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UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

International Coordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme Thirty-first session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room II (Fontenoy Building)

17 - 21 June 2019

ITEM 14 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA: Technical Guidelines for Biosphere Reserves (TGBR)

1. At its 29th session, the MAB-ICC decided the development of Technical Guidelines for Biosphere Reserves (<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000253591>).
2. The MAB Secretariat reported on the progress up to July 2018 during the 30th session of the MAB-ICC. The MAB-ICC approved the terms of reference and the roadmap of the TGBR working group but decided to go for a second round of call of nomination for experts to serve in the TGBR working group to address the issue of uneven regional distribution and gender. It requested the MAB Secretariat to send a letter to the Member States requesting additional nomination of experts. (http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/FINAL_30_MAB_ICC_REPORT_en.pdf).
3. This document reports on the implementation of the above ICC decisions and gives an update on the development of the TGBR.

Report on the second call of proposal:

4. In July 2018, 47 experts from 23 Member States composed the TGBR working group (TGBR-WG) divided in four thematic Sub-groups (TSG): zonation of biosphere reserves; governance of biosphere reserves; policy, management and business plans and data management and monitoring.
5. After a lengthy nomination process, the MAB Secretariat received 25 eligible nominations from the following countries:

Region	Country	Nominations per Country
LAC		
	Mexico	3 incl. 1 female
	Colombia	3 incl. 1 female
	Cuba	4 incl. 1 female
	Argentina	1 female
AFR		
	Senegal	1
	Sudan	1
	Nigeria	3
	Ivory Coast	5 incl. 4 female
ASPAC		
	Australia	1 female
	Korea	2 incl. 1 female
	Pakistan	1
Total		25

Two nominations were not eligible due to lack of CVs and two experts self-withdrawn.

In November 2018, the MAB Bureau approved the following composition:

TGBR working group: 70 experts from 33 countries including 15 from LAC, 23 from Europe & North America, 23 from Africa and 8 from ASPAC; 33% of experts are female.

Thematic Sub Groups (TSG):

- **Zonation of biosphere reserves:** 17 experts from 15 countries including 3 from LAC, 5 from Europe & North America, 7 from Africa and 2 from ASPAC; 29% of experts are female.
- **Governance of biosphere reserves:** 17 experts from 17 countries including 4 from LAC, 7 from Europe & North America, 4 from Africa and 2 from ASPAC; 29% of experts are female.
- **Policy, management and business plans:** 20 experts from 19 countries including 5 from LAC, 6 from Europe & North America, 5 from Africa and 3 from ASPAC; 35% of experts are female.
- **Data management and monitoring:** 16 experts from 14 countries including 3 from LAC, 5 from Europe & North America, 7 from Africa and 1 from ASPAC; 38% of experts are female.

The detailed statistics charters as per the list approved in November 2018 are in document SC-19/CONF.231/INF.4.

Update on the work of the TGBR working group (TGBR-WG) and Thematic Sub Group (TSG)

6. All the meetings of the TGBR-WG and TSG are virtual and organized by the MAB Secretariat. Working documents are in English.
7. After the 30th session of MAB ICC, the TGBR-WG held a meeting on 26 July 2018 to review an updated draft of the TGBR outline (TGBR outline Prototype II) prepared by MAB Secretariat, to decide on nomination process of the Chair and Rapporteur of TGBR-WG and TSG.
8. TSGs started their work on January 2019. Three TSG started to draft the content of the TGBR by priority areas and hold regular meetings twice a month (Annex I)
9. Since the beginning of the TGBR work, a number of experts were not actively involved in the meetings. Therefore, as per Chairs of the TSG, the MAB Secretariat has sent an email to each non-active member for confirmation of their interest. The final list of the 70 approved experts as well as TSG members is contained in document. SC-19/CONF.231/INF.5

10. In order to improve communication and sharing of documents, the MAB Secretariat created a collaborative workspace dedicated to the TGBR in UNESTEAM. It is accessible to all active members of the TSGs.

11. It is worth noting that MAB France provides support to the development of the TGBR. An intern is seconded to the MAB Secretariat for 6 months from February 2019 to July 2019.

12. In order to document the TGBR development work, surveys were sent to the Advisory committee members to seek their relevant views and experiences related to the TGBR (Annex II A&B). The responses will be shared on the UNESTEAM working space. Direct interaction between some members of Advisory Committee and TSG could be organised as appropriate.

