session of the General Conference of UNESCO in 2009 adopted decision 35C/31 based on a draft resolution proposed by Germany and supported by more than 30 UNESCO Member States requesting the Director General of UNESCO to promote the visibility and recognition of MAB and WNBR as platforms for sustainable development within UNESCO and the broader UN system. The same decision called for a report on the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan (MAP) for Biosphere Reserves (2008-2013) to be submitted to the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference. This report will be based on the interim evaluation of the implementation of MAP during the first three years (2008-2010) to be reviewed by the 23rd session of the ICC under agenda item 7 and decisions and recommendations of the Council on that report.

6. The mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the Madrid Action Plan during 2008-2010 outlines both strengths and weaknesses; some networks such as the Ibero-American, have undertaken a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of MAP during 2008-2010 in Latin America and the Caribbean, thanks to voluntary support of Chile which coordinated the mailing of questionnaires and synthesizing responses received. During the last AfriMAB network meeting held in Nairobi in September 2011, 25 countries reported on the status of MAP implementation at national levels. New information may emerge from forthcoming regional meetings, such as the EuroMAB Network due to meet in Lake Vanern Biosphere Reserve in Sweden immediately after the 23rd session of the MAB ICC in Dresden, Germany. However, in many parts of the world responses received by the Secretariat to questionnaires sent out were restricted to selected countries and biosphere reserves and this dimension of the evaluation process needs clear improvement when MAP is due for its final evaluation in 2014.

7. It is evident that implementation of the MAP requires strong commitment from authorities responsible for biosphere reserves, MAB National Committees and Focal Points as well as UNESCO National Commissions. These national and local authorities are assigned lead responsibilities for attaining well over 50% of the 31 targets of MAP. Based on lessons of the mid-term evaluation of the MAP (2008-2010) the Secretariat wishes to solicit stronger engagement of such national and local authorities to improve implementation of MAP during 2011-2013. The Council may consider inviting the UNESCO Executive Board and the General Conference to call upon Member States to consider investing appropriately in strengthening UNESCO National Commissions, MAB National Committees and Focal Points and biosphere reserve authorities in order to improve implementation of MAP during 2011-2013 and linking those investments to the work of appropriate national and local sustainable development agendas.

8. Specific areas of the implementation of the MAP, for example the communication strategy with its global, national and local level dimensions, need greater resources and capacity during the period of 2011 and beyond. The Secretariat is hopeful that some of the 40th anniversary commemorative activities will boost capacities in the Secretariat and in Member States on aspects related to communications, information exchange and sharing of knowledge and lessons linked to sustainable development practice in biosphere reserves. Increasing interest in exchanges between biosphere reserves will help in this regard; the Secretariat is pleased to note the exchange visit from representatives of biosphere reserves from the Republic of Korea and Vietnam to German biosphere reserves just prior to the time of the International Conference and the 23rd session of the MAB ICC in Dresden, Germany.

9. The importance of national and local level initiatives in the implementation of MAB and WNBR initiatives has been the principal reason guiding the document included as Annex 1 to

the working document SC-11/CONF.202/8. This document is intended to replace the earlier document on "Guidelines for the Establishment of MAB National Committees". The International Support Group (ISG) established by the 21st session of the MAB ICC in 2009, and authorized by the 22nd session of the ICC in 2010 to review, under the Presidency of the Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the MAB ICC for the Arab Region, Mr. Mohamed El-Zahabi, all revisions to statutory documents related to MAB and WNBR has recommended that the ICC does not consider Annex 1 of SC-11/CONF.202/8 as a statutory text. Instead, ISG has suggested that the Member States be invited to review this document and to provide suggestions for its revision and finalization so as to enable the Member States to use the document as a guide to implement MAB and WNBR activities at the national level. The ICC may wish to adopt the recommendations of the ISG and also request that Member States report back on their efforts to implement the suggestions in Annex 1 of SC-11/CONF.202/8 to the 24th session of ICC in 2012.

10. MAB and WNBR activities have also received support in many target countries of the One UN initiative, for example in Cape Verde, Rwanda, Tanzania and Vietnam. These initiatives where the MAB Secretariat provided back-up support to efforts of UNESCO Regional, Cluster and National Offices have built capacity and helped raise awareness of the relevance of MAB and WNBR to national level environmental, biodiversity and sustainable development initiatives. Lessons learned from these countries may help others to better link MAB and WNBR as platforms for national and local-level sustainable development programmes and initiatives within the framework of UNDAF and other in-country multi-lateral agency co-ordination frameworks.

