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International Co-ordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
Twenty-fourth session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room XII (Fontenoy Building)
9 – 13 July 2012

ITEM 12 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA:

**PROPOSALS FOR NEW BIOSPHERE RESERVES AND
EXTENSIONS/ MODIFICATIONS TO BIOSPHERE RESERVES
THAT ARE PART OF THE
WORLD NETWORK OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES (WNBR)**

1. Proposals for new biosphere reserves and extensions to biosphere reserves that are already part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) were considered at the last meeting of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves (IACBR), which met at UNESCO Headquarters from 2 to 4 April 2012.
2. The Advisory Committee formulated their recommendations regarding specific sites following the recommendation categories as follows:
 - 1) *Nominations recommended for approval*: the proposed site is recommended for approval as a biosphere reserve; no additional information is needed.
 - 2) *Nominations recommended for approval pending the submission of specific information*: the proposed site is recommended for approval as a biosphere reserve subject to receiving the specific information as requested by the Advisory Committee. If the latter is received by the Secretariat by 31st May 2012, it will be considered by the next session of the MAB-ICC to be held from 9 to 13 July 2012 and the Council may approve the inclusion of the site in the WNBR.
 - 3) *Nominations deferred*: the proposed site is deferred as it does not meet the criteria for biosphere reserves as stipulated in the Statutory Framework for Biosphere Reserves and/or major clarifications with regard to the application of the Framework to the proposed area is requested by the Advisory Committee. The relevant National Authorities are therefore invited to revise the nomination and/or provide the requested clarifications for examination by the Advisory Committee at its next meeting.
 - 4) *Nominations rejected*: the proposed site is rejected as it is not sufficiently compatible with the principles of the MAB programme.
3. The Bureau of the MAB-ICC will consider the attached recommendations of the IACBR as well as the additional information received by the Secretariat particularly with regard to nominations recommended for approval subject to receiving additional information and nominations recommended to be deferred. The Bureau will recommend for the consideration of the MAB-ICC final decisions on all sites included in this document.
4. The MAB-ICC is invited to decide on the new sites for inclusion in the WNBR and extensions of biosphere reserves already included in the WNBR that could be approved.

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Recommendations of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves:

Nominations recommended for approval

Sheka, Ethiopia

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal which covers a total area of 238 750 ha and consists of a mixture of forests, bamboo thickets, wetlands, agriculture lands, rural settlements and towns. The committee commended the Ethiopian Authorities for a well-prepared nomination. The forest in Sheka which is also part of the Southwest Highlands Forests of Ethiopia is important for the conservation of the Afromontane forest vegetation types especially the Afromontane Rainforest and Alpine Bamboo thickets. The area is rich in plant and animal species with over 38 threatened species both flora and fauna on the IUCN list.

The committee acknowledged the cultural and spiritual significance of the proposed area to the people and their commitment to maintain the integrity of the ecosystem through the practice of ecologically sustainable agriculture.

The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved** and encouraged the authorities to develop the potential of the area for use as a demonstration site for environmental education and also to show the link between culture and biological diversity.

Bassin de la Dordogne, France

The Advisory Committee welcomed this very well-prepared and comprehensive proposal which consists of the whole Dordogne watershed, which is a hydro system of 24 000 km². The Dordogne's catchment area shelters a great biodiversity (flora and fauna) and represents a diversity of landscapes from mountains to cliffs and contains one of the biggest estuaries. Human activities are mainly rural, with low population density and no large cities. Among main activities are tourism based on natural and cultural heritage and agriculture and forest exploitation. It is one of the three most hydroelectric power production places in France. The main objective of the proposed site is to reduce pressure on the water and aquatic ecosystems and to link water policies to the management of land and biodiversity. One million people live along the two biogeographic regions.

The Advisory Committee commended the authorities for the intensive communication and coordination processes, with strong involvement of local communities and decision makers through *inter alia* public forums and considered that the proposal should be shared in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves as a source of inspiration. The Advisory Committee commended this very well-prepared, clear proposal and recommended that the site be **approved**.

