



## INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON TRANSBOUNDARY BIOSPHERE RESERVES IN EUROPE

### Instruments, methods, governance

Transboundary Biosphere Reserves (TBR) are cooperation projects, concerning management of socio-ecological systems over borders. To be designated by UNESCO, they have to follow specific requirements (see Pamplona recommendations, UNESCO 2000). During the last 20 years, 14 TBR have been designated by UNESCO all around the world notably in Europe, Africa and Latin America, each gathering 2 or 3 countries. Other projects are in preparation.

In 2004, an international conference followed by an expert workshop took place in the German part of the German/French TBR Pfälzerwald/Vosges du Nord, in Fischbach and Edesheim.

Ten years after, it appears that it would be very useful to assess the situation and progress achieved regarding the TBR approach and its development.

The Vosges du Nord/Pfälzerwald TBR, together with the French and German MAB National committees, are organising an international meeting in June 2015. This meeting will provide the opportunity to discuss a broad range of issues on (i) TBR management and cooperation (how and with whom to build a common vision and a cooperation programme, establishing a common zonation, implementing projects: staff, funding, evaluation, etc.), on (ii) institutional mechanisms and governance (structures, modes of functioning, getting support, etc.), and on (iii) promotion, visibility and recognition outside the UNESCO/MAB field.

### AGENDA

The overall goal of this meeting is to support the development and management of transboundary biosphere reserves by building on best practices and lessons learned from existing initiatives. It concerns the management of the TBR and how and with whom to build the

cooperation, the institutional mechanisms and the governance. It also concerns their recognition as an efficient tool for cooperation in Europe.

## Specific objectives

- To strengthen everyday management and governance in TBR, involving local people in transboundary sustainable development projects
- To enhance institutional and funding mechanisms in TBR
- To promote TBR, improve their visibility and recognition/acknowledgement by the authorities, at regional, national and international levels, including the EU.
- To promote TBR as a tool for cooperation in Europe

## Expected output & outcome

- Best practices, operational guidelines for the establishment and management of TBR, based on the Pamplona recommendations, in order to strengthen TBR implementation
- Improved recognition of the TBR tool and its integration in existing cooperation programmes in Europe
- Improved funding for and visibility of TBR
- Discussion on the feasibility and usefulness of a resource centre/network on transboundary cooperation in the field of conservation and land use planning in Europe
- Input for the MAB Lima Action Plan

## Organisation of the meeting

A questionnaire (in English and French) has been drawn up to prepare the meeting and to provide information for the operational guidelines.

### 2nd June

Welcoming the participants and transfer to the meeting place, the Château de Liebfrauenberg (Goersdorf, Vosges du Nord).

7 p.m. :

Opening by MAB committee and Vosges du Nord –Pfälzerwald TBR personalities

Ice breaking evening

### 3rd June

9 a.m. – 10 a.m.:

Workshop objectives and method of work

The meeting will use an interactive and participatory method adapted from AmericaSpeaks/Global Voices “21st Century Town Meetings®”.

In order to share concrete examples and success stories, several possible questions in 4 main sessions/themes will be suggested. Participants will be asked to interact and discuss ideas based

on their work in or with the transboundary biosphere reserves, to better understand and identify best practices and lessons learned. Participants will use these questions to address specific objectives and provide recommendations for the development, management and promotion of transboundary sustainable biosphere reserves.

10 a.m.-1 p.m.

### **Session 1: Identify the strengths and added values of the transboundary biosphere reserves**

Before engaging in the more concrete discussions on management, it is suggested to have an opening session focusing on the positive aspects of the TBR, highlighting their strengths and potential added value to start in a positive and constructive tone. Results will be used for session 4 on developing promotion/communication strategies/tools and messages.

### **Session 2: Development and management of a TBR**

This session will start by identifying issues/problems encountered during the development of a TBR project, and will continue on issues/problems arising while managing an existing TBR but separately addressing the internal processes (e.g. structure, functioning, staff management) and the external partnerships or interactions.

2. 30 p.m. – 5.30 p.m.

### **Session 3: Best practices and lessons learned to address identified problems/questions**

This session aims to build on participants' best practices and experience to find solutions and provide recommendations to address the problems/questions identified in session 2.

5. 30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Debriefing of the day

## **4th June**

9 a.m. 12 a.m.

### **Session 4: Promotion of the TBR, visibility, funding and recognition**

This session will make use of a different format to have a more practical “hands-on” approach and start developing tools and concrete communication/funding supports and material. Tables will be attributed different topics and participants will be able to choose freely the one on which they would like to work. participants will have a chance to change topic once if they wish.

From 2 p.m:

Field trip

## 5th June

9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Session 5: Final session on workshop results, next steps and European cooperation

- Restitution of workshops, overview and elements for drafting the guidelines.
- Round table on regional cooperation in Europe in the field of conservation/land use and the role TBR can play.
  - Panel with representatives of European institutions to identify current opportunities for cooperation between TBR and other initiatives or programmes
  - Q & A Session to further explore these opportunities, challenges, requirements, etc.