13. The draft outline of the TGBR as of June 2019 (Annex III) will be submitted to the MAB Bureau for approval during the 31st session of the MAB-ICC.

14. The MAB Council is invited to:

- a) Take note of this report and to endorse the decision of the MAB Bureau on the draft outline of the TGBR (Annex III)
- b) Provide guidance for the work of the TGBR
- c) Encourage Member States to provide support to the MAB Secretariat in developing the TGBR.

ANNEX I: CALENDAR OF THE TGBR MEETINGS & LIST OF BUREAU MEMBERS**TGBR working group**

Date	location	Main outcome
06/07/2018	Skype meeting	Draft TORs of the WG Draft Road map of the WG
07/26/2018	Face to face meeting in Palembang	finalize draft TORs and Road map to be presented to MAB ICC
09/26/2018	Skype meeting	Discussion on TGBR outline Nomination of Chair and Rapporteurs

Policy Management thematic sub-group

Date	Location	Main outcome
01/29/2019	Skype meeting	Election of interim Chair and Rapporteur Discussion on table of contents and agree on way forward for the drafting work Distribution of responsibilities among the experts by items of the priority area

Contributions of participants by mail and on a shared document

Governance thematic sub-group

Email discussions on going on table of content – work in progress

Zonation thematic Group

Date	Location	Main outcomes
26/03/2019	Skype meeting	Election of the Chair Discussion on the way of working in-group of the TSG Discussion on table of contents
09/04/2019	Skype meeting	Discussion on specifics items of the draft between the experts Presentation of the shared literature
24/04/2019	Skype meeting	Introduction to the UNESTTEAM platform Discussion on specifics items of the draft between the experts Distribution of the responsibilities between the participants

Monitoring thematic sub-group

Date	Location	Main outcomes
22/03/2019	Skype meeting	Election of the Chair Discussion on the way of working in-group of the TSG Creation of thematic sub working group and a pool online for the participants
08/02/2019	Skype meeting	Election of the Rapporteur Distribution of the responsibilities between the participants Discussion on the way of working in-group of the TSG
02/05/2019	Skype meeting	Distribution of the responsibilities between the new participants Discussion on contributions on the shared document Introduction to the UNESTTEAM platform

List of Chairs and Rapporteurs by TSG

TSG	CHAIR	RAPPORTEUR
Governance	M. Martin Price (United Kingdom)	Ms. Mireille Jardin (France)
Data Management and Monitoring	M. Sergio Leandro (Portugal)	Ms. Beth Kaplin (Rwanda)
Policy, Management and business plans	M. Lütz Moller (Germany) a.i	Ms. Ruida Pool-Stanvliet (South Africa)
Zonation	Reinaldo Francisco Ferreira Lourival (Brazil)	Catherine Cibien (France)

ANNEX IIA: SURVEY FOR THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In the framework of the redaction of the *technical guidelines of biosphere reserves (TGBR)*, we would like to ask you some questions on your experience as member of the Advisory Committee. This work is divided in four thematic sub-group: Governance, Zonation, Management & Policy and Monitoring.

We kindly invite you to illustrate the items with concrete examples if you can!

I. GOVERNANCE

Open issue: *What were the principal difficulties in terms of governance you may observed throughout the revision or the designation of new biosphere reserves? Are there specific questions which caused you any difficulties?*

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1. Local participation

- Problem according to **local participation**? Are there different interpretations of the vision of the “participation”?

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- Are there different ways of organizing the participation and its integration into the governance structure?

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- How should endorses and signs the nomination form?

E.g: in the BR of the Cevennes, some of the municipalities did not signed the Charter of the parc. For this reason the parc did not met the conditions of BR at the last report.

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- Did you meet some difficulties in the Integration of **indigenous people** in the governance? Their vision of biodiversity? The political organization?

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- What are the issues according the role of the **private sector**? Are their **different models of integration** of private sector in the BR governance?
Integration VS financing, element to select private enterprises or are all of them welcome?

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.....
2. Institutional mechanism

- What kind of difficulties you noted in determining **the role of national authorities**?

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- What kind of difficulties you noted in determining the **function of management authorities** of the three areas? (Core, buffer and transition)?

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.....
- In terms of governance, what are the issues of different kind of **ownership title** of biosphere reserve (private, public...). What kind of **mechanism/ Authority model** are set up? What are the advantages or weaknesses of the different models?

