

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

International Coordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

Twenty-second session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, France

31 May – 4 June 2010

http://portal.unesco.org/science/en/ev.php-URL_ID=6793&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

Item 12 of the Provisional Agenda:

Capacity building

b. South-South Co-operation

1. At its twenty-first session of the ICC, held in 2009 in Jeju, Republic of Korea the Council encouraged future development plans of ERAIFT for capacity-building within the MAB Programme and UNESCO in Africa thus stimulating the development of similar institutions in other parts of Africa, e.g. Côte d'Ivoire or Congo, and networking across similar ecosystems in the Amazon, the Congo Basin and Asian tropics with appropriate South-South and South-North-South partners.

2. As the Council had requested the Secretariat to investigate, in collaboration with selected UNESCO Chairs, relevant UNESCO Category II Centres and other partner institutions, the Secretariat launched the initiative for a collaborative programme for capacity building in sustainable development research and development in biosphere reserves, which would link these partners.

3. One example has been the launching of the partnership of UNESCO Chairs in Sustainable Development, which has now been established between the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve and the UNESCO Chair for Sustainable Development in Bilbao, Spain; the Agua y Paz Biosphere Reserve and the UNESCO Chair in Biosphere Reserves and Natural and Mixed World Heritage Sites in San José, Costa Rica; and the future Marajo Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO Chair for South-South Co-operation in Belém, Brazil.

4. During the 21st session of the ICC, the South-South Cooperation Network for Capacity Building and Sustainable Development in the Humid Tropics was launched and a memorandum of cooperation was signed at a special ceremony on Thursday 28 May 2009 at the Jeju KAL Hotel, Jeju Island, ROK. This Network led by Prof. Luis Aragon, Coordinator of the UNESCO Chair in South-South Cooperation for Sustainable Development at the Federal University of Pará (UFPA), Belém, Brazil and coordinator of the interdisciplinary doctoral Programme on Sustainable Development of the humid tropics at the Centre for Advanced Amazonian Studies (NAEA), Dr Raymond Lumbuenamo, Professor at ERAIFT and the University of Kinshasa, DRC, and Dr Endang Sukara, Chair of the Indonesian MAB National Committee and Deputy of the Indonesian Institute of Science. This South-South partnership is committed to linking many research and academic institutions throughout the humid tropics of the world.

5. Three immediate actions are being launched within this network: a) A meeting of the Rectors of NAEA, the University of Belém, ERAIFT, the University of Kinshasa and the Indonesian Institute of Science at ERAIFT in June 2010; b) An official South-South Cooperation meeting between these three partners and other interested tropical countries, as expressed by Sri Lanka at the Jeju session at a venue and time to be agreed upon; and c) the launching of the Amazonian South-South Cooperation Network in April 2010 in Belém, Brazil,

to which the UNESCO Chair in Belém will invite all ten biosphere reserves of the Amazon region to present collaborative one-year projects on nature conservation and rural development in these areas. After successful completion of this initiative, a three-year programme is foreseen with the same partners. The total amount for the Amazonian initiative is around USD 1,500,000, which is provided by the Spanish Ministry of Environment, Rural and Marine Affairs via the MAB Special Account.

6. As also discussed in Jeju, the UNESCO Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences has been developing a new initiative on Earth Science Education in Africa. This initiative, which was announced by the Director-General of UNESCO as a legacy item of the International Year of Planet Earth has held five African regional scoping meetings in the last eight months. During the scoping meeting in Kinshasa in February 2010, a number of initiative partners visited ERAIFT and have begun to develop proposals to collaborate with ERAIFT in the training of earth science specialists in such areas as remote sensing and tropical forest management as it relates to geological resources. This Initiative will hold a major event at UNESCO Headquarters on 28-29 October 2010.

7. The Council may wish to take note of this information and provide any further advice and guidance to the Secretariat with regard to enhancing South-South cooperation initiatives under the framework of MAB and WNBR activities.