

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,  
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**INTERNATIONAL COORDINATING COUNCIL OF  
THE MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE (MAB) PROGRAMME**

Twentieth Session

*Palacio Municipal de Congresos, Room Madrid, Madrid*

5-8 February 2008

**FINAL REPORT**

1. The twentieth session of the International Coordinating Council (ICC) of the Programme on the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) was held at the *Palacio Municipal de Congresos*, Madrid from 5 to 8 February 2008.

2. Participants included representatives of the following Members of the ICC as elected by the UNESCO General Conference at its 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> sessions: Argentina, Austria, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Germany, Israel, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mali, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Viet Nam, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

3. In addition, observers from the following Member States were present: Algeria, Angola, Australia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Croatia, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Kuwait, Mauritania, Mexico, Montenegro, Niger, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Senegal, Slovenia, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United States of America, Uzbekistan and Yemen.

4. The following international organizations attended the session: The World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the International Council of Science (ICSU). The full list of participants is presented as Annex 1 to this report.

**I. Opening of the session**

5. Mr Thomas Elmqvist of Sweden, the outgoing Chairperson of the MAB ICC, declared the session opened and invited the representative of the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, to address participants of the session.

6. Mr Erdelen warmly welcomed the MAB-ICC delegates on behalf of Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO. He thanked the Spanish Government for its generous offer to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves and the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC,

highlighting the longstanding cooperation between Spain and UNESCO and the substantial support provided by Spain to the implementation of the MAB Programme.

7. Mr Erdelen recalled that the main item of discussion at this session of the ICC would be the Madrid Action Plan – a roadmap to provide a vision for the MAB Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and to guide their effective implementation in the years to come. He noted that, with the steadily-expanding WNBR and the expectation by the international community that this network will continue to be a basis for implementing sustainable development at local and regional levels in UNESCO Member States, the Madrid Action Plan could not afford to be anything but bold, ambitious, realistic, relevant, inclusive, transparent and representative in scope and participation. He also noted that it was time to mainstream the lessons learned in the context of the MAB Programme and the WNBR into the sustainability agenda, from science to policy, from research to practice, at the local, national, regional and global levels.

8. Mr Erdelen called upon the ICC Members to ensure that the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC delivers its expected results – the Madrid Declaration and the Madrid Action Plan, thus making the Madrid gathering a landmark event.

## **II. Report of the outgoing Chairperson**

9. Mr Elmqvist welcomed the new and the former Council Members as well as the observers and representatives from international organizations attending the session. He warmly thanked the government of Spain for hosting and generously supporting the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves and the 20<sup>th</sup> Session of the MAB-ICC in Madrid.

10. Mr Elmqvist reported to the Council on the decisions of the Bureau meeting held at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 18 to 20 September 2007, which focused on the nomination of new biosphere reserves. He informed that 34 nominations had been received since the last MAB-ICC meeting in October 2006 and that 23 biosphere reserves in 18 countries were approved by the Bureau, including first-time sites in El Salvador, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. Two other biosphere reserves – Rostovsky in the Russian Federation and Islas Marietas in Mexico – were approved by the Bureau during its meeting on 3 February 2008 in Madrid, after it considered additional information and clarifications on some aspects of these nominations. He also mentioned that the governments of Ukraine, Belarus and Poland had agreed to sign an official agreement in support of the proposed West Polesie Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.

11. Mr Elmqvist reported on activities he had undertaken as Chairperson since the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC. He referred to a side-event on “Biosphere Reserves as Platforms for Learning and Innovation” that was organized by the MAB Secretariat together with the Viet Nam MAB National Committee and National Commission for UNESCO and held during the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in May 2007 in New York. He informed the members of the ICC that the international launch of the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC) had also taken place during the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in May 2007 and that a Memorandum of Understanding between the SRC and UNESCO had been signed in October 2007 during the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference of UNESCO in Paris. He stated that it was hoped that MAB would be a very significant partner in the work of the SRC.