11. The ISG, under the Presidency of Mr. Mohamed El-Zahaby, also reviewed the statutes of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves as well as the International Coordinating Council of the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) included as Annexes 2 and 3, as well as 4 and 5, respectively, to document SC-11/CONF.202/8. These annexes include both the current versions of the statutes under consideration and the track-change version of all amendments made to the statutes following 4 meetings of the ISG; average participation in each of the ISG meetings included 30-40 ICC Member and Observer Delegations. Except where indicated, all amendments proposed were accepted unanimously by those Member States present during the discussions of the ISG. The Secretariat invites the Council to adopt both the statutes of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves and the MAB International Coordinating Council, with any further changes that the ICC may consider necessary, so that they could be considered for adoption by the Executive Board and General Conference sessions of UNESCO to be convened at UNESCO Headquarters during September-November 2011. Once, the UNESCO General Conference adopts the statutes of the MAB International Coordinating Council, the ICC may wish to consider appropriate amendments to its rules of procedure at its 24th session in 2012.

12. The ISG also compared the provisions of the Statutory Framework for the WNBR with the vision, mission, actions and targets of the MAP for biosphere reserves (2008-2013). Although the ISG noted that selected targets of MAP aim to attain results that are beyond the scope of the Statutory Framework of the WNBR the ISG was of the view that the ICC should defer any revisions to the Statutory Framework of the WNBR until such time when the MAP for Biosphere Reserves (2008-2013) has been fully implemented and a final evaluation of the achievements of MAP has been undertaken in 2014.

13. The ICC will examine the recommendations of its Bureau on new proposals for biosphere reserves and extensions and modifications to existing biosphere reserves in the World Network under agenda item 8. The Bureau is expected to consider the recommendations of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves which met at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris in February 2011 to examine these proposals in detail. The ICC will also be informed of the decision of one Member State, i.e. Australia, to withdraw one (Macquarie

Island) of its sites from the World Network because the site does not meet criteria set by the 1995 Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

14. The periodic review of biosphere reserves continue to grow in its importance for ensuring quality of the work carried out in individual biosphere reserves. Recommendations of the International Advisory Committee on this matter, both from an overall perspective and for individual sites for which reports were submitted by Member States in 2010 are detailed in document SC-11/CONF.202/7. Following extensive discussions on this subject last year, the Secretariat has been communicating with Member States and has been receiving more information on country plans to undertake periodic review exercises as well as on steps taken to implement recommendations emanating from the reports. Nevertheless, more than 100 sites continue to be in the category of biosphere reserves that had never undertaken periodic reviews. The International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves recommended that the ICC consider inviting those countries that have never undertaken periodic reviews on specific biosphere reserves to withdraw these sites from the World Network. The ICC may wish to recall that at its last session in 2010 it set 2013 as the deadline for countries that have never undertaken a periodic review to either inform the MAB Secretariat of their plans and a time table to complete such a review; the outcome of such a review may result in eventual withdrawal of a site from the WNBR.

15. The ICC may recall that during discussions on this agenda item at its last session, Austria raised the issue that several biosphere reserves designated prior to 1995 are unlikely to be re-designed to meet the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework criteria for the World Network and offered to host a meeting to discuss the future of those sites continuing to have some status within the MAB Programme. Such a meeting was organized at UNESCO Headquarters in February 2011 with the participation of members of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves and two Austrian specialists, to address the possibility of including these sites in a separate category that tentatively has been called "MAB Research Sites". The meeting recommended to the ICC that the working title for such sites be "support/study sites for the MAB Programme" and that selection criteria for such sites should be established by the Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves (see document SC-11/CONF.202/12 on this issue). The ICC may consider these recommendations and guide the Secretariat on what steps must be taken in order to explore this issue further while minimizing any undesirable incentives and messages that creating a new category of sites parallel to the World Network may entail.

16. The electronic working group established under the Chairmanship of the Chair of the French MAB National Committee, Prof. Robert Barbault, has made some progress in revising the nomination and periodic review forms. An update will be provided during the Council session. The Secretariat will soon place the revised drafts of these two forms in the MABNet to invite comments from all interested Member States with a view to submitting a consolidated version for review by the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves at its next meeting in early 2012. Based on the recommendations of that meeting of the Advisory Committee, revised versions of both forms will be submitted to the consideration of the 24th session of the MAB ICC in 2012.

