

Country Report for the 22nd Session of MAB ICC

County Report of China-MAB

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Summary

This report is a summary about the activities of China MAB Committee since last two years, which also includes some jobs of China MAB to implement the Madrid Action Plan (MAP) of World Biosphere Reserve Network (WBRN) from the perspective of Eco-civilization. The report integrates some specific actions finished from 2008-2010 and can be summarized as the following points:

- (1) to strengthen the communication and cooperation with the regional network on the platform of China Biosphere Reserves Network(CBRN), particularly focusing on the role of cultural diversity in the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development;
- (2) to promote the concept of biosphere reserve among the general public and policy makers. Besides publishing the “Man and Biosphere” magazines, newsletters and updating the website of China MAB, we helped the national nature reserves to solve the problem of unsustainable development through the nomination process of a Biosphere Reserve, to improve the management plans, to promote the participation of stakeholders and to form wide partnership;
- (3) to combine the local practical problems with the review, policy study and on-site field visit, to strengthen the relationship between biosphere reserves and local government, to promote the dialogues among stakeholders and to find out the unbalance between the conservation of biodiversity and economic development, so as to form consensus and take practical action plans. The dialogue and participation of stakeholders is one of the approaches of biosphere reserves as the learning site of sustainable development;
- (4) to include more members into the CBRN, to hold the CBRN annual meeting, to summarize management lessons and raise common problems. In the past two years, 27 new members joined CBRN network. China MAB has undertaken policy study on the special licensed tourism activities in some biosphere reserves

in China.

The participation and dialogue of the stakeholders of biosphere reserves and the emphasis on the cultural diversity is the foundation of biosphere reserve as the learning site of sustainable development.

In the period of implementing the Madrid Action Plan of World Biosphere Reserves Network, China MAB Committee hosted the joint regional meeting of the 11th EABRN and the 11th CBRN, titled as “Implementation of Madrid Action Plan”, which has undoubtedly promoted the communication of experiences and ideas of biosphere reserve managers from East Asian and other countries. As the organizer of the 11th meeting, China MAB Committee introduced its main activities, which fully revealed the role of CBRN as the platform for communication, cooperation, publication and implementation of the ideal of biosphere reserve. On 20th May, 2010, the Forum on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development-12th China Biosphere Reserve Network (CBRN) Convention was held in the UN Pavilion of the Shanghai World Expo Park.

The contents of the China Country Report can be summarized as follows, which integrates some specific actions finished from 2008-2010:

1. to strengthen the communication and cooperation between CBRN and other regional Network (SeaBRnet)

China MAB Committee, in collaboration with UNESCO Jakarta Office, held the Regional Seminar Ecotone - SeaBRnet 2007 and the 9th Conference of the China Biosphere Reserves Network (CBRN) on the theme of Cultural Diversity: Foundation of Biodiversity and Sustainable Development at Maolan Biosphere Reserve on Nov.7-13, 2007. This meeting successfully promoted the communication and cooperation between SeaBRnet and CBRN and formed the consensus to enhance the linkages between cultural and biological diversity.

The meeting raised the issue of “cultural diversity promoting the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development”. With the development of globalization, we need to realize the root cause of the loss of biodiversity, the



inharmonious relationship between man and nature and the development model of solely pursuing the growth of GDP is our neglect on our culture and its diversity. In particular, the theme of the meeting offered new thoughts for China's biodiversity conservation and the current mode of economic development. China, as one of the parties (2007) of "Cultural Diversity Convention (Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions Convention)", took the lead in the implementation of the convention in China's nature reserve area.

The meeting adopted CBRN 《Libo Consensus》 and SeaBRnet 《Libo Declaration》, which advocated the need to take actions to involve culture diversity into the management system of biodiversity conservation and the agenda of China's sustainable development.

The dialogue with local villagers and local government officials during the field visit has fully explained the value of cultural diversity. The local community has realized the foundation of regional sustainable development is cultural diversity and they need to solve local problems by using the concept of biosphere reserve. China Central Television (CCTV), People's Daily and its overseas edition, and other media reported the meeting.

About 200 participants attended this meeting, including representatives from Chinese National Commission for UNESCO, UNESCO Beijing Office, 12 South East Asian Countries, government officials from State Ethnic Affairs Commission, State Environmental Protection Administration, National Forestry Administration, National Oceanic Administration, Chinese Academy of Sciences, experts from Peking University, Tsinghua University and other environmental NGOs, journalists, 122 biosphere reserves managers of China Biosphere Reserve Network (CBRN) and local government officials at provincial, municipal and county level.



The participants were deeply impressed by the enthusiasm and good spirit of China CBRN members during the meetings and the positive attitude of local government on the concept of biosphere reserve. This meeting was held before the 3rd World Biosphere Reserves Congress, which laid a good foundation for China MAB committee to organize biosphere reserve managers to attend the Congress and implement the Madrid Action Plan.

2. to organize the Forum on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development in the UN Pavilion of the Shanghai World Expo Park.