12. Mr Elmqvist also reported on his involvement in the follow-up on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and reiterated the crucial role that the MAB Programme and the WNBR could play in this process. He mentioned the establishment of a research network on urban issues and the initiation of a research and capacity building programme on management and governance of ecosystem services, which will focus on Africa. Mr Elmqvist announced that in 2012 the SRC will host an international conference on environmental issues to take stock of the results accomplished in this field since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in 1972 in Stockholm.

13. Mr Elmqvist then briefly introduced his views on the draft Madrid Action Plan and raised the question of the possibility of its adoption by the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the Council and proposed its adoption at an extraordinary session of the MAB-ICC after consultation with governments. He also expressed concerns with regard to the transparency of the election process of the new Chairperson and the MAB-ICC Bureau.

14. In the brief ensuing discussion, the delegate from Egypt supported Mr Elmqvist's proposal to adopt the Madrid Action Plan at an extraordinary session of the MAB-ICC after consultation with governments, while the delegates from Austria, Chile and Lebanon disagreed on the proposal and stressed that the MAB-ICC was indeed in the position of adopting the Madrid Action Plan at this 20<sup>th</sup> session.

15. The delegate from Germany raised a point of order, recalling that, according to the Statutes, substantive discussions can only take place after the new MAB-ICC Bureau has been elected. In this regard, he stressed that new Members to the MAB-ICC had been elected by the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference of UNESCO and hence the election of a new Chair and Bureau was a necessary agenda item to address before the 20<sup>th</sup> session could proceed to consider other substantive agenda items including the adoption of the provisional agenda. At his request, a staff member of the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs, Mr Jean Christophe Badaroux-Mendieta confirmed that, according to Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Statutes of the MAB-ICC, the first obligation of the ICC was to "elect a new Bureau whenever its own membership is changed by the General Conference". Consequently, it was decided that the members of the MAB-ICC should proceed with the election of a new Chair and a new Bureau for the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC.

### **III. Election of the Bureau of the MAB Council**

16. The MAB-ICC elected the following to the Bureau of the MAB Council:

**Chairperson:**

Mr Henri Djombo (Congo)

**Vice-Chairpersons:**

Mr Valery Neronov (Russian Federation)

Mr Antonio Serrano (Spain)

Mr Ghassan Ramadan Jaradi (Lebanon)

Mr Chung-II Choi (Republic of Korea)

Mr Alfredo Reca (Argentina)

#### **IV. Adoption of the agenda and timetable**

17. The MAB-ICC agreed that the recognition of the winner of the Michel Batisse Award should be dealt with under item 13 of the agenda, i.e. other matters. The MAB-ICC adopted the MAB-ICC 20 agenda, as contained in Annex 2 to this report.

#### **V. Report of the Secretary on programmes and activities since the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC**

18. The Secretary of the MAB Programme presented his report on programmes and activities since the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 23 to 27 October 2006, which had been submitted to the MAB-ICC as document SC-08/CONF.201/INF.1. He informed the MAB-ICC that the work of the MAB Secretariat since the previous session of the Council focused, in particular, on the preparation of the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC and the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves. He referred to the information on the progress on preparations for the two Madrid events which was circulated to MAB and UNESCO organs via circular letters CL/MAB/2007/03 dated 31 July 2007 and CL/MAB/2007/05 dated 18 December 2007.

19. He recalled that the Draft Madrid Action Plan had been compiled by a three-person team – Ms June Marie Mow Robinson (Colombia), Ms Doris Pokorny (Germany) and Mr Juan Garay Zabala (Spain) and subsequently endorsed by the joint Meeting of the MAB Bureau and the Organizing Committee for the Madrid events, which took place under the auspices of the former Chairperson of the MAB-ICC, Mr Thomas Elmqvist, and which was kindly hosted by the Stockholm Resilience Centre, Sweden in June 2007. The first draft of the Madrid Action Plan was ready in October 2007, which received important inputs and revisions proposed by the Chairperson and the Members of the Bureau, MAB National Committees as well as other partner organizations and individuals. A revised draft was posted on the MABNet on 20 December 2007 for additional comments by the international MAB community. All comments received (27 in total) are to be examined at the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the ICC to obtain a consensus Madrid Action Plan acceptable to all.