17. The ICC will receive from the Bureau of the MAB ICC recommendations for the winners of the MAB Young Scientists Research Grants: 10 nominees for receiving the grants from the regular UNESCO contributions and 2 laureates for receiving the special awards being sponsored by the Government of Austria in the context of the International Year of Forests in 2011. Austria financed two similar supplementary awards already in 2010 in celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity. UNESCO participation in activities of the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 resulted in the Conference of Parties of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) that met in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010 adopting a joint CBD-UNESCO initiative on biological and cultural diversity. The International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves recommended Mr Nazir Hani from Lebanon as the winner of the Michel

Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Case Studies; the Members of the Bureau have endorsed this recommendation and Mr Nazir Hani from Lebanon is here with us in Dresden to present his case study to the ICC under agenda item 12.

18. In line with the overall priority UNESCO assigns to Africa, several initiatives in Africa have been implemented since the conclusion of the last session of the ICC in June 2010. The governance of the AfriMAB network has been strengthened by the adoption of its Charter and statutes and by the election of a Bureau elected for 2 years. An East African Biosphere Reserve group has been initiated to support the transboundary initiatives in the sub region. Capacity building on carbon trade and REDD+ related matters have been carried out at regional and sub regional levels. The Regional Post-Graduate Training School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests, known by its French acronym, ERAIFT, in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), received 30 students from more than 10 African States for 2010-2011. During its current phase between 2009 and 2013, ERAIFT intends to train more than 100 African professionals and has committed to ensuring that the last intake for 2012-2013 will include equal number of trainees from English and French-speaking African countries. ERAIFT hosted the first meeting of the South-South Co-operation for tropical forests, during December 2010 in Kinshasa, DRC, in accordance with an MoU it signed with the Federal University of Para, Belem, Brazil, and the Indonesian MAB National Committee at the time of the 21st session of the MAB ICC convened on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, in 2009. A work programme that includes exchange of students and staff has been established and will be the subject for further discussion and refinement at the second meeting to be hosted by Indonesia in September 2011. The Director of ERAIFT is co-operating closely with the MAB Secretariat and the UNESCO Office in Kinshasa, DRC, to prepare a feasibility study for establishing a UNESCO Category I Centre in ERAIFT; the feasibility study is due to be submitted for the consideration of the UNESCO Executive Board at its forthcoming session in September-October 2011.

19. The Secretariat wishes to thank the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation for organizing a special training workshop for African Biosphere Reserve Managers in parallel to the 23rd session of the ICC in Dresden, Germany. The UNESCO-MAB/UNEP-GEF Project for capacity building among six West African Biosphere Reserves' authorities and communities that concluded in 2009, recently received very positive comments from an independent evaluation giving encouragement to the Secretariat to explore launching other such projects for strengthening MAB and WNBR activities in Africa. The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation has invited participation of the MAB Secretariat in a joint mission scheduled for November 2011 that aims to link the application of the biosphere reserve concept to trans-border co-operation for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in Southern Africa.

20. Following the encouragement provided by the MAB ICC at its 22nd session, the MAB Secretariat has fostered the setting up of ad-hoc open ended working group exploring themes linked to MAB, WNBR, green economy and sustainable development. An urban ecosystem working group has been created. The group was derived from the participants of the UNESCO-MAB, SCOPE and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) symposium on "Urban Futures and Human and Ecosystem Wellbeing" held in Shanghai, China, in late October 2010. ICC Member and Observer States may wish to refer to the website <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/specific-ecosystems/urban-systems/> to know more about the outcomes of this symposium and planned work of the urban ecosystem working group. A similar working group is in the making on the theme "Earth Resources and Biosphere Reserves" based on the outcome of a 1-day workshop held at UNESCO Headquarters on 15 February 2011, bringing together selected experts from the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves and the Bureau of the International Geosciences Programme of UNESCO as well as a small number of mining industry representatives. The working group will explore important issues of sustainable development in exploration and exploitation of minerals and oil and gas resources in biosphere

reserves. Establishment of other such working groups covering themes such as tourism are currently under discussion.