La Selle, Haiti

The Advisory Committee welcomed the first submission of a biosphere reserve in Haiti. The proposed area includes a large number of different ecosystems (mountain, plain, tropical dry forest and coastal ecosystem) and protected areas like La Visite or Forêt-des-pins (with the endemic species, *Pinus occidentalis*). The area is located in the ecological continuum of the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enrique Biosphere Reserve of the Dominican Republic and contributes to the Caribbean Biological Corridor as an example of collaboration among countries. Four percent of the Haitian population lives in the biosphere reserve and the main economic activities are agroforestry, fishery, tourism and handicraft industry.

The Advisory Committee commended the national authorities for this new nomination and recommended that this site be **approved**. The Advisory Committee suggested that the national authorities consider this as an opportunity to develop a transboundary biosphere reserve with the Dominican Republic and to use this new nomination as an important place to test local community involvement and resource use in the context of sustainable development.

Achanakmar-Amarkantak, India

The Advisory Committee commended the Indian authorities for the well prepared nomination. It recognized that this site of 383,551ha is located at the tri-junction of hill ranges, with topography ranging from high mountains, shallow valleys to plains. The moist deciduous forests constitute 63.19% of the area. There is a rich biodiversity of great conservation value at this site. Different types and methods of forest management are practiced in this site. Twenty-seven tribal and non-tribal communities inhabit 418 villages living on agriculture (including production of medicinal plants) and non-timber products carried out in the proposed buffer and transition areas. The Advisory Committee also noted that ecological studies are applied for the improved management of the proposed site.

The Advisory Committee invited the Indian authorities to provide a clear map with the boundaries to the MAB secretariat. The whole map should show neighbouring counties and their protected areas around the proposed site. It was also recommended to clarify activities and coordination mechanism in the areas surrounding the proposed core area. The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to provide more information about the distribution of population in the core and buffer areas and to submit updated information of a management plan in the transition area as well as the related legal documents. The required information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat before the start of MAB International Coordination Council meeting in July 2012. The Advisory Committee thus recommended that this site be **approved**.

Wakatobi, Indonesia

The Advisory Committee commended the Indonesian Authorities for a well-prepared nomination. It recognized that this site's nomination including detailed data of biodiversity was supported by various stakeholders. The site has diverse ecosystems with many marine and coastal species of seagrass, coral reefs, fish used both for consumption and for sale, sea birds, turtles, cetaceans, and mangroves.

The proposed core area of this site is of great value in the protection of marine ecosystems as the habitats of various important plant and animal species. It also noted that the proposed multi-stakeholder cooperation and coordination is the key driver in developing a management plan and many other concrete actions.

The Committee asked the Indonesian authorities to provide the printed zonation map showing the whole transition area with a clear explanation of each zone/area. In addition a management scheme is needed to solve the conflict between conservation of biodiversity and traditional sustainable use of natural resources such as mangrove trees and sea turtles by indigenous people. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved**.

Aya, Japan

The Advisory Committee welcomed this submission from Japan, which was the country's first new proposal after more than 30 years since the four already existing Japanese biosphere reserves had been designated in 1980. Situated in the eastern part of Japan's southern Kyushu Island, the overall site is noted for harboring one of the country's largest remaining lucidophyllous forests on the border of warm-temperate evergreen and broad-leaved temperate deciduous forests. The proposed total area is 14 580 ha and includes Aya Town in the transition zone with a population of 7 283 (as of 2010).

The Committee noted that the proposed core area is made up of the Kyushu Central Mountains Quasi National Park which has never been used for human activities and which is the object of scientific studies on the structure, functioning and dynamics of the lucidophyllous forest. The transition zone is mainly used for organic agriculture, and Aya Town has been the first community in the country to develop a traditional recycling-oriented agricultural system since 1988. Ecotourism, including "forest therapy" (for healing purposes) and forest environmental education, is currently actively developed and would benefit from the biosphere reserve designation. The Advisory Committee recommended that additional core zones be considered for inclusion in a future expansion of the biosphere reserve over the next two years based on conservation needs and including also headwater sources for the downstream areas through a

consultative process with neighbouring municipalities. With this in mind, the Advisory Committee recommended that Aya be **approved** as a biosphere reserve.

