

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION  
International Co-ordinating MAB Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB)  
Programme**

28<sup>th</sup> Session  
Lima, Peru, 18-19 March 2016

**FINAL REPORT**

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1. The 28<sup>th</sup> session of the International Coordinating MAB Council (ICC) of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme was held in Lima, Peru from 18 to 19 March 2016.
2. A total of 170 participants including representatives of the following Members of the MAB Council as elected by the UNESCO General Conference at its 37<sup>th</sup> and 38<sup>th</sup> sessions attended this MAB Council session: Algeria, Austria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and United Kingdom of Great Britain And Northern Ireland..
3. Observers from the following Member States were present: Argentina, Azerbaijan, Belize, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Côte d'Ivoire, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Gabon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Luxemburg, Mongolia, Namibia, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Tanzania (United Republic of Tanzania), Thailand, United States of America and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).
4. The full list of participants is presented as annex 1 to this report.

**I. Introduction and Opening by the Chair of the MAB International Co-ordinating MAB Council**

5. Mr Sergio Guevara, the Chair of the MAB International Coordinating MAB Council (MAB-ICC), officially opened the meeting. He welcomed all members of the MAB Council and Observers, and thanked the Secretariat for preparing the session.

## II. Opening remarks

6. In her opening remarks Ms Flavia Schlegel, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Natural Sciences, recalled that the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves, which ended on 17 March 2016, was a great success and would not have been possible without the vision and generosity of the government of Peru. She also thanked Peru for hosting the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB Council.

7. She recalled that there have been two very important events at the global level since the last MAB Council in Paris last year – the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNFCCC COP21 Paris agreement. She stated that the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement were well reflected in the MAB Strategy 2015-2025 that was adopted by the 27<sup>th</sup> session and also later endorsed by the 38<sup>th</sup> session of UNESCO's General Conference.

8. Ms Schlegel informed that the MAB Council will have another opportunity to show leadership by adopting the Lima Action Plan for UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves for the period 2016-2025.

9. At the end of her opening remarks, she thanked on behalf of UNESCO, Mr Sergio Guevara Sada for his visionary and kind leadership since he was elected as the Chair of the MAB Council in 2014. She remarked that it was under his leadership that the new MAB Strategy and the Lima Action Plan (LAP) were elaborated. She wished members of the MAB Council fruitful deliberations for the 28<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB Council.

10. In his remarks, Mr Michael Worbs, Chair of the Executive Board of UNESCO, thanked Peru for hosting the Congress and the MAB Council, and highlighted how the Lima Action Plan and the Lima Declaration for the MAB Programme would play a critical role in framing MAB's work in the coming ten years.

11. He mentioned that it is the duty of the MAB Council to adopt the Lima Action Plan (LAP) for onward transmission to the Executive Board of UNESCO.

12. He highlighted that the LAP and the Lima Declaration will also give more visibility to the MAB Programme at the global level and would also gain more support for the MAB programme from Member States.

13. He stated that each biosphere reserve demonstrates that it is possible to make decisions towards sustainable development and poverty reduction. The WNBR is an inspiring source of a global movement that engages citizens of the world to act in a responsible way with the ultimate goal to attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

14. He added that institutional and financial support are key factors to enable all actors to implement the LAP and to support the Lima Declaration.

15. Mr Manuel Pulgar Vidal, Minister of Environment of Peru, remarked that it is up to the different regional blocks and countries to ensure that biosphere reserves play a central role in sustainable development, and mentioned that the MAB Council has a task to ensure that this is

realized.

16. He noted that the MAB Council has a very important role in the functioning of the MAB programme, and looked forward to hearing the MAB Council members' guidance on the implementation of the Lima Action Plan.

17. He recalled that a new Bureau would be elected at this MAB Council and stressed that change and transition is an important element in every governance structure.

### **III. Report by the Chair of the MAB International Co-ordinating MAB Council**

18. The Chair of the MAB Council, Mr Guevara, started his intervention by thanking the members of the Bureau, the rapporteur, Mr Martin Price, the group of experts and the drafting group, for their key role in elaborating the Lima Action Plan, and to the Government of Peru for hosting and organizing the Congress.

19. He highlighted the importance of strengthening scientific research and of ensuring the participation of all stakeholders, including youth, in the MAB programme.

20. Mr Guevara mentioned then that the Exit Strategy, as well as efficient communication between all MAB stakeholders, would enable the MAB Programme to stay dynamic in the coming years.

### **IV. Election of the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Rapporteur**

21. The outgoing Chair invited members of the MAB Council to nominate candidates for Chairmanship of the MAB Council. Following the nomination of France by Peru, France was elected by acclamation. The incoming Chair took the podium and invited nominations for vice-chairs and rapporteur. The Russian Federation (Group II), Nigeria (Group V (a)), Algeria (Group V (b)) and the Republic of Korea (Group IV) were elected by consensus.

22. For Group III, Peru and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines both announced candidatures. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines requested that a secret ballot be held to determine the appointment. The Chair conducted the secret ballot, resulting in the election of Peru with 27 out of 31 votes cast while Saint Vincent and the Grenadines received 4 votes. 3 Members of the MAB Council were absent (Kuwait, Togo and Yemen) and did not vote.

23. Following a call from the Chair for the elected members of MAB Bureau to volunteer for the role as the Rapporteur, Peru was appointed by the MAB Council to this duty.

24. The new composition of the MAB Council's Bureau is now as follows:

Chair: Mr Didier Babin, France (Group I)

Vice-chairs:

Group II: Russian Federation

Group III: Peru (Rapporteur)

Group IV: Republic of Korea

Group V (a): Nigeria

Group V (b): Algeria

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

25. The MAB Council adopted the agenda and timetable of its 28<sup>th</sup> session without modification.

## **VI. Report by the Secretary of the MAB Programme**

26. The Secretary of the MAB Programme introduced document SC-16/CONF.228/4. He presented the overall situation of the MAB Programme highlighting that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit 2015 in September 2015 in New York, which sets up the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and associated targets, was the most important new context for the Programme.

27. He recalled that the MAB Strategy 2015-2025 was approved at the 38th session of UNESCO General Conference (Paris, November 2015) and that the examination and approval of the new Strategy was accompanied by a strong Resolution (ref. 38 C/COM SC/DR.1) initiated by France, Germany and Peru, and supported by 24 other countries. The Secretary firmly believes that with this strong political support, the MAB Strategy 2015-2025 will successfully guide the development of MAB and its WNBR in the next ten years.

28. The 38th Session of UNESCO General Conference approved the budget for the MAB Programme within 38C/5 (2016-2017) as 1 of the 6 Main Lines of Actions (MLAs) under the Natural Sciences. "MAB maintained middle high priority in the new expenditure plan of UNESCO with total regular budget similar to 37C/5 (2014-2015)" Although this certainly maintains the prevailing budgetary stress a financial basis has been secured for the continuation of the MAB Programme during the new biennium.

29. At the last MAB Council in June 2015, 20 new biosphere reserves were added to the WNBR, including 1 transboundary sites. In this development, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Myanmar joined the WNBR for the first time. The WNBR now comprises 651 sites - including 15 transboundary reserves - in 120 countries, covering over 10.2 million km<sup>2</sup> of terrestrial, coastal and marine areas and representing all major ecosystem types of the planet under diverse development contexts, home to approximately 172 million people, ranging from rural local communities and indigenous peoples to urban dwellers. This MAB Council session will again examine and make decision on new biosphere reserve nomination proposals and the proposals for extension.

30. MAB made a significant contribution to Priority Africa. A MAB flagship project for more than a decade with financial support from EU to develop professional capacities in Africa, ERAIFT (Ecole Régionale postuniversitaire d'Aménagement et Gestion intégrés des Forêts et Territoires tropicaux) in DR Congo, has now become the second UNESCO category 2 centre under the MAB Programme.

31. The Secretary of the MAB Programme informed the MAB Council that the Secretariat has been following up the decisions and recommendations of MAB Council made at its last session as follows:

- a) The MAB Strategy 2015-2025 endorsed by MAB Council was presented to and approved by the 38th session of the General Conference.

- b) The Lima Congress finalized and launched the Lima Action Plan of MAB, issued the Lima Declaration, facilitated 21 workshops and 13 side events with expectation of participation of total over 1000 representatives from approximately 100 countries.
- c) All new biosphere reserves designated in 2015 received UNESCO certificates and Member States with the new biosphere reserves organized national inauguration ceremonies.
- d) All the MAB Council decisions and recommendations concerning individual biosphere reserves based on Periodic Reports received and the follow up of the previous MAB Council recommendations were communicated to Member States in a timely manner.
- e) The implementation of the Exit Strategy continued during the last 12 months.
- f) Progress has also been made in terms of biosphere reserve documentation management, with all nomination documents and periodic review reports to 2014 stored in UNESCO archive system. Digital archiving has also been started with UNESCO's Central Services.
- g) A proposed general structure for the Operational Guidelines for WNBR (OP-WNBR) was presented and discussed at the 22nd session of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves (IACBR). This will also allow the MAB Secretariat to move forward on the implementation of the open access policy adopted by the MAB Council at its 27th session.
- h) A meeting was held by the International Support Group to MAB (ISG-MAB) in January 2016, at which Member States received an update from the MAB Secretariat on the progress of MAB and the Lima Congress preparation.
- i) The prize ceremony for the UNESCO-Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Preservation was held during the World Science Forum, Budapest, Hungary in November 2015.
- j) Following the report of the External Auditors on governance presented at the 38th session of the General Conference, the MAB Council will continue its discussion in future sessions of the MAB Council.

32. The Secretary also informed that a comprehensive report on MAB activities during 2014-2015 has been made available to the MAB Council. This report highlights some of MAB activities that the MAB Secretariat and UNESCO Field Offices have engaged in directly, in order to show the dynamics and dimensions of regional and thematic networks and partnership. As the report demonstrates, MAB and the WNBR are active in biosphere reserve quality improvement, consolidation as model regions for sustainable development, exploring green development solutions, communicating WNBR values through local engagement, and working on climate change issues.

33. He also highlighted some activities that have been carried out by the various regional MAB networks, such as the 4th General Assembly of the AfriMAB network which was held in Accra, Ghana in November 2015; the 14<sup>th</sup> East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (EABRN) meeting in October 2015 at the Shiga Highland Biosphere Reserve in Japan; the 2015 EuroMAB meeting in Haapsalu, Estonia in May 2015; the 16th IberoMAB meeting in Barcelona, Spain and the training for Arab countries on effective implementation of the MAB Programme and nomination of biosphere reserves held in Muscat, Oman in December 2015.

34. The Secretary of the MAB Programme presented the partnerships with other sectors and programmes of UNESCO and with other UN agencies – as well as with non-UN scientific institutions and organizations, development agencies, civil society organizations, local governments and the private sector.

35. At the 38th session of the General Conference, UNESCO's intergovernmental and international scientific programmes of IBSP, IGGP, IHP, IOC and MOST issued a joint Chairs' statement for 2030 Agenda. Technical cooperation with the World Heritage Convention Secretariat (WHC) on biological diversity has been further strengthened through the sharing of expertise on global issues related to Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Aichi Targets and climate action. Education for Sustainable Development and its Global Action Plan have been clearly reflected in both the MAB Strategy 2015-2025 and in the Lima Action Plan 2016-2025. MAB's contribution toward the SIDS Action Plan and the Samoa Pathway has been made clear. MAB's partnerships within UNESCO have been well maintained.

36. The Secretary briefly presented the main MAB activities in communication and outreach namely, the communication effort on biosphere reserve branding through EuroMAB, aiming to generate a global movement on pursuing sustainable development by local communities in the WNBR; the 2014-2015 MAB activity report; the proceedings of the Conference "Botanists of the twenty-first century: Roles, challenges and opportunities"; the MAB/WNBR Facebook, Twitter, WeChat and WeiBo pages and the social media campaign #ProudToShare; and the new media initiative My Biosphere, My Future, launched before Lima Congress. All of these initiatives have gained a lot of visibility for the MAB Programme.

37. The Secretary finished his presentation by saying that it was time to join efforts for the implementation of the MAB Strategy 2015-2025 and the Lima Action Plan 2016-2025. He indicated that immediate follow up is to develop the national, local and regional plans for its implementation in order that the MAB global strategy and action plan will address the specific conditions and priorities at national, local and regional levels. He thanked the Austrian MAB National Committee, Abertis Foundation and Spain for funding the publication of the MAB activity report. He also acknowledged Germany for their generous support which has ensured the continuous and timely production of the World Map of Biosphere Reserves.

38. The delegate from Colombia remarked that there were various synergies between the Secretary's report, the Lima Action Plan and other international instruments especially goals 8 and 12 of the SDGs. The Secretary of the MAB Programme affirmed this observation and added that indeed there was a lot of synergy even with the CBD and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

## **VII. Reports by regions/ regional and thematic MAB Networks in the context of MAB**

39. The Chair invited regional and thematic networks to provide reports on their activities. 5 regional networks took the floor: Algeria for ArabMAB, Mexico for IberoMAB, Republic of Korea for the East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network (EABRN), France for EuroMAB and South Africa for AfriMAB. Finally, the Republic of Korea took the floor to deliver the report of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves.

40. Several networks reported on their review and input to the MAB Strategy and Lima Action Plan in preparation for the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves. Priority issues raised in the network reports included gender equality, climate change research, strengthening biosphere reserve management, engagement of youth and other stakeholders, and the positioning of biosphere reserves as sites for sustainable development.

## **VIII. Reports by Countries on actions undertaken by Member States**

41. The Chair of the MAB Council invited Member States to highlight activities which they

had implemented at national, regional and international levels since the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the MAB Council. The Russian Federation, Slovakia, Morocco, Indonesia, Azerbaijan, Malaysia, Sweden, Madagascar, Spain, Turkey, Algeria, Austria, Burkina Faso, Peru, France, South Africa, Hungary, Republic of Korea, Honduras, Japan, Germany, Mali and China and Kazakhstan took the floor. Following these reports, the Chair invited any observers wishing to do so to deliver remarks. Canada, the United States of America, Switzerland, Botswana and Ghana made statements in response.

42. Reports covered a broad range of themes, highlighting both challenges and opportunities facing the MAB programme and the World Network. Several member states thanked Peru for the successful organization of the 4th World Congress held immediately prior to the meeting. A number of reports stressed the value of successful transboundary and site-to-site cooperation, as well as on-going efforts at strengthening the legislative framework for biosphere reserves. Delegates also proposed new ideas for thematic networks and mentioned the importance of engaging with indigenous peoples. Likewise, several reports made reference to the potential of biosphere reserves for stimulating sustainable local economies through initiatives in areas such as entrepreneurship and branding. Youth engagement, communication, public awareness and education for sustainable development were also emphasized by a number of speakers, as were efforts towards strengthening biosphere reserve management and the updates on environmental research and monitoring.

43. Reports submitted by networks and countries in advance of the meeting have been made available on MABNet. Additional reports will be made available as they are received.

## **IX. MAB Young Scientists Award Scheme**

44. The MAB Secretariat received 45 eligible applications 13 of the applicants were females. Applications were received from Algeria, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Comoros, Croatia, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Morocco, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Togo, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.

45. The Secretariat once again called on Member States to consider providing support for an increase in the award amount and also the number of awardees. Once a Member State expresses interest to support, the modalities of the funding can then be discussed.

46. One delegate noted that the research done by the young scientist could be published in the journal of biosphere reserves recently proposed during the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves. Another delegate asked whether the application form for the Young Scientist Award Scheme could be updated to include the priorities of the Lima Action Plan.

47. The Chair indicated that the Bureau will explore this with the MAB Secretariat. The MAB Council then endorsed the winners of the 2016 MAB Young Scientist Award. The winners and the titles of their research studies are:

Winner	Title of Study	Country
Ms. Anna YACHMENNKOVA	Study of infectious diseases of red fox ( <i>Vulpes vulpes</i> ) as one of key carnivore animals in tundra ecosystems at the territory of Kronotsky Biosphere Reserve.	Russia
Ms. Disaorn AITTHIARIYASUNTHON	Gender role in Ranong Biosphere Reserve management	Thailand
Ms. Ina ANEVA	Conservation and sustainable management of medicinal plants in tow biosphere reserves in Pirin and Slavyanka Mountains - South western Bulgaria	Bulgaria
Mr. Md Ajat MOHD MOKRISH	Assessment of zoonotic disease awareness in primary and secondary schools students in Malaysia	Malaysia
Ms Fatimatou SOW	Evaluation de la pollution chimique et bactériologique des eaux de la réserve de biosphère du Haut Niger	Guinée
Mr. Belarbi ZOHIR	Patrimoine Mondial de l'UNESCO: Compactibilité entre la préservation et la fréquentation touristique	Algeria

#### **X. Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management**

48. The Secretariat informed the MAB Council members that it had received 7 files from 6 countries and that only 5 of these met the criteria for consideration.

49. At its 22nd meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters from 25-28 January 2016, the members of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves recommended Mr Qu Shuguang (China) for the 2016 Michel Batisse Award for his case study on the Wudalianchi Biosphere Reserve, which received the highest score with 107 points. The Members of the Bureau of the MAB Council have endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

50. Mr Qu Shuguang, Director of the Wudalianchi Biosphere Reserve presented a video on his case study on “Wudalianchi eco-migration project: protecting the environment and improving people’s livelihoods”. He received his award from the Chair of the MAB Council.

#### **XI. Proposals for new biosphere reserves and extensions/modifications to biosphere that are part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)**

51. The members of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves examined at its 22nd meeting (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, from 18 to 21 January 2016) 20 proposals for new biosphere reserves (including 1 transboundary site and 3 re-submissions of proposals

for new biosphere reserve) and 11 requests for extension/modification and/or renaming of already existing biosphere reserves.

52. Taking into account the recommendations of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves and the Bureau's further deliberations on 18 and 19 March 2016, the MAB COUNCIL took the following decisions:

### **Nominations approved**

**53. Tlemcen Mountains (Algeria)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposal, encompassing the Tlemcen National Park, with its rich biodiversity, valuable archaeological sites, cultural landmarks and caves, had been reviewed by the MAB Council at its 26th and 27th sessions. At its 27th session, the MAB Council approved the proposal pending the fulfilment of its request for additional information relating to the extension of the site outside the National Park be submitted and reviewed favourably by the MAB Bureau. In conjunction with the Bureau's positive review of the additional information provided by the Algerian authorities, including detailed maps outlining the new zonation of the site covering a total of 98532.10 ha, the MAB Council **approved** this site.

**54. Beaver Hills (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site encompassing morainic landscape located in the province of Alberta in western Canada. It comprises an area of 159,560 ha, extending more than 60 km north to south and over 40 km east to west. The core area is 21,725 ha, the buffer zone 21,766 ha, and the transition area 116,069 ha. Around 12,000 years ago the glaciers began to retreat leading to abundant wetlands, shallow lakes and rocky landscapes, characteristic of the Boreal zone. Now the Beaver Hills comprise a mixture of human-modified agricultural lands, mixed wood forest, grasslands and wetlands.

55. The diversity of forest and upland habitats, with small openings of native grassland, provided optimal habitat for bison, deer, elk and moose, as well as diverse and abundant waterfowl. 36 plants and 6 plant communities observed within the moraine that are considered sensitive due to low distribution of populations within the province.

56. The terrain within the moraine prevented the settlement of big human communities. The only large urban centre is Edmonton (1,159,869 inhabitants) lying west of the proposed reserve. Today, the moraine is predominantly a rural community comprising agricultural and rural residential landowners and a few small villages. The Beaver Hills concerns 5 counties totalizing 12,000 permanent inhabitants and 365,000 seasonal visitors. The communities within and near the moraine represent a modern Canadian mosaic of long-term residents of European and aboriginal descent. Ukrainian immigrants were among the first to homestead in the region and this culture is still well-represented across the moraine. Today, agriculture and recreation are the main activities within the moraine, although agriculture has diversified to take advantage of new markets, including organic and local food trends. Several agencies among which University of Alberta and Alberta Parks are currently active in research or monitoring addressing the abiotic, biotic and socio-cultural aspects of the moraine.