21. The MAB Secretariat has contributed towards the drawing up of the Director General's Climate Change Initiative which amongst others aims to advocate the use of biosphere reserves and World Heritage sites in REDD (Reduced deforestation and forest degradation) and REDD+ (REDD initiatives that are linked to concurrently furthering MDGs and other UN goals and objectives). The Secretariat is in communication with UNDP, UNEP and FAO which comprise the UN-REDD as well as bilateral governments such as Norway which strongly support tropical forest conservation initiatives. The Secretariat is actively engaging with discussions with private sector partners often facilitated by MAB National Committees and biosphere reserve co-ordinators in countries like Sweden and the United Kingdom to explore new partnerships in order to have biosphere reserves used as experimental sites for climate change mitigation and adaptation initiatives within the context of sustainable development.

22. Partnerships, both from the public and private sector as well as from civil society organizations will become increasingly critical for implementation of the MAB and WNBR activities, including the implementation of MAP during 2011-2013. The next few years are likely to be challenging years financially as UNESCO's Regular Programme (RP) Budget faces reductions in real value in the light of austerity measures introduced in many developed as well as developing countries. The MAB Secretariat has been particularly fortunate in receiving considerable support beyond the UNESCO RP budget, particularly from Spain which has contributed about US\$ 2-3 million per biennium for the implementation of MAP. Other countries like Germany which are hosting the 40th anniversary events and several other initiatives referred to in this report are also providing regular support. The ICC may wish to draw attention to Article IX, para. 3 of the current MAB Statutes (or Article IX, para. 4 of the proposed revised Statutes) where Member States have the option of providing earmarked or voluntary contributions to implementation of MAB and WNBR activities globally, nationally and locally and encourage all Member States to explore the feasibility to contribute towards the collective pool of resources needed for developing MAB and WNBR as worldwide platforms for sustainable development action and practice.

23. The Members of the ICC will consider the dates and venue of its 24th session under agenda item 13. At that time it would be important for the ICC Members to keep in mind that the Rio+20 Conference is scheduled for 4-6 June 2012. In order to enable Member States, ecosystem, MAB and biosphere reserve networks as well as the Secretariat and its partners to fully make use of this important event to highlight the work of MAB and WNBR, the ICC may wish to consider convening its 24th session a few weeks after the Rio+20 event. Such a scheduling of the 24th session of the ICC would also enable the Secretariat to introduce key messages deriving from the Rio+20 Conference into the discussions of the 24th session of the MAB/ICC.

24. Members of ICC as well as Observer States are invited to comment on the contents of this report and also to provide suggestions and advice on future activities and initiatives. In particular, the Secretariat seeks the guidance on specific suggestions underlined in this document and especially with regard to paragraphs 3, 4 and 7, respectively. Suggestions of the Secretariat with regard to issues to be addressed under the different agenda items may be given due consideration at the time of discussions of those respective items.

Annex 5:

REPORT ON THE REVIEW PROCESS OF THE FORMS
 Prof. Barbault, Chair of the French MAB National Committee

The electronic working group that I was requested to chair was tasked with updating both the Biosphere Reserves Nomination Form and the Periodic Review Form. The group comprised Janette Dutoit, South Africa; Jörg Bruker, Germany; Bonaventure Guedegbe, Benin; Kim Kwigon, Republic of Korea; Francisco Dallmeier, United States of America and Ghassan Ramadan-Jaradi, Lebanon. The group was assisted in its work by the MAB Secretariat, in particular Meriem Bouamrane.

The objectives of the revision process

It was necessary to update the two questionnaires in order to meet better biosphere reserve goals, as laid down in the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves and the Madrid Action Plan, more effectively.

The goals of this update were to ensure that:

- the nomination forms and periodic review forms will enable the MAB Council to improve its assessment of whether sites meet the Statutory Framework criteria;
- the updated forms will provide reliable, useful data so that the MAB Council, with the assistance of the Secretariat, will produce global statistics, and analyse, promote and enhance the work carried out locally, regionally and internationally in the field of sustainable development; these data should help to produce and disseminate best practices and solutions for sustainable development;
- the nomination forms will provide baseline information about the area or territory;
- the periodic review form will be designed in such a way as to permit evaluation of changes, progress and results achieved in the area and comparison of data with those submitted at the nomination stage;
- the two forms will clearly highlight procedures for dialogue, consultation and involvement of key stakeholders;
- the two exercises will be useful and will help the managers and Member States to meet their national, regional and international commitments in the field of biodiversity and sustainable development (such as the European Conventions, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the national biodiversity conservation and sustainable development strategies) so that countries will consider it worthwhile to complete these forms and may use the data and indicators to submit other nominations.