Korgalzhyn, Kazakhstan

The Advisory Committee was glad to note that this site was Kazakhstan's first ever proposal for the designation of a biosphere reserve in the country. Situated in the northern/central part of Kazakhstan, the site is a complex of freshwater and saline lakes embedded in the dry steppe zone of Eurasia making it an important wetland site for migratory water birds (including globally threatened species, among them the extremely rare Siberian white crane, the Dalmatian pelican, Pallas's fish eagle) under the RAMSAR Convention; Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve is also one of the clusters of the UNESCO World Heritage site "Saryarka – Steppes and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan". The total proposed area covers 1 603 171 ha. About 500 people live in the buffer zone and around 12 000 in the transition area.

The territory is characterized by elevated plains, hills, lake depressions and marked by an extreme-continental climate (with absolute temperatures ranging from -45°C to +41.5°C). Findings through a GEF/UNDP Wetlands Conservation Project (2004-2011, which also provided the basis for the zonation of the proposed biosphere reserve) revealed human emigration caused by overall environmental degradation (unsustainable use of water and biological resources, unsustainable "wild" tourism) and which is now addressed through a variety of pilot projects such as to foster sustainable pasture management, ecotourism, the creation of fishing and hunting farms, and the demonstration of alternative power sources. Scientific studies focus on large-scale complex geobotanic, floristic and faunistic research, including the monitoring of species, and socio-economic studies including demography and migration, agriculture, industry, fishing and hunting industries. The Advisory Committee recommended that Korgalzhyn be **approved** as Kazakhstan's first biosphere reserve. It also recommended that the currently proposed 2km wide buffer zone be expanded in the future into the transition zone where appropriate.

Tehuacán-Cuicatlán, Mexico

The Advisory Committee welcomed the re-submission of this proposal. It was submitted for the first time in 2011. This reserve is located on an arid mountain and high lands system and has one of the highest biodiversity as well as higher plant and animal endemism both of wild and domesticated species in Mexico. It is the most emblematic of the old landscapes of Mesoamerica. It is a very relevant area because it includes the original domestication sites for maize, cucumber, avocado and beans. Currently it has important mesoamerican cultural values and eight different ethnic groups. The most relevant ecosystem is a densely wooded expanse of arborescent cactus species (bosque de cactáceas columnares) and the tropical dry forest (selva baja caducifolia) which includes several numbers of endemic species in Mexico.

The Committee highlighted the mechanism developed for local participation involvement and appreciates their efforts to improve the dialogue between academic and local knowledge. The Advisory Committee notes that the new proposal incorporates the recommendation by showing a good zonation system. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved**.

Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), Republic of Korea

The Advisory Committee considered this interesting proposal which is situated on the northern border of the territory of the Republic of Korea, and which spans the country from East to West. The Advisory Committee noted that the entire Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) is a military buffer zone formed as a result of the Armistice Agreement on 27 July 1953, which ended the Korean War (1950-53). In accordance with the Agreement, the DMZ is defined as 4km wide, with the Military Demarcation Line running through the middle of the entire Korean DMZ. The **core area** of the proposed biosphere reserve covers the southern half of the Korean DMZ, which is a 2km wide area between the Military Demarcation Line (in the north) and the Southern Limit Line (in the south), an area which is under the jurisdiction of the Commander-in-Chief of the United Nations Command. In addition, the proposed core areas also cover several conservation areas in Gangwon Province of the Republic of Korea. The **buffer zone** of the proposed

biosphere reserve covers a substantial part of the area between the Southern Limit Line and the Civilian Control Line in the south. The proposed transition areas are located south of the Civilian Control Line in the Republic of Korea's Gyeonggi and Gangwon provinces and are subject to various land-uses (farmlands, forests, urban areas and protected nature areas). The total surface area of the proposed site covers 297 913ha. Over 2 200 people live in the buffer zone and over 244 000 in the transition areas.