57. The MAB Council acknowledged the strategy adopted by the Beaver Hills Initiative (BHI) to identify and use alternative mechanisms for meeting the intended function and conservation role of buffer zone around the 2 core areas. It further noted that the region is largely under private ownership and it also noted the high potential of sustainable use of surrounding areas of the proposed core areas and suggested to extend the buffer zone to most of the proposed transition area where possible as already a lot of farmers adopted land stewardship practices

especially in grazing areas.

58. The MAB Council acknowledged receipt of additional information provided by the national authorities with regards to the zonation, the funding mechanism and the management of the site especially in response to the urban expansion.

59. After their satisfactory review by the Bureau, the MAB Council **approved** this site.

60. **Tsá Tué (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site located in Canada's Northwest Territories. The area is the homeland of the Sahtúto'ine (The Bear Lake People) and the concerned region is the watershed of the Great Bear Lake (GBL). This last pristine arctic lake is under pressure from the climate change, but also possible mineral, oil and gas mining exploration. Local community elders and leaders worked for many years to develop environmental stewardships. Different management plans and management bodies were established during the last decade to promote sustainable development of the region, aiming to keep healthy ecosystem and people by maintaining ecological and cultural integrity. A joint agreement between first nation, corporation, local council, Parks Canada and other organizations created the Tsá Tué Biosphere Reserve Stewardship Council to guide activities and to be the coordination unit of the proposed biosphere reserve.

61. The proposed area is located in the Northwestern territories of Canada. It includes Great Bear Lake (GBL) and a portion of its watershed (GBLW) within the District of the Sahtu Settlement Region. GBL has a surface area of 3,112,100 ha while the GBLW within the District encompasses 6,219,200 ha. The total area is therefore about 9,331,300 ha of which the core area is 2,008,200 ha; the buffer zone is 7,236,500 ha; and the transition area is 79,700 ha. The Great Bear Lake is the largest lake lying entirely within Canada. 3 ecozones are represented in the watershed: the Taiga Plains in the west of the watershed, the Taiga Shield to the southeast, including the Camsell River drainage area, and the Southern Arctic ecozone on the northeastern rim of the lake. They are recognized as important wildlife areas for species such as the muskox, the general moose and caribou herds which witnesses a high degree of biological integrity.

62. The only community on GBL is the traditional First Nation Dene community of Déline (meaning "Where the water flows") is located on the western shore of Great Bear Lake near the mouth of the Great Bear River. It has a population of about 600 inhabitants, the majority of whom are Sahtuto'ine Dene, i.e., the "Bear Lake People". As the Sahtuto'ine culture is intricately tied to the health of the lake and its environment, the community is willing to use and keep the land healthy. Human activities on the proposed site are moderate. There are still harvesting activities remaining, and a moderate tourism activity which tends to be developed through ecotourism. Various research activities are underway in the area, related to water quality and quantity, fish (notably lake trout), wildlife (notably barren-ground caribou), archaeology, social sciences and contaminants from remediated contaminated sites (notably mines).

63. The MAB Council noted that mining projects are under environmental and regulatory reviews and that they will not proceed if they will harm the ecological and cultural integrity of the proposed site. It also noted that these activities should be consistent with the land stewardship approach and project proponents will have to engage closely with the proposed biosphere reserve stewardship MAB Council.

64. The Council acknowledged receipt of additional information with regards to zonation and legal status of conservation zones.

65. Following their satisfactory review by the Bureau, the MAB Council **approved** this site.

66. The MAB Council further encouraged the authorities to undertake comparative approach and knowledge sharing, especially with Lake Baikal in Siberia (Russian Federation), Laurentian Great Lakes (USA and Canada), Lake Tahoe (USA), Lake Lemman (Switzerland) and Lake Titicaca (Peru and Bolivia). It also encouraged the stewardship council to develop social-ecological research and monitoring in partnership with local, national and international research organizations and networks to promote and implement an efficient adaptive co-management of the proposed site.

67. **Lake Bosomtwe (Ghana)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site situated in the Ashanti region of Ghana, the lake is one of 6 meteoritic lakes in the world with a radial drainage system of 106 km<sup>2</sup>, a maximum depth of 78 m and a diameter of about 11 km and constitutes a unique natural and cultural heritage. The proposed biosphere reserve has a core area of 1,159 ha, a buffer zone of 10,740 ha and a transition zone covering 16,798 ha.

68. With a population of over 50,000, the main economic activities are farming, fishing and tourism as the lake is a major national tourist destination. The fishery is characterized by the use of non-motorized wooden planks as canoes linked to the cultural history of the area, which also houses the sacred Abrewa stream.

69. The MAB Council commended the introduction of the Community Resource Management Area (CREMA) system supported by law, which devolves responsibility for management to local communities and the participatory approach used for the nomination.

70. The MAB Council **approved** this site and encouraged the authorities to fully implement the management plan for the CREMA to strengthen sustainable development.

71. **La Hotte (Haiti)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve located in the south-east peninsula area covers a total area of 435,193.54 ha comprising 265,279.20 ha of terrestrial area and 169,914.34 ha of marine area (core area: 117,119.06 ha; buffer zone: 185,027.41 ha; transition area: 133,047.07 ha). The buffer zone is larger than the transition area, showing that this is a modern biosphere reserve where sustainable development plays an important role. The region is considered a biodiversity hotspot. It is a very diverse area because of its different climate ranges: from humid to subtropical dry forest.

72. The core area consists of 13 protected areas for the conservation of the ecosystem, the landscape, biodiversity and cultural values, as well as research and education purposes. The proposed biosphere reserve covers 6 peaks ranging in altitude from 1,992 m (Pic Grand Colline) to 2,347 m (Pic Macaya), as well as a coastal and marine ecosystem in the north (Iles Cayemites) and south (Ile-à-Vache) of the region. The population of the reserve amounts to 854,835 inhabitants, whose main economic activities are farming, agriculture, agroforestry, fisheries, commerce, handcrafts and tourism.

73. The MAB Council welcomed this nomination proposal and **approved** this site.

74. **Agasthyamala (India)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site which is located in the southernmost end of the Western Ghats with a peak reaching 1,868 m above mean sea level. It covers 350,000 ha, mostly tropical forests, within Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts of Tamil Nadu and Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts of Kerala, Southern India. The core area is 113,500 ha, the buffer zone 144,500 ha and the transition area is 92,000 ha. The site is one of the biodiversity hot spots of the Western Ghats, with 2,254 species of higher plants,

including about 400 endemics. It is also a unique genetic reservoir of cultivated plants especially for cardamom, jamune, nutmeg, pepper and plantain. It also includes 3 wildlife sanctuaries - Shendurney, Peppara, Neyyar and one Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger reserve.

75. A number of tribal settlements with a total population of 3,000 are located in the core area of the proposed site; non-tribal families live in the fringe area of the forests. The people use a wide variety of biological resources for their sustenance but are rarely involved in commercialization. Through a process which involves participatory planning and the implementation of activities which reduce dependence on the forests and at the same time provide more productive livelihoods, tribal populations have been economically empowered to desist from activities such as illicit timber and non-timber forest produce collection. This is made possible by micro financing linked with micro enterprises and by promoting self-help groups through a revolving fund which has been set up at the village level using a “seed grant”.

76. The following research institutes are engaged in basic and applied research activities in the area: Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute, Salim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, Forestry Colleges of Kerala and Tamil Nadu, and Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute.

77. The MAB Council noted the commitment of the national authorities to ensuring local community participation and empowerment. It also appreciated that, although there is a population of about 3,000 people in the core area, this has not interfered with its strict conservation function and is described as undisturbed. The MAB Council encouraged the national authorities to continue with careful monitoring and scientific management of the entire site, especially the core area, in order to sustain its conservation and sustainable development functions.

78. The MAB Council observed that this proposal was approved pending the submission of additional information during its 27 session. It acknowledged with appreciation the submission of the requested information which clarifies the legal status of the outer zone of the northernmost part of the core area. The MAB Council considered the information provided as satisfactory. The MAB Council therefore **approved** the site.

79. **Belambangan (Indonesia)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve located in East Java province, Indonesia and covers a total 678,647 ha comprising: 127,856 ha as core area, 320,277 ha as buffer zone and 320,518 ha transition area. This proposed site is spread over 3 National Parks (Alas Purwo, Baluran and Meru Betiri) and one nature reserve (Kawah Ijen).

80. The national parks and nature reserve include both terrestrial and marine ecosystems – karst landscapes, savanna, alpine/subalpine forest, upper, dry and lower montane (mountain) forest, lowland forest (including bamboo forest), coastal forest, mangrove forest, seagrass beds, and coral reefs.

81. Aside from biodiversity conservation, watershed protection and ecotourism in the core area the Meru Betiri National Park has potential for global carbon trade (pilot site for REDD Project) and Kawah Ijen National Park has an acidic crater lake (biggest in world) with blue fire phenomenon. The buffer zone and transition area have settlements. Economic activities practiced include agriculture (food/horticultural crops) and agroforestry (plantations of teak, mahogany). Manmade savanna was planted with grass to provide habitat for big mammals.

82. The MAB Council is concerned about the use of gum Arabic tree (*Acacia nilotica*) due to its invasive nature. It therefore advised that the national authorities minimize the planting of this species. The national authorities are commended for the interim and proposed management set up and plans. The MAB Council **approved** the site and encouraged the national authorities to include the marine buffer zone in the management plan as well as to establish regulations for the protection of this zone.

83. **Hamoun (Iran)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site located in South East Iran and limited from North and East by the border with Afghanistan. The proposed Hamoun Biosphere Reserve includes mixed natural and cultural properties. It is constituted of terrestrial and wetland ecosystems with a total of 7 habitat types, including desert and semi-desert areas, as well as Hamoun Lakes, a Ramsar site, with its marshlands and watersheds. The 3 wetlands included in the proposed biosphere reserve are the most important of the region. The area is a hot spot for migratory birds (183 species) and home to 30 mammal species, 44 reptile species, 7 amphibian species, 22 fish species and 55 plant species.

84. Part of the core area is directly adjacent to the border with Afghanistan. Transboundary cooperation would therefore seem relevant in order to ensure that any eventual negative external impacts on the core area are mitigated. It is mentioned in the nomination form that a transboundary Biosphere Reserve with Afghanistan would be of interest to Iran and that it could help to reinforce the zonation. Such cooperation would be further advisable since the long-term sustainability of the Hamoun Lake (and its biodiversity) depends on the water level of the Hirmand River that is increasingly used on the Afghan side for farmlands and cities.

85. The activities in the buffer zone but also in the core area include some traditional use of ecosystem services, such as fishing and limited grazing of local people's herds. Since the proposed biosphere reserve is partly a desert, the lake is a primary life source, this is why a total access restriction in the core zone would be fatal to local populations. The nomination file actually stresses that depriving the local populations from essential ecosystem resources would not be helpful towards achieving conservation objectives and needed conservation

86. The MAB Council **approved** this biosphere reserve. Furthermore the MAB Council encouraged Iran to explore cooperation with Afghanistan towards a potential transboundary Biosphere Reserve.

87. **Collina Po (Italy)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve located in the north of Italy within the Piedmont Region. The proposed surface is 171,233.85 ha, with a core area of 3,853.05 ha, the buffer zone and transition area 21,161.45 ha and 146,219.46 ha respectively. The site covers the whole Turin stretch of the River Po with its main tributaries and the Collina Torinese hillside. The river Po is the main reservoir of biodiversity on the Turin plain, partly due to the numerous wetlands along its course. The physical and geological characteristics have led to the formation of numerous gravelly shores, oxbows and riparian woods hosting various species. The territory hosts 14 habitats of community interest, 3 of which are priorities.

88. These resources take a great value in the context of high human density especially in the nearby city Turin with its 900,000 inhabitants and other major cities such as Chivasso, Macalieri and San Mauro. The entire area involves 85 municipal districts with a resident population of approximately 1.5 million inhabitants mostly in the transition zones. Traditionally Turin attracts a lot of visitors for its old-town, and other remarkable historic and cultural elements such as

Basilica Superga, Palazzo Madam, National Automobile Museum. Cultural attractions outside Turin include the Residences of the Royal House of Savoy, Vezzolano Abbey, etc. The increasing numbers of tourists choose to spend time on the hillsides and riversides areas to hike, bike, or to practice agritourism. Monitoring and researches on the nominated area are held by the Po Park, University of Turin and several research institutes and private organizations. The proposed biosphere reserve presents an opportunity for sustainable education and contribution to quality of life for urban communities.

89. The MAB Council acknowledged the additional information sent by national authorities with regards to the status of the buffer zones, the management framework and the mechanism to increase involvement of local communities and the impact of car industry in the biosphere reserve.

90. Following the satisfactory examination of the additional information by the Bureau, the MAB Council **approved** this site.

91. **Barsakelmes (Kazakhstan)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site located in the Sahara- Gobi Desert zone of the Aral Sea basin. The total area of the proposed Barsakelmes Biosphere Reserve is 407,132 ha. The core area (160,826 ha) is constituted of 2 distinct parts, the former islands Barsakelmes and Kaskakulan that are connected through a corridor, and belongs to the territory of Barsakelmes State Nature Reserve.

92. The Aral Sea region is a priority area for wetland conservation – the Ramsar site of Syrdarya Delta is located in the transition area – and several routes of Palaearctic bird migrations converge over the region. The territory of the proposed biosphere reserve is a valuable site to preserve the biodiversity of the Aral Sea. To date, the core area includes approximately 2,000 species of invertebrates, including 3 listed in the IUCN Red list, 30 mammal species or 71.4% of the 42 species inhabiting the desert zone of Kazakhstan, 20 reptile species, which is 46.9% of the total herpetofauna list of Kazakhstan, and 178 bird species, including 23 listed in the “Red Data Book of Kazakhstan”. There are also 4 medieval permanent settlements of nomadic Kazakhs (Kerderi archeological sites) on the former Silk Way dating back to the 12-14 centuries. The most known site is the Bekmana mausoleum (11th century), which is considered a holy site and visited by local people.

93. Along with local desertification processes, the biodiversity of the Aral region encompassing the proposed biosphere reserve’s area has decreased during the second half of the 20th century because of the sharp drop in regional water supply and intensive development of economic activity (resulting in half of nesting birds’ number, among other negative impacts). In recent times, less water is taken for irrigation, plantations of hygrophilous crops decreased, as well as reduced grazing pressure on the river flood-lands, leading to positive trends in the recovery of the region’s ornithofauna. In this context, the short-term purpose of the proposed Biosphere Reserve is to preserve the region's unique ecosystems, prevent the depletion of natural resources and ensure their sustainable use.

94. In the core zone, environmental education takes place through the use of mass media, interaction with teachers and educational institutions, in order to raise ecological awareness of local people, convey an understanding of the key role of the protected territory, and gain public support. Training seminars were also conducted with staff member of Barsakelmes state nature reserve.

95. In total, around 19,000 people live in the transition area, with agriculture – fishery, crop

and livestock production as main economic activity. In recent years the local population started gaining expertise in market relations and more shops and services were opened in the villages, bus and cargo transportation are organized. While it is important to support local population in their activities, the goal of the proposed Biosphere Reserve would be to help providing stable social-economic conditions in order to decrease negative anthropogenic impacts on nature.

96. A consultation with all land users was undertaken and local communities are involved in the Coordination Council created in 2014. This Council consists of representatives of state agencies, the state nature reserve, Akimat (department of land resources, agriculture, etc.), local NGOs and land users, which have all equal rights in voting and decision-making. A special Management Plan for the proposed Biosphere Reserve territory has not yet been developed and management of the core area and buffer zone is conducted by the administration of Aksu-Zhabagly state nature reserve.

97. The MAB Council noted the recommendations of the Advisory Committee with regards to the buffer zones which were not entirely satisfactory in the proposed biosphere reserve. Together with the core areas the buffer zones belong to Barsakelmes State Nature Reserve and should therefore be included in the proposed biosphere reserve's core zone. Appropriate buffer zones should be large enough to include different land uses compatible with the integrity of the core areas. Further, the buffer zones should follow functional considerations and the ecological and socio-economic realities on the ground, rather than as in the present proposal, a fixed 2 kilometre wide zone around the cores.

98. The MAB Council acknowledged the submission of the updated zonation map and a management plan for the area. Following the satisfactory review of this information by the Bureau, the MAB Council therefore **approved** the site.

99. **Belo-sur-Mer – Kirindy-Mite (Madagascar)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve situated in the coastal western part of Madagascar of nearly 514,000 hectares consists of a core area of 45,281 ha (of which 0.3% of mangrove and 7% of coral reefs), a buffer zone of 81,700 ha and a transition area of 387,000 ha. The area falls in the convergence area of the western and southern malagasy phytogeographical zones which explains the high biodiversity at species and genus level. The site includes watershed upstream and marine and coastal ecosystems downstream. This land-sea landscape constitutes an impressive mosaic of rich but fragile diverse ecosystems such as dry forests, thickets, thorn forests, savannas, salty swampy depressions ("tannes"), mangroves and coral reefs. Kirindy-Mite National Park, part of core area, has the largest population (500,000 trees) of *Adansonia grandidieri*, one of the 7 species of Malagasy Baobabs (*Adansonia grandidieri*) with 500,000 trees. The reef is a feeding area of spectacular marine megafauna consisting of whales (humpback), dolphins, dugongs and marine turtles.

100. The population of the area relies totally on these natural resources for their livelihood and income. The marine biodiversity, the islands as well as 2 sacred salted lakes with the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus minor*) are valuable assets for tourism and ecotourism. Aquaculture, pelagic fishing and salt production complement the development potential of the area.

101. To reconcile the conservation of this exceptional nature and the sustainable human economic development of the area, the zoning and the management of the different areas of the proposed biosphere reserve were defined based on national and regional integrated management plan frameworks and uses the Integrated Coastal Management Zone (ICMZ) approach. The MAB Council commended the country for the establishment of a legal framework

allowing the transfer of natural resource management to local communities which reinforces the principles of decentralized management of biosphere reserves.

102. The MAB Council **approved** this site and encouraged the country to continue the research activities in the area for a better knowledge and monitoring of this exceptional biodiversity and its sustainable use.

103. **Isla Cozumel (Mexico)** The MAB Council welcomed this re-submission proposal by Mexico for Cozumel Island and the surrounding marine areas. The proposed biosphere reserve covers a total area of 134,624.17 ha, with a new zoning system of which 87,736.54 ha constitute marine areas and 46,887.63 ha are terrestrial (core area: 12,487.90 ha; buffer zone: 77,027.90 ha; transition area: 45,107.90 ha). The MAB Council noted the inclusion of a new core area in the coastal and marine zone as per its previous recommendation. The island of Cozumel has diverse marine and terrestrial ecosystems, is rich in amphibians and reptile species, and has 31 endemic taxa. It is also home to 3 endemic species, which the IUCN considers to be critically endangered.

104. The main terrestrial ecosystems are medium semi-deciduous forest and mangroves. Medium semi-deciduous forest is rare in other parts of the state of Quintana Roo, and hosts a substantial proportion of the endemic species of the island. Marine ecosystems constitute a significant portion of the proposed biosphere reserve, which forms part of the second largest reef system in the world, the Mesoamerican Reef, which is home to 1,192 marine species. The area encompasses 2 Ramsar sites: Parque Nacional Arrecifes de Cozumel (nominated in 2005), and Manglares y Humedales del Norte de Isla Cozumel (nominated in 2009).

105. The permanent population of the proposed biosphere reserve amounts to 79,535 inhabitants (2010 census). Human settlements are located mainly in the city of San Miguel, which comprises most of the tourism and urban infrastructure. Mayan heritage is a quintessential feature of Cozumel: there are more than 36 Mayan archaeological sites in the proposed biosphere reserve, including material remains such as ceremonial and commercial centres and pilgrimage routes. This heritage is the focus of archaeological studies that could be much enhanced by the creation of the reserve.