On 20th May, 2010, the Forum on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development-12th China Biosphere Reserve Network (CBRN) Convention was held in the UN Pavilion of the Shanghai World Expo Park. The forum was jointly organized by the Chinese National Committee for MAB (Man and Biosphere) and the UNESCO Office in Beijing. It received over 120 participants from the UNESCO Office in Beijing, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the State Oceanic Administration, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, CBRN members, the Xinhua News agency and other media organizations. Tackling the theme of the ‘International Year of Biodiversity 2010’, the forum advocated the belief that “biodiversity is essential for the well-being of all life – including human beings”. Strategically perched in the UN pavilion, the forum constitutes a high-level forum for introducing the relationship between humans and biodiversity to international visitors in the Shanghai Expo Park. The forum also functioned to disseminate information on the active role of UNESCO biosphere reserves in balancing biodiversity conservation and economic development. Case studies on the contribution of Chinese biosphere reserves to sustainable development were presented at the forum to elaborate on the achievements of the CBRN in promoting a commitment to sustainable management of natural resources in protected areas through: biosphere protection and communications, a combination of policies and empirical practices and capacity building for biosphere reserve managers.

3. Biosphere Reserve Nomination

China MAB Committee takes the opportunity of biosphere reserve nomination to correct the problems of unsustainable development and to help biosphere reserves solve practical problems. The field visit and expert guidance is the important process of biosphere nomination. To clarify the problems and confusions in accordance with the concept of biosphere reserve is helpful for biosphere reserves to improve their management plans. In 2007, Xingkai Lake reserve and Chebaling reserve were successfully nominated as UNESCO World Biosphere Reserves.

To promote the concept of biosphere reserve among the general public and decision makers is an important job of biosphere reserve management. To this end, China MAB Committee held the issuing ceremony for Chebaling and Xingkai Lake Biosphere Reserves & the 2008 CBRN Meeting at the



People's Great Hall, Beijing in December 2008. The meeting defined "Enter eco-civilization and Implement the Madrid Action Plan" as its theme, elaborated the meaning of eco-civilization and the relationship of biosphere reserves implementing the eco-civilization from different perspectives. In the end, the meeting advocated to implement the Madrid Action Plan from the perspective of eco-civilization.

About 120 participants attended the issuing ceremony, including representatives from CBRN members, teachers and students from middle schools in Beijing, experts from research institutes and universities, policy-makers from government institutions, media and public.



After the meeting, Chebaling Biosphere Reserve formulated a work plan to implement the Madrid Action Plan-The cooperation plan of Chebaling Biosphere Reserve, established the Chebaling Biosphere Reserve United Committee under the leadership of the Director of the County, and publicized its Protection Convention. All these measures have been recognized by local government and local communities, which also involved the participation of experts from research institutions.

GEF, UNESCO Beijing Office and China MAB Committee jointly implemented the biogas pilot program. Currently, 10 digesters have been set up and well operated. The local government officials and local residents highly welcome this pilot program and they hope to continuously increase the number of digesters.

At the end of 2009, Chebaling BR in collaboration with Chebaling Eco-construction Association successfully applied the fund provided by GEF-Small Grant Programme under the framework of climate change, which has become the seed money for implementing the Chebaling Cooperation Plan.



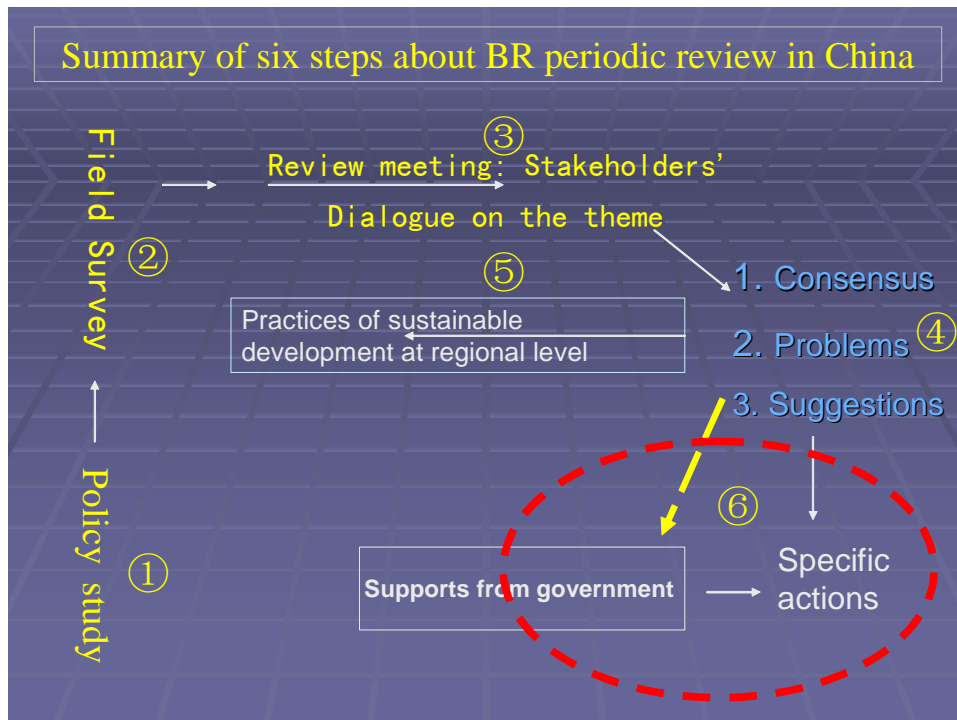
At present, candidates to be nominated as biosphere reserves in 2009 and 2010 include Guangxi Maoershan reserve, Sichuan Tangjiahe reserve, Guangxi Mulun reserve, Shanghai Jiuduansha wetland reserve and Jiangxi Jinggangshan reserve. China MAB Committee has organized a nomination workshop for Guangxi Maoershan reserve, participated by the reserve managers, local residents, local governors and policy makers.