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II. MANAGEMENT

Open issue: *What are the difficulties encountered in the implementation of a management plan of BR ? ? Are there specific questions which caused you any difficulties ?*

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- Does this **notion (management plan = MP)** build a consensus? Are there various categories of visions?

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.....
- Do exist difficulties to integrate in the long run the **3 aspects in the MP?** (Conservation, development structures and green economy?)

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.....
- According to the **business strategy**, what are the principal issues? According to the **fund raising**?

- According to the **marketing strategy** and the **communication strategy**, what are the **principal difficulties** you have met during your experience in the AC? : branding, logo settlement

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- Difference between plan and policy? What are the most frequently designed?

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III. ZONATION

Open issue: What are the principal issues connected with the zonation of BR ? ? Are there specific questions which caused you any difficulties?

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- What are the difficulties faced with the **exteriors limits**? (geographical, ecological, political, cultural limits) How the advisory committee decides **the area is adapted to coordinated the three functions of a BR**?

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- Areas: how you determine that **the 3 areas (Core, Buffer and Transition) are relevant in terms of the three functions** (conservation, development structures, green economy)?

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- Did you noted some difficulties **in building a BR on a pre-existing governance structure** like a National/regional parc, a protected area ... ?

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- Do the **notions of core area, buffer area and transition area** build consensus

Remind to develop some examples for each category if you can!

Core: difference between German vision of the core area: no management VS French vision: strict interpretation of the statutory framework: the protection of the core area must be organized according the objectives of the BR (but who decides of the coherence? How?) How make others countries?

Buffer: How do you interpret the framework statutory if it does not specify some case?
e.g BR in Spain do not meet the criteria because there was a nuclear central on his buffer area (statutory framework do not specify it is forbidden)

e.g: sometimes, there is no place around the core area to set up a buffer zone (e.g BR Gorges du Gardon), what should we do in this case? How do we consider the protection of the core area is sufficient?

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- How do you chose at the AC the **activities, which are compatible**? By which logic of interpretation for each area (Core, Buffer and transition) ? Are there oppositions?

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Transition: Do this notion build consensus?

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IV. MONITORING

Open issue: According to the monitoring, what kind of difficulties you noted during your experience at the Advisory committee? *Are there specific questions which caused you any difficulties?*

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- What are the difficulties to build **performance indicators**?
For the 3 areas?
For the long run?

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- Which **criterion need indicators**? Does that build consensus?

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- By which logic do we decide the **conditions of excellence awards**?

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- What problem do you encountered **for periodic report**?

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- Do you heard about difficulties in the **building of information center**?

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ANNEX IIB: SURVEY FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER - TSG GOVERNANCE

For each issue, please can each of you briefly indicate what you feel is - or are:

- the main problem(s) that should be looked at;
- the various solutions which you know have been found to solve the problem;
- what sort of guidance or recommendation would be needed to help countries or sites to improve the situation or simply deal with the issue.

I. Local participation (elements of this section will include sub-sections a) before nomination and b) after designation

- Engagement strategy development: early engagement and building long-term relationships
- Stakeholder mapping: how to proceed and how to use it
- Local participation: how to organize it, mechanisms to ensure local participation and techniques for conflict resolution
- Inclusion of areas where traditional lifestyles and indigenous uses of biodiversity are practiced (including sacred sites) cf Seville Strategy, Goal II, 3
- Role of the agency responsible for the core area
- Role of local authorities and other government agencies/organisations (at any level from local to national)
- Involvement of the private sector

II. Institutional/governance mechanisms

- Role of national authorities and/or, in federal states, regional authorities
- Establishment of a biosphere reserve from 1) an existing protected area or 2) ex nihilo
- Mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zones (art 4 item 7 a): regulatory and contractual policies, incentives, joint decision-making
- Authority or mechanism: difference between authority and mechanism, composition, regulatory/enforcement powers (police powers)
- Institutional mechanisms to manage, coordinate and integrate programmes and activities of the BR
- Models for authorities and mechanisms; and their advantages and weaknesses
 - 1) Existing body of a protected area, (in some cases, extending beyond its boundaries), or of part of the area
 - a. e.g., National Park, Regional Nature Park, cooperation Nature/Marine Park
 - 2) Structure under specific national legislation on BRs
 - a. e.g. Spain, Mexico
 - 3) Public governing body adapted to the needs of the BR
 - a. e.g. a municipality with the addition of a management committee and associations
 - 4) Governance of an Island
 - a. e.g., Minorca, Isle of Man
 - 5) Public
 - a. e.g., grouping of public institutions including municipalities
 - 6) Private
 - a. e.g., association or charity under national law
 - 7) Public/private partnerships (with clear definition of roles and responsibilities)
 - 8) Ad hoc structure
 - 9) Others