106. Tourism is thus the most important economic activity on the island of Cozumel, which receives a significant number of visitors each year (3,292,452 in 2013). Due to this influx the rate of unemployment is low among the population, which enjoys an income level above the average for Mexico. One of the main objectives of the proposed biosphere reserve of Cozumel Island is to contribute to the development of an Integrated Urban Environmental Management System and to articulate a series of local planning instruments to address issues such as treatment of solid waste, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, energy efficiency, ecological zoning and sustainable tourism management.

107. The MAB Council **approved** this biosphere reserve and recommended implementing a management plan to control the number of tourists and invasive plants.

108. **Atlas Cedar (Cèdre de l'Atlas) (Morocco)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve situated in the central Atlas Mountains covers a total area of 1,375,000 ha (130,000 ha core area; 895,000 ha buffer zone; 350,000 ha transition area). As its name indicates, this is the home of the majestic Atlas cedar tree (*Cedrus atlantica Manetti*) covering some 75% of the total global Atlas cedar tree population. The Atlas Cedar Biosphere Reserve is a logical addition to the existing biosphere reserves in Morocco, that together form a coherent

network of sites of highest national and international importance. In addition to the Cedar, this part of the Atlas Mountains is generally rich in ecosystems and species diversity, and its peaks reaching up to 3700 m provides the region with critically important water resources.

109. The local economy is pastoral, with some irrigated, more modern agriculture. The local culture is rich, constituting the bastion of the majority of the Amazigh culture with a remarkable preservation of language and traditions. It was for centuries the exclusive world of sound semi-nomadic pastoral tradition, extremely efficient water consumption, leaving nearly 90% of karst water to cover the needs of the entire country. However, fruit plantations, modern agriculture, urban and tourist activities are taking a toll on scarce water resources. The region needs, therefore, to rethink attitudes vis-à-vis natural resources and redefine its activities in a much more sustainable direction. This is the rationale for why it is important to designate the area as a biosphere reserve.

110. The MAB Council **approved** the Atlas Cedar as a biosphere reserve encouraging the relevant authorities to implement the management plan.

111. **Gran Pajatén (Peru)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve located in the Central Cordillera. The area is characterized by high altitudes, ranging from 300 m to 4,670 m (the Nevado de Cajamarquilla), and by pristine ecosystems. The core zone is the National Park del Río Abiseo, inscribed as a Mixed World Heritage site in 1990, with a view to protecting the fauna and flora of rainforests characteristic of this region of the Andes. There is a high level of endemism in the park, and the yellow-tailed woolly monkey, previously thought extinct, is found only in this area.

112. The new proposed biosphere reserve covers a total area of 2,509,698.84 ha (core area: 274,520.00 ha; buffer zone: 762,541.70 ha; transition area: 1,472,637.14 ha). The area includes Peruvian yungas and paramos ecosystem that play an important role in hydrological regulation.

113. The population is located in small villages in the buffer zone and particularly the transition area (174,632 inhabitants according to the 2007 census). The economic activities are mainly agriculture (cacao, coffee), livestock and mining.

114. The main objective of this proposal is to preserve the ecological and cultural values of the area and to promote the sustainable development of the population by improving their productive systems, restoring the damaged ecosystem and promoting ecotourism, as well as local and environmentally friendly production chains.

115. The MAB Council therefore **approved** the site.

116. **Albay (Philippines)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve located at the southern end of the Luzon Island in the Philippines. The whole province of Albay has been proposed for nomination as a biosphere reserve. Elevation ranges from 0 to 2,462 meters in the terrestrial areas, and 0 to - 223 meters below mean sea level in the marine areas.

117. The proposed size of core area is 12,085 ha (10,571 ha terrestrial, and 1,514 ha marine), that of the buffer zone is 44,918 ha (all terrestrial), and that of the transition area is 190,918 ha (all terrestrial), with total area of 247,092 ha (246,406 ha terrestrial and 1,514 ha marine). There are 3 major terrestrial ecosystem types: forest ecosystems are mostly in the core areas; grassland and agricultural ecosystems are found in the buffer zones which are essential for agro-biodiversity and food productions; and urban ecosystems cover the transition areas. In

addition, there are 94 caves in Albay, and they form a special type of ecosystem. Aquatic ecosystems are divided into 2 types: freshwater ecosystems including lentic water bodies and lotic water bodies, and marine and coastal ecosystems including mangrove forests, seagrass and soft bottom habitats, and marine coral reefs.

118. Conservation value of this proposed biosphere reserve is very high. There are 182 species of terrestrial plants, out of which 46 are endemic. In the marine and coastal ecosystems, there are 12 species of mangroves, 40 species of seaweed or macro-algae, and 10 species of sea grasses, which represents 62.5% of all known species in the Philippines. 5 species of marine turtles among all the 7 species in the world are found in Albay. The whale shark, which is the largest fish in the world, frequently visits the marine areas of the proposed site. Two species of reef building marine corals occur in this area too.

119. Population size of the proposed Albay Biosphere Reserve or Albay Province in 2010 was 326,489 in the buffer zone, and 906,943 in the transition area. In terms of development function, agriculture is the main source of income in this area. Irrigated rice paddies are the most practiced form of agriculture in lowland areas. Fishing is the main livelihood along the shores in Albay. In addition to agriculture and fishing, tourism is a growing industry, centered at the Mount Mayon Natural Park.

120. The MAB Council acknowledged the submission of the report which outlines how the recommendations of the Advisory Committee have been addressed and the zonation map which shows the delineation of buffer zones and transition areas in the marine parts of the proposed site.

121. Following the satisfactory review of the additional information by the Bureau, the MAB Council therefore **approved** the site.

122. **Fajãs de São Jorge (Portugal)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed biosphere reserve that integrates the entire Island of São Jorge, which is situated in the Azores archipelago, stretches about 55 km in length, has a maximum width of 7 km (between Fajã das Pontas and Portinho da Calheta), and covers an area of 243.8 km<sup>2</sup> and close to 140 km of coastline. It is the 4th largest island in the archipelago, and its highest elevation is Pico da Esperança at 1,053 m.

123. The combination of high altitude and coastal ecosystems has resulted in a wealth of endemic terrestrial flora, of which 60 species are native to São Jorge. These ecosystems provide an excellent habitat for a diversity of invertebrate, terrestrial arthropod, mollusc and bird species.

124. With 9,171 inhabitants in 2011, the island of São Jorge represented only 3.7% of the Azorean population. The Fajãs de São Jorge Biosphere Reserve aims to make a contribution towards improving the quality of life and economic development in the local community, based on the conservation of the island's biodiversity, landscape, and cultural and historical identity. The Biosphere Reserve designation would bolster the efforts and commitment of government bodies and the local population to conserve species and ecosystems, and promote a model of development that both preserves these natural values and uses them to create new opportunities for investment and job creation, thereby encouraging people to remain in the region, especially youth and those who possess qualifications.

125. The proposed biosphere reserve would thus serve as a platform for development and

public participation, promoting environmental training and information among economic agents and the general community. This would be supported by the knowledge created by research activities and by national and international cooperation with other biosphere reserves, with whom Fajãs de São Jorge would work to explore new models for sustainable development and to find solutions to common problems.

126. The MAB Council congratulated the national authorities for the high quality of the proposal and **approved** Fajãs de São Jorge as a biosphere reserve.

127. **Tejo/Tajo Internacional (Portugal and Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed this new proposal for a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve submitted by the Portuguese and Spanish authorities. The new proposed reserve covers a total area of 428,176 ha (Core area: 55,927 ha; Buffer zone: 131,413 ha; Transition area: 240,835 ha). It is located in the western region of the Iberian Peninsula shared between Spain and Portugal, and its main axis is the Tajo River.

128. The area is characterized by low altitude and sharp relief. The vegetation consists largely of sclerophyllous and cork oak formations and abundant patches of scrub, as well as cultivated areas, extensive pastures and open stand formations. Among the most significant plant taxa are different species of orchids. The principal occupations of the territory are livestock and forestry, with sheep, cattle and pigs forming the basis of the local economy, along with other traditional farms such as cork extraction, honey collection and the cultivation of cereals.

129. The fauna is typically Mediterranean and includes a large number of threatened or endangered taxa, some of which are endemic to the peninsula. Among the most important species are the European imperial eagle, Bonelli's eagle, the black stork, the black vulture, the Egyptian vulture, the lesser kestrel, the great bustard, the little bustard, the otter, the green lizard, along with the extensive fauna of the Mediterranean rivers.

130. The population is small and concentrated in small and medium areas, which are markedly rural in composition. The overall population is aging with a depopulation trend observed over recent decades, especially on the Spanish side. This demographic weakness is one of the main challenges facing the region.

131. This transboundary biosphere reserve is symptomatic of the strong level of cooperation and understanding between Spain and Portugal. In general, the zonation schema follows the biosphere reserve model, however in the western part of proposed biosphere reserve, the core zone is not surrounded by a buffer or transition area. Nevertheless, this area is part of an international limit between Portugal and Spain.

132. The MAB Council welcomed this nomination and **approved** this site.

133. **Jozani-Chwaka Bay (Tanzania)** The MAB Council welcomed this new proposed biosphere reserve, situated in the Island of Zanzibar and which contains its only national park, covers a total area of 21,274 ha comprising of 2,063 ha core area, 4,227 ha buffer zone and 14,984 ha transition zone. It is Ramsar site, World heritage site and Convention on Biological Diversity monitoring site for red colobus and duikers. The landscape consists of mosaics of mangroves, tropical forests and coral rug forests, groundwater, salt marshes and agricultural and residential areas. The area is a biodiversity hotspot area including inter alia reef fish species, 2 species of dolphins, the Zanzibar leopard (*Panther pardus adersi*), 168 species of birds including 30 of global and regional relevance, 25 species of reptiles, and 19 species of amphibians including Kassina jozani which is endemic only to the proposed biosphere reserve.

Out of the 291 plant species belonging to 83 families, 21 are known to be threatened or endangered. Several of the plants are important for traditional medicines.

134. With a population of over 16,000 inhabitants, the leading economic contributor in Zanzibar is tourism supported by sustainable livelihoods like fishing, bee keeping, butterfly and marine turtle rearing and crabs fattening providing benefit sharing. Community capacity building is fostered through training on entrepreneurship, conservation and law enforcement. The linkage between 3 zones and functions is well articulated in the nomination.

135. The MAB Council examined the additional information provided by the national authorities with regard to the status of the area around Charawe which is not considered as a buffer zone as well as the road map to establish a coordination structure for the entire biosphere reserve based on the 2 existing management systems and to revise the outdated management plan. The MAB Council also acknowledged the submission of translated copies of the agreement with the *Shehia* (smallest administrative unit in Zanzibar).

136. Following the satisfactory review of this information by the Bureau, the MAB Council decided to **approve** this site.

137. **Isle of Man (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)** The MAB Council welcomed this proposed site located in the Irish Sea between Ireland and UK. It measures 33 miles long by 13 miles wide. The area covers the 57,200 ha land area and the Manx Territorial Sea comprising a further 399,800 ha. The core area is 15,398 ha (3,008 hectares of terrestrial and 12,390 hectares of marine), the buffer zone is 114,670 ha (46,563 of terrestrial and 68,107 of marine areas) and the transition area is 326,932 ha (7,629 hectares of terrestrial and 319,303 of marine areas). The total population consists of about 84500 residents, concentrated in a few areas, which explains the relative small size of the transition areas. The population is characterized by its own language, its own parliament and legislative body and historical Celtic and Norse influences.

138. The area includes various coastlines of cliffs, stacks, islets, and long beaches. The hills hold important peat reserves and are deeply cut by wooded glens in the east. The coastal plain in the north is covered by grasslands, pools and wetlands including the Ballaugh Currah Ramsar site. The sea bed has areas of rich biodiversity, hosting horse mussels, and Sabellaria reefs and maerl and seagrass beds, many of which are protected in the Ramsey Bay Marine Nature Reserve. The proposal contains conservation sites of international importance, including the Ballaugh Currah Ramsar site, and the Ramsey Bay Marine Nature Reserve, which is classified as an OSPAR Marine Protected Area. The proposed site harbours important populations of European eel, Atlantic cod, curlew and basking sharks, as well as Manx shearwater. The proposal also introduces a breeding project for rare farm breeds.

139. The country side is farmed with sheep, beef and dairy cows as well as arable areas. The sea is harvested for shellfish. Since the late 19th century, the island became a popular tourist destination, hosting 111,911 tourists in 2013. Since the late 1980's the Island has developed services and manufacturing sectors which has resulted in a robust economic growth.

140. Stakeholder participation is taking place through civil society organizations and representation in local government. Governance is mainly based on existing governance structures, with an added steering committee, which reports to existing democratic governance structures. In consultation with the stakeholders, a management plan will be developed once the

proposal is approved.

141. The MAB Council **approved** this site and recommended that the national authorities develop a comprehensive management plan for the biosphere reserve in the near future.

### **Nominations deferred**

142. **Iron Gates (Romania)** The MAB Council welcomed this new proposed site located in south western Romania, in Danube river gorge, along the border with Serbia. It includes 48 municipalities with population exceeding 49,000 people. The total surface of the proposed site is 128,341 ha, divided into 12,998 hectares of core areas, 23,538 hectares of buffer zones and 91,805 hectares of transition area. The area has multiple designations such as Iron Gates Natural Park (designation corresponding to the IUCN category V - Protected landscape), the Iron Gates wetland (Ramsar site) and protected areas within the Natura 2000 network (both SCIs and SPAs).

143. The continental temperate climate with Mediterranean influences (hot and dry summers with mild rainy winters) favours occurrence of many thermophilous plants and animals that adapted to the local conditions. There are 1,668 vegetal taxa (only higher plants) including 28 endemics as well as over 5,200 animal species identified in the area with most of the reptile, amphibians and birds species protected at an international and national level. The Iron Gate area also represents a flyway of world importance.

144. Main economic activity is currently energy production as the Iron Gates facility is the biggest hydro electrical power plant in Romania. Mining was another important activity, but it is gradually declining since 1989. Other economic activities concentrated in urban areas include ship building and productions of automobile components. In rural areas prevail no intensive forms of agriculture, managing small fields, with very low use of mechanization, pesticides and fertilizers, resulting in low but resilient and sustainable production. Tourism is in developing stage, building on natural and cultural properties of the region and will have more important role in the future.

145. The MAB Council acknowledged that cross-border cooperation has been initiated between the Iron Gates and Djerdap National Park in Serbia and also noted good possibilities for implementing the logistic function activities.

146. The MAB Council also noted with concern that the area of proposed Iron Gates Biosphere Reserve overlaps totally with the existing Iron Gates Natural Park. The MAB Council thanked the authorities for the additional information provided following the request of the Advisory committee but expressed some concerns on the proposed biosphere reserve management and territorial structure, based mainly on the Natural Park which may cause some confusion.

147. The MAB Council decided that Iron Gates be **deferred** and encouraged that national authorities resubmit a proposal including the following elements:

- a. the submission of a further elaborated governance structure that differs from the Administration of the Iron Gates Natural Park and is inclusive, comprehensive and ensures local stakeholders' equal position in participation in the decision making processes and in biosphere reserve management, including a clear common, shared vision by the local communities for the designation as a biosphere reserve;
- b. the submission of a proposal of measures to be adopted to distinguish the proposed

biosphere reserve from the Natural Park to prevent confusion between the designations and purpose

- c. a detailed zonation map showing that all core areas are surrounded by or adjacent to buffer zones, noting that some of the transition areas proposed may be transformed into buffer zones as they meet the criteria for buffer zonation.

148. **Alto Turia (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed this new proposal submitted by the Spanish authorities for Alto Turia, located in the Valencian Province. The proposed biosphere reserve covers a total area of 67,080.00 ha (core area: 6,987.38 ha; buffer zone: 49,513.38 ha; transition area: 10,805.27 ha). It is uniquely positioned in the middle watercourse of the Turia River. The Alto Turia region is characterized by the presence of a diverse, varied and valuable physical environment.

149. The territory is bordered by the south-eastern edge of mountain ranges of the Iberian system. The main peaks of the proposed reserve are Tortajada (1,515 m), Campalvo (1,329 m) and Picarcho (1,305 m) in the northern part of the area lying inside the reserve boundaries; and El Navazo (1,103 m) and El Remedio (1054 m) in the southern part of the area.

150. The region includes small towns located mainly in the transition zone (5,714 inhabitants). These have tried to survive using their own resources, with low levels of agriculture and farming (an underdeveloped industry) and a small tourist sector, but face significant problems of rural population drift.

151. The main aim of the proposed biosphere reserve is the conservation and development of the valuable natural and cultural heritage. The territory has been severely affected by depopulation and a downturn in productive activities. This development project will provide a necessary economic boost emphasizing the self-ownership and use of resources in a sustainable manner. The objective is to demonstrate that it is possible to recover and re-develop Alto Turia, transforming the area from a territory with a high degree of depopulation into a society that makes sustainable development its main activity and way of life. This area will serve as a model approach showing how human beings can live in harmony with the environment.

152. The MAB Council, however, found that the zoning of the proposal was not fully functional. Five core areas of the proposal lay mostly at the border of the biosphere reserve, and a large part of the core areas were not surrounded by buffer zones and transition areas. No additional information is given outside of the biosphere reserve.

153. The MAB Council decided that the site be **deferred** and encouraged the national authorities to revise the zonation.

### **Extension, rezoning or renaming of already existing biosphere reserves approved by the MAB Council**

154. **Trifinio Fraternidad - Extension (Honduras)** The MAB Council welcomed this extension submission for the Honduras part of the Tri-national Trifinio Fraternidad Biosphere Reserve between El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. The area represents an important water catchment shared by the 3 countries, with the biosphere reserve providing a framework for cooperation and the establishment of a common management plan to ensure joint sustainable

development of the region. The extension project presented by Honduras would cover an area of 278,762.89 ha including 6 national protected areas.

155. The reserve includes key biodiversity areas, such as Montecristo National Park and different forest ecosystems. The mountain area fulfils an important function in guaranteeing water supply for the communities, while important developments include the promotion of coffee production and conifer forest extraction or agro-tourism. This biosphere reserve has strong political support at a high level (vice-ministers of the 3 countries) and involves local communities in the promotion of sustainable development.

156. The extension follows the social, environmental and economic plan in line with the conservation area of the Tri-national Trifinio Plan Commission (CTPT). This area was established to preserve and restore the hydrological resources of the bi-national watershed of the Motagua River (Guatemala and Honduras), the Ulúa River (Honduras) and the tri-national watershed of the Lempa River.

157. The MAB Council **approved** this extension and encouraged national authorities to include corridors -common buffer zone protecting small core areas- should be included. The MAB Council asked the national authorities to include this extension in the Trifinio Plan's Tri-National Commission.

158. **Selve Costiere di Toscana Biosphere Reserve - Extension and renaming of former Selve Pisana Biosphere Reserve (Italy)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension and renaming submission of Selve Pisana Biosphere Reserve designated in 2004.

159. It is located along the Mediterranean coast of Italy to the west of Pisa city. The area is a mosaic of ecosystems related to estuaries, wetlands as an important bird habitat, dunes with *Amophilla arenaria*, dune forests of anthropogenic origin with *Pinus pinea* and *Pinus pinaster*, lagoon, bogs and marshes, rare forests, mountains covered by maritime pine woods and rare oak-trees. The area hosts 10 endemic species of plants and 5 endemic species of animals, among them 2 species of bats breeding in the buffer zone. The extension is planned for 2 plain zones, hill region in central eastern part and vast area in Monte Pisani. The proposed area encompasses 43,132.57 ha, of which 8,253.50 ha core areas, the buffer zones covers 15,927.00 ha for the terrestrial part and 947.58 ha for the marine part, and the transition area covers 18,004.40 ha. The core area is composed of a cluster of 18 zones. The objective of the proposed area is to conserve natural values and implement sustainable activities in agriculture, silviculture and tourism.

