



GHANA MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE (MAB) NATIONAL COMMITTEE



Report on Activities Undertaken between September 2021 and June 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ghana has three (3) Biosphere Reserves at present: Bia (1983), Songor (2011) and Lake Bosomtwe (2016) {Figure 1}.

The Man and the Biosphere (MAB) National Committee of Ghana is hosted by the Environmental Protection Agency of Ghana and is currently composed of 28 members representing government regulatory and research institutions, universities and civil society. The development of the Ghana Action Plan for the MAB Programme (GAP) in 2018 from the Lima Action Plan has facilitated a national framework for action on the Lima Action Plan as a tool for enhanced stakeholder engagement and support at the local, national and international levels. As a member of the MAB Council, Ghana continues to support various sustainable development initiatives.

This report presents activities implemented between September 2021 and June 2022

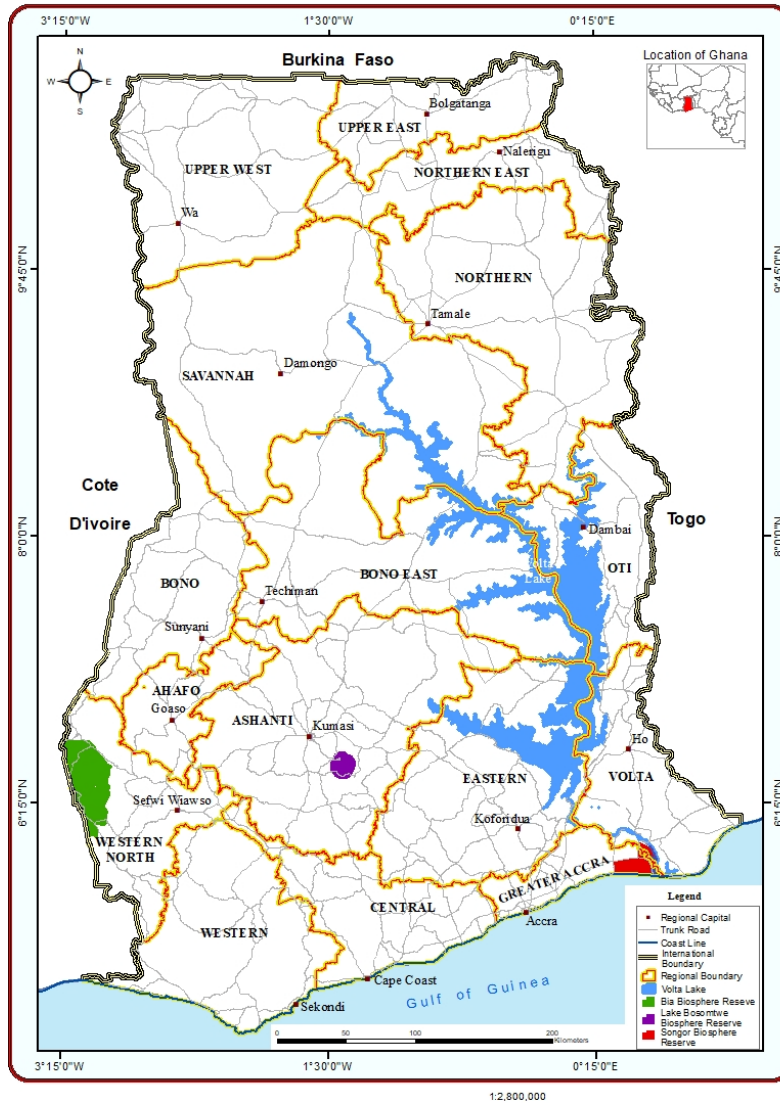


Figure 1. Map of Ghana showing the location of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

2.0 ENSURING EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MAB PROGRAMME

Strategic Area E of the Lima Action Plan for “Effective governance within the MAB Programme and the WNBR”

- i. Ghana continues to ensure representation at the MAB council sessions and those of the relevant regional and thematic networks and presents regular updates to such meetings each year. Ghana presented four representatives to last year’s hybrid Council meeting held in Abuja and online.
- ii. The Environmental Protection Agency as the host institution for the MAB Programme ensured the organisation of the General Assembly of the MAB National Committee in December 2021. The general assemblies are used to review activity implementation and plan for the coming year.

- iii. A handbook for mainstreaming the biosphere reserve concept into development planning was developed and published in 2021 in collaboration with the National Development Planning Commission. The published handbook was launched at a national workshop organised in the Songor Biosphere Reserve, which was well patronised by local communities, traditional leaders, various conservation and development partners as well as the press (Fig 2). The handbook has since been distributed to various district assemblies and is expected to provide technical guidance to District Plan Coordinating Units (DPCUs) to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services in development planning.