The Advisory Committee noted that the areas located between the Military Demarcation Line and the southern Civilian Control Line (core and buffer zones) have been protected from direct human interventions and economic activities for some 60 years entailing a unique natural process that restored once completely ruined areas to rich habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, thus underlining the conservation value of the proposed site. With regard to the proposed core zone under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Command, the Advisory Committee was informed by letter of the MAB National Committee of the Republic of Korea to the Secretary of the MAB Programme, dated 28 February 2012, that the United Nations Command (UNC) has expressed its neutrality as regards the international community's recognition of the proposed biosphere reserve and that it is not in a position to endorse or oppose the proposal from the Republic of Korea. The letter also informed that the UNC will be aware if the proposed biosphere reserve is realized and that it will continue to manage this part of the DMZ in accordance with the Korean War Armistice Agreement of 1953.

The Advisory Committee underlined the extraordinary conservation value of the core and buffer zones, which had been a *de facto* "no go" area for the past 60 years. Many abandoned agricultural lands have turned into wetlands through a natural recovery process being now the habitat of a variety of endangered species. As a vestige of the Korean War, the DMZ is considered as a symbol of peace drawing increasing numbers of tourists, in particular for historical and cultural reasons which is planned to be complemented by eco-touristic offers. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Republic of Korea Authorities consider extending the buffer and transition zones to Cheorwon County in Gangwon Province through a consultative and awareness raising process with the local residents regarding the potential benefits of the biosphere reserve designation and encouraged the Government of the Republic of Korea to step up its compensation efforts to foster sustainable development in particular in Cheorwon County. The Advisory Committee recommended that the proposed site be **approved** as a biosphere reserve.

The Island of Príncipe, Sao Tome and Principe

The Advisory Committee welcomed the first submission of a biosphere reserve in Sao Tome and Principe. The island of Príncipe is one of the three existing oceanic volcanic islands of the Gulf of Guinea and is geologically the oldest of the group. The area includes the entire emerged area of the island of Príncipe, its islets and Tinhosas islands. It is home to great biodiversity in terrestrial as well as in marine ecosystems, considering this area as an important place for the reproduction of sea turtles, seabirds and cetaceans. The main economic activities are agriculture, fishing and tourism. The Advisory Committee congratulated the national authorities for this new nomination and recommended that this site be **approved**. The Committee recommended that the national authorities consider this opportunity as a model for promoting an integrated eco-tourism development in similar islands and to suggested the future creation of a larger marine and terrestrial buffer zone.

Ferlo, Senegal

The Advisory Committee welcomed this well-prepared proposal. It noted the Sahelian climate in North of the site and sudan-sahelian climate to the South. The proposed site occupies a total area of 2 058 214 ha. The great variety of habitat and vegetation makes this location very rich in biodiversity. The region hosts a rich fauna including redneck ostrich, gazelles and oryx.

It noted that the site has a research station which accommodates national and international institutions. The Committee acknowledged with appreciation the existence of the chart of responsibilities and the multi-stakeholder management committee including government and community representatives.

The Committee recommended increasing conservation activities; if possible through establishing a corridor between the core areas of the Reserve Forest of Ferlo. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved**.

La Gomera, Spain

The Advisory Committee welcomed this submission and congratulated the national authorities for the high quality of the proposal. The proposed area is part of the Canary archipelago, situated in a central location surrounded by the Tenerife, La Palma and El Hierro islands. In the central part of the island, called "meseta", is located the Garajonay National Park. This park is also nominated as an UNESCO World Heritage site and encompasses laurisilva rainforest ecosystem. The landscape is also well modeled by the agriculture system exploitation in "terrace". They have strong cultural values. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved**.

Las Ubiñas-La Mesa, Spain

The Advisory Committee welcomed this submission. The new proposal is located in the central zone of the Cantabrian Range. It encompasses an old growth forest, which maintains very pristine conditions and a high biodiversity. The area also has protected species such as the Cantabrian brown bears, woodpeckers as well as unique domestic species. It has a rich cultural heritage. The area is surrounded by other biosphere reserves: Bibia, Los Valles de Omaña y Luna, Alto Bernesga and Somiedo. This new nomination will be part of the concept to create a unified biosphere reserve called Gran Reserva de la Biosfera Cantábrica. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved**.