160. The 72,600 inhabitants live mostly in the transition zone. Agritourism, sport and cultural tourism are well-developed. The site welcomes more than 1 million tourists every year mostly in the transition area. The main touristic attractions inland are the seaside activities, outdoor activities in Monti Pisani and the cultural sites. The territories host for example the basilica San Piero a Grado or the Calci Carthusian monastery, but also ancient roman ruins near Monti Pisana. Many researches are conducted about various subjects (fauna, flora, intensity of human activities, agronomy, and invasive species) by a range of centers and institutes such as Pisa University, Joint Research Center for the European Commission.

161. The MAB Council noted with appreciation that a special bottom-up management scheme was designed, with decision body for communities. This governance system could ensure the participatory implication of local communities, experts and stakeholders. The MAB Council commended the authorities for the involvement of young people in the nomination process to

ensure intergenerational cooperation. The MAB Council noted that the draft management plan would be finalized and adopted after the designation.

162. However, the MAB Council noted that the Advisory Committee requested the submission of the following information:

- a. To reconsider the proposed zonation, in order to ensure that all core areas are surrounded by or adjacent to buffer zones and in this process, to consider that some of the proposed transition areas could be considered as buffer zones since they fulfil the criteria for being buffer zones already;
- b. To submit a revised zonation map and provide clarification on the rationale for the size of the marine buffer zone and the absence of a marine transition area;
- c. To better describe the monitoring and types of tourism in the proposed area;
- d. To explain why signatures of authorities in charge are the same for all the 3 zones (pages 24-25-26-27-28);
- e. To explain why the agreement is only mentioning 7 municipalities (annexe 3) while the extension includes 9 municipalities, and to explain how would Lucca and Capannori municipalities will work with the other municipalities.

163. Upon receipt and examination of the additional information provided by the Italian authorities, the MAB Council **approved** the extension and renaming of this site.

164. **Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve - Extension (Japan)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension submission of Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1980, which comprises the alpine zone, the subalpine zone, and the montane zone. In the montane zone, in particular, there is an extensive forest of the Siebold's beech (*Fagus crenata*) which provides a habitat not only for various types of plants, but also for animals, such as the Asiatic black bear (*Ursus thibetanus*) and the Japanese serow (*Capricornis crispus*). No endemic species has been found in the Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve. However, among plants found in the biosphere reserve 57 species of the orchid family are listed in Annex II of CITES.

165. This submission proposes the extension of the core area from 17,857 ha to 22,120 ha; the buffer zone from 29,843 ha to 45,660 ha and a new transition area of 131,549 ha which is set in the mountain villages. The total area will be more than quadrupled, with a significant addition of transition areas. The villages have maintained a livelihood based on the sustainable use of resources in the mountain areas.

166. The extended biosphere reserve has a UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage site "Historic Villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama." In addition, it contains 2 Japanese Geoparks. The total human population of the biosphere reserve is 17,023, mostly in transition areas. There is a decline in the population of children and increase in the population of the elderly due to changes in lifestyles and outflow of young people to larger cities after the mid-20th century. This has led to a concern for the risk of losing lifestyles using natural resources and traditional cultures.

167. The MAB Council **approved** this extension and encouraged the national authorities to develop a new management plan for the biosphere reserve.

168. **Yakushima and Kuchinoerabu Jima Biosphere Reserve – Extension and renaming of former Yakushima Biosphere Reserve (Japan)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension and renaming submission of Yakushima Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1980 and located 60 km south of Kyushu Island in Japan. It is famous for the Yaku cedar primeval forest, and it includes Yakushima World Natural Heritage site which was inscribed in 1993. Yakushima

demonstrates vertical distribution of plants from subtropical warm-temperate zone near the coast to high moors near the summit (1,936 m). The current size of this biosphere is 18,958 ha in total, with 7,559 ha of core area and 11,339 ha of buffer zone, and it covers 37.6% of the whole area of Yakushima Island (50,429 ha). However, the current zonation does not include any transition area nor any marine area.

169. The new nomination document proposes an extension to cover the whole Yakushima Island and add another island called Kuchinoerabu Jima, and it will include marine areas surrounding the 2 islands. The new proposed total area will be 78,196 ha (54,066 ha terrestrial and 24,130 ha marine). Marine transition zone is set from the coastline to 2 km off the shore in Yakushima and 1 km in Kuchinoerabu Jima excluding marine core area and buffer zone. Kuchinoerabu Jima is located 12 km west-northwest from Yakushima, and the whole island is part of the Yakushima National Park. The new proposed area will include Nagata-hama beach, a Ramsar site which is a spawning place for internationally endangered loggerhead turtle. The current human population of the biosphere reserve is 13,589.

170. The Japanese authorities submitted a Basic Management Policy of Yakushima and Kuchinoerabu Jima Biosphere Reserve, explaining the outline, objectives, functions and zonation of the biosphere reserve, together with a current management system. There is a single coordinating body of the biosphere reserves: Promotion Council of Yakushima and Kuchinoerabu Jima Biosphere Reserve. It consists of local residents, town council, local communities, administrative organization and experts, and it is responsible for the coordination among stakeholders.

171. The MAB Council commended the national authorities for their efforts in the extension of the site and encouraged the authorities to formulate a management plan for this biosphere reserve and submit this to the MAB Secretariat in the near future.

172. The MAB Council **approved** the extension proposal and change of name of this biosphere reserve.

**173. Mount Odaigahara, Mount Omine and Osugidani Biosphere Reserve – Extension and renaming of former Mount Odaigahara and Mount Omine Biosphere Reserve (Japan)**  
The MAB Council welcomed the extension and renaming submission of Mount Odaigahara and Mount Omine Biosphere Reserve, which was designated in 1980. The site is located in the Kii Peninsula of Honshu Island of Japan, and within Mie and Nara Prefectures. It is a mountainous area, and forestry was developed instead of farming. The current size of this biosphere reserve is 36,000 ha, composed of 1,000 ha core area and 35,000 ha buffer zone without any transition area.

174. The new extension document proposes an extension from 36,000 ha to 118,331 ha, comprising 5,398 ha of core area, 32,428 ha of buffer zone and 80,505 ha of transition area, with a significant addition of transition areas. The new core area will include Special Protection Zone of Yoshino-Kumano National Park, Preservation Zone of Osugidani Forest Ecosystem Reserve, and National Wildlife Protection Area and Special Protection Area of the Mount Odai Range. The new buffer zone will include Special or Ordinary Zone of Yoshino- Kumano National Park, and Conservation and Utilization Zone of Osugidani Forest Ecosystem Reserve. The entire core area and a large part of buffer zone is included in Yoshino-Kumano National park. The new transition areas are designated as a landscape planning area of the Mie or Nara Prefectural Landscape Plan. With a significant increase in size, the Japanese authorities proposed a name change from Mount Odaigahara and Mount Omine Biosphere Reserve to Mount Odaigahara, Mount Omine,

and Osugidani Biosphere Reserve.

175. The biosphere reserve is characterized by mountain ranges as in Mount Omine range, gently sloping plateau-like terrains as in Odaigahara, and deep, V-shaped valleys as in Osugidani. The Mount Omine range, which straddles the core area and the buffer zone, has been designated as a World Cultural Heritage “Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range” by UNESCO. The total human population of the expanded biosphere reserve is 14,317, with a trend of decrease in the population of children and an increase in the population of elderly people.

176. The MAB Council commended the effort of the national authorities especially with regard to the involvement of local people in the extension proposal. The national authorities are encouraged to formulate a new management plan and to submit it to the MAB Secretariat in the near future.

177. The MAB Council **approved** this extension and re-naming.

178. **Mount Sorak Biosphere Reserve - Extension (Republic of Korea)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension submission of this site designated in 1982 and located in the center of the Baekdudaegan Mountain Range. Mount Sorak is the third highest mountain in the Republic of Korea. Spanning from Sokcho City to the counties of Yangyang, Inje, and Goseong in Gangwon Province, the mountain stands 1,708m tall.

179. Mount Sorak Biosphere Reserve currently occupies a total area of 39,350 ha (core area 16,430 ha, buffer zone 22,385 ha, and transition area 353 ha). The transition area of the Mount Sorak Biosphere Reserve accounts for only 1% of the entire area. The majority of the biosphere reserve falls within the boundary of the Mount Sorak National Park, which creates many limits when it comes to developing Biosphere Reserve linkage programs, attracting local residents' participation, and managing programs designed to activate the local economy. On these backgrounds, the MAB Council in its 25 session recommended the extension of the transition area for Mount Sorak Biosphere Reserve.

180. The main objective of this proposal consists of the extension of the transition area to encompass the local residential areas, forests, and agricultural areas surrounding the legally protected Mount Sorak National Park and it accounts for a total area of 76,749 ha (core area 14,992 ha, buffer zone 22,312 ha, and transition area 39,445 ha). Mount Sorak Biosphere Reserve mainly consists of temperate forests, with 22.8% of the entire area situated at an elevation of 1,000 m or higher. Many rivers also originate from the biosphere reserve, as do various natural and geomorphological landscapes. The protected area of Mount Sorak, located at the center of the Baekdudaegan Mountains.

181. With respect to economic activities, some of the local residents are engaged in agricultural activities in orchards, rice paddies and dry fields. However, the majority of residents are engaged in businesses such as accommodations, restaurants, resorts, and other facilities geared towards visitors and tourists in the Mount Sorak area. As such, the revenues from Mount Sorak account for the largest ratio of the regional economy.

182. The MAB Council commended the national authorities for taking the appropriate measures to address future challenges which are associated with development and also population increase. The authorities are also commended for involving the local population in the process of expanding this biosphere reserve.

183. The MAB Council **approved** the extension proposal for the Mount Sorak Biosphere Reserve.

184. **Shinan Dadohae Biosphere Reserve - Extension (Republic of Korea)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension submission of Shinan Dadohae Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2009 with a total area of 75,749 ha. After its designation as a biosphere reserve, several pilot projects have been implemented to conserve and promote sustainable development in the area, with particular focus on the Jeungdo area. The increased tourism that has resulted from these efforts has invigorated the local economy and enhanced the lives of local residents. This has, in turn, raised awareness among residents of other areas in need of similar efforts within the Shinan Dadohae Biosphere Reserve.

185. As a result of the biosphere reserve designation, Shinan County was able to introduce more systematic measures to preserve and manage biodiversity on the 5 core islands near the coast and in the adjacent seas and deep waters. The results of these efforts provide the basis upon which the county has developed comprehensive and suitable measures to preserve and manage all of the islands within Shinan County in a coherent and consistent manner. The extension of the biosphere reserve to the entire area of Shinan County is necessary for the county to expand the linkage between its ecosystem conservation policy and management of the biosphere reserve. Another objective of this extension is that it is expected to contribute to the implementation of a unified system for biodiversity conservation on the islands and has proceeded due to the requests made by local residents.

186. The extension primarily consists of 1,000 islands distributed across the southwestern part of the Korean peninsula. It also contains tidal flats included on the Tentative List of World Heritage Sites and designated as Ramsar Sites, as well as other natural protected areas such as the Dadohae Maritime National Park and Tidal Flat Provincial Park, and Slow City (Cittaslow) site. Moreover, it also contains areas of high cultural diversity due to the uniqueness of indigenous knowledge. The proposed total area will be 323,874 ha, including a transition area of 177,661 ha.

187. The MAB Council congratulated the national authorities for the high quality of the proposal and **approved** this extension. The authorities are also commended for the involvement of the local communities. The MAB Council is pleased to note that this extension application was initiated and supported by the communities.

188. **Noroeste Amotapes - Manglares Biosphere Reserve – Extension and renaming of former Noroeste Biosphere Reserve (Peru)** The MAB Council welcomed this extension and renaming submission for Noroeste Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1977. The proposed extension includes Cerros de Amotape National Park, Coto El Angolo and Tumbes Mangroves Protected Area (previously 231,402 ha). The extension covers 1,115,947.79 ha (Core: 154,533.27; Buffer: 212,049.47; Transition: 749,365.05 ha).

189. The altitude ranges from 0 to 1,600 metres. The area is located on the northern coast of Peru in the Tumbes and Piura departments. It covers part of the Ecuadorian dry forest situated in the tropical Pacific forest with a high biodiversity of flora and fauna. The reserve also includes the 'Cerros de Amotape' National Park, the 'Coto El Angolo' and the national forest of Tumbes. Its relief is highly varied and covered by matorral formations, very dry forest, dry and tropical sub-montane forest (*Prosopis juliflora*) (*Bombax* sp.), (*Tillandsia* sp.), and Tumbes mangroves. It also contains endangered fauna species such as gryphus, *Sacoramphus papa* and *Burhinus*

*superciliaris*, and mammals including *Odocoileus virginianus*, *Tayassu tajacu* and *Felis concolor*.

190. The main threats in the area are cattle, lobster and shrimps farming, and wildfire. The total population is 511,244 inhabitants. The economic activities are mainly agriculture, cattle rearing and ecotourism.

191. The MAB Council **approved** this extension and renaming of this biosphere reserve. It encouraged the authorities to include the marine area in the proposal and discuss the possibility to create a future transboundary reserve with the Ecuadorian Biosphere Reserve, Bosque Seco, designated in 2014.

192. **Wester Ross Biosphere Reserve - Extension and renaming of former Beinn Eighe Biosphere Reserve (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension and renaming submission of located in the north west of Scotland in United Kingdom, Beinn Eighe Biosphere Reserve, was designated in 1976.

193. The proposed site covers 529,904 ha: a core area of 5,337 ha, a buffer zone of 13,807 ha, and a transition area of 510,760 ha (96% of the total). The proposed area includes Loch Maree, which has been designated as a Ramsar site, and considered of international importance due to its black-throated diver population. The proposal also includes a marine area which is not under the jurisdiction of local authorities, but for which they nevertheless aim to develop plans for a more sustainable use of marine resources.

194. The region is dominated by wild mountains with the highest being the Beinn Eighe. The banks of the lakes and valleys are covered by woodlands while highlands are mostly grassy. Beinn Eighe Natural Reserve hosts the largest of ancient Caledonian forest in Wester Ross. Some of the Scots pines age 400 years old.

195. The transition area is hosting a population of 8,000 people, resulting in one of the lowest densely populated areas in Europe. The majority of the population lives in the main settlements of Ullapool, Gairloch, Lochcarron and Kyle of Lochalsh. Due to its rugged and mountainous topography, much of the land is suitable for grazing by cattle. Private estates are often subsidized by external resources in addition to grants for forestry, agriculture or the development of renewable energy projects. The remarkable nature around attracts more than 70,000 visitors each year, mostly for tourism and recreational purposes. A wide variety of existing research activity takes place in the previously established Biosphere Reserve at Beinn Eighe. Extensive research is being carried out on the physical, living and socio- economic environments principally through the University of the Highlands and Islands, statutory conservation bodies and local groups, including on the impact of tourism. Scottish National Heritage has developed an extensive monitoring programme.

196. The MAB Council noted with appreciation that the development of the proposal has been conducted with extensive community consultation and support. Management will be aligned with nation-wide trends towards decentralization. The MAB Council thanked the authorities for the additional information provided on the core area and buffer zone which clarified the rationale for the zonation. Therefore the MAB Council **approved** the renaming and extension of this site.

197. The MAB Council recommended that the authorities closely monitor the effects and impact of tourism as an alternative strategy and that the national authorities develop a comprehensive management plan for the biosphere reserve in the near future.

**Extension, rezoning or renaming of already existing biosphere reserves approved by the MAB Council pending the submission of specific information**

198. **Masurian Lakes Biosphere Reserve - Extension and renaming of former Lake Luknajno Biosphere Reserve (Poland)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension and renaming submission of Lake Łuknajno Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1976 in northern Poland is located within the geographical region of Masuria. The western part is located in the Mrogowa Lakeland and the eastern part belongs to the Land of Great Masurian Lakes. The proposed site covers 57,751.97 ha: a core area of 6,824.58 ha, a buffer zone of 14,674.26 ha, and a transition area of 36,253.13 ha. The area covers the largest lake in Poland, Lake Sniardwy, and one of the largest forest complexes in Poland. The area includes 23 habitats among them 10 priority habitats such as marshy pine coniferous forest and Boreal spruce forest. The considerable diversity of forest ecosystems is reflected in the richness of the animal world, including the grey wolf and the red deer.

199. The area of the proposed Masurian Lakes Biosphere Reserve is distinguished by a relatively low population density due to high contribution of forest areas and major water bodies. The town of Mikolajki in the northern part of the reserve, and numerous villages constitute the main areas of concentration of local communities. The human population amounts to approximately 8,300 inhabitants. The mostly pristine nature attracts around 350,000 visitors annually. The main recreational activities are walking trails, sailing, canoeing on the Krutynia River, horse riding and cycling. The fastest branches of the economy in the area are therefore tourism but also agriculture, forestry and fishery. Many researches are conducted by the Warsaw University, the Polish Academy of sciences in Popielno and the one in Mikolajki, the Masurian Landscape Park thanks to 3 important research stations located within the proposed area.

200. It is distinguished by traditional stable and reserve breeding of 2 species: Polish pony, which is recognized as a unique environmental-breeding relic evidencing the contribution of Poland in the global breeding culture since 1949, and Polish Red Cattle. The latter constitutes valuable material for ecological agriculture in biological and ethnographic terms.

201. The area has considerable historical-cultural resources. The mixed character of the population of the area (Masurians, Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians) particularly determined a multitude of cultural and religious traditions that presents important intangible heritage.).

202. The MAB Council noted with appreciation that the nomination process has been conducted in participatory way. The involvement of stakeholders in the future management of the biosphere reserve will be implemented through the establishment of the Coordination Board/Steering Committee of the Masurian Lakes Biosphere Reserve. It will engage the representatives of the local authorities, forest districts, non-governmental organizations, representatives of research stations, entrepreneurs, and institutions related to nature protection – Regional Directorate for Environmental Protection in Olsztyn and Masurian Landscape Park. The draft of the management plan will be adopted after the nomination in participatory way.

203. The MAB Council acknowledged the very well prepared nomination file presenting clear conservation objectives with involvement of research institutions and local population. It noted that the education programmes are well in place and that research studies include also socio-economic aspects. It also noted that the objective of the proposed site is to increase the quality of life and strengthening the identity of local people through the different activities of the

proposed area.

204. The MAB Council acknowledged with thanks receipt of additional information requested by the Advisory Committee as regards the endorsements of all municipalities involved and the description of how the local communities will be involved in the management of the proposed biosphere reserve, in addition to open public discussions during the meetings of the Committee.

205. However as the zonation was still unclear as regards the transition area in the southern part of the lake, it decided to **approve the site pending** the receipt and approval of the following information by 30 September 2016: Pursue the process for establishing the transition area in the southern part of the lake through mutual social agreement between local authorities, and provide an updated zonation map.

### **Extension, rezoning or renaming of already existing biosphere reserves deferred by the MAB Council**

206. **Fitzgerald Biosphere – Extension and renaming of former Fitzgerald River National Park Biosphere Reserve (Australia)** The MAB Council welcomed the extension and renaming submission of the Fitzgerald River National Park Biosphere Reserve located in the state of Western Australia, which was originally designated in 1978. However, this site being a pre-Seville site has not been fully functioning as a biosphere reserve due to the lack of an appropriate buffer zone and transition area. Hence this extension and re-nomination. The total area of this proposed biosphere reserve is 1.529 million ha: comprising 296,390 ha as core area; 140,797 ha as buffer zone; 1,092,208 ha terrestrial transition area and 157,286 ha as marine transition area.