20. The Secretary of the MAB Programme also reported on some relevant results of the 34<sup>th</sup> session of the UNESCO General Conference held at UNESCO Headquarters in October–November 2007, in particular, the consideration by the General Conference of the results of the Overall Review Committee for Major Programmes II (Natural Sciences) and III (Social and Human Sciences) that had been appointed by the Director-General. He pointed out that the draft Madrid Action Plan would address the implementation of many of the recommendations of the Review Committee.

21. The Secretary of the MAB Programme informed the MAB-ICC on new developments related to partnerships involving the MAB Programme, including those with an International Institute for a Partnership for Environment and Development (IIPED), being established in Trieste, Italy as a category 2 institute under the auspices of UNESCO; the Memorandum of Understanding signed by UNESCO and the Stockholm Resilience Centre; and the Memorandum of Understanding signed by UNESCO and the Star Alliance Group of Airlines.

22. The Secretary of the MAB Programme reported on the inclusion of 25 new biospheres reserves into the WNBR, which counts 531 sites in 105 countries. He also reported on the main ecosystems activities of the MAB Programme: in the area of drylands and related activities to

combat desertification, he informed the MAB-ICC that the MAB Secretariat was currently finalizing the proceedings of the Conference on “The Future of Drylands”, held in Tunis in June 2006. The Conference benefited from significant scientific inputs from the current international MAB project on “Sustainable Management of Marginal Drylands (SUMAMAD)”. In the context of the UNEP-GEF regional project for six West African biosphere reserves, which has generated a great wealth of knowledge since its inception in 2004, efforts are currently being made in order to share this knowledge with policy-makers and demonstrate how results from the project can be incorporated into the management plans of the six biosphere reserves concerned. With regard to mountain ecosystems, focus is currently on the follow-up to the European Commission-UNESCO-MAB Mountain Research Initiative project on “Global Change and Mountain Regions (GLOCHAMORE)”, which uses mountain biosphere reserves in all regions of the world to assess the impact of global change, including climate change, on mountain environments and people. As for the activities in coastal/marine areas, a new sub-regional MAB Network for the Pacific region, PacMAB, has been created, which will *inter alia* promote the creation of new biosphere reserves, in particular in Pacific island countries that have not yet joined the WNBR.

23. In the area of capacity building, the Secretary of the MAB Programme reported on the activities and success of the ERAIFT (Regional Postgraduate School on Integrated Management of Tropical Forests and Lands) in Kinshasa, DRC, which has trained more than 60 Africans at master’s degree level and has awarded its first three PhDs. The challenge for the future is to strengthen ERAIFT and to use this project as a model for the development of other regional training facilities for other ecosystems, including arid lands and wetlands.

24. An International Conference on Humid Tropical Ecosystems was held in Kandy, Sri Lanka in December 2006. It recommended to explore various possibilities so as to build South-South and triangular South-North-South cooperation in the Congo Basin, the Amazon region and the South-East Asia region.

25. The Secretary of the MAB Programme mentioned the attribution of the 2008 MAB Young Scientists Awards aimed to support research on environmental issues; he also indicated that six issues of the electronic MAB Newsletter had been released since the last MAB-ICC, with the aim to strengthen communication within and beyond the WNBR.

26. The Secretary of the MAB Programme introduced two new staff members of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences in Paris: Ms Sarah Gaines, USA and Ms Wakako Ichikawa, Japan.

27. Finally, he informed the members of the MAB-ICC that a handbook on biosphere reserves, as requested at the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC, had been compiled by a former member of the MAB Secretariat, Ms Jane Robertson, and that the handbook would be made available for comments on the MABNet.