What has been done

At the outset, the members of the group agreed that:

- the existing nomination form and periodic review form did not appear to be that bad, so it was simply a matter of improving and not of rewriting it completely;
- it is important to ensure continuity in order to maintain the visibility of MAB; it is also more respectful for the existing 564 biosphere reserves and their managers, as well as for the countries that support them;

- in the revision exercise, three points were highlighted: (a) the updated files should provide reliable and useful data; (b) these data should permit the evaluation of changes, progress and results; (c) local consultation practices and evaluation procedures followed in biosphere reserves should be documented.

We concentrated on sections 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the nomination form, after briefly revising the other parts. The periodic review form was not discussed sufficiently (lack of time), following an initial suggestion to work on the basis of a proposal submitted by Canada.

Main changes

The nomination form has been reworded to make it clearer that nomination is the first step in the process and that the periodic review is the following step.

It was suggested that Chapters 11 and 12 (physical and biological features) be merged under the heading "natural features", thus increasing flexibility and integration;

It was also suggested that the new chapter 11 entitled "main features (or objectives) of the project" deal specifically with the project. The idea here is to encourage biosphere reserve managers to summarize the main objectives of their project by including the three functions of the biosphere reserve (conservation, development and logistic support) as these three functions are interdependent in an action plan.

Part I (summary) has been shortened to contain key information only. It might be useful to request information here on the mechanisms and procedures that will be used to implement the project.

What remains to be done

It seems very necessary to improve the parts dealing with governance. Much more could perhaps improve the way in which useful data, that is to say data easily used for monitoring and consistent with sustainable development, is requested.

The periodic review form must be revised by making the same changes as to the nomination form.

Annex 6:**STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FOR BIOSPHERE RESERVES****Article 1**

An International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves, hereinafter referred to as the Committee, and established in accordance with the Work Plan for sub-programme II.2.3 in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1992-93 (26 C/5), is recognized as the primary scientific and technical Committee body advising the International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and the Director General of UNESCO on matters pertaining to the WNBR.

Article 2

1. The Committee shall advise the Director-General of UNESCO and the MAB-ICC on scientific and technical matters concerning the nomination of new sites and, changes and periodic reviews of sites already included in the WNBR, as well as the development, operation and monitoring of the WNBR which they constitute in accordance with the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework for the WNBR. The Committee shall also advise the Director-General of UNESCO on any other aspects of the MAB Programme as requested by the Director-General or the MAB-ICC.
2. In the performance of its task, the Committee shall be guided by the Recommendations of the MAB-ICC and by the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework of the WNBR adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 28th session under resolution 2.4 and the Madrid Action Plan adopted by the 20th session of the MAB-ICC in February 2008 in Madrid, Spain.

Article 3

1. The Committee shall be composed of twelve members, serving in a personal capacity. The members shall be appointed by the Director-General, after consultation with the Member States and or the National Committees/focal points for the MAB Programme of the countries concerned.
2. The terms of office of members shall be four years. Terms of office of members may be renewed for one additional period of four years by the Director General. In event of death or resignation of a member of the Committee, the Director-General shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of the term.
3. The members of the Committee shall be selected for their scientific qualifications and for their experience in promoting and implementing the biosphere reserve concept. Special attention shall be given to gender balance. Membership of the Committee shall be in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical representation and take account of the bio-geographical diversity of the UNESCO Member States.
4. The Director-General may invite to sessions of the Committee, as consultant-observers, persons who by reason of their functions or knowledge can assist the work of the Committee.

The Director-General may extend invitations to send observers to meetings of the Advisory Committee to:

- d) Organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has not concluded mutual representation agreements;
- e) Intergovernmental organizations; and
- f) International non-governmental organizations, in accordance with Directives concerning UNESCO's relations with international non-governmental organizations.

The United Nations and other organizations of the United Nations system with which UNESCO has concluded mutual representation agreements may send representatives to meetings of the Committee.

Article 4

1. The Director-General shall convene the Committee at least once a year.
2. Each member of the Committee shall have one vote.
3. The Committee shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure that shall be submitted to the Director-General for approval.