207. The range of geological systems (barren coastal range, marine plains, granite upland, limestone ridges) is overlain by complex coastal and subcoastal landforms, drainages, wetlands and soil systems (e.g., deep sands, salt lakes) that give rise to a complex mosaic of vegetation systems. Conservation is attained in all zones, but most significantly in the core area (Fitzgerald River National Park), which is one of the richest places on earth for botanical diversity – 1,665 species of plants including 62 endemics found in eucalypt woodlands, allocasuarina and melaleuca habitats. This area also has one of the most complete sets of vertebrate fauna (e.g., tamar wallaby and other strange-sounding names). Surrounding the core area and interspersing with terrestrial transition area, the buffer zone includes terrestrial and coastal nature and other reserves and public lands which are not subject to mineral exploration and mining. Land uses include conservation, protection of water supplies, recreation and camping, and Aboriginal use.

208. The transition area covers large areas of exploration and mining sites which are ecologically sustainable following strict government legislation within the framework of limiting and managing environmental damage and providing offsets. Providing significant economic benefits (to Ravensthorpe communities), it has led to housing developments and commercial opportunities. The marine component comprises estuaries, streams, coastal ecosystems with significant interaction between oceans and river catchment. It has been assigned to the transition area because of the significant coastal recreation and seasonal tourism (during holidays, school breaks) and major commercial (abalone, purse seine, beach seine and gillnetting) and recreational fishing following ecosystem-based fisheries management. Its pristine waters include calving (southern right whale), migration (humpback whales) and feeding (seals,

sealions, seabirds) grounds.

209. Logistic support is provided by Commonwealth legislation and policy and state agencies (e.g., National Park Ranger), local government authorities (e.g., Ravensthorpe and 3 other shires), various community groups, universities and research institutions and international groups.

210. The MAB Council commended the Australian national authorities for their tremendous efforts towards improving the functionality of this site according to the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, after careful examination of this new extension application, the MAB Council noted that the size of the buffer zone which was indicated in the nomination file did not correspond to what is depicted on the zonation map. It also observed that the buffer zone is not contiguous to or surrounding the core area and therefore does not give adequate protection to the core area.

211. The MAB Council decided that this extension and renaming be **deferred** and encouraged the national authorities to resubmit the nomination taking into application the recommendation to rezone this area such that the buffer would be contiguous with the core area and to submit a new zonation map accordingly.

212. **Cuenca Alto del Manzanares Biosphere Reserve - Rezoning (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the rezoning proposal to add the previous recommendation of the MAB Council in 2006 to include an adequate transition area. This site has a unique character due to its location in the immediate neighbourhood of Madrid, reflected in the zoning proposal that follows the Regional Park Cuenca Alta del Río Manzanares and the Sierra de Guadarrama National Park that guarantee the 3 functions of this peri-urban biosphere reserve. The new extension covers a total area of 46,787.19 ha (core: 18,683.85 ha; buffer: 24,641.17 ha and transition: 3,462.17 ha).

213. The biosphere reserve is located among medium-altitude and high-altitude mountains with valleys and rocky areas consisting of granite and gneiss. The 'Pedriza de Manzanares' is a particular feature of note, comprising a spectacular geological landscape dominated by strongly eroded granite formations of enormous capriciously shaped blocks known as 'berruecos', with a Mediterranean vegetation of aromatic plants such as thyme, lavender, Spanish lavender, rosemary, and Cistus or Rock roses. Among the tree formations are oak and ash groves, juniper and pine groves and, at higher altitudes, Cytisus oro-mediterreneus scrubland.

214. The MAB Council noted that no change has taken place in the size of the biosphere reserve and some of the buffer zones have been transformed into transition areas. The MAB Council also noted that significant human activities are taking place in the core area that contravenes the proposed zonation system. Moreover, the core area is not surrounded by buffer zone and transition areas.

215. The MAB Council decided this proposition of rezoning be **deferred** and encouraged the national authorities to undertake a total revision of the zonation proposal.

### **Withdrawal of sites**

216. Austria took the floor to inform the MAB Council that it had withdrawn 2 biosphere reserves from the WNBR: Unterer Lobau and Neusiedler See.

217. With 20 new biosphere reserves including one transboundary site being added to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and 2 withdrawn sites from Austria, the WNBR is now composed of 669 biosphere reserves, including 16 transboundary biosphere reserves in 120 countries.

## **XII. Periodic review of biosphere reserves and follow-up of recommendations**

218. The representative of the Secretariat introduced the item by indicating that, at its last session, the Advisory Committee on Biosphere Reserves examined 75 periodic review reports and 69 follow-up reports.

219. She recalled that at its last session the MAB Council decided that no decision would be taken as regards sites not meeting the criteria and that countries would have until 30 September 2016 to address the recommendations issues by the MAB Council.

220. She explained the Advisory Committee recommendations by category, highlighted in different colours on the screen in plenary to facilitate the discussions. These categories are: a) sites which meet the criteria, to be formally recognized by the MAB Council, according to paragraph 4 of Article 9 of the Statutory Framework; b) sites which do not meet the criteria, so that further measures are required (paragraph 5 of Article 9 of the Statutory Framework); c) sites for which not enough information was available to assess whether the site is or not meeting the criteria.

221. The chair acknowledged with appreciation the work done by the advisory committee. A delegate informed the MAB Council that they were prepared to provide technical support for countries that needed it.

222. The MAB Council formally adopted the following recommendations:

223. **El Kala Biosphere Reserve (Algeria)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report from El Kala Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 1990. The MAB Council acknowledged the Biosphere Reserve's efforts to comply with the recommendations made in 2002 following the biosphere reserve's first periodic review. In particular, several studies on the ecological state of the site, notably for the elaboration of a management plan for wetlands, and on socio-economic characteristics of the local populations have been undertaken in order to identify appropriate local engagement processes. Among these, support and training for the development of beekeeping involving both men and women has to be mentioned in particular. The MAB Council congratulated the biosphere reserve for having become a reference that is often consulted by national and local authorities in the realm of ecological sustainability and for its capacity to build several national and international collaboration arrangements.

224. Integration of local populations is undertaken through economic developments and volunteering opportunities. However, the biosphere reserve is managed following El-Kala National Park's management plan and by its "conseil d'orientation" (orientation council), in which civil society is present only through one association representative. The increase of participatory processes within the Biosphere Reserve as stated in the objectives for the coming years are thus strongly encouraged.

225. Following the request made in conjunction with the first periodic review, Algeria had submitted a revised and extended zoning of the biosphere reserve that met with the MAB

Council's full approval. Subsequently, together with other positive developments reported on, the MAB Council concluded that the El Kala Biosphere Reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

226. The MAB Council **approved** the extension of this biosphere reserve.

227. **Gouraya Biosphere Reserve (Algeria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review from Gouraya Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 2004. The MAB Council congratulated the authorities for the positive developments in territorial planning that have taken place since its designation. Among which are the closing of a quarry, the delocalization of a landfill site and the infrastructure developments facilitating transport and access to previously isolated villages.

228. A strong scientific research activity is reported, implemented through conventions with several national and international universities on the biosphere reserve's natural resources but that also resulted in the recovering of historical sites of national value. Environmental education and ecotourism development have been translated into the creation of 4 eco-museums, hiking trails while open communication is achieved through a dedicated website and the biosphere reserve's presence in the social media.

229. Noteworthy is the reported recruitment of 1,500 people in the biosphere reserve since its designation. The inclusion of local people is described as happening at the implementation level of the site's management plan. Rural development projects and ecotourism projects have thus been built with associations from the civil society and beekeeping has been supported through training. However, participation of local communities is currently not foreseen in management planning, decision making and new territorial plans and should therefore be more encouraged.

230. While, the MAB Council acknowledged with appreciation the ongoing work to extend the transition zone to include several additional municipalities, it requested that a clarification be provided concerning the status, detailed rationale, and the surface figures provided in relation to these changes. In particular, the authorities are invited to specify if the measures in the table on surface area and spatial configuration constitute a formal proposal, or if it is work in progress yet to be finalized, and if they represent additions to current surface area and not updated figures of the total area. Similarly, the measures indicated in the table have to be made coherent with the information contained in the maps. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria and **approved** the extension of this site. The authorities are requested to provide the requested clarification and documents to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

231. **Taza Biosphere Reserve (Algeria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review from Taza Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 2004. It acknowledged the extension of the transition zone to a marine area and the revision of the biosphere reserve's internal organization, with the creation of a scientific committee to determine research priorities and coordinate the collaboration of research institutions. As a consequence of the biosphere reserve's scientific research efforts and the establishment of conventions with universities, the discovery of new animal species (butterflies and bats) and an increase in the number of inventoried species have to be cited.

232. Studies targeted biological diversity as well as cultural history and traditional cultural knowledge has been promoted through media coverage. In parallel, the revival of some traditional practices such as pottery or mountain agriculture has been observed. The MAB

Council congratulated the authorities for their commitment to local development. In particular, socio-economic studies were performed to identify the needs of the local population and training sessions (beekeeping, arboriculture, ecotourism etc.) held as a means for capacity building. This approach provides a good example of the site's compliance with the biosphere reserve concept. Further the biosphere reserve's ability to face ad-hoc problems, such as beach pollution due to over-frequentedation, through the creation of field units has to be emphasized.

233. To date, the local population is participating in the implementation of the BR's management plan by being the recipient of training sessions and environmental education programs or by contributing in voluntary activities (cleaning for instance). However, these processes remain mainly top-down while local populations are not included in the elaboration of the management plan nor in decision making. Therefore, the MAB Council encourages Taza Biosphere Reserve to work towards more participatory processes.

234. The MAB Council concluded that Taza Biosphere Reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and **approved** the extension of this site.

235. **Delta del Paraná (Argentina)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2000, that covers an area of 88,624 ha. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the great work done in this biosphere reserve for the last ten years. The national authorities implemented in 2008 the Integral Strategic Plan for Conservation and Sustainable Development of the Paraná Delta Region (PIECAS—DP) for a better land-use regulation. The organization of the symposium in 2010 "Delta del Paraná: Historia, presente y futuro" with a large contribution of different actors on the role of the Biosphere Reserve helped to improve the management and analyze the contributions made during the past years.

236. The MAB Council considered that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, the MAB Council recommended that the national authorities reinforce the Management Committee, present the Management Plan and also improve the zoning system in order to ensure the protection of the core area located at the border with Uruguay. The national authorities are requested to complete the dossier, and to submit the shape files of the zoning system to the MAB Secretariat in the near future.

237. **Wienerwald Biosphere Reserve (Austria)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review of Wienerwald Biosphere Reserve, established in 2005. The Wienerwald Biosphere Reserve covers an area of 105,645 hectares and extends across 51 communities in Lower Austria and 7 municipal districts in Vienna and is the largest contiguous beech woodland in Central Europe. The biosphere reserve contains 20 types of woodland – with beech, oak and hornbeam dominating – and more than 17 types of meadow. There are more than 2,000 plant species and around 150 species of breeding birds. Cultural landscape is shaped by vineyards and dry stone walls.

238. The MAB Council took note of the diversity of projects in the field of nature conservation that acted as a bridge between science and society. Through very successful involvement of various stakeholders, they introduced sustainable farming with support of local economy through well-functioning partnership. The education and public awareness are harmoniously incorporated in all 3 functions of biosphere reserve.

239. In addition to conservation projects, the biosphere reserve supports social involvement of local people, provides training for young people, and promotes the area through traditional knowledge, recognized as intangible heritage, healthy food and environment, creating green society also through transgenerational projects.

240. The management plan is based on participatory approach that was introduced through the project Wienerwald BR 2020 Vision, where inhabitants are proposing activities. The action plan is a tool for further management of the site. The MAB Council recommended that this methodology can be used as a model for other biosphere reserves.

241. The MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

242. The MAB Council commended the management authority on the very well prepared periodic review report. The MAB Council recommended that the report is used as model for periodic review report for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and commended the participatory approaches in implementing sustainable development and nature conservation, as well as the management of a biosphere reserve close to a capital city.

243. **Espinhaço Range Biosphere Reserve (Brazil)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2005 and congratulated the national authorities for the high quality of the information provided. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the work done in this biosphere reserve for the last ten years in order to promote conservation and sustainable development (training courses, seminars, and development of educational and information material) in line with the principle of the Biosphere Reserve.

244. The MAB Council considered that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, however, recommended to put more attention on mining activities developed in the Biosphere Reserve and explore how to better manage them.

245. **Amazônia Central Biosphere Reserve (Brazil)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2001 and noted the achievement made by the Biosphere Reserve taking into account the difficulties of the Amazonian region. The MAB Council noted as well, that there is an overlapping of national and international designations in the Biosphere Reserve area - Biological Corridor, Ramsar site and World Heritage sites – that reflects the importance of conservation of this area.

246. The MAB Council considered that the site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and recommended to:

- a. revise and update the management plan and structure of the Biosphere Reserve to reinforce the harmonization with the other national and international designations
- b. ensure a stable funds to guarantee the continuity of the activities implemented.

247. **Caatinga Biosphere Reserve (Brazil)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2001. The MAB Council thanked the national authority for the submission of the information provided in this report and noted the important work carried out by this Biosphere Reserve to fulfil sustainable development objectives. It noted the importance of the contribution of the State Committees of the biosphere reserve.

248. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria. However, the MAB Council recommended that the national authorities restructure the management committee and reinforce the national MAB Council and the management system of this biosphere reserve. The authorities are also requested to submit an updated management plan.

249. **Cerrado Biosphere Reserve (Brazil)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 1994, and extended in 2000 and in 2001. The Phase one is actually working and achieved the objective of the Seville strategy, however, it was not possible to evaluate the situation of phase 2 and 3, as no information was provided by the national authorities. The MAB Council concluded that additional information should be provided to enable it to assess whether this biosphere reserve meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

250. The MAB Council requested that the national authorities submit a new Periodic Review Report to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016 with information covering all the entire biosphere reserve, including the extension of phase 2 and 3. The national authorities are also requested to define clearly the management committee and management plan for the biosphere reserve, including the extension of phase 2 and 3, and to send clear digital and printed cartography of the whole Biosphere Reserve.

251. **Pantanal Biosphere Reserve (Brazil)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2000. Pantanal is the biggest continental wetland in the world. There are good conservation practices. It works as a biosphere reserve but the management plan has not been implemented. The MAB Council noted the important work made by the national and states authorities, NGOs and private partners to ensure the conservation of the cultural and environmental values of the Pantanal area as well as the sustainable development of the local communities. However, the MAB Council noted that activities were not promoting directly by the Biosphere Reserve because the management structure was not operational. It encouraged to revitalize the structure of the Biosphere Reserve to become the promotor of the management of this important area as a model of sustainable development of the region.

252. The MAB Council considered that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities:

- a. Submit report of the activation of the management committee by 30 September 2016.
- b. Present a management plan for the biosphere reserve.
- c. Promote the communication of Pantanal as a biosphere reserve.

253. **Mare aux Hippopotames Biosphere Reserve (Burkina Faso)** The MAB Council welcomed this second periodic review of a site established in 1987 located in the south east part of the country. The area comprises of various humid ecosystems as well as dry forests and savannas. The biosphere reserve has been named after a pond, the “Mare aux hippo”, which is the habitat of an important population of hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*). It is an important concentration area for migratory birds (more than 160 species) designated as a Ramsar site (1990) and an Important Bird Area (IBA). This biosphere reserve has been an active member of the “Sustainable Management of Marginal Drylands” project completed in 2014 and which build resilience capacity of BR to climate change.

254. The MAB Council commended the country for the participatory process of the periodic

review at local, regional and national level which involved all categories of stakeholders and acknowledged the implementation by the national authorities of the recommendations of the MAB COUNCIL following the 1997 periodic review.

255. The MAB Council noted that a number of community based organizations are involved in the management of the biosphere reserve. A number of participative local and regional management plan have been developed since the last periodic review. The newly developed management plan (2016 -2025) has been endorsed by regional authorities but was not provided. A number of development activities, including tourism, have been implemented increasing the income of communities. Environmental education programmes are also implemented. Communication in the area has been improved by establishment of a community radio. However, the MAB Council noted confusion with the definition of logistic function under section 2.2.6., which mentioned infrastructures (lodge, radio infrastructure, etc.).

256. The MAB Council acknowledged the reinforcement of the management team. A number of activities towards the conservation function have been conducted with a positive impact of the pond dimension and the density of fauna. However, it noted with concern the presence of invasive species.

257. The MAB Council commended the national authorities for the establishment of the “Fonds d’Intérêt Collectif (FIC)” in support of communities living around fauna reserves and requested the national authorities to provide a signed copy of gazette legal act.

258. The MAB Council concluded that the Mare aux Hippo Biosphere Reserve **meets** the criteria of the statutory framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and requested that a copy of the management plan (2016-2025) be sent to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

259. **W Biosphere Reserve (Burkina Faso)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review of this site established in 2002 and which is part of the transboundary W Biosphere Reserve with Niger and Benin.

260. The site is located in the south eastern part of the country. The biosphere reserve is home to a wide and varied biodiversity. The ‘W’ Region also constitutes a barrier against the advance of desertification from the north. The area hosts one of the largest populations of ungulates in West Africa and also comprises wetlands of international importance recognized under the Ramsar Convention. Wild plant species continue to play an important role in traditional land use and agriculture.

261. The MAB Council noted the extension of 26 000 ha of the buffer zone by addition of the Koakrana fauna reserve. The MAB Council acknowledged the update of the management plan (2015-2024). It commended the country for the participatory process of the periodic review at local, regional and national level which involved all categories of stakeholders.

262. The MAB Council recognized the involvement of the communities in the management of the biosphere reserve through several communities based organizations improving the development function of the biosphere reserve. Capacity building to improve the governance of the biosphere reserve has been done. The logistical function has been promoted through biological and socio economic research as well as monitoring activities. The MAB Council invited the national authorities to pay attention to the reporting of logistic function under section 2.2.6.

263. The MAB Council commended the national authorities for the establishment of the “Fonds d’Intérêt Collectif (FIC)” in support of communities leaving around fauna reserves and requested the national authorities to provide a signed copy of gazette legal act.

264. The MAB Council concluded that the W Biosphere reserve (Burkina Faso) **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR). The MAB Council requested that the national authorities send a new nomination form for the extension of the biosphere for its approval by the MAB MAB COUNCIL and a copy of the management plan (2015-2024) to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

265. **General recommendation to Bulgaria:** The MAB Council noted that all the Bulgarian biosphere reserves have been designated before the adoption of the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework. Their zonation is not meeting the statutory framework criteria as only the conservation function and partly the logistic function have been implemented. The MAB Council acknowledged that in response to the adoption of the Exit Strategy, a national Expert Group was established in 2013 and that also the MAB National Committee was enlarged to include all major stakeholders. It also welcomed the mentioned plan to fund review of the Bulgarian network of biosphere reserves within the Operational Program ‘Environment’ (2014 – 2020). The MAB Council acknowledged the unique contribution of the sites to conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems as well as contribution to scientific research.

266. The MAB Council noted that all Bulgarian biosphere reserves share the same borders with specific nature conservation areas, under the national legislation. As the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and the specific Bulgarian legislation – Protected Areas Act, allow no human settlements within their boundaries, the biosphere reserves in Bulgaria are with no inhabitants.

267. The MAB Council recommended that drastic changes need to be made on the spatial structure of the biosphere reserves to include inhabited areas, to consider new zonation scheme, for building a shared common vision with diverse stakeholders and relevant management structures and management plans for the sites that will equally reflect all the 3 functions of a biosphere reserve.

268. Therefore, the MAB Council recommended that the authorities consider the withdrawal of all but one biosphere reserves and strongly encouraged the authorities to submit new proposals based on the implementation of the Statutory Framework criteria, the involvement and active participation of stakeholders, including local communities in the nomination process. The MAB Secretariat and the UNESCO Venice office will be at the disposal of the Bulgarian authorities to assist in this process.

269. **Steneto Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1977. The biosphere reserve is located within Central Balkan National Park (CBNP) in the central part of the country.

270. It noted that there is no clear distinction between the national park and the biosphere reserve. Steneto Biosphere Reserve has the highest legal protection according to the national legislation, therefore no human activities related to use of natural resources are allowed. The conservation and the logistic functions are of high standards; nevertheless the development function is not implemented in the site.