## **VI Realignment of ICC working methods and practices to better meet UNESCO’s planning and programming agendas**

## **VII Regional, sub-regional and thematic networks as future drivers of MAB and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)**

## **VIII Biosphere reserve zones in conservation, development and building a knowledge society**

## **IX Research and capacity building in biosphere reserves for ecosystem goods and services**

## **X Learning, adaptive management and governance for sustainable development in biosphere reserves**

28. The Chairperson of the ICC noted that the working documents corresponding to agenda items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 had been requested by the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the ICC in view of preparing the Madrid Action Plan. All the documents had been presented to the plenary of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves on the afternoon of 4 February at the same venue and where many of the ICC Members and observers were present. Hence, based on the suggestion of the Chairperson, the Council decided not to have another round of presentations of these five working documents but consider comments on those documents pertaining to agenda items 6 to 10 within the context of the Council's discussions on the Madrid Action Plan.

## **XI Discussions and decisions on the Madrid Action Plan and the Madrid Declaration (Agenda items 11 and 12)**

29. The Chairperson introduced the draft Madrid Action Plan (MAP) or document SC-08/CONF.201/8. He recalled the process that led to its formulation, namely, the establishment by the Bureau of the MAB-ICC of a three-person drafting team and widespread public consultations on the draft through the MABNet, and he opened the floor for comments from the ICC Members and Observers inviting them to provide practical views on whether there would be a need, and if so how, to improve the current draft MAP. The ICC Members made the following comments on the draft Madrid Action Plan (MAP):

- The delegate from Argentina stressed that the proposed Task Force charged with supervising the implementation of the MAP should liaise with the ICC Bureau; or else, an alternative mechanism through which to ensure participation by ICC Members in the Task Force should be envisaged.
- The delegate from Mali suggested the need to elaborate further upon the section of the MAP dealing with ecosystem services.
- The delegate from the Russian Federation stressed that protected areas should remain the main element of any biosphere reserves, in the form of their core zones; and that while defining core zone status, special attention should be paid to the conservation of pristine and quasi-pristine areas. He insisted on the importance to link biosphere reserves with the implementation of relevant international agreements and, in particular, the Programme of Work on Protected Areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It was also suggested that the MAB-ICC be upgraded to an intergovernmental council to enable adequate support of National Governments to MAB National Committees.
- The delegate from Madagascar supported the request by Argentina to ensure that ICC Members interested in taking part in the proposed Task Force would be able to do so. The question of giving the appropriate importance to the issue of climate change in the context of the MAP was raised. It was noted that climate change poses risks as well as opportunities (especially in terms of carbon 'industries'), including for building adequate capacity, and that the notion of climate change had progressively evolved into broader issues related to landscape use, which should be addressed in the context of the MAP.