2.1 Formation of Partnerships for Enhancing Research in Biosphere Reserves

In line with Action A4 to “Establish partnerships with universities/research institutions”, five (universities) and research institutions are involved in the ‘Biosphere Learning Laboratory at

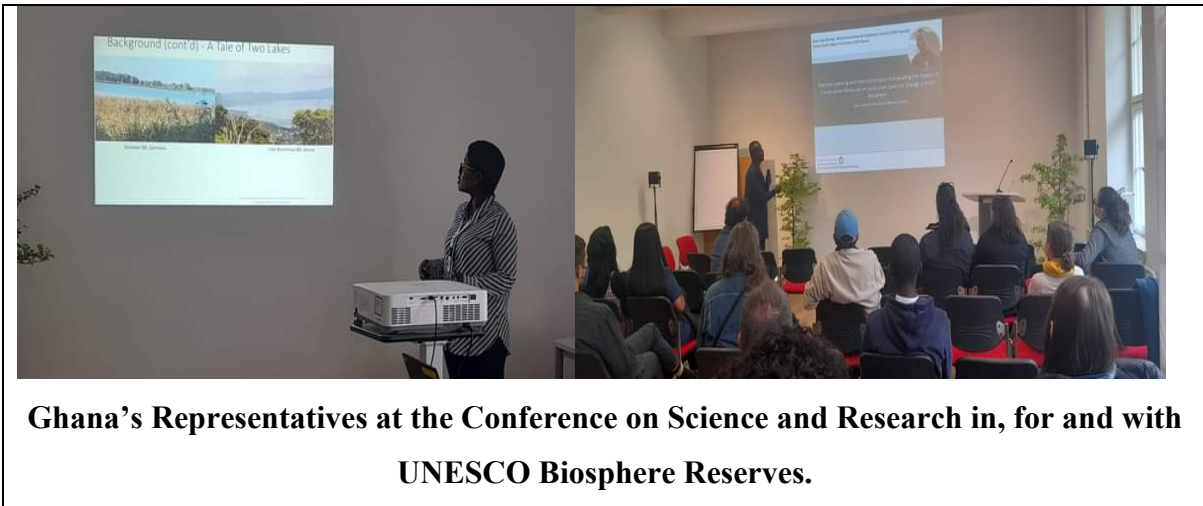
Lake Bosomtwe (BL3B) project led by the Biosphere Reserves Institute of Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development in Germany. In pursuance of this, a capacity building exchange visit was organised for the Ghanaian partners to four (4) biosphere reserves in Germany and Denmark. The partners are: Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Energy and Natural Resources, and Akenten Appiah Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development, the Forestry Research Institute of Ghana with the Environmental Protection Agency and Water Resources Commission as supporting institutions. The project builds on the twinning exchange between Schalsee and Lake Bosomtwe Biosphere Reserves and has started supporting student exchanges to Lake Bosomtwe Biosphere Reserve under the Master of Biosphere Reserve Management Programme. The project will among other things, support student research exchanges and build capacity for research.

The project has also resourced the Lake Bosomtwe Biosphere Reserve with research equipment such as drones, camera traps, binoculars and laptops for use by the research partners. A review of the curricular in each of the universities to ensure integration of the biosphere reserve concept is ongoing and expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Ghana was represented at the recent Conference on Science and Research with UNESCO Biosphere Reserves held in Schorfheide Biosphere Reserve in Germany.



Exchange visit by BL3B local partners to Germany, 2021



3.0 OTHER ACTIVITIES

In pursuance of Action A1.1 to “Promote Existing Biosphere Reserves as sites that actively contribute to achieving the sustainable Development Goals, SDGS”, the third national forum on biosphere reserves and sustainable development is being planned for the International Biosphere Reserves Day in November 2022.

3.1 MAB Young Scientists Award

The MAB National committee advertised the annual call for proposals and screened two applications for submission to UNESCO Headquarters early 2022.

3.2 Periodic Review and Monitoring

The periodic review of the Songor Biosphere Reserve has been undertaken awaiting validation by local stakeholders and submission to UNESCO Headquarters. The annual monitoring and support visits were also conducted by the National MAB Secretariat to all the Biosphere Reserves.

3.3 Nomination of New Biosphere Reserves

Stakeholder consultations continued for the mobilisation of financial resources and community support for the nomination of the Kyabobo National Park.

3.4 MAB Youth Network

The national youth network organised various support activities such as beach clean-ups and community sensitization to mark World Wetlands Day.

4.0 NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The MAB National Committee anticipates increased stakeholder collaboration and resource mobilization for enhanced visibility and awareness creation on the MAB Programme and the Biosphere Reserve Concept.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Ghana remains committed to ensuring the effective implementation of the Lima Action Plan and extends her best compliments to all partners for their support and cooperation.