271. It also noted the existence of a Public Advisory Council under Central Balkan National

Park Directorate, with stakeholder groups from the surrounding areas. However, there is no one in charge of the biosphere reserve management.

272. It also acknowledged the lengthy and ongoing efforts to fulfill the Seville strategy criteria, but considered that Steneto Biosphere Reserve still has no adequate zonation in place, that there is no population living within the biosphere reserve and that its primary focus on nature conservation does not reflect the value of the 3 functions of a biosphere reserve.

273. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

274. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

275. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities may consider withdrawal of the current site due to the following reason:

- a. there are no inhabitants in the biosphere reserve
- b. the 3 functions are not being implemented
- c. the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

276. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

277. **Tsaritchina Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1977. The biosphere reserve is located within Central Balkan National Park (CBNP) in the central part of the country. There is no clear distinction between the national park and the biosphere. The national legislation does not allow any kind of human activities or use of natural resources within the Tsaritchina biosphere reserve. The conservation and the logistic functions are fulfilled through the National park agenda, nevertheless the development function is not implemented. The MAB Council noted the existence of a Public Advisory Council for the national park, but that there is no coordination structure established for the biosphere reserve.

278. The MAB Council concurred as written in the document that this biosphere reserve remains in the pre-Seville state. It noted efforts made over the last few years have to remedy the situation, but despite these efforts Tsaritchina Biosphere Reserve has only a core area in place. It also noted that no population is living within the biosphere reserve and its primary focus is on nature conservation.

279. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve. It concurred with the authorities, that the Central Balkan National Park is suitable to form the core area and buffer zone of a biosphere reserve whereas the transition area could be constituted by the territory of the municipalities adjacent to the park, as there is no need for the transition area to have any nature conservation status.

280. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council

recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

281. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

282. **Srébarna Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1977. The biosphere reserve is located within Srébarna Managed Reserve in the north east part of the country. The area has high biodiversity value and has been listed as a World Heritage Site, Ramsar site and also Natura 2000 site.

283. There is no clear distinction between the nature reserve and the biosphere reserve. According to the Constitution of Republic of Bulgaria and the specific Bulgarian legislation, there is no human activity or settlement allowed within the Srébarna Biosphere Reserve. The only exceptions are limited management measures to improve habitats. The nature reserve administration agenda includes conservation and logistic functions, but the development function in the biosphere reserve is not fulfilled. The MAB Council also noted that there is no coordination structure established for the biosphere reserve.

284. It also noted that the authorities agree that this biosphere reserve remains in the pre-Seville state. It also noted the efforts made over the last few years to improve the situation. However, Srébarna Biosphere Reserve has no permanent residents and the zonation is limited to a core area. The 3 functions of the site are not performed equally as nature conservation dominates above all.

285. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

286. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

287. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

288. **Doupkata Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1977. The biosphere reserve is located within Doupkata Nature Reserve in the Western Rhodopi Mountains. The area has high biodiversity value and is included in the Natura 2000 network.

289. It noted that there is no clear distinction between the nature reserve and the biosphere reserve. According to Bulgarian legislation, no human activity or settlement is allowed within the Doupkata Biosphere Reserve. The conservation function and partly the logistic functions have been implemented, but the development function is not fulfilled, despite some attempts to

cooperate with municipalities outside the biosphere reserve. The MAB Council also noted that there is no coordination structure or management plan established for the biosphere reserve.

290. It also noted that the authorities agree that Doupkata only contained core area and buffer zones and that no inhabitants reside within the site. It noted the efforts made at the national level over the last years but considered that the potential of Doupkata to become a biosphere reserve has not yet been investigated in details.

291. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve, especially as regards its crucial role for maintaining ecosystems.

292. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

293. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

294. **Koupena Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1977. The biosphere reserve is located within Koupena Nature Reserve in the Western Rhodopi Mountains in the southwestern part of the country. The area is rich in biodiversity and has been included in the Natura 2000 network.

295. It noted that there is no clear distinction between the Koupena Nature Reserve and the biosphere reserve. The conservation function and partly the logistic functions have been implemented but the development function in the biosphere reserve is not fulfilled. The MAB Council also noted that there is no participative coordination structure or management plan established for the biosphere reserve.

296. The biosphere reserve has only a core area which is a strict nature reserve and according to the national legislation, no population is allowed to live within the area. It acknowledged the efforts of the national authorities over the past few years to upgrade Bulgarian biosphere reserves but noted that there have been no satisfactory results achieved yet. It also noted that the potential of Koupena to become a functioning biosphere reserve has not been investigated in details.

297. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve, especially as regards its crucial role for maintaining ecosystems.

298. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

299. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

300. **Mantaritza Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1977. The biosphere reserve is located within Mantaritza Nature Reserve in the Western Rhodopi Mts. in the southwestern part of the country. The rich biodiversity was the reason for declaring the area a part of the Natura 2000 network.

301. It noted that the biosphere reserve is not fulfilling its functions because there is no clear distinction between the Mantaritza Nature Reserve and the biosphere reserve. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria and Protected Areas Act, nature reserves (corresponding to Protected Area Category I of IUCN) do not allow any human settlements within their boundaries. The conservation function and partly the logistic function have been implemented but the development function is nonexistent. Currently the biosphere reserve is limited to a core area. The MAB Council also noted that there is no participative coordination structure, stakeholder involvement or management plan established for the biosphere reserve.

302. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve, especially as regards its crucial role for maintaining ecosystems.

303. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

304. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

305. **Ali Botouch Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review of Ali Botouch Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1997. The biosphere reserve is located in Mountain Slavyanka next to Bulgarian – Greek border. The site comprises 3 major types of ecosystems – forests, grasslands and lands with no or sparse vegetation. The protected area was established in order to protect the unique relic forest with *Pinus helredichii*, *Pinus nigra*, *Abies borisii-regis*.

306. The core area size is 1,638.1 ha with surrounding buffer zone that covers an area of 701.3 ha and was established in 1985 according to national legislation. There is no transition area and no people are living in the biosphere reserve. The activities in the area are related to conservation, research and biodiversity monitoring. Tourism activities are restricted.

307. The biosphere reserve is managed by the Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water in Blagoevgrad. The draft for management plan of the nature reserve has recently been elaborated. There are no activities neither implemented nor planned for promotion of sustainable development.

308. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

309. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

310. **Bistrishko Branishtë Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review of Bistrishko Branishtë Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1997. Bistrishko Branishtë is located on the south-eastern slope of Mount Vitosha and it is distinguished by centuries-old natural spruce forests. The biosphere reserve covers an area of 1061.6 ha. There is only a core area. It is a part of Vitosha Nature Park. The management authority is the Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water in Sofia.

311. There are no people living in the site. The vicinity of the capital of Bulgaria, Sofia results in a large number of tourists visiting marked trails. It noted that there is no data on monitoring of tourism activity and its impact. Currently, local population is involved in drawing up of the management plan through public hearings and consultation. Local community are regularly involved in different eco-events in Vitosha Nature Park, e.g. cleaning along the marked tourist trails in the reserve and campaigns for raising public awareness on environmental issues.

312. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

313. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

314. **Tchouprené Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review of Tchouprené Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1977. Tchouprené was declared as a strict nature reserve with an area of 936.5 ha by Order No 358/09.02.1973. In 1979 the surface area of the reserve was enlarged to 1,439.2 ha. In 2011 as a result of more precise measuring, the area of the reserve was estimated to 1,451.9935 ha. It was initially established to protect the only compact *Picea abies* forest in the Western Stara Planina Mts. in their natural state, as well as to protect some rare animals, e.g., the Western capercaillie (*Tetrao urogallus*), the Red crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*), and the Wildcat (*Felis sylvestris*). The reserve is situated in the Western Stara Planina Mts (the Balkan Range) just next to the Bulgarian-Serbian border.

315. A buffer zone was designated in 1986 according to the national legislation. The site is managed by the Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water in Montana. The MAB Council noted that regular scientific research has been carried out. Research for elaboration of Management Plan has been carried out for the past 2 years.

316. There are no people living in the biosphere reserve. The tourist activity in the biosphere

reserve is limited to hiking in one marked trail. During the periodic review process, Tchouprené Municipality was contacted to provide information. Representatives of the local communities are currently not involved in the work of the biosphere reserve with the rare exception of cases of extinguishing fires and restoration works after other natural disasters.

317. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

318. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

319. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

320. **Kamtchia Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review of Kamtchia Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1977. The site is located in south-eastern Bulgaria, on the northern Black Sea coast around the mouth River Kamtchia. The area is distinguished by floodplain forest and large number of bird species. The biosphere reserve covers a total area of 849.7531 ha and a buffer zone of 230 ha. There is no transition area. The site is managed by the Regional Inspectorate of Environment and Water in Varna. There is no staff engaged in management nor rangers present. There are no people living in the site. The local communities are not actively involved in the management of the biosphere reserve. Due to financial constraints, educational activities are limited.

321. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

322. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

323. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

324. **Parangalitza Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review of Parangalitza Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1997. The site occupies part of the south-western slopes of Rila Mountain, and it is located within the borders of Rila National park. It encompasses some of the oldest spruce forests in Europe, presenting habitats for the 290 higher plants and numerous animal species protected by law and listed in the Red Data Book of Bulgaria. Springs of the river Maritza are located in the site as well as 120 natural lakes of glacial origin.

325. The surface of Parangalitzha Biosphere Reserve is 1,509.0 ha, and includes only a core area consisting of 4 nature reserves; Parangalitzha, Central Rila Reserve, Ibar, Skakavitsa, Rila monastery forest. There are no buffer zone and transition area. There are no people living in the biosphere reserve. The biosphere reserve is managed by Rila National Park Directorate. The biosphere reserve has well developed conservation and logistic function, but no development function nor proper zonation scheme.

326. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

327. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

328. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

329. **Doupki Djindjiritza Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this sites established in 1977. The MAB Council appreciated the project aimed at revitalizing the biosphere reserves in Bulgaria that was implemented in 2008-2009, and the establishment of working groups by the MOEW in 2012. These initiatives focused on promoting the implementation of the Seville Strategy, and strengthening the role of local stakeholders. The MAB Council, however, regretted that these initiatives have not resulted in a follow-up in the Doupki Djindjiritza Biosphere Reserve.

330. The zonation of the current site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework. The site lacks buffer zones and transition areas. According to the authorities, there is a potential for revising of Doupki Djindjiritza diritsa Biosphere Reserve by considering the whole territory of Pirin National Park (40,356 ha) as well as the adjacent municipalities. The MAB Council recommended exploring this possibility, but only if this is combined with a clear view of what the objectives would be in terms of the 3 functions of the biosphere reserve.

331. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

332. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

333. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

334. **Boatin Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic

review report for this site established in 1977. The MAB Council appreciated the efforts made through the Operational Program Environment 2007 – 2013, which funded several projects to improve tourist information and infrastructure in the site, the restoration of degraded habitats, and the elaboration of a new management plan for the biosphere reserve.

335. It noted that the next cycle of the Operational Program envisages the funding of a comprehensive study of the opportunities for adjusting the site – as well as other biosphere reserves that are part of the Central Balkan National Park - to meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework. The study will be conducted within the process for elaboration of management plan for the Central Balkan as a Natura 2000 site. It also noted that the zonation of the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework as it lacks buffer zones and transition areas. The MAB Council expressed concerns, however, about the possibilities of aligning the Natura 2000 criteria with those of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

336. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

337. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

338. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

339. **Tchervenata Sténa Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this site established in 1977. The MAB Council appreciates the efforts made through the Operational Program Environment 2007 – 2013, as well as the efforts made to use the biosphere reserves territory for local socio-economic development, notably through the establishment of small family-run guesthouses and the promotion of local organic production. These operations benefit from the nearby presence of the Bachkovo Monastery.

340. Currently, the zonation of the site – with only core and buffer zones, and no transition zone – **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework. The authorities remark that the next cycle of the Operational Program Environment (2014-2020) includes a study on the possibilities of opportunities to adjust the requirements of the Seville Strategy.

341. The MAB Council recommended exploring this possibility, and the submission of an extension of the site, but only if this is combined with a clear view of what the objectives would be in terms of the 3 functions of the biosphere reserve and the participation of local communities in the management of the site. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

342. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are

no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

343. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

344. **Djendema Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this site established in 1977. The MAB Council appreciated the efforts made through the Operational Program Environment 2007 – 2013, which funded several projects to improve tourist information and infrastructure in the site, the restoration of degraded habitats, and the elaboration of a new management plan for the biosphere reserve.

345. The next cycle of the Operational Program envisages the funding of a comprehensive study of the opportunities for adjusting the site– as well as other biosphere reserves that are part of the Central Balkan National Park - to meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework. The study will be provided within the process for elaboration of management plan for the Central Balkan as a Natura 2000 site.

346. It noted that the zonation of the site does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework; as it lacks buffer zones and transition areas. The MAB Council expressed concerns, however, about the possibilities of aligning the Natura 2000 criteria with those of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves.

347. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve.

348. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities: consider withdrawal of the current site as there are no inhabitants, that the 3 functions are not being implemented and that the zonation is not meeting the criteria.

349. The MAB Council encourages the authorities to prepare a new proposal for a biosphere reserve that would include local communities and of a sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

350. **Ouzounboudjak Biosphere Reserve (Bulgaria)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this site established in 1977. The MAB Council appreciates the implementation of the project entitled 'Collaboration for Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Local Development in Strandzha', which was conducted between 2009 and 2012, and aimed at demonstrating benefits for local people from Pas and their participation in biodiversity conservation.

351. The MAB Council appreciated the initiative to revise the zonation of the biosphere reserve by including buffer zones and transition areas, including 26 protected areas and 19 settlements with a total of 12,300 residents. The periodic review report mentions that the nomination form for an extended biosphere reserve has been filled in.

352. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to submit the nomination form, as the

present zonation of the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework. The nomination form should also contain detailed information on the participation of local communities in the management of the proposed extension. The MAB Council also recommended further exploration of the possibility of establishing a transboundary biosphere reserve in cooperation with Turkey.

353. The MAB Council acknowledged the efforts made by the relevant authorities to comply with the MAB Programme requirements and considered that the region has great potential to become a functioning biosphere reserve. Despite these efforts, the MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

354. The MAB Council recommended to the national authorities to submit to the MAB Secretariat the new proposal for extension by 30 September 2016 using the nomination form, which would include the involvement of local communities. The proposed site should be of sufficient size to ensure that all 3 functions can be fully implemented.

355. **General recommendation to Cameroon:** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report of Benoué Biosphere Reserve (BR) and Waza Biosphere Reserve established respectively in 1981 and 1979. The recommendations of MAB MAB COUNCIL following the submission of the periodic review of both biosphere reserves in 2006 stated that the zonation should be reviewed, the collaboration with stakeholders fostered especially through implementation of participatory management plans. The MAB Council noted that the zonation of both sites still **does not meet** the criteria of the statutory framework of the world network of biosphere reserves and needs further improvement with regards to the definition of the 3 categories: core area, buffer zone and transition area which are not clearly identified in any of the maps provided. The MAB Council acknowledged the participatory process of the periodic review.

356. **Waza Biosphere Reserve (Cameroon)** The Waza Biosphere Reserve is located in the Chad depression in the extreme north of Cameroon. The area is characterized by low relief without any permanent rivers, with rocky outcrops around Waza village rising to over 500 meters. Lake Chad once covered part of the area, while today the Yaéré floodplains with perennial grasses are vital to the carrying capacity of the Waza region. The fauna is rich and varied with large numbers of giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*), elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), aardvark (*Orycteropus afer*) and warthog (*Phacochoerus aethiopicus*). Many animals move to the Yaéré plains towards the end of the dry season.

357. The MAB Council commended the authorities for the management plan 2015-2019 which includes programmes on Conservation; research and monitoring and participatory management and Eco development. The MAB Council acknowledged the participation of representative of communities in the various entities in charge of the management of the biosphere reserve. However, the transition area is not established (section 7.5.6; p. 23) and the buffer zone and the core area are managed by the Ministry in charge of Forest. Moreover, the zonation map indicates “macro-zones” with no clear definition.

358. The MAB Council considered that the Waza biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the statutory framework of the world network of biosphere reserves especially with regards to the zonation. The national authorities are requested to implement the following by 30 September 2016:

- a. Finalization of the zonation of the biosphere reserve using the standard terminology

- of the biosphere reserves
- b. Provision of proper information with regards to the population living in each areas/zone
  - c. Improve governance structure of the biosphere reserve by involving key stakeholders, in particular local communities.

359. **Benoué Biosphere Reserve (Cameroon)** The Benoué Biosphere Reserve is located on the Benoué River plain, at the foot of the Adomaoua plateau in northern Cameroon. Tropical woodland savannah and dry open forests are the major habitats. More than 300 bird species can be found in the area as well as several mammal species including elephant (*Loxodonta africana*), waterbuck (*Kobus ellipsiprymnus*), leopard (*Panthera pardus*), hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*) and velvet monkey (*Chlorocebus pygerythrus*).

360. The commended the national authorities for the number of biological and socio-economic research activities in support of the management of the biosphere reserve. It is noted that since 2014, the communities are increasingly involved in the management of the biosphere reserve through community based organizations.

361. The MAB Council noted with concerns the on-going threats related to poaching and illegal mining and grazing in the area. The management plan of the biosphere reserve should have been updated in 2006. The MAB Council noted that a zonation with an updated transition area was not yet finalized.

362. The MAB Council considered that the Benoué biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the statutory framework of the world network of biosphere reserves especially with regards to the zonation.

363. The national authorities are requested to finalize the zonation of the biosphere reserve by 30 September 2016 and to provide a road map for updating the management plan.

364. **Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve – Renaming of former Georgian Bay Littoral Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the comprehensive approach to the periodic review adopted by the authorities.

365. The periodic review process included the writing of a self-study, an on-line survey, and peer reviews. There were parallel processes happening in 2014 that contributed to the overall reflection exercise: (1) a resilience assessment study by Brock University researchers coordinated by GBBR staff to engage 30 stakeholders in surveys and a workshop; (2) the visit of a Canadian documentary film team that arranged stakeholder interviews; and (3) GBBR Inc.'s own internal organizational strategic planning for 2015-2018.

366. The self-study reports that livelihood strategies within the biosphere reserve have been diversified, so there is less dependency on resource extraction. Sustainable forestry is practiced, for which a certificate has been obtained. The MAB Council also appreciated the implementation of initiatives such as 'State of the Bay' and 'Lessons-in-a-backpack'. The MAB Council shared the concerns about government budget cuts that affect the planning of the biosphere reserve, as these have impacts on the capacity to enforce legislation and monitoring. However, at the same time, the authorities indicated that the biosphere reserve budget has stabilized and funding sources have become more diversified.

367. While the authorities cite many examples of projects conducted for and with local

communities, NGOs, and academic institutes, the GBBR does not have a representative board. The reviewers of the self-study equally raised the question about the extent to which local interests are reflected in the management of the biosphere reserve (under the heading 'Building conservation from the inside out'). The MAB Council recommended to establish such a board, to increase local participation in the management of the biosphere reserve.

368. Linked to this, the MAB Council concurred with the reviewers and encouraged the authorities to highlight the cultural values of the areas in the biosphere reserve to First Nations communities who might value the areas for reasons other than tourism. The MAB Council concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

369. To foster further positive developments in the site, the MAB Council encourages the authorities to take up the recommendations made by the reviewers as detailed on pages 15 to 18 of the periodic review report.

370. The biosphere reserve management organization requested a formal name change to "Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve." The reason provided for this change is that it facilitates communication with a wider audience. The MAB Council **approved** the name change.

371. **Bogeda Biosphere Reserve (China)** The MAB Council welcomed the submission of the second periodic review for the Bodega Biosphere Reserve, the first biosphere reserve in Xinjiang province, which was designated in 1990 and congratulated the authorities for taking action on all the recommendations of the previous periodic review report.