Article 5

1. At each of its sessions, the Committee shall elect a chairperson, two vice-chairpersons, and a rapporteur, who shall form the Bureau of the Committee and who shall remain in office until the following session.
2. The Chairperson or acting Chairperson shall represent the Committee at the meetings of the MAB-ICC and its Bureau.

Article 6

The travel and subsistence expenses of the members of the Committee, as referred in paragraph 1 of Article 3, shall be borne by UNESCO, in accordance with the provisions of its travel rules.

Article 7

1. The Director-General shall designate members of the UNESCO Secretariat to represent him/her on the Committee and its Bureau.
2. The Secretariat of the Committee shall be the Secretariat of the MAB Programme of UNESCO.

Article 8

1. The agenda for the sessions of the Committee shall be drawn up by the Director-General, normally after consulting the Chairperson.

2. After each session, the Committee shall present a report on its work and its recommendations to the Director-General. The Director-General shall inform the Executive Board and the MAB-ICC of the results of the Committee's proceedings.

Article 9

The Executive Board may terminate the mandate and/or amend the Statutes of the Committee provided that an item to this effect has been inscribed in the agenda of the Executive Board in accordance with its rules and procedures.

Annex 7:

June 2011

**STATUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATING COUNCIL
OF THE PROGRAMME ON MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE
(MAB)**

Article I

An International Co-ordinating Council of the Programme on 'Man and the Biosphere' (hereinafter called 'Council') is hereby set up within the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (hereinafter UNESCO).

Article II

1. The Council shall be composed of thirty-four Member States of UNESCO, elected by the General Conference at its ordinary sessions, taking due account of equitable geographical distribution, of the need to ensure appropriate rotation, of the representativeness of these States from the viewpoint of ecology, biodiversity and cultural diversity in the regional groups of UNESCO, and contributions to sustainable development within the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (hereinafter the "MAB Programme").

2. The term of office of the members of the Council shall begin at the close of the ordinary session of the General Conference at which they are elected and shall expire at the close of the second ordinary session of the Conference following it.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 2 above, the term of office of one half of the members designated at the first election shall expire at the close of the first ordinary session of the General Conference following the session during which they were elected. The names of these members shall be drawn by lot after the first election by the President of the General Conference, it being understood that the outgoing members shall be replaced by members belonging to the same regional group.

4. Members of the Council are immediately eligible for re-election.

5. The Council may make recommendations concerning its own membership to the General Conference.

6. The persons appointed by Member States as their representatives on the Council shall preferably be experts in the field covered by the MAB Programme and chosen from among those persons playing a major part in the implementation of the activities related to the MAB Programme in the said Member States.

Article III

1. The Council shall normally meet in plenary session once every 12-18 months, but no more than twice per biennium. Extraordinary sessions may be convened under conditions specified in the Rules of Procedure.

2. Each Council member shall have one vote but it may send as many experts or advisers as it deems necessary to sessions of the Council.

3. The Council shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

Article IV

1. The Council shall be responsible for guiding and supervising the planning and the implementation of the MAB Programme for studying proposals concerning development and modifications of this Programme, for recommending scientific and international co-operation projects of interest to all or to a large number of a group of countries, and assessing priorities among such projects for co-ordinating international co-operation of Member States in the framework of the Programme for assisting in the development of national and regional projects related to the Programme, and for taking any practical or scientific measures that may be required for the successful implementations of the MAB Programme. Such measures may include the submission of specific proposals to the general Conference on the implementation of the MAB Programme for consideration and approval by this body.

2. In carrying out its activities, the Council shall make full use of the facilities offered by the agreements or working arrangements between UNESCO and the other intergovernmental organizations mentioned in Article VII, paragraph 2.

3. The Council may consult with all appropriate international, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with which UNESCO maintains official relations.

4. The Council shall, wherever necessary, attempt to co-ordinate the MAB Programme with other international programmes.

Article V

1. The Council may set up *ad hoc* committees for the study of specific problems. Membership of such *ad hoc* committees shall also be open to Member States of UNESCO, which are not represented in the Council.

2. Taking into account other relevant international activities, the Council may establish as required working groups of specialists to examine certain aspects of the MAB Programme. These working groups, whose members shall serve in a personal capacity, may include nationals of Member States of UNESCO which are not represented on the Council.

Article VI

1. At the beginning of its first session, the Council shall elect from among its Member States a chairman and four vice-chairmen and a rapporteur. These shall form the Council's Bureau.