- The delegate from Egypt suggested that any change in the name of the MAB Programme would be misleading and counterproductive. It was stressed that it was imperative to reinforce the current structure of the MAB Programme and foresee appropriate enforcement measures. It was also stressed that biosphere reserves should act as laboratories for solving real problems such as water-related issues and natural disasters. It was felt that the term 'governance' was misleading in that it had a political connotation and that, in the context of the MAP, terms such as 'management' should be used in its place. It was pointed out that involving the private sector further in the activities of biosphere reserves was a good endeavor and that memoranda of understanding to this end should be developed; this type of partnerships should allow for private ventures such as ecotourism companies to utilize the MAB image, for example through the use of the MAB logo. It was also proposed that post-graduate diploma schemes be developed in biosphere reserves or the MAB Programme, which would assist in addressing the science education component of the MAP.
- The delegate from Sri Lanka commended the draft MAP and expressed its appreciation at the fact that several of the recommendations made at the International Conference on Humid Tropical Ecosystems held in Sri Lanka in December 2006 had been reflected in the draft Madrid Action Plan. He also expressed the need for guidelines and incentives to implement the biosphere reserve concept in buffer zones and transition areas with the aim of clarifying the notion of 'pilot testing sites', as well as the need for guidelines on the functioning of the MAB Programme for the National Committees.
- The delegate from the United Kingdom stressed the importance to maintain the core values of the MAB Programme, specifically with regard to inclusiveness, participation and societal choice. He stressed that the MAP should be a refinement and clarification of the Seville Strategy. Satisfaction was expressed with regard to linkages in the draft MAP with other UNESCO Intergovernmental Scientific Programmes (ISPs).
- The delegate from Spain supported the current draft MAP while recognizing the need for its possible improvements. He warned the ICC on the importance of referring to 'good practices' in biosphere reserves rather than to the notion of 'laboratories', as the latter would imply experimental activities rather than implementation. It was stressed that the finalization of the draft MAP should include clarification on its juridical aspects before its final endorsement by the General Conference of UNESCO in 2009. Furthermore, the delegate noted that Spain would not support the establishment of a new Task Force, because there are other bodies of the MAB Programme (ICC, Advisory Committee, and Regional Networks) that could deal with the work proposed for the Task Force.
- The delegate from Iran called for the conservation element in the vision of the draft MAP to be reinforced, as well as for the strengthening of the provisions related to technical assistance, capacity-building and to education.
- The delegate from Cuba stressed the pertinence of the draft MAP and drew the ICC's attention to the important contribution that the regional networks could provide towards its finalization. Changes in names of the MAB Programme and biosphere reserves were seen as less relevant.
- The delegate from Germany supported the draft MAP as an appropriate basis on which to proceed with further steps related to its finalization. It was stressed that the Seville Strategy should be linked with the draft MAP so as to ensure continuity and capitalize upon past efforts and experiences. It was suggested that a number of concrete measures should be

foreseen in the context of the MAP, including: strengthening the currently loose structure of the MAB Programme; developing strong indicators; identifying clear targets; and cooperating with the private sector. Skepticism about the possible changes in the name of the MAB Programme, as well as the establishment of the Task Force was expressed.

- The delegate from the Dominican Republic drew the attention of the ICC to the need for the draft MAP to address the ethical dimension of climate change and of consumption patterns in biosphere reserves and for the principle of shared and differentiated responsibilities to be introduced in the draft MAP. It was pointed out that the logical framework of some of its parts should be improved; that the MAP should make specific reference to quality, quantity and time indicators for actions; and that it should also include actions to be carried out by local government authorities.
- The delegate from Slovakia suggested that the draft MAP could refer to partners in ecosystem and landscape research such as the United Nations University (UNU), in particular the newly established UNU Research and Training Centre for Ecosystems and Landscape Health in Slovakia and the International Long Term Ecological Research (ILTER) network.
- The delegate from Indonesia supported the suggestion that climate change be included in the draft MAP. It was stated forcefully that climate change needs immediate responses so as to improve mitigation capacities and to be able to develop plans at all levels in order to counteract the adverse effects of climate change.
- The delegate from Ethiopia called for the expeditious establishment of a drafting committee in order to finalize the draft MAP.
- The delegate from the Republic of Korea pointed out to experiences whereby problems have raised with regard to the perception of the term 'reserve' and proposed the term 'park' as a more appropriate designation. It was also stressed that the 'soft-law nature' of the Statutory Framework may entail limited consideration of the MAB Programme at the central government level as compared with international conventions.

30. The ICC Observers expressed the following comments on the Madrid Action Plan (MAP):

- The delegate from Canada stated that the draft MAP was too ambitious, lacked realism in light of the limited resources available and that priority-setting was therefore needed. The need to build on the Seville Strategy was stressed. In its current form, the draft MAP was found to reflect an incomplete picture of sustainable development as it lacked technological, informational and cultural aspects, such as local and traditional uses of biodiversity. The MAP should allow for participatory approaches, partnerships and integration – three main characteristics of biosphere reserves – to be applied to larger portions of the landscape, including urban areas. It was noted that the periodic review could be used as an opportunity for stakeholder consultations and for developing models of cooperative efforts; in this regard, it was also noted that flexibility with regard to zoning was needed.
- The representative of the World Heritage Convention reminded the ICC Members and Observers that more than 80 sites were biosphere reserves that also included areas inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. He informed the MAB-ICC that these joint sites were not only natural heritage and biodiversity sites, but were also cultural landscapes, mixed sites, archaeological and rock-art sites, and that cooperation between these sites was being further

advanced so as to achieve common conservation objectives. It was suggested that the conservation function be strengthened and the partnerships with the Convention be made more explicit in the draft MAP, especially with regard to the action area related to zonation.