372. The reserve covers a total area of 2,170 square kilometres, extending from Bogeda Peak (5,445 metres, the highest peak in east Tianshan Mountains) to the south edge of the Gurbantonggut Desert. By virtue of its special location, it has a complex of unique ecosystems that are representative of the arid zones in the hinterland of Eurasia and home to a large variety of unique biological resources. As a region of the vastest area, the most varied and complete natural landscape belts and the most diverse ecosystems in the Chinese temperate desert region

373. The MAB Council acknowledged the multidisciplinary approach used to conduct the periodic review and the extensive research and consultations invested in the review process. While there have been no changes to the zonation of the biosphere reserve, the MAB Council commended the authorities for the reduction in the human population in the core and buffer zones by 25% and 20%, respectively, through ecological migration, and for sustainable development activities such as the establishment of an information centre and exhibition hall for specimens, media and pictures, research publications, staff training, a co-management programme with the communities and tourism development which contributed to attaining World Heritage status in 2013.

374. The MAB Council noted that although the national authorities submitted the information requested by the Advisory Committee (a more legible higher resolution zonation maps with legend written in English of the whole biosphere reserve and the two separate sub-reserves, as well as all relevant management plans for the biosphere reserve including the requested maps) this was sent after the stipulated deadline and hence it will be reviewed at its next session in 2017.

375. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to implement all the recommendations of

the national review of the biosphere reserve which was conducted by an expert group from the Chinese MAB National committee in June 2014.

376. **Xishuangbanna Biosphere Reserve (China)** The MAB Council congratulated the authorities of China for submitting a second periodic review for the biosphere reserve and for taking action to implement the recommendations of the first periodic review.

377. The Xishuangbanna Nature Reserve has 8 natural vegetation types (i.e., the tropical rainforest, tropical monsoon forest, sub-tropical evergreen broad-leaved forest, deciduous broad-leaved forest, warm coniferous forest, bamboo forest, shrubbery and grass) has 2,772 species of vascular plants belonging to 1,003 genera and 212 families, including 262 species of ferns belonging to 90 genera and 40 families, and 2,510 species of seed plants belonging to 913 genera and 172 families.

378. The MAB Council noted the changes in the dimensions of the 3 zones in line with the recommendation of the last periodic review resulting in a proposed zonation comprising a core area of 107,242 km<sup>2</sup>, a buffer zone of 72,602 km<sup>2</sup> and an experimental area of 62,484 km<sup>2</sup>.

379. The MAB Council noted the eco-migration programme which had resulted in the population of core area being reduced by 20% and buffer by about 90%. The establishment of a museum for science and environmental education in 2012 had also led to patronage by over 7 million visitors. The MAB Council commended the integration of benefit sharing in the tourism development and the initiation of co-operation with Laos for a future transboundary biosphere reserve.

380. The MAB Council, however, noted with concern that some sections of the core area were not protected by a buffer zone and there was no management plan to provide information of the level of involvement of communities or the coordination structure.

381. The MAB Council was not able to conclude whether this biosphere reserve meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council therefore recommended that the authorities submit a higher resolution zonation map for the whole biosphere reserve and the 5 separate sub-reserves. The MAB Council also requested for copies of all relevant management plans (if any). The authorities are requested to submit these documents to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

382. **Trebon Basin Biosphere Reserve (The Czech Republic)** The MAB Council welcomed this second periodic review for this biosphere reserve, established in 1977 and located in the South of the Czech Republic near the Austrian border. Semi-natural landscape comprises 460 artificial fishponds and lakes that were constructed in the 15th and 16th century and now present important part of Czech fish-farming industry. The Trebon fishponds and Trebon peat lands are also wetlands of international importance of Ramsar Convention. The biosphere reserve is also classified as European Important Bird Area (IBA)

383. The MAB Council commended the management authority on the very well prepared periodic review report. The biosphere reserve is managed by the "Administration of the Trebon Basin Biosphere Reserve and Protected Landscape Area". The MAB Council noted with satisfaction that following the previous recommendation, proper funding from the Ministry of environment has been allocated as well as an increase in staff. It noted that there is a cooperation with local communities, initiated with the negotiation of the management plan. It also noted that long-term social ecological monitoring has been established.

384. The MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

385. The MAB Council encouraged the management authority to continue the implementation of participatory approach in the management of the biosphere reserve, and strongly recommended the establishment of a biosphere management authority which allow for local cooperation in the very near future. It recommended to the authorities to pursue the involvement of local communities in the management of the biosphere reserve. It further recommended to actively participate in the WNBR and to provide further information on the measures and procedures taken for reducing the pressure of intensive fish farming and extraction of sand and gravel deposits.

386. **Yangambi Biosphere Reserve (Democratic Republic of Congo)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report of Yangambi Biosphere reserve which was designated in 1977. The Yangambi Biosphere Reserve is situated within the Congo River Basin west of the City of Kisangani in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The site is very important from a biodiversity point of view; the herbarium consists of 6400 plant species with 150 000 specimen. Threats due to human activities have led to extinction of the elephant (*Loxodonta africana cyclotis*) in the area; the river hog (*Potamochoerus porcus*) and monkeys (*Cercopithecus* spp.) are among the most threatened species.

387. The recommendations of the MAB Council following the submission of the periodic review of the BR in 1998 stated that the zonation should be reviewed to include a transition area and a participatory management plan be elaborated. The MAB Council noted that the periodic review report is a desk study and that the process does not involve the stakeholders at national, regional and local level.

388. The MAB Council noted that the transition zone of 90,305 ha has been added to the biosphere reserve. However, the map which is provided does not give a clear zonation of the biosphere reserve. The report refers to a management plan in support of conservation, promotion of sustainable production systems, research (agriculture) and biological and ecological monitoring. The MAB Council noted with concern that one objective of the management plan is the eviction of population living in the core area.

389. The MAB Council concluded that the Yangambi Biosphere reserve does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves with regards to the zonation which needs further improvement. The MAB Council requested that a new nomination form for the extension be submitted by 30 September 2016 in order for the MAB Council to approve the extension of the transition zone. It should include a zonation map with clear delineation of the 3 categories: core area, buffer zone and transition area and provide information on the population of the biosphere reserve.

390. The MAB Council strongly recommended that efforts be made to ensure the appropriation of the biosphere reserve approach and principles by public authorities, communities and other relevant stakeholders at national, regional and local level.

391. **Lufira Biosphere Reserve (Democratic Republic of Congo)** The MAB Council welcomed the third periodic review report of Lufira Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 1982. This biosphere reserve is located in the south-east of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Miombo woodland is the dominant vegetation type of the Central African plateau and comprises

ecosystems in the seasonal tropics dominated for example by the tree genus *Brachystegia*. There is a dense and mature river system, marshlands and papyrus beds. The species diversity is extraordinarily high.

392. The MAB Council noted that the periodic review report is a desk study and that the process did not involve the stakeholders at national, regional and local level. With regards to its the recommendations following the submission of the periodic review of the biosphere reserve in 2004, the MAB Council noted that the staffing of the biosphere reserve has been addressed. However, none of the other recommendations (public awareness, pollution of Panda river, extension of the biosphere reserve to protect the entire ecosystem, reinforcement of the biosphere reserve status and revision of the zonation) have been implemented.

393. The MAB Council noted that there is no map nor a management plan available for Lufira biosphere reserve. The MAB Council noted with concern that the site after 3 periodic reviews and 35 years of existence, is still not managed as a biosphere reserve, does not implement the 3 functions and does not meet the basic requirement such as zonation, participative governance structure, research, environmental education. The site has been constantly reported as undergoing serious degradation due to timber exploitation, agricultural and fishing activities even in the core area. No update of this situation has been provided.

394. Therefore, the MAB Council concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria of the statutory framework of the World Network of the Biosphere reserve. The MAB Council suggested that the authorities may consider withdrawing the site.

395. **Northeast Greenland Biosphere Reserve (Denmark)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, the largest biosphere reserve in the world, covering 972,000 km<sup>2</sup>. Located in north-east Greenland, this biosphere reserve was designated in 1977. The national Park Administration is in charge of its coordination. There is no permanent settlement in the biosphere reserve. The landscape is a mix of inland ice and fjords. In summer, the area is a key place for breeding birds. A long-term monitoring programme for responses of arctic plants to changing environmental conditions linked to the climate changes. The main ecosystems are tundra communities and barren arctic deserts.

396. The MAB Council noted that during the periodic review process the national authorities organized in mid-September 2014 a workshop to establish working groups to involve stakeholders in discussions about visions, objectives and zonation. All relevant stakeholders (ministries, state agencies, municipalities, tourism organizations, research groups, mining industries, environmentalists and archaeology/cultural organizations) were involved to map the stakeholders' interests and the role of the biosphere reserve in relation to the 3 functions. A draft of a cooperation plan was shaped. A subset of the stakeholders was involved to focus on zonation issues. A synthesis is expected early 2016 to establish the foundation for the new zoning of the biosphere reserve.

397. The MAB Council commended the authorities for the information related to the progress made in terms of updating the functioning and governance of the biosphere reserve. It noted the strong political will and engagement of the government in the process, its involvement and participation in the NordMAB network and its visit to the Canadian Manicouagan Uapishka Biosphere Reserve to exchange knowledge and know-how related to biosphere reserve management.

398. The MAB Council concluded that this site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory

Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council strongly encouraged the authorities to continue the process of reviewing and upgrading of the biosphere reserve and requested that the authorities submit the following by 30 September 2016:

- a. the periodic review form;
- b. a new zonation map of the biosphere reserve;
- c. clarification on the involvement and engagement process of stakeholders;
- d. description of the governance and management committee for the biosphere reserve, in line with the new zonation system;
- e. a management plan with clear objectives for the biosphere reserve by integrating the different land use plans included in the biosphere reserve;
- f. a plan to promote and improve the collaboration within the NordMAB network.

399. **Sumaco Biosphere Reserve (Ecuador)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 2000. The MAB Council noted the activities implemented to involve local community with the setting up of working table as original management mechanism to achieve the objective of the Biosphere Reserve mechanism since 2008. In spite of that the management structure is promoted by the manager of the core area composed by the National Park, it included “Buen Vivir” national principles that affected to the entire Biosphere Reserve.

400. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The national authorities are encouraged to update the management plan for the entire biosphere reserve with a digital mapping system. They are also requested to provide information on the thematic working group (*mesas temáticas*).

401. **Archipiélago de Colón Biosphere Reserve (Ecuador)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 1984. The first periodic review was examined by the MAB Council in 2000. This site has a very important international recognition within the frame of the Natural World Heritage (1976) and Ramsar (2001) sites.

402. The Conservation activities are well performed to reduce the tourism pressure that has this site. The Terrestrial and Marine protection is ensuring with the National Park of Galapagos and the Marine Reserve of Galapagos. It is promoting eco-tourism as well as bio-agriculture to increase the autonomy with inland region. The new management plan and structure is ensuring the connection with others recognitions and it is promoting local participations following the “Buen vivir” principles.

403. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve. The MAB Council requested that the national authorities submit to the MAB Secretariat a clearer zonation map with a digital/paper mapping system.

404. **West Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Reserve (Estonia)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review of this country’s only biosphere reserve which was designated in 1990.

405. It commended the country for its effort to address recommendations formulated by the MAB Council in 2005. In this regards the biosphere reserve zonation has been slightly changed in favor of core areas (both terrestrial and marine) due to legislation changes in protection status and efforts to add additional islands to the biosphere reserve. The biosphere reserve

representatives have been taking more active part in sharing their experience through participation in the MAB Council session (2012), EuroMAB 2013 and ultimately by organizing EuroMAB meeting in Estonia in 2015.

406. In addition, Estonia engages in cooperation with NordMAB. The closest cooperation has taken place with Finland's Archipelago Sea Biosphere Reserve and Latvia's North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve and there was close cooperation with several German biosphere reserves in Rügen and Schleswig-Holstein (2005-2007).

407. The MAB Council acknowledged the participation in creation of the Sustainable Development Act based on the concept of biosphere reserves and the approval of the "Sustainable Development Program for West Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Program Area 2014-2020".

408. It acknowledged that the site is managed by the Environmental Board, in close conjunction with West Estonian Archipelago Biosphere Program Area Council, which includes various stakeholders and work on mutually agreed 5-year action plan. It noted with appreciation the cooperation among various stakeholders, based on partnerships and specific projects targeted, alongside nature conservation, towards sustainable economy models for processing of local resources, based on local heritage (both on land and in the coastal waters). All the 3 functions of a biosphere reserve are being fulfilled.

409. Among the successful projects, the MAB Council noted local food competitions, training in use of sustainable energy sources and use of timber, the "Act4MyBalticSea" project designed to increase the attention paid to clean coastal waters or the project "Green Islands" that involved observation of waste handling, energy and water resource consumption and waste water treatment issues on Muhu Island.

410. The MAB Council recommended improvement of the visibility and promotion of the biosphere reserve (e.g. dedicated biosphere reserve website) to enhance the communication of the MAB Programme agenda. The MAB Council welcomed the appointment of a local coordinator for managing the biosphere reserve.

411. The MAB Council considered that it would need more clarification with regard to the lack of buffer zones around certain core areas and requested that these clarifications be provided by 30 September 2016, in order for the MAB Council to assess if the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

412. **Vallée du Fango Biosphere Reserve (France)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report for this site, designated in 1977, after the first periodic review report submitted in 1988..

413. The MAB Council noted with appreciation the activities developed in the biosphere reserve in terms of water management and fire control, as well as the inclusion of 2 Natura 2000 zones in the biosphere reserve – with a 3rd in the process of being established. Eco-tourism has been promoted, but with attention to the negative impacts tourism could have. The MAB Council, however, noted that while the promotion of sustainable agriculture is mentioned as one of the biosphere reserve's objectives, concrete actions are less visible in the periodic review report. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to strengthen this aspect of the site management.

414. The MAB Council welcomed the renewed attempts to establish a Charter for the biosphere reserve, including a marine component in the site (provided the stakeholders agree with the extension), and to become an experimental site within the PNRC, and to redevelop the area in cooperation with local stakeholders.

415. The MAB Council encouraged the national authorities to use this opportunity to revise the zonation of the biosphere reserve to meet the requirements of the Statutory Framework, and improve the linkages between the core area, buffer zones and transition areas, as well as strengthen the participation of local stakeholders in the management of the biosphere reserve. It noted that the approval of the new Charter is expected by the end of 2016, early 2017. The MAB Council recommended the development of a new management plan soon thereafter and to pay especially attention to the development function.

416. It also noted that the report mentions the establishment of a Local Biosphere Reserve Committee which was established in 2013 in response to a survey. The MAB Council recommended that the authorities clarify the role of this committee in the management of the biosphere reserve and strengthens its role. The MAB Council took note of the proposal to change the name of the Biosphere Reserve to Fangu, as this reflects the local denomination of the area. The MAB Council recommended approval of the name change.

417. The MAB Council concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and strongly encouraged the authorities to submit the following elements by 30 September 2016:

- a. A new management plan and the charter;
- b. Clarification of the role of the local biosphere reserve committee in the management of the biosphere reserve and strengthens its role;
- c. An updated zonation map.

418. **Mount Olympus Biosphere Reserve (Greece)** The MAB Council welcomed this second periodic review of Mount Olympus Biosphere Reserve, established in 1981, with a periodic review report submitted in 1999. The MAB Council took note of the efforts of the biosphere reserve to fulfil their previous recommendations.

419. It noted that a Management Authority was established, including Board of Directors with 11 members, representing the local and regional authorities and stakeholders. It also noted with concern that the funding and functioning of this body is uncertain after December 2015.

420. It also noted that a scientific committee was established in order to coordinate research and monitoring. It welcomed the implementation of a new zonation which includes small village and army skiing facility. It also noted that the impact of recreational activities is included in monitoring programme of the Management Authority and that a management plan was still not adopted. The biosphere reserve is implementing the conservation function, as well as logistic objectives, but is still weak in implementing the sustainable development function.

421. The MAB Council therefore concluded that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

422. It further requested the authorities to submit the following information by 30 September 2016:

- a. Confirm that the management authority will be functional after December 2015;

- b. Provide legal document on the approval of the updated zonation;
- c. Clarify the zonation (i.e. buffer zones) so the terminology used is fully consistent with the statutory framework;
- d. Provide a draft of management plan with activities for implementing the function of sustainable development.

423. **General recommendation to Kenya:** The MAB Council acknowledged the effort of the national authorities to fulfill the requirement of the Exit Strategy by providing the periodic review of 3 sites which never submitted a report since their approval.

424. The MAB Council fully recognized the effort made by Kenyan authorities to extend Mount Kenya, Malindi Watamu and Kiunga Biosphere Reserves. However, this has to be reflected in a new proposal. Therefore, the MAB Council encouraged national authorities to submit a new nomination form for the 3 sites by 30 September 2016.

425. **Malindi Watamu Biosphere Reserve (Kenya)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for Malindi Watamu Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 1979. The area, one of the main recreational and tourism centers in Kenya, is located 100 km from Mombasa with a core area of 42,827 ha, a buffer zone of 84,422 ha and a transition area of 330,940 ha.

426. Notable physical features of this biosphere reserve are rock platforms, cliffs and sandy beaches. Mida Creek comprises tidal mud flats with fringing mangrove swamps and the biosphere reserve area also includes coral reefs and sea-grass beds. This region is one of the main recreational centers of Kenya and local communities benefit from tourism activities.

427. The periodic report shows that in addition to the 2 marine reserves of the initial nomination, an extension of the core area now includes the Arabuko Sukoke forest (41,094 ha) which is the largest and most intact coastal forest in East Africa, with 20% of Kenya's bird species, 30% butterfly species and at least 24 rare and endemic bird, mammal and butterfly species.

428. The MAB Council took note of the updated zonation of the reserve and the methodology used for conducting the periodic review for submission in compliance with the MAB exit strategy. The MAB Council commended the authorities for the intensive research, environmental education and public awareness programmes undertaken to control upstream pollution and poaching of turtles through the introduction of an incentive programme. The committee noted with concern the increasing temperatures and shoreline recession reported and encouraged authorities to integrate climate change mitigation, adaptation and monitoring in all management plans.

429. The MAB Council further noted that a lot of sections of the form were not filled and it was, therefore, unable to determine if the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve due to insufficient information.

430. The MAB Council requested the national authorities to:

- a. prepare and submit a new nomination form for the extension be submitted to UNESCO by 30 September 2016
- b. submit all relevant management plans for the various sections of the reserve or an integrated management plan, if available
- c. submit the awareness materials with signed agreement granting non-exclusive rights

to UNESCO for their use

431. **Mount Kenya Biosphere Reserve (Kenya)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for Mount Kenya which was designated in 1978. The area includes Mount Kenya National Park and extends across Nyeri, Meru and Laikipia, Kirinyaga, Tharaka Nithi and Embu counties for which it constitutes a major water reservoir and the main contributor to the upper Tana, lower Tana and Ewaso Nyiro river ecosystems.

432. The main vegetation types are afro-montane forest, moorland and grassland with a rich faunal diversity including amphibians, reptiles and large mammals such as the giant forest hogs, leopards, eland, buffalo. The MAB Council noted the updated zonation from the previous national park covering an area of 71,759 ha to a core of 99,147 ha and the inclusion of a proposed buffer zone of 173,666 ha and a transition zone covering 434,037 ha.

433. It was observed that the legal framework covering the core area had been improved and 32 community forest associations (CFAs) formed with neighbouring communities. Hence the increased human population had not impacted negatively on the functioning of the biosphere reserve. The management of conflicts over water had been addressed through the formation of Water Resource User Associations (WRUAs). With support of government, there had been an increase in agricultural (dairy and tea), fishing, construction and tourism activities. Research and educational activity had also improved in the past ten years.

434. The MAB Council noted with concern the gradual decline of traditional knowledge and values due to modernization such as the destruction of the sacred Mogumo tree despite the diversity of ethnic groups in the area. The management plan for the reserve had not been completed. The MAB Council requested the national authorities that a new nomination form for extension be submitted to UNESCO by 30 September 2016.

