



**THE NIGERIA MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE (MAB) NATIONAL COMMITTEE
REPORT PRESENTED TO THE 32ND SESSION OF THE MAB COUNCIL,
OCTOBER, 2020**

Handing Over of Chairmanship of the African Network of Biosphere Reserves (AFRIMAB) to Cote D’Ivoire at the 6th AFRIMAB General Assembly

Nigeria participated in the 6th General Assembly of AfriMAB where the position of the Chairman was handed over to Cote d’Ivoire. The general objective of the 6th GA was to provide capacity building within the network through the suggestion of sustainable management strategies for Biosphere Reserves in the context of climate change. The theme was *“Biosphere Reserves’ Contribution to Sustainable Development in the Context of Climate Change”*. The meeting was held at Hotel Belle Cote, Cocody, Abidjan, between 29th September – 4th October 2019.

The 6th General Assembly approved a proposal made by the Nigeria MAB Focal Point, Prof. Adeshola Adepoju that the Youth wing of AfriMAB be officially launched during the 2020 MAB ICC in Nigeria.



Submission of Nomination Forms for the Proposed Biosphere Reserves

Three nomination forms were submitted to the MAB Secretariat for consideration in September 2019. The proposed BRs are Oban, Okwangwo (Cross River state) and Hadejia-Nguru-Bade (Jigawa and Yobe States)



BIOPALT Meeting

The MAB National Chairman attended a workshop to participate in the *Capacity building session on the synergy between the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) and the World Heritage Convention in the countries of the Lake Chad Basin*, which was held in Saint-Louis (Senegal) from July 15th to 22th, 2019. The event was organized by UNESCO as part of the implementation of the Biosphere and Heritage of Lake Chad (BIOPALT) project.

Restoration and Re-Delineation of Buffer Zone

The restoration of the degraded parts of the buffer zone of Omo Biosphere Reserve continues during this raining season. Gaps identified were planted up with indigenous tree species in form of enrichment planting. To avoid the future threat to the buffer zone, Nigeria MAB re-demarcated to strengthen the conservation of Omo Biosphere Reserve.

Increased Patrol in Biosphere Reserve

The level of patrol within the Biosphere has been jacked up to prevent the effect of COVID-19 on biodiversity conservation. In search of sustainable income, many protected areas experienced intentional activities by the locals, either through the collection of firewood, timber, and Non-Timber-Forest-Products. Efforts were geared up to increase the level of protection in the biosphere reserve. The place is still being patrolled and vulnerable wildlife is still being guarded. This continued protection is as a result of the dedication of BR staff during a difficult time.

Production Herbal Products for Amelioration of Covid-19

It's no doubt that the lockdown has caused a lot of concerns globally, with deep consequences and has brought about exploring human behavior ranging from usual way of life to social dynamics. Such consequences have shown both positive and negative impacts on human activities at a global scale with potentially major effects on the environment. While the COVID pandemics is on, the OBR office is not relenting to implement activities.

Additionally, COVID-19 has put health researchers to test particularly in Africa. This has further juxtaposed the quest for re-strategizing action plan for research and development in herbal medicine in Nigeria as potential COVID-19 therapy grounded in science. The over 1million confirmed COVID cases and about 28,000 deaths reported in the African continent as well as over 36 million confirmed cases and about 977,000 deaths registered all over the world, have stimulated the quest and race to finding a cure and vaccine for the virus.

The COVID-19 cases challenged the Forestry Research Institute of Nigeria to develop a Poly-Herbal Mixture and Remedy from herbal plants for the management of COVID-19 related ailments and immune booster (FRIN C-TONE). This herbal product has officially been certified by National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) with the issuance of a registration number for commencement of post marketing surveillance and general usage.



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Man and
the Biosphere
Programme



Commendably, FRIN is the first Institution in Nigeria to be granted this certification by NAFDAC for its COVID-19 ailment related herbal product.

The Omo Biosphere Reserve has looked into its evergreen landscape to produce a reliable herbal-based sanitizer following standards laid out by the World Health Organization (WHO). The result is an alcohol-based solution with oil of *Luffa cylindrica* seed, which was found to possess both antibacterial and antiviral effects, added with black seed oil (*Nigella sativa*) and honey. So far, over 20,000 units have been produced.



Research Activities

Project/research implementation has been greatly affected. Most research works were pending during the lockdown. Students are negatively affected as they are missing opportunities for practical training and research in fieldwork. Universities and the conservation community need to support these students by giving them the chance to make up their training and lost opportunities.

COVID-19 Enlightenment Campaign

Enlightenment campaign was carried out among the communities at the pick of the pandemics. The staff of the Biosphere Reserve visited villages close to the buffer zone, for COVID-19 sensitization and awareness creation to educate them on the impact of the pandemics and advice



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Man and
the Biosphere
Programme



to stay safe while going about their normal duties. The essence of this visit was to strengthen conservation collaborations to collectively safeguard the forest from human interference.

National Priorities

- To increase the number of Biosphere Reserves
- To strengthen the conservation status of the existing reserve by engaging local communities in policymaking, security, and environmental education and awareness.
- To seek funding for the management of the Biosphere Reserve.

Conclusion

Omo Biosphere Reserve serves as a pacesetter in the area of livelihood project implementation. An example is the GEBR project being replicated in other conservation areas. It is believed that more biosphere reserves will be enlisted very soon.