2. The Bureau shall discharge such duties as the Council may lay upon it.

3. Meetings of the Bureau may be convened in between meetings of the Council, at the request of the Council itself, of the Director-General of UNESCO or by consensus of the members of the said Bureau.

4. The Council shall elect a new Bureau whenever its own membership is changed by the General conference in accordance with Article II, above. The members of the Bureau who are representatives of Member States of UNESCO shall remain in office until a new Bureau has been elected.

Article VII

Observers who could be invited (and encouraged) to attend the ICC sessions, its Bureau, or its Committees, without having the right to vote, include but are not limited to:

1. Representatives of the Member States and Associate Members of UNESCO which are not members of the Council.
2. Representatives of the United Nations, as well as other intergovernmental organizations of the U.N. system, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.
3. Representatives of international non-governmental organizations who are invited by the Council and/or the Director-General of UNESCO.
4. The Council shall determine the conditions under which organizations other than those foreseen in paragraphs 2 and 3 above will be invited to attend its meetings, without the right to vote, whenever questions of common interest are discussed.

Article VIII

1. The secretariat of the Council shall be provided by the Director-General of UNESCO, who shall place at the Council's disposal the staff and other means required for its operation. Staff members of the other organizations mentioned in Article VII, paragraph 2, above may be assigned to the secretariat by agreement with the said organizations.
2. The secretariat shall provide the necessary services for the sessions of the Council and meetings of its Bureau, committees and working groups. Arrangements may be made with other organizations mentioned in Article VII, paragraph 2, for providing specialized services to particular working groups of the Council without costs to UNESCO.
3. The secretariat shall take any day-to-day measures required in order to coordinate the execution of the international programmes recommended by the Council, it shall fix the date of the Council's sessions in accordance with the Bureau's instructions, and shall take all steps required to convene such sessions.
4. The secretariat shall assemble all proposals sent in by members of the Council, other Member States of UNESCO and the international organizations concerned with regard to the formulation of the international projects under the MAB Programme and shall prepare them for examination by the Council; it shall maintain liaison with the national committees established by Member States for the execution of the MAB Programme in accordance with the invitation contained in resolution 2.3131 adopted by the General Conference at its sixteenth session, and inform them of the Council's recommendations.
5. In addition to the services to be rendered to the Council, the secretariat shall cooperate closely with the secretariats of UNESCO Programmes and of the international governmental and nongovernmental organizations mentioned in Article VII, paragraphs 2 and 3 above; it shall for this purpose take part in inter-secretariat co-ordination meetings as necessary.

Article IX

1. International programmes proposed by the Council to Member States for concerted action on their part, shall be implemented by the participating Member States, according to the commitments which each State is willing to make. The Council may, however, make recommendations to UNESCO and to the other organizations mentioned in Article VII, paragraphs 2 and 3 above, concerning assistance to Member States for the development of environmental programmes. If the said organizations accept such recommendations and if the Member States concerned signify their agreement, these organizations shall undertake to finance the related activities in accordance with the provisions of their respective constitutions and regulations.

2. Member States shall bear the expense of participation of their representatives in sessions of the Council and its committees. The running expenses of the Council and its subsidiary organs shall be financed from funds appropriated for this purpose by the General Conference of UNESCO as well as from such additional resources as may be made available by other organizations of the United Nations System. Nevertheless, the General Conference may be requested to bear the participation expenses of one representative from Council Member States with a per capita income less than USD 10,000 or from LDCs.

3. The Council Sessions shall take place in the premises of UNESCO HQs. However, upon invitation by a UNESCO Member State and the acceptance of that invitation by the Council of a majority of the Members Council, a Session of the Council may take place in a Council Member State extending the invitation. In this case, the expenses of convening that session of the Council and its subsidiary organs shall be borne by the Member State that extended the invitation. Every time that the Council Session's agenda foresees modifications to the Statutes or the Programme's Rules and Procedures, the session will be held at UNESCO HQs.

4. Voluntary contributions may be accepted and established as trust funds in accordance with the Financial Regulations of UNESCO and administrated by the Director-General of UNESCO. The Council shall make recommendations to the Director-General on the allocation of such contributions for international projects under the MAB Programme.

Article X

The Council shall submit reports on its activities to the General Conference of UNESCO at each of its ordinary sessions. These reports shall be communicated for information to the other international organizations mentioned in Article VII, paragraphs 2 and 3 above and other interested parties as deemed appropriate by the Council.