- The representative of the IUCN encouraged the ICC to sharpen the scope of the targets of the MAP and suggested that it be shortened without detracting from its key messages. It was stressed that the MAP should reflect a sense of urgency, in particular regarding the key role of biosphere reserves in addressing the loss of species and pervasive threats of climate change. In this context, the role and functions of the different areas/zones of biosphere reserves should be clarified, and the periodic review process used further as a strategic tool to measure the performance of biosphere reserves against national standards for sustainable development. More emphasis should be put on partnerships; in this context, it was stressed that linkages with the CBD and with the IUCN Connectivity and Climate Change initiative, as well as with the broader process of the IUCN World Conservation Congress to be held in Barcelona in October 2008, should be established.
- The representative of the ERAIFT called for the MAP to be guided by a systemic approach, which should also be reflected in the name of the MAB Programme. The MAP should reflect the notion of poverty reduction and rely on success indicators. It was referred that, as it was already recognized by the UNESCO governing organs, ERAIFT represented a model for tropical forest management beyond Central Africa and in fact beyond Africa itself, for other tropical regions such as in South America.
- A former Secretary of the MAB Programme suggested the need for the MAP to act as a very valuable communication document, which implied the need for streamlining the current version of the MAP. It was stressed that the Seville Strategy should be used as a basis against which to build the MAP.

31. Having listened to the various views on the draft MAP, the Chairperson recognized that it benefited from a general degree of support. In order to address the requests for its improvement made by several ICC Members and Observers, the Chairperson decided to establish a drafting committee under the chairmanship of Spain and comprising two representatives per regional group, two members of the UNESCO International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves and two members of the drafting team that was constituted by the MAB Bureau of the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC in order to prepare the draft MAP for discussions of the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC and the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves in Madrid.

32. Subsequently, the regional groups identified their representatives to the drafting committee, namely: Argentina, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Latvia, Madagascar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sudan and United Kingdom.

33. The ICC agreed that the drafting committee should work in parallel with the ICC, report to it regularly and deliver its final report – the finalized draft MAP by day 3 of ICC 20.

34. At the following working session of the MAB-ICC, the Chair of the Drafting Committee reported to the MAB-ICC on progress made by the Committee. During its first meeting, the Committee recognized that the Seville Strategy should be taken into account in their work. The Committee had a discussion on the main challenges noted in the draft MAP such as climate change, urbanization and provision of ecological services. The mission and vision had been discussed, and the members of the Committee felt that they should reflect a mixture of the options proposed in the current draft MAP. The Committee had agreed on the need to simplify

and shorten the MAP. Finally, the Chair noted the good spirit of participation in the Drafting Committee.

35. The Chairperson of the MAB-ICC expressed encouragement to the Drafting Committee. He informed the MAB-ICC that the syntheses of the work by the regional groups at the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves would be made available to the Drafting Committee and assured the Council that the views expressed by the various regions would be taken into due account in the draft MAP.

36. The delegate of the United Kingdom expressed concerns with regard to the need for all inputs formulated in the context of the World Congress to be transferred on to the Drafting Committee and the capacity of the latter to deal with all inputs received; he also proposed to provide all the necessary help to the Drafting Committee. This intervention was supported by an ICC Observer, Canada

37. Two ICC Observers then expressed the following observations:

- The delegate from Brazil added her comments on the draft MAP to those already expressed by other members and observers of the MAB-ICC the previous day. Namely, she explained that there was not a clear relationship between the introduction and the suggested actions; that operational guidance for implementing actions at the local level should be provided for in the draft MAP; and that reference to multilateral environmental agreements was missing. She also raised the question of fundraising strategies that are needed to implement the MAP.
- The delegate from France stressed that it was important that the Drafting Committee would take into account the views from the regions. He took this opportunity to stress that the process of demographic changes should also be taken into account by the draft MAP, as this process was not reflected in the Seville Strategy.