East Vättern Scarp landscape, Sweden

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal, the second Sweden's largest cold water lake, the fifth largest lake in Europe with a total surface of 105 520 ha. This history of the site is well documented. Almost 40,000 people live in the area. The majority of the proposed biosphere reserve is dominated by agriculture and forestry lands, with villages and settlements consisting of small farms and individual homes. There are also several large scale farms and manors, as well as three urban areas.

The core areas consist of existing nature reserves, Natura 2000 sites and forest habitat protection areas and shorelines protected areas. The three functions are very well described as well as the comprehensive and extensive consultation process. The development of new technology is linked to the conservation objective to enhance bio cultural heritage. Involvement of the private sector, support to social entrepreneurship for sustainable use of meadows, grasslands, energy through demonstration areas are well documented and are considered as a pilot model. Adaptation and mitigation to climate change is one key objective of this proposed biosphere reserve, with many research and activities described. The coordination structure and engagement process of the different stakeholders and group were commended, including the Biosphere Centre.

The Advisory Committee recommended the site to be **approved**, highly commended the Swedish authorities for the quality of the proposal and recommended that this proposal is shared within the WNBR as a model and source of inspiration and that the sustainable development activities be closely monitored.

West Polesie Transboundary Biosphere Reserve, Belarus/Poland/Ukraine

The approval of this transboundary biosphere reserve (TBR) nomination had been deferred by the 2008 Bureau until submission of an official agreement between the governmental authorities at the ministerial level attesting the proper functioning of this TBR. The Bureau took note of the willingness of the three countries, including that of Poland which had submitted a letter dated 4 February 2008 (Réf: 43/2008) to the Secretariat expressing its readiness to sign such an agreement with Belarus and Ukraine, and decided to approve this

TBR after the agreement signed by the three Member States is received by the Secretariat and the content of the agreement is approved by the Bureau.

The trilateral agreement for the establishment of the West Polesie transboundary biosphere reserve has been submitted to the MAB Secretariat and will be transmitted to the Bureau for its consideration, so the site can be officially be **approved** as a transboundary biosphere reserve and included in the WNBR.

Nominations recommended for approval pending the submission of specific information

Salzburger Lungau & Kärntner Nockberge, Austria

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal. It consists of a representative example of inner-alpine landscapes with high mountains and deep valleys. It is a richly structured landscape with a wide range of altitude (600-3000 m above sea level) and encompasses typical ecosystems, including man-made, of the Central Alps such as mountain meadows, and mires (Ramsar and Natura 2000 sites) and has a high biodiversity. The proposed site covers an area spreading along two provinces, with separate nature conservation legislation. The Kärntner Nockberge part is a whole national park.

The proposed area is a total of 149 000 ha. Human history is characterized by migration. Apart from hunting and gathering, early farming techniques including meadows for fodder, trade and mining have been important ways for earning a living. The permanent population is 33 350 of which 21 000 live in small towns. More than 50% of the jobs are found in construction industry, public health sector and commercial goods industries (cosmetics, luxury food, wood, rubber, plastics). In the side valleys, service sector including tourism is the most important job provider.

The Advisory Committee noted that the zonation provided was not clear; especially as regards the national park area and that the objective of conservation was not well defined with numerous disconnected landscapes and fragmentation. In addition, the description is vague on how the proposed site will become a model area for sustainable development. Furthermore, information is missing as regards involvement of local communities in the regional association that would manage the proposed biosphere reserve.

The Advisory Committee recommended that the proposal be **approved pending** transmission of the following elements to the secretariat by 31 May 2012:

- Clarification and rational of the zonation.
- Clarification on future benefits for the designation of the proposed area and sustainable development vision.
- Clarification on the coordination authority for the management of the proposed site with involvement of local communities.

Jinggangshan, China

The Advisory Committee recognized that this proposed biosphere reserve has diverse landscapes of mountains, valleys, structural basins and karst with elevation varying from 381m to 1779m above sea level. Local residents live on agriculture and forest industries, such as rice, potato, vegetables, bamboo and tea-tree oil cultivation. Tourism industry has developed not only because of the marvellous landscapes and scenic spots but also the historical sites of China's revolution.

