

UNESCO CHAIR FOR BIOSPHERE RESERVES AND NATURAL AND MIXED WORLD HERITAGE OF THE UNIVERSIDAD PARA LA COOPERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL/AGUA Y PAZ BIOSPHERE RESERVE, COSTA RICA

The UNESCO Chair and the Agua y Paz BR signed a cooperation agreement, stating:

“The Chair commits itself to working in the Agua y Paz Biosphere Reserve as a pioneer site for the implementation of its monitoring, capacity building, research and communication activities.

“For its part, the Directorate of the Agua y Paz Biosphere Reserve commits itself to working with the Chair and supporting and facilitating its actions.

“The two parties will present integrated joint projects, as well as training initiatives in sustainable development in order to support actions that benefit the management of Agua y Paz Biosphere Reserve.”

Contacts: UNESCO Chair for Biosphere Reserves and Natural and Mixed World Heritage: <http://www.uci.ac.cr/especiales/rirb.asp> - Agua y Paz BR: <http://www.uci.ac.cr/especiales/boletin.asp>

UNESCO CHAIR FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF PARÁ, BRAZIL

The UNESCO Chair is actively supporting the compilation of a nomination dossier for the new Marajo BR. It also participates in publicity and awareness raising among communities and grassroots institutions for their participation in the development of the new BR, an important prerequisite for its recognition. The UNESCO Chair/BR model is included in the concept of this new BR proposal.

Contact: UNESCO Chair for South-South Cooperation and Sustainable Development: <http://www.ufpa.br/cate-draunesco/>

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES

The three pilot models work actively through the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and especially the IberoMAB Regional Network to disseminate the concept of collaboration with UNESCO Chairs as a model for cooperation and exchange. In the last meeting of the three pilots, which took place at the Urdaibai BR from 21 to 23 July 2009, the participants in the different models exchanged experiences and identified common research themes such as:

- Ecosystem Services
- Applied Science for Management
- Carbon-Neutral Strategies for BRs

Furthermore, they agreed upon a work plan contained in the *Urdaibai Declaration*. The IberoMAB Regional Network, to which these three models belong, is strongly supported by the Autonomous Organism for National Parks (OAPN) of the Ministry of the Environment, Rural and Marine Areas, Spain, which also collaborates in promoting this new network of UNESCO Chair/BRs.

Contacts: OAPN: http://www.mma.es/portal/secciones/el_ministerio/organismos/oapn/oapn_mab.htm - UNESCO/MAB: <http://www.unesco.org/mab>



UNESCO CHAIRS LINKED TO BIOSPHERE RESERVES: A SPACE FOR COOPERATION AND DIALOGUE BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC EXPERTS AND POLITICAL DECISION-MAKERS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES

WHAT IS THE UNESCO CHAIR/BIOSPHERE RESERVE MODEL?

The UNESCO Chair/Biosphere Reserve model is a space for collaboration and dialogue between scientific actors on the one side and politicians and Biosphere Reserve managers on the other in order to bring together Science and participatory and adaptive Environmental Management.

The Biosphere Reserve provides a space for demonstrating sustainable development through the participation of all the actors involved in management and administration of the Biosphere Reserve.

The UNESCO Chair who 'works' for and within the Biosphere Reserve provides scientific support to politicians and managers through applied research related to the challenges of the Biosphere Reserve (challenges identified by all the Biosphere Reserve actors), creating knowledge that is multidisciplinary and useful for managers and local communities. The UNESCO Chair also provides training for stakeholders and communications campaigns at all levels.

The UNESCO Chair/Biosphere Reserve model comprises two UNESCO programmes: the UNITWIN programme and UNESCO Chairs, from the Education Sector and the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme of the Natural Sciences Sector. This alliance is an important contribution to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

WHY IS THIS MODEL NEEDED?

BRs are sites recognized by UNESCO for the promotion of sustainable development, respecting biodiversity and taking into account ecosystem services. In order to guarantee sustainable development in these areas, managers should understand the interests of all stakeholders in the BR. Management of the BR should be capable of reconciling different points of view and interests. Thus, BR management is especially complex.

On the other hand, research supports decision-making, since it provides scientific knowledge and understanding. Knowledge-building should be directed at the identification of the needs of local communities that use the BR. It is also essential to keep in mind the importance of local and traditional knowledge as an aid to decision-making, ensuring the involvement of local actors. This body of knowledge must be transcribed so as to be useful to political decision-makers.

UNESCO Chairs include training, research, and exchange between universities. In the majority of cases they are interdisciplinary in nature and have the following principal objectives: pertinence, anticipation, and efficacy. These are important values for understanding a world where social, economic, and environmental factors evolve very rapidly. At the same time, the UNESCO Chairs programme and the UNITWIN Networks serve a dual function as think tanks and builders of bridges

between academic circles, civil society, local communities, research and political decision-making.

The role of 'bridge-builder' is the foundation for this UNESCO Chair/Biosphere Reserve model

HOW DOES IT WORK?

In order that BRs may benefit from scientific knowledge, links should be built between a UNESCO Chair and BRs.

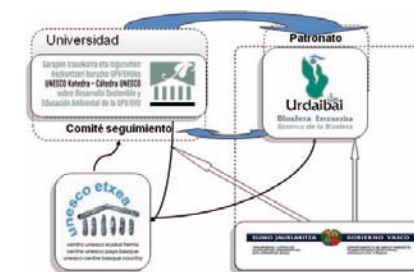
UNESCO Chairs should work **for** and in the BRs. BRs should be capable of using the tools and knowledge provided by the Chairs to support decision-making. This requires an agreement between the BR and the UNESCO Chair to formalize the intended cooperation.

Moreover, it is important to establish coordination structures between the two institutions such that:

- The BR can communicate its needs and recommendations. The UNESCO Chair will provide specific and adaptive support.
- The UNESCO Chair may use the BR as a 'laboratory' for multidisciplinary research benefiting from the enrichment of local and traditional knowledge. The BR will use this new resource to guarantee sustainable development.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF SELECTED PILOT MODELS

UNESCO CHAIR FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF THE UNIVERSIDAD DEL PAÍS VASCO/ URDAIBAI BIOSPHERE RESERVE, SPAIN



Since its creation, the UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Development and Environmental Education has directed its activities in research, education, and awareness raising towards the Urdaibai BR, and as such it represents the pilot model of this concept. The Chair is located near the Urdaibai BR. It is involved in the management of the BR, as through the university it serves as a member of the BR Committee. The BR, for its part, serves on the UNESCO Chair Steering Committee. Furthermore, the model relies on two additional supporting bodies: UNESCO Etxea-UNESCO Centre of País Vasco and the Department of Environment and Territorial Planning, Agriculture and Fisheries of the Basque Government. This latter also provides financial support to the actors involved in this model.

Contacts: UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Development and Environmental Education: <http://www.ehu.es/cdsea/> - Urdaibai BR: <http://www.ingurumena.ejgv.euskadi.net/r49-12892/es/> - UNESCO Etxea: <http://www.unescoeh.org>