38. In response, the Chairperson of the MAB-ICC reassured delegates that all pertinent elements would be taken into account in the process of drafting the MAP, through a large consultation process at the Council and the Congress and the regular interaction of the Drafting Committee with the regional and thematic groups of the Congress.

39. The representative from an ICC Observer, Algeria, pointed out that the MAP should also address issues related to poverty, fair international trade (especially of natural resources) and the equitable sharing of benefits from natural resources.

40. The Chairperson of the MAB-ICC stated that the need to reconcile conservation with income generation was being considered in the draft MAP.

41. On 7 February, the Chairperson of the MAB-ICC invited the Chair of the Drafting Committee to inform the MAB-ICC on the progress of work by the Committee.

42. The report of the Chair of the Drafting Committee can be summarized as follows:

- The Committee met on 6 February from 16:00 to 21:00 and on 7 February from 10:00 to 13:00. The Committee will reconvene on the same day at 15:00.
- The Committee focused on simplifying the draft MAP by reducing redundancy and ensuring more coherence. It primarily focused on matching targets with actions. To this end, three sub-groups were formed within the Committee, and an in-depth examination of the draft

MAP was conducted so as to produce a single table clearly stating all the targets and related actions.

- Changes in the introduction of the MAP were made in order to better reflect the link with the Seville Strategy, which is still to be considered as a core document for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.
- Changes in the structure of the document were also made so as to reflect the comments and suggestions that the Committee received from the MAB-ICC and the regional and thematic groups that met in the context of the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves.
- A meeting with the chairs/rapporteurs of the regional groups was held to ensure that consensus comments from the regional groups were incorporated in the draft MAP; and a meeting with the chairs/rapporteurs of the thematic groups was scheduled for the same purpose;
- The Committee will continue its work on the vision and mission statements of the draft MAP.
- The Committee also considered the discussions on the establishment of a Task Force as suggested in the original draft MAP, and decided that the decision on this item needed to be taken by the ICC as a whole.

43. The ICC took note of the report of the Chair of the Drafting Committee. A draft Madrid Declaration was distributed for subsequent consideration by the MAB-ICC.

44. The Chairperson of the MAB-ICC opened the floor for discussion on the draft Madrid Declaration. A number of specific amendments were made. The MAB-ICC adopted the Madrid Declaration, as contained in Annex 3 of this report.

45. The Chairperson opened the floor for discussions on the second version of the draft MAP that had been produced by the MAB-ICC Drafting Committee. Members of the MAB-ICC provided amendments to the draft MAP as follows:

- The delegate from Argentina highlighted that some actions were repeated under different targets, and this duplication of actions should be avoided in the final version of the MAP.
- The delegate from Egypt requested the deletion of the expression stating 'in ethical, transparent and accountable manner' under Targets 4 and 7 of the draft MAP.
- The delegate from Togo highlighted that recommendations from the thematic group on forests had not been sufficiently reflected in the draft MAP.
- The delegate from Sri Lanka suggested that a sentence be added with regard to keeping the term 'biosphere reserves', while also giving the possibility to MAB National Committees to adapt it to particular national contexts, as appropriate.
- The delegate from Austria suggested adding to the MAP some strategic directions, particularly with regard to ensuring flexibility in the definition of areas/zones.
- The delegate from Colombia suggested that in Target 3 an action be included with regard to creation of a journalism award for communication work in promoting role and importance of biosphere reserves. With regard to Target 6, she proposed adding an action on creating an incentive programme to recognize the efforts of communities, individuals, institutions, networks and nations in creating, managing and promoting the biosphere reserves. She also stressed, with particular reference to Action 26, that the issue of alternative livelihoods was not adequately reflected in the draft MAP.