With regards to the zonation system of this site, the committee requested the Chinese Authorities to provide a clear zonation and land-use map with English translations. Clarification is needed for the direct connection of the core area to the transition area. The authorities are also encouraged to provide a management plan for the entire proposed area and the evidence

of an integrated coordinating body for the three zones. Regarding the nomination dossier, the committee recognized the necessity of correcting scientific names of plants and animals.

The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved pending** the receipt of the above requested information by the MAB Secretariat by 31 May 2012.

Niubeiliang, China

The Advisory Committee commended the Chinese Authorities for this well-prepared nomination. The site is located in the eastern segment of the Qinling Mountains, with a typical temperate broad-leaved mixed mountain forest system. The site exhibits high biodiversity with many endangered species including golden takin (*Budorcas taxicolor bedfordi*) and dwarf musk deer (*Moschus berezovskii*). Local residents in the transition area have developed rural tourism for increased income. Research, monitoring, and programs of public awareness and training have been carried out very actively in this site.

With regards to the zonation system of this site, the committee has requested the Chinese Authorities to provide a clear zonation map with the text translated into English. The two transition areas should be clearly delineated. The committee also asked the authorities to provide an outline of the management plan for the proposed area and evidence of an integrated coordinating body. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **approved pending** the receipt of the above requested information by the MAB Secretariat by 31 May 2012.

Mura Drava Danube, Croatia/Hungary

The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of this proposal for a second time, which was deferred in 2010. The Advisory committee welcomed the joint submission from the two countries and the efforts made to provide the elements requested at the previous session, namely statements on transboundary cooperation and to describe the envisaged mechanisms for coordination of activities between the two countries.

The Advisory Committee recommended that the site be **approved pending** the submission to the MAB Secretariat by 31 May 2012 of the following elements:

- Clarification on the coordination structure between the two countries and the partnership with the upstream management bodies;
- Clarification on how they expect to address the water and sediment management issues, including in the management plan of the whole area;
- Explanation on how they plan to involve local municipalities and local communities in both countries in the management of the proposed area.

Bashkirskiy Ural, Russian Federation

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal located in the western slopes on southern Ural, for a total surface area of 345 700 ha. The proposed site is of very rich diversity, with a high variety of landscapes from gorges of mountain rivers, mountains steppes, meadows, floodplains to reservoirs. There are more than 1650 plant species, of which 44 are endemic and a list of over 2000 animal species. The interpenetration of flora and fauna from Europe and Siberia make it uniquely rich. The proposed site contains five different protected areas, including national parks and forestry districts. There are unique archaeological sites linked to culture and history of the Bashkir people as well as the cult cave of "Shulgan Tash" preserved since the Stone age. The total population resident is 14 957 with main activities being forestry and small scale farming and traditional bee keeping with the tourism increasing in importance (180, 000 visitors from May to September).

The Advisory Committee noted that the conservation objective was very well documented, with clear vision, resources and legal and institutional support. However, it noted that there was insufficient explanation on local settlements involvement. The research and logistic function was also very well documented with research facilities, research staff and

research stations as well as cooperation with universities, dated back since 100 years, mainly focusing on nature conservation.

However the Advisory Committee noted that the sustainable development function was very weak, with no management plan proposed and a management structure that was not directly involving the small settlements.

The Advisory Committee recommended that this proposal be **approved pending** the submission of an improved management plan which ensures the direct involvement of local stakeholders including settlements, to the MAB Secretariat by 31 May 2012. It was also recommended that the research function be broadened to include the social sciences.

Galloway and southern Ayrshire Biosphere, United Kingdom

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal, located in the south western of Glasgow. The proposal is the merging of two former biosphere reserves which were not fulfilling the Statutory Framework criteria. The proposed total area is of 520 000 ha, composed of open field landscapes, lochs, moorlands, arable lands, pastures and afforested areas.