Annex III: Draft Outline of the Technical Guidelines for Biosphere Reserves (TGBR)

Part I. Background information on biosphere reserves

I. Introduction

- A. Background and purpose of the TGBR
- B. MAB programme
 - 1. What is a biosphere reserve?
 - 2. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves
 - 3. Transboundary biosphere reserves
 - 4. Multi-designated sites
 - 5. Biosphere reserves as protected areas (IUCN classifications) and as areas beyond protection
 - 6. MAB – an intergovernmental programme of UNESCO, bodies and decision-making
 - 7. Context (2030 Agenda, Rio conventions)
- C. Drafting procedure
- D. Open access policy

II. Nomination of a new biosphere reserve

- A. Biosphere reserves as learning sites for sustainable development: Three integrated functions (Article 3, Seville)
 - 1. Conservation
 - 2. Development
 - 3. Logistical support
 - 4. What does a functioning model for biosphere reserves look like?
- B. How to nominate a biosphere reserve
 - 1. How to initiate a nomination
 - 2. How to prepare a nomination file
 - Info box/case study
 - 3. What is the Designation Procedure? (Article 5, Seville)
 - 4. How to nominate transboundary biosphere reserves

5. What about multi-designated sites?

C. How to participate in the WNBR

1. Scientific research

- Subregional
- Regional
- Global
- Publication

2. Environmental /sustainable development education and training

- Subregional
- Regional
- Global

3. Regional and thematic networks

4. Twinning partnerships

5. Collaborative projects

6. UNESCO networks

D. How to extend an existing biosphere reserve

E. How to rename a biosphere reserve

F. How to voluntarily withdraw a biosphere reserve

G. What is the WNBR Coding System?

Part II. Zonation in biosphere reserves

I. Introduction

Definition of zones in the Statutory Framework of the WNBR:

- a) A legally constituted core area or areas devoted to long-term protection, according to the conservation objectives of the biosphere reserve, and of sufficient size to meet these objectives;
- b) A buffer zone or zones clearly identified and surrounding or contiguous to the core area or areas, where only activities compatible with the conservation objectives can take place;
- c) An outer transition area where sustainable resource management practices are promoted and developed.

II. Definition of the 'zonation' notion

- A. Zonation: A tool for integrated management that incorporates the three functions of the biosphere reserve
- B. Flexibility of the biosphere reserve model
- C. The different models of biosphere reserve

III. External limits of the biosphere reserve

- A. How to build a biosphere reserve around a protected area (centrifugal/cluster)
- B. How to build a biosphere reserve ex nihilo
- C. How do you delimit the border of the biosphere reserve?
- D. How to ensure that, in spite of borders, a biosphere reserve can inspire and disseminate its effects to a wider landscape/constituency?
- E. How to establish a biosphere reserve along a border

IV. Objective: What are the conservation and development objectives of the biosphere reserve? (Article 4, 5.a. of the statutory framework of the World Network of Biosphere reserves)

- A. How and who should define the conservation objectives of the biosphere reserve?
- B. What are the development objectives of the biosphere reserve?

V. Core area: How is it established?

- A. Size
- B. Degree and type of protection
- C. Which level of human use? How is it controlled?
- D. Role for sustainable development (ecosystem services): research, monitoring, education and training

VI. Buffer zone: How is it established?

- A. Size
- B. Geographical definition
- C. What is the system of regulation for activities and resource use (public/private)
- D. Roles for conservation, intensive and subsistence agriculture, livestock grazing, sustainable development, research, monitoring, education and training
- E. Population

VII. Transition area: How is it established?

- A. Size and geographical definition
- B. Level of development and types of activities (intensive and subsistence agriculture, industry, mining, power stations and cities)
- C. Roles for conservation, sustainable development, research, monitoring, education and training
- D. Population

VIII. Mapping

- IX. When do biosphere reserves have to propose an extension or a reduction: Reasons and procedure for changes
- X. Why it is important to have a zonation agreed by the local authority and population
- XI. What is the importance to have an efficient biosphere reserve model monitoring and evaluation (in relation with Governance TSG)