4. Periodic Review of Biosphere Reserve

Biosphere Reserve Periodic Review is an important job of China MAB Committee. Currently, China MAB takes 6 steps to review biosphere reserve (please see the table below): (1) to organize policy study on the biosphere reserve to be reviewed; (2) field survey taken by the Secretariat of China MAB; (3) to select review experts, organize the field visit participated by all the stakeholders, choose the topic of the dialogue among all the stakeholders and hold the review workshop; (4) to clarify the problems of the biosphere reserve, reach consensus and put forward suggestions; (5) to take practical actions and get the support from government; (6) to promote practices of sustainable development at regional level. On the basis of this 6-step procedure, China MAB Committee will fill out the Biosphere Reserve Review Form and submit the complete official report to UNESCO MAB Secretariat.



The discussion among experts, local residents and reserve managers for conservation and local economic development is an important part of the Periodic Review. The major approach of China MAB Committee to review biosphere reserve is to invite experts from the fields of social and natural sciences, managers, government officials, private sectors, local community and other BR managers to raise the topic for a dialogue on the main problems faced by the biosphere reserve and to organize the dialogue among all stakeholders. The review process of biosphere reserve strengthened the relationship between biosphere reserve managers and local government officials and promoted the establishment of the partnership among all stakeholders of the biosphere reserve.



According to the above-mentioned steps and approaches, the secretariat of China MAB Committee took the periodic review on the Fenglin Biosphere Reserve in September 2007. The review on Nanji Islands Biosphere Reserve was taken in October 2008 on the topic of “Biodiversity conservation and welfare of local community: How to develop harmoniously?” In 2009, China MAB organized the periodic review on Jiuzhaigou Biosphere Reserve on the topic of “the Changes of Jiuzhaigou Biosphere Reserve and its sustainability”.

5. Development of the CBRN Network

Up to May 2010, China Biosphere Reserves Network has 141 members in total, among which 28 members are UNESCO World Biosphere Reserves. CBRN introduces and implements the concept of biosphere reserve and it has become the platform of both international and local communication and the base of inter-department cooperation. In the past two years, 27 national nature reserves have joined CBRN network, which shows an apparent increasing trend.



China MAB Committee undertook the policy research on some common issues faced by biosphere reserves. From September to November 2008, under the support of UNESCO Beijing Office, China MAB took the Management Policy Research of Tianmushan Biosphere Reserve. The purpose of this policy research is to investigate the influence of the separation of biosphere reserve's tourism management right and operation right on the conservation function of biosphere reserve, as some biosphere reserve is trying to launch the management system of special licensed tourism. Taking the Tianmushan BR as an example, the policy research is mainly focused on the challenges in the operation process of special licensed tourism, the threats on the conservation of biodiversity and the benefits and appeals of the local communities.

China MAB Committee actively promoted the cooperation with the Center for Earth Observation, Chinese Academy of Sciences. The two parties have identified the priorities for cooperation, organized 5 workshops among biosphere reserve managers and planned to apply the space technology into the biosphere reserve management.

Besides the development of CBRN new members, China MAB has also strengthened its communication with the public through publishing the "Man and Biosphere" Magazine. China MAB has published 12 issues in the past two years to explore the ultimate topics of the relationship between man and nature. The topics include "Cultural Diversity", "Chebaling", "Xingkai Lake" and so on.



In addition, the Secretariat of China MAB Committee irregularly publishes the “Man and Biosphere Newsletter” to reflect the practical problems of biosphere reserves, to make comments on some special issues from the perspectives of social and natural sciences and to get the suggestions of decision makers. The secretariat has published several issues of the newsletter including “Fengling Biosphere Reserve”, “Nanji Island Biosphere Reserve”, “Jiuduansha Wetland Nature Reserve” and “Biosphere Reserve as the learning site for sustainable development”. The new edition of the CBRN website (www.china-mab.cas.cn) has strengthened the relationship between the secretariat and biosphere reserve managers.

“Man and Biosphere” Magazine and “Man and Biosphere Newsletter” have been sent to CBRN members; government organizations such as National Forestry Administration, State Environmental Protection Administration etc; universities and research institutions, general public, news media and so on.