The proposed site has a very low human density with less than 100 000 inhabitants, and has suffered from post-industrial crisis with the closing of mining and textile industries. There are few cities with no more than 10 000 inhabitants. The biodiversity is very high with important bird population such as grouse, golden eagle and mountains hares. The core area is composed of various protected areas under the management and ownership of the Scottish National Heritage. The tourism demand is growing, with more than 850 000 visitors per year.

The zonation is based on the river drainage systems and is very functional with strong local support and adequate funding is provided from European leader projects. The Advisory Committee commended the engagement of the local communities in the process. The Committee requested that additional elements of clarification vis a vis the development of the wind mill situation, as well as the trade off with tourism development were to be provided. It also recommended to improve the research function and to seek cooperation with the EuroMAB working group on charter development.

The Advisory Committee recommended that the site be **approved pending** reception of the following elements by the MAB Secretariat by 31 May 2012 :

- The missing signatures of the community councils.

- A detailed description of the dialogue process for wind mill development as well as the tourism development.

Nominations deferred

Samothraki, Greece

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal which comprises the entire island of Samothraki located in the Aegean archipelago. The proposed total surface is 22 853 ha, mainly composed of mountains rising up to 1611 m with high endemic biodiversity. The very early human presence on the island since the prehistoric times created cultural landscapes and there are two archaeological protected sites. There are about 2 700 inhabitants whose means of livelihood are mainly agriculture, livestock rearing, fisheries and tourism. Tourism activities in the area peak between July and August with more than 40 000 visitors. These activities impact both the marine and terrestrial ecosystem. The Advisory Committee noted with appreciation the efforts put in the nomination file as well as the focus on the development of tourism but highlighted that the following aspects were weak:

- The conservation function was not satisfactory as the core area is only protected through Natura 2000 status; the impact of tourism was not well documented especially with regards to the planned development of mountainous tourism in the core area

- Lack of a detailed management plan and information on the land tenure system;
- The lack of a clear coordination structure for the management of the proposed biosphere reserve;
- The need for more information on the and coordination with World Heritage site located in the village of Chora;
- The weakness of the research and logistic function.

Therefore the Advisory Committee recommended that the proposal be **deferred** and encouraged the authorities to resubmit the proposal in accordance with Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves.

Khangchendzonga, India

The Advisory Committee commended the India authorities for this proposal. It recognized that this site represented a land area which contains trans-Himalayan biota in the eastern part of Hindukush-Himalaya. The proposed site comprises unique geomorphological features of high mountains and peaks, glaciers and lakes, ranging from 1,220 m to over 8,550 m above sea level, with various ecosystems from sub-tropical to arctic. The Advisory Committee also noted that this site encompasses unique environmental and cultural characteristics. Agriculture and animal husbandry is the main occupation for the local communities in the transition area who belong to different ethnic groups (including Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepalese). The native communities have various eco-development programmes. Various research organizations and NGOs are also carrying out research projects related to the biodiversity assessment and the conservation of endangered and endemic species of flora, including medicinal wild plants such as *Aconitum ferox* and *Aconitum heterophyllum*.

The Advisory Committee, however, requested the Indian authorities to provide more information about a highway which is crossing the core area and to provide legal documents on the status of the core zone. Moreover, the Advisory Committee requested the Indian authorities to provide additional information about the resident populations in the core and buffer zones and a detailed management plan pertaining in particular to the core area. The Advisory Committee thus recommended that this site be **deferred**.

Tang-Sayyad, Iran

The Advisory Committee commended the Iranian Authorities for the sustainability programmes planned in the proposed site although the nomination was incomplete. The Committee recommended that a new nomination file which consolidates all the information contained in the different previous nomination files, including the official endorsements from all the stakeholders, should be submitted to the UNESCO MAB Secretariat. The Committee encouraged the authorities to get technical support from the UNESCO regional office and the MAB Secretariat with respect to the nomination process. The Advisory Committee thus recommended that this site be **deferred**.

Gouritz, South Africa

The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of this proposal and recognized the importance of this site for the conservation of biological diversity as well as its potential for sustainable economic development of the local communities through eco-tourism.