Part III. Governance in biosphere reserves

I. Introduction

II. Local participation

- A. Engagement strategy development: Early engagement and building long-term relationships
- B. Stakeholder mapping: How to proceed and how to use it
- C. Local participation: How to organize it, mechanisms to ensure local participation and techniques for conflict resolution
- D. Inclusion of areas where traditional lifestyles and indigenous uses of biodiversity are practised, including sacred sites (Seville Strategy, Goal II, 3)
- E. Role of the agency responsible for the core area
- F. Role of local authorities and other government agencies/ organizations (at any level from local to national)
- G. Involvement of the private sector

III. Institutional/governance mechanisms

- A. Role of national authorities and/or regional authorities (in federal states)
- B. Establishment of a biosphere reserve from an existing protected area or ex nihilo
- C. Mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zones (Seville strategy Art. 4, item 7a): Regulatory and contractual policies, incentives and joint decision-making
- D. Authority or mechanism: The difference between an authorities and mechanisms, their composition and regulatory/enforcement powers (police powers)
- E. Institutional mechanisms to manage, coordinate and integrate programmes and activities of the biosphere reserve (role of a central coordinating entity for the biosphere reserve vs. roles of all other public actors in the area)
- F. Models for authorities and mechanisms and their advantages and weaknesses
 - 1) Existing body of a protected area (in some cases extending beyond its boundaries) or of part of the area
 - 2) Structure under specific national legislation on biosphere reserves

- 3) Public governing body adapted to the needs of the biosphere reserve
- 4) Governance of an island
- 5) Public (including (inter)municipal)
- 6) Private
- 7) Public/private partnerships (including clear definition of roles and responsibilities)
- 8) Ad hoc structure
- 9) Others

Part IV. Management and policy in biosphere reserves

I. Introduction

II. Management policy and plan

- A. Introduction
- B. Why is a management plan necessary (i.e. what are its crucial benefits)?
- C. What is a management plan?
- D. What are the issues to be addressed by a management plan?
- E. How to plan and draft a management plan. (including how to develop a biosphere reserve vision, stakeholder and community participation and involvement, and governance of biosphere reserves.
- F. How to implement a management plan (including stakeholder and community participation and involvement.

III. Business policy and plan

- A. Introduction: Terminology for a business strategy, business policy and business plan
- B. Why is a business strategy/policy/plan necessary?
- C. What is a business strategy/policy/plan? What might it include?
- D. How to plan a business strategy
- E. How to implement a business strategy
- F. Funding models for biosphere reserves
- G. Fundraising strategy

IV. Marketing strategy

- A. Introduction: Why is a marketing strategy necessary?
- B. What is a marketing strategy? What might it include?
- C. How to plan a marketing strategy
- D. How to implement a marketing strategy
- E. How to develop a brand for biosphere reserves

V. Communication plan

- A. Introduction: Why is a communication strategy and plan necessary? (Make the link to the global MAB communication strategy)
- B. What is a communication plan? What might it include?
- C. How to plan and implement a communication plan

VI. Transboundary biosphere reserves

Introduction, specificities, case studies

VII. Multi-designated sites

Introduction, specificities, case studies

Part V. Monitoring in biosphere reserves

I. Introduction

II. Quality control

- A. The quality control process
- B. How to track performance of a biosphere reserve: Performance indicators (Seville Strategy)
- C. What effective tools can be used to monitor biosphere reserves?

III. Periodic review

- A. What is the Process of Excellence?
- B. How to prepare a report for the periodic review
- C. The evaluation process
- D. How to implement corrective measures

IV. Web-based information clearing house and information centre (3.1 Madrid Action Plan)

- A. Common requirements of a Web-based information centre (monitoring data collected, collaboration, exchange)
- B. Components of an information centre
- C. Suggested architecture of a Web-based information centre
- D. Technical suggestions for the architecture: OS, database, web tech, and software

V. How to map biosphere reserves

- A. Methods to be adopted
- B. Reference data
- C. Available tools

VI. Management and monitoring of transboundary biosphere reserves

- A. The agreement between the countries
- B. Boundaries issue (link with Zonation TSG)
- C. Info box/case study

VII. Management and monitoring of biosphere reserves with multi-designations

- A. Description of international multi-designation
- B. Case studies

ANNEXES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

