

**AFRICAN NETWORK OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES, AFRIMAB. REPORT PRESENTED AT
THE 28TH MAB ICC, LIMA- PERU**



**COMPILED BY THE AFRIMAB SECRETARIAT-
GHANA MAB NATIONAL COMMITTEE
GHANA**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The African Network of Biosphere Reserves, (AfriMAB) promotes cooperation among MAB National Committees and Biosphere Reserves in Sub-Saharan Africa. This report outlines the key activities implemented since the 27th session of the MAB ICC.

2.0 4TH SESSION OF THE AFRIMAB GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 4th Session of the General Assembly (GA) was hosted by Ghana from November 24 – 27, 2015 under the theme AfriMAB: *Aligning the MAB Strategy (2015 – 2025) to the Sustainable Development Goals, SDGs (2015 -2030)*. Participants were drawn from 20 member states, UNESCO Headquarters and field offices, three ministers of state and other local stakeholders as well as other development partners. Participants reviewed activities since the last General Assembly and discussed extensively the Lima action plan in preparation for the Lima congress as well as the African Biosphere reserves fund (AfriBiofund). The key achievements at the end of the GA were:

1. Election of a new bureau chaired by Ghana with sub-regional coordinators drawn from South Africa, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe and Kenya.
2. Adoption of a communiqué which outlined AfriMAB's commitment to the MAB Strategy as adopted during 27th MAB-ICC and the draft Lima Action plan with amendments proposed during the GA.
3. Reprioritisation of the strategic action areas of the LAP for the network
4. Identification of priority themes formation of working groups within each strategic area of action
5. Members renewed their commitment to the full operationalization of the AfriBiofund by making personal contributions

3.0 ON GREEN ECONOMY IN BIOSPHERE RESERVES

In line with recommendations from the 3rd General Assembly, a regional workshop on Green Economy was organized in Sao Tome and Principe from December 17-21, 2015. The workshop was recorded a high participation from UNESCO HQ and field offices, IUCN, Yves Rocher foundation, FFEM, ERAIFT, Principe Trust foundation, selected member states involved in the implementation of Green Economy projects and local stakeholders including the President of Principe Island.

The workshop discussed case studies of GE projects and included a technical training session on how to evaluate ecosystem services and Natural capital in Biosphere Reserves. Following this workshop a technical working group on Green Economy is to be formed while a concept note has been submitted to FFEM for support with the operationalization of the AfriBiofund.

The second international review workshop on the Green Economy in biosphere reserves project sponsored by KOICA was organized in February 2016 in Tanga District, Tanzania. The workshop was attended widely by representatives of the beneficiary countries: Ghana, Nigeria and Tanzania, UNESCO Headquarters and field offices, KOICA, Korean MAB National committee as well as local stakeholders and the media. The keynote address was delivered by the Vice President of Tanzania. The workshop assessed the progress of work in each of the countries and included a training session on value chain analysis and establishment of revolving funds. The workshop provided a platform for sharing of vital information and networking on common issues in the three biosphere reserves among the respective countries and local stakeholders.

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4.0 NEW MAB NATIONAL COMMITTEE

The membership of the network was increased with the formation of a new MAB national committee in Mozambique to initiate action for the nomination of a biosphere reserve.

5.0 COMPLIANCE WITH EXIT STRATEGY

Periodic review reports were submitted for various biosphere reserves in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Kenya, DRC, Tanzania, South Africa. Comments received from the Advisory Committee are being addressed.

6.0 CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR BIOSPHERE RESERVE MANAGERS

The Southern African sub-region organized a workshop in Gaborone, Botswana, from 1-4 February 2016 under the theme “Biosphere Reserves: Local solutions to local and global challenges”. The workshop discussed challenges related to stakeholder participation, zoning, mining, wildlife crime, and Green Listing for quality management of core zones in the overall context of sustainable development. The workshop was co-hosted by the Government of the Republic of Botswana, IUCN, German Conservation Agency and UNESCO.

7.0 NEW BIOSPHERE RESERVE NOMINATIONS

Ghana, Madagascar and Tanzania submitted nominations for three proposed sites which were considered at the last meeting of the Advisory committee.

8.0 TRANSBOUNDARY INITIATIVES

Following extensive discussions in the last GA, TBR initiatives, which have been initiated are as follows:

Benin-Togo, Cote d’Ivoire-Burkina Faso, Guinea-Liberia-La cote d’Ivoire, Benin-Burkina Faso, Ghana-Togo, Ghana-la Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana-Burkina Faso, Nigeria-Cameroun, Gambia-Senegal, Mali-Burkina Faso, Guinea-Mali, Tanzania-Uganda, Tanzania-Burundi, Niger-Algeria and Malawi-Mozambique.

In this regard, stakeholder consultative workshops have been organized in the Mono Delta to discuss the Togo-Benin initiative with support from GIZ while two consultative meetings have held in Ghana to discuss the Ghana- Togo initiative.

9.0 OTHER ACTIVITIES

AfriMAB was represented on a delegation of the international advisory committee that was tasked to undertake a study tour to some biosphere reserves in China. The committee visited two sites to observe their management strategies and offer technical advice on ways to enhance management

10. PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR THE NEXT BIENNIUM

Within the framework of the LAP actions in this regard include: promotion of gender equality, enhancement of youth involvement, development of national MAB Strategies and Action plans, enhancing visibility of BRS, research on climate change and BRS, forstering peace through transboundary initiatives and activation of various working groups for the thematic areas identified in line with regional priorities.

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