However, the Committee noted lack of involvement of the local people in the nomination process as well as the management of the proposed biosphere reserve. Also it noted lack of information to ensure the performance of the logistic/education function of the proposed site.

The Advisory Committee advised that this site be **deferred** and encouraged the South African Authorities to re-submit a new proposal in conformity with Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework of Biosphere Reserves. The revised proposal should bear the original signatures of the relevant authorities and stakeholders and also include clear information on the following:

- the involvement of local communities in the nomination process and their participation in the management of the biosphere reserve if approved;
- maps showing clearly the extent of the core areas, buffer and transition zones and
- a clearly outlined education/logistic functions of the proposed biosphere reserve.

Real Sitio de San Ildefonso, Spain

The Advisory Committee welcomed this submission and congratulated the national authorities for the quality of the proposal. The area is located in the province of Segovia. The mountain of Valsaín constitutes an important woodland area in the country, and is of incalculable ecological, economic, aesthetic and social value. The Advisory Committee noted the unusual zonation system as a first step of a process to include all the Guadarrama Range zone. However, the Advisory Committee would like to obtain a clarification about the satellite buffer zone that is disconnected from the main biosphere reserve and consider the need for it to be part of the general structure.

77. The Advisory Committee recommended that this site be **deferred**.

Nominations rejected

Terres de l'Ebre, Spain

The Advisory Committee takes note of this submission. This proposal includes the delta and the watershed of the Ebro River. The Ebro River is the largest river in Spain in terms of volume. It has a large number of different ecosystems from inland to the coastal area. The main part of productive land is used for cattle system.

However, the Advisory Committee noted that three of the eight nuclear power plants of Spain are located in the proposed biosphere reserve. The Advisory Committee stated that nuclear energy is not compatible with principles of the MAB Programme. Therefore, the large majority of the Advisory Committee members recommended that this proposal be **rejected**.

Extensions, renaming or changes in the zonation of Biosphere reserves

Fray Jorge Biosphere Reserve, Chile, Extension

The Advisory Committee welcomed this submission of the existing biosphere reserve. This new extension incorporates the transition zone that was not included during the nomination in 1977 and enlarges the buffer zone thus the biosphere reserve has more than doubled in size. The Advisory Committee noted the strong local participatory method. The Committee congratulated the national authorities on adjusting this post-Seville site to conform to the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework requirements and recommended that this proposal be **approved**

Réserve de biosphère des Iles et de la Mer d'Iroise Extension and renaming (former Iroise), France

The Advisory Committee commended this well-prepared proposal for the extension of Mer d'Iroise, which now includes a marine park and the island of Sein and is based on engagement and support from local communities with a clear vision for sustainable development supported by a charter. The total surface area is 99 149 ha, with 1324 inhabitants.

The Advisory Committee is pleased to note that the extension of the site will strengthen the implementation of the objectives and the three main functions of the biosphere reserve. Therefore, the Committee recommended that this extension and renaming be **approved**. The Committee requested for further information on the implementation of the coordination process and further encouraged cooperation with other marine and islands biosphere reserves.

Doñana Biosphere Reserve, Spain, Extension

The Advisory Committee welcomed this submission for this biosphere reserve nominated in 1980. This extension incorporates the transition zone that was not included in the previous nomination and enlarges the buffer zone thus increasing the total area by more than three times.

The Advisory Committee congratulated the national authorities for adjusting this post-Seville site to conform to the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework requirements.

The Committee encouraged the authorities to enforce the dialogue between stakeholders in the new extended area to achieve common agreement between conservation and sustainable development as an example of conflict resolutions. This proposal was recommended for **approval**.

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Sierra Nevada Biosphere Reserve, Spain, Re-zoning

The Advisory Committee welcomed the re-submission of this biosphere reserve nominated in 1986. This new submission is a **re-zoning** that incorporates the transition zone that was not included in the previous nomination. The Advisory Committee noted the effort of the national authorities to adjust this post-Seville biosphere reserve to conform to the Seville Strategy and Statutory Framework requirement and therefore recommended that this proposal be **approved**.