- The delegate from Sweden suggested adding reference to “local communities”; this suggestion was supported by one ICC Observer, Canada.
- In relation to Target 18, the delegate from Egypt raised the question of why coastal areas only and not other ecosystems were mentioned in this target. He also mentioned that the capacity-building component of the MAP, namely professional training, was not adequately reflected in the draft Madrid Action Plan. Finally, in this context, he suggested the establishment of University diplomas for biosphere reserve managers.
- The delegate from Germany made specific requests on the deletion of the terms ‘core areas and buffer’ on page 15, line 12 of the draft MAP and the replacement of the success indicator for Target 23 with ‘number of biosphere reserves integrating urban areas’. He proposed the following rewording of the section F of the MAP “The Madrid Action Plan (MAP) has been adopted at the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC also in view of implementing effectively UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy. In light of the rolling character of that strategy, possible adaptations of the MAP may be discussed at the next ICC Meeting in 2009”.

46. The representative of an ICC Observer, Canada, stated that it had been very difficult for French-speaking participants in the ICC session to follow the modifications being made to the texts since no French translation of the amended texts was available. The representative of France had also raised this issue. Canada regretted the lack of consultation with the participants in the Madrid Congress as well as with representatives from the private and the public sectors in the drafting of the Madrid Declaration although the latter states in its introductory paragraph, that they had been consulted.

47. With the above-mentioned amendments, the MAB-ICC adopted the Madrid Action Plan (MAP), as contained in Annex 4 to this report.

48. The MAB-ICC requested the MAB Secretariat to make available the adopted version of the MAP on the MABNet by mid-March 2008.

49. The Chairperson of the MAB-ICC requested that the Secretary of MAB, in collaboration with Permanent Delegations to UNESCO, explore the possibility of setting up an *ad hoc* committee operating at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, including representatives from all UNESCO regions as well as observers, to follow up on the implementation of the MAP.

## **XII. Date and venue of MAB-ICC 21**

50. The MAB-ICC decided to convene its 21<sup>st</sup> session in late May or early June 2009. Two proposals for the venue of MAB-ICC 21 were considered: the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and the Island of Jeju, Republic of Korea. The MAB-ICC requested the MAB Secretariat to explore the feasibility of these two options and propose the most appropriate date and venue for MAB-ICC 21 to the MAB-ICC Members by June 2008.

## **XIII. Other matters**

51. The delegate from the Republic of Korea requested that the map of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves be amended since there were errors in the way the Republic of Korea and

the Democratic Republic of Korea were referred to in the map. He therefore requested to halt the distribution of the map until the requested corrections were made.

52. The MAB Secretary informed the MAB-ICC that at its meeting in September 2007 at the UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, the MAB Bureau had approved the recommendation made by the Advisory Committee to grant the 2007 Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management to Mr Francisco Javier Jiménez Gonzáles, Mexico. The MAB-ICC congratulated Mr Jiménez Gonzáles on his work and officially granted him the 2007 Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management.

#### **XIV. Adoption of the report**

53. The Chairperson and the Members of the MAB-ICC entrusted the Secretariat with the finalization and translation of the report of the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC. They requested the Secretariat to send as soon as possible the draft version of the report to all Members of the ICC for their comments and approval. In the event that the Secretariat did not receive comments within a one-month deadline, the report would be considered adopted.

#### **XV. Closure of the session**

54. The Secretary of the MAB Programme thanked the Chair, the Bureau and the Council participants for their support and discussions. He also expressed his appreciation to his colleagues of the MAB Secretariat as well as those staff members working intensively behind the scenes, including the translators, interpreters, assistants and technicians. He heartily thanked the Spanish Government for the outstanding support provided to the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves and the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the ICC.

55. The Chairperson of MAB-ICC expressed his gratitude to the Spanish Government for its generosity for hosting the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves and the 20<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB-ICC. He also thanked the Secretariat, the Members of the MAB-ICC and all those involved in the preparations and smooth running of this session and declared the meeting closed.

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