435. The national authorities are encouraged to:

- a. complete and submit in the near future a comprehensive management plan for the biosphere reserve integrating traditional knowledge and all the forest and water management plans,
- b. build the capacity of the CFAs
- c. develop and implement a framework for benefit sharing,
- d. ensure a coordinated management structure
- e. explore other sources of funding for management such as through partnerships with the private sector.

436. **Kiunga Biosphere Reserve (Kenya)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for Kiunga Biosphere reserve, which was designated in 1980. Kiunga Biosphere Reserve is located on the northernmost part of Kenya's coast, about 16 km south of the Somali border. On the coastal strip, there are sandy beaches with sand dunes and dry coastal shrubby forest. Old and living reefs form a chain of about 50 calcareous islands composed of coral and organic debris. In-between the islands and the coast, there are sheltered and calm water habitats. The biosphere reserve is important for nesting seabirds, green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) and dugongs (*Dugong dugong*) and hosts relatively pristine mangroves.

437. The MAB Council appreciated the reported change in the core area and the multi stakeholder approach used in the preparation of the report. The MAB Council noted, with concern, the fact that most sections of the periodic review were not filled and there was insufficient information to determine whether the site meets the criteria or not.

438. The MAB Council requested the national authorities to resubmit the periodic review form with all the outstanding information, together with copies of any management plan with clear zonation by 30 September 2016.

439. **Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 1986. The first periodic review was done in 1999.

440. The MAB Council noted the progress achieved in order to reply to the recommendations made during the previous periodic review and the 3 functions of the Biosphere Reserve. The recommendations of the previous report were: (1) Clarify the area of the 3 zones, with a map showing their extent; (2) Improve public awareness, in order to minimize some threats to conservation; (3) Pursue their effort to establish better connections with other biosphere reserves in the region. The biosphere reserve improved the zoning system and the connectivity with the surrounding protected areas, the Biological Mesoamerican Corridor and promoted the participation of local communities.

441. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria. However, it suggested that the national authorities include in the biosphere reserve the national biosphere reserve Arrecifes de Sian Ka'an.

442. **Banco Chinchorro Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2003. The MAB Council noted that the size of the transition zone has been increased to include a large number of communities that are benefiting from the area and be part of the conservation activities and its sustainable uses.

443. The main economic activities are fishing and tourism. Fishing is done with authorization, and tourism has low impact due to the few number of tourists in the area (563 per year). The total area is about 300,000 hectares including the transition zone. There are about 1,500 inhabitants that live in the transition zone.

444. The MAB Council noted with appreciation the collaboration with Belize and Honduras in line to coordinate the management of the Mesoamerican coral reef and suggested the possibility of creating a future transboundary biosphere reserve with Belize.

445. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria.

446. **El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report (first 2005) for this biosphere reserve, designated in 1993, and thanks for the work that is reflected in the periodic review document to achieve the tree function of the Biosphere Reserve. The recommendation made of presenting a clear zonation of the reserve was attained. Total area, including the transition zone is about 280,000 hectares. The total population in 2010 was about 50,000 people, living mainly in the transition zone. The Main economic activities are: coffee production, agroforestry, and production of non-timber forest products.

447. The MAB Council noted the inclusion of a clear zoning system with a transition area that is also part of its management plan. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

448. **Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2004. The MAB Council noted with appreciation the work that has been undertaken to achieve the 3 functions of the biosphere reserve. The Committee noted the collaborative activities that is implementing as a marine corridor with the neighbour protected areas in line with humid biological corridors. The total area including the transition zone is about 230,000 hectares. Total population is about 10,000 people mainly living in the buffer zone. The Management Plan is being implemented mainly with government resources. Contacts were made to enlarge the Biosphere Reserve joining other national biosphere reserve. The main economic activities are: agriculture, cattle rearing, salt production, fisheries and tourism.

449. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council suggested that the national authorities reinforce the connectivity activities within the possibility to enlarge the Biosphere Reserve.

450. **Ría Celestún Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 2004.

451. The MAB Council commended the work undertaken to achieve the 3 functions of the biosphere reserve. The total area including the transition zone is about 131,000 hectares. The total population is about 37,000 living mainly in the transition zone. The MAB Council noted the justification provided for 2 biosphere reserves, Ria Celestun and Ria Lagartos to remain separate. Main economic activities: Fishing, salt production and tourism. The Action Plan is being implemented and the Management Committee has been established.

452. The MAB Council noted the possibility to enlarge this area by including the national protected area, the Mexican Biosphere Reserve Los Petenes, in line with their actual work to promote biological corridors.

453. The MAB Council considered that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

454. **General recommendation to Mongolia:** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review reports of 4 biosphere reserves in Mongolia. However, the Mongolian authorities submitted simple activity reports or periodic review reports of special protected areas, not of biosphere reserves. Therefore, the MAB Council recommended that the Mongolian authorities submit official forms of periodic review reports, focusing on the whole biosphere reserve, not just on special protected areas. It also requested the Mongolian authorities to submit clear zonation maps of the biosphere reserves with English legends together with digital files of the maps. It also requested the authorities to develop management plans for the whole biosphere reserve and submit them to the MAB secretariat by 30 September 2016.

455. **Bogd-Khan Uul Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review report of Bogd-Khan Uul, designated in 1996 with a total area of 67,300 ha consisting of 41,651 ha as core area, 13,433 ha as buffer zone and 12,216 ha as transition area. The MAB Council noted with concern that the national authorities did not submit a full periodic review report using the official periodic review form. Also, the report submitted did not refer to the site as a biosphere reserve but as the Bogd-Khan Mountain Strictly Protected Area (SPA)

456. The report explains the zonation and administration of the SPA, the main activities ongoing within the SPA, and current states of ecosystems and biodiversity conservation. Also of concern is the fact that the zonation maps provided were not clear and the legend was not written in English.

457. The MAB Council concluded that without the official periodic review form, it is not possible to assess whether the biosphere reserve meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. Therefore, the MAB Council requested the authorities to submit a periodic review report using the official form with clear zonation map of the biosphere reserve, together with relevant information clarifying the name of the site by 30 September 2016.

458. **Uvs Nuur Basin Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review report of Uvs Nuur Basin, designated in 1997. It was later on enlisted as a World Heritage site in 2003 and giving the recognition as a Ramsar site in 2004. The MAB Council noted that this submission is a 3-page report outlining some activities that have been undertaken in the biosphere reserve from 2009 to 2014.

459. The MAB Council concluded that without a full periodic review report using the official form, it is not possible to assess whether the biosphere reserve meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. Therefore, the MAB Council requested that the national authorities submit a report review report using the official form. The periodic review report should include other relevant supporting information such as the zonation maps and management plan. The national authorities were requested to submit the requested documents to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

460. **Great Gobi Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia)** The MAB Council welcomed this first periodic review report of Great Gobi Biosphere Reserve. The MAB Council noted that the report contained specific details information on the management and activities carried out in this biosphere reserve.

461. The MAB Council however observed that some basic data such as the size of the biosphere reserve and the name indicated in the periodic review report do not match with the information given in the original nomination document. It also noted with concern that a zonation map was not provided in the report.

462. The MAB Council concluded that without a zonation map and clarification of the data provided it is not possible to assess whether the biosphere reserve meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. Therefore, the MAB Council requested the national authorities to submit a clear zonation map of the whole biosphere reserve and a revised report clarifying the inconsistency in the data.

463. The MAB Council also requested the national authorities to focus on the whole biosphere reserve, and not on the specific protected area, in the revised report. It also encouraged the authorities to establish a comprehensive management plan for the biosphere reserve which will be different from the management of the special protected area. The national authorities are advised to submit the requested documents to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

464. **Dornod Mongol Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia)** The MAB Council congratulated the authorities on the submission of the first periodic review report for the reserve which was approved in 2005. The biosphere reserve lies in the Great geomorphologic zone of Central Asia

and the sub zone of Nukht Davaa of Mongolian Eastern zone. The terrain is characterized by medium-sized low steppe mountains above 890 to 1,099 m hummocks, knolls and narrow feather-grass valleys between them, with few flat plains and rich in biodiversity including diverse birds, wolves, the Mongolian gazelle, reptiles and amphibians.

465. The MAB Council commended the approaches used to promote sustainable development of the area such as partnership with local communities, training on range management, organization of educational camps, and public awareness for schools especially the Young Naturalists Club. The promotion of indigenous values and relationship with local communities through the empowerment of communities in protection of local springs, the creation of an information centre employing local people and the formulation of an Act of law concerning the negotiated costs for hunting wolves was appreciated.

466. The MAB Council noted, with concern the different nomenclature used for the area (SPA, EMPAA, etc.) and its management zones in the report, which did not conform to the biosphere reserve concept. The zonation map provided was not in English and did not have the functional zones of a biosphere reserve. Therefore, the MAB Council was unable to determine whether or not the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

467. The MAB Council requested the authorities to provide a translated and more legible zonation map and any management plan(s) for the reserve by 30 September 2016, indicating measures being used to manage the environmental impacts of oil exploration, illegal hunting of the gazelle and marmot.

468. **General recommendation to the Russian Federation:** The MAB Council recommended that all periodic review reports include clear zonation map, in line with the typology of the zonation defined by the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves as well as clear unit and surface for each zone.

469. **Voronezhskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report on this biosphere reserve, designated in 1984.

470. The biosphere reserve is located in the south-east of Moscow, which features undulating plains, rivers, and one of the largest forest areas in the steppe. Some 69,000 permanent residents live mostly in the transition area and mostly depend on farming and livestock breeding. The tourism activities increased by 5 times during the last decade. The major habitat is mixed forests (pines, oaks, lindens), flood plain forests, marshlands, meadows.

471. It noted that in 2011, the core area increased from 16,811 ha to 17,039 ha and the buffer zone decreased a bit from 14,242 ha to 14,014 ha due to transfer of land for protection. The transition zone was enlarged from 14,032 ha to 31,000 ha. During the periodic review process, the biosphere reserve readjusted the zonation system following the recommendations of the MAB Council based on coordination unit staff and experts, and local governments. Overall improvement in the economic situation in the region and a significant strengthening of the state policy in the field of protected areas management, are the main factors positively influencing the development of the whole territory of the site.

472. It also noted that the biosphere reserve is developing cooperation with research institutes in Ukraine, Mongolia and Moldova. It also welcomed the information on studies of alien plant species, beaver breeding and training of specialists in the nature conservation as core activities.

The MAB Council welcomed the huge increase of the federal budget in the current budget of the biosphere reserve. Although the biosphere reserve does not have yet its own management plan, the MAB Council noted that the biosphere reserve implements conservation, sustainable development, research and education activities.

473. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, the MAB Council recommended that the authorities:

- a. Define a management plan with clear objectives for the biosphere reserve by integrating the issues of illegal harvesting, illegal occupation of land and illegal construction;
- b. Better define the cooperation with local stakeholders and users;
- c. Promote research with local stakeholders on social-ecological changes and dynamics;
- d. Implement studies and monitoring of social, economic and ecological impacts of tourism industry development.

474. **Kedrovaya Pad' Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report on this biosphere reserve, designated in 2004.

475. The biosphere reserve is located in the Russian Far East near the borders with China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The landscape is made of 2 main mountain ridges (400 m above sea level) and river valleys. The core area of the biosphere reserve is the oldest Russian reserve created in 1916. The area is a biodiversity hotspot due to the overlapping of southern and northern species of plants and animals. Despite major damages from human activities, the biosphere reserve is the only area in native conditions and is a unique example of south-Ussury taiga. The forest contains species from northern taiga and subtropical forests. The key species are the Amur tiger, the Amur leopard and the Himalayan bear. Some 10,000 permanent residents live mostly in the transition area and mostly depend on forestry, agriculture, coastal fisheries, and salmon breeding. In 2008 two new refuges were established, and these 2 protected areas were combined to become the transition area of the biosphere reserve. In 2012 the National Park "Land of the Leopard" was established. The territory of the national park included the federal refuge and some adjacent areas. The tourism activity development is the main aim of the federal and local authorities. The local population is actively involved in the biosphere reserve activity. Most of them are working in Land of the Leopard National Park established and the State Nature Biosphere Reserve. The core area of the biosphere reserve covers 18,045 ha.

476. It noted that the biosphere reserve manager considers the National Park territory as a mix of buffer and transition zones, the whole National Park is totalizing 261,884 ha. The main activities of the biosphere reserve and national park staff are patrol activity, anti-poaching activities, scientific research and monitoring and environmental education. During the last decade scientific cooperation in the field of transboundary research and monitoring of Amur leopard and Amur tiger and their habitat were developed with China and Republic of Korea. Aiming to promote the development function by providing new income opportunities for local people e.g. in eco-tourism and other rural development business, the National Park "Land of the Leopard" performs the eco-tourism function while Kedrovaya Pad' reserve remain intact and conserve the unique forests of Primorskii krai with its rare plant and animal species.

477. During the periodic review process, the biosphere reserve readjusted the zonation

system following the recommendations of the MAB Council based on coordination unit staff and experts. Although the biosphere reserve does not have yet its own management plan, the MAB Council noted that the biosphere reserve implements conservation, sustainable development, research and education activities.

478. The MAB Council commended the progress made by the Kedrovaya Pad' biosphere reserve since the designation of the biosphere reserve but concluded that this site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

479. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities:

- a. Clarify the zonation of the biosphere reserve, especially the buffer zones and transition areas.
- b. Provide a map with a clear delineation of the 3 zones of the biosphere reserve;
- c. Define a management plan with clear objectives for the biosphere reserve zones by integrating the issues of poaching, habitat management, land use and tourism development.
- d. Better define the involvement of local stakeholders and sustainable activity development;
- e. Promote research with local stakeholders on social-ecological changes and dynamics;
- f. Implement studies and monitoring of social, economic and ecological impacts of ecotourism development.

480. **Laplandskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1985. The biosphere reserve is located in the western part of the Kola Peninsula at 120 km north of the Arctic Circle and 120 km south of Murmansk. The landscape is a mix of forested plains and glaciated mountains (peak 1,114 m) with permafrost patches, with mountain tundras, rivers, lakes and marshes. The emblematic species are lemmings, beavers, otters, elks, wild reindeers, wolverines and brown bears or white-tailed eagles and snowy owls. Only 20 people live in the core area while some 766,000 permanent residents live mostly in the transition area and depend on forestry, stone mining, hydroelectric power production and industry.

481. The transition area is the place of large industrial enterprises such as Metallurgical Company and also an Atomic power station. Local authorities, enterprises, indigenous people, educational and cultural organizations have been taking part in increasing of development function of the reserve by developing trails and visitors' facilitations, reconstructing settlement and repairing roads. A management plan is implemented in the core area and communication and activity plans are implemented in the 2 other zones. The international cooperation was developed with Finland and Norway and is based on tourism development with a focus on their common cultural, biological and geological heritage. A private-public partnership in Barents region-2 led to the development of natural and geological tourism in Barents region. In this context a tourist information center was opened on the site.

482. The MAB Council noted that the biosphere reserve readjusted the zonation system following its recommendation but regretted that no information is provided concerning how the review was conducted and with whom. It noted that the biosphere reserve implements conservation, sustainable development, research and education activities.

483. The MAB Council commended the progress made by the Laplandskiy biosphere reserve

since the last periodic review but concluded that this site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the authorities submit the following information by 30 September 2016:

- a. Clarify the zonation of the biosphere reserve, especially the buffer zones and transition areas by providing a more detailed map including the exact surface for each zone;
- b. Clarify the impact or exclude from the transition area all the heavy industries and settlements and exclude the nuclear plant from the transition area;
- c. Clarify the social-ecological interactions between the 3 zones;
- d. Clarify the method used for the periodic review;
- e. Better define the involvement of local stakeholders especially Sami people, and sustainable activity development;
- f. Promote research with local stakeholders on social-ecological changes and dynamics;
- g. Implement studies and monitoring of social, economic and ecological impacts of tourism development and the surrounding heavy industry.

484. **Tsentral'no-chnozem Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report of this biosphere reserve, designated in 1978. The biosphere reserve is located 500 km in the South of Moscow near the border with Ukraine. While most of the black and fertile soil (chnozem) of this steppe region have been intensively cultivated and transformed in farmlands, the core area protects the last remaining of undisturbed steppes in Europe. The meadow steppes have a high plants diversity. Dynamics of a biodiversity of the reserve over the last 10 years is defined mainly by an increase in species of lichens, fungi, insects, birds and mammals.

485. The buffer zone comprises 4,586 inhabitants and is managed following a management plan that regulates agricultural practices limiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers. The transition area's landscape is a mix of intensive agriculture, mining and industrial activities. During 15 years of development of excursion and tourist activity in the site, the excursion programme has been developed, the second equipped ecological track was open, in 2003 the Eco-information center was open, the permissible load was calculated on an eco-trail, release of advertising and publishing and souvenir products has been expanded. The Tsentral'no-Chernozem Biosphere Reserve purposefully and systematically works with all groups of the population in the region.

486. The MAB Council noted that the periodic review was based on meetings and consultations and involved the deputy directors and the head of municipality. It noted that the biosphere reserve implements conservation, sustainable development, research and education activities.

487. The MAB Council commended the progress made by the Tsentral'no-Chernozem Biosphere Reserve since the last periodic review but concluded that this site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

488. The MAB Council recommended that the authorities submit the following information by 30 September 2016:

- a. Clarification of the zonation of the 3 areas of the biosphere reserve by providing a more detailed map;

- b. Clarification of the surface area of each zone by using ha or km<sup>2</sup> as measure units;
- c. Clarification of the land use and land covers changes inside and outside the biosphere reserve;
- d. Clarification of the social-ecological interactions between the 3 zones;
- e. Provide or give more detailed information on the management plans and other planning tools that are implemented to manage the whole area of the biosphere reserve;
- f. Description of the involvement of local stakeholders and sustainable activity development;
- g. Plan to promote research with local stakeholders on social-ecological changes and dynamics;
- h. Plan to implement studies and monitoring of social, economic and ecological impacts of tourism development and the surrounding agro-food and farming industry.

489. **Golija Studenica Biosphere Reserve (Serbia)** The MAB Council welcomed this second periodic review of Golija Studenica Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2001, with first periodic review report in 2012. Golija Studenica site is located in the mountain Tara, which is a refuge of the tertiary flora in Serbia and is important for genetic, species and ecosystem diversity in the Balkans and in Europe. It is characterized by the abundance of water and a variety of wildlife

490. The biosphere reserve management authority is a working unit of National Park Golija that adopted a special scheme of Biosphere Reserve Council as decision making body, Golija interested parties forum and Municipal forum. The Protected Area Management Plan for 2011-2020 was adopted. The area of "Golija-Studenica" Biosphere Reserve is included in Forest Management Plans, adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection.

491. The MAB Council noted that the management of the site was improved, that education programmes started for stakeholders. It also noted that a programme for monitoring and for harmonizing the tools available for nature protection at national level was implemented. It considered that the conservation function is well implemented, that the logistic function is also progressing along with initiatives for implementation of sustainable development. The MAB Council commended the authorities for the quality of the periodic review report.

492. However, the MAB Council considered that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves as regards the zonation.

493. The MAB Council requested the authorities to submit the information below by 30 September 2016:

- a. To provide rationale on why some core areas (west, north and central parts) are not surrounded by buffer zones;
- b. To provide information on measures and procedures related to the infrastructure project South Adriatic;
- c. To provide information on ski resorts in the area and possible impacts;
- d. To provide action plan for biosphere reserve that will demonstrate the harmonization between management plan for national park and biosphere reserve.

494. The MAB Council recommended that the biosphere reserve authority consult the new MAB Strategy and implement the Lima Action Plan once adopted, and encouraged them to participate in WNBR and establish cooperation with biosphere reserves in the region and in the EuroMAB network.

495. **Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve (South Africa)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report of Cape West Coast Biosphere reserve (CWCBR) established in 2000. The Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve is situated in the coastal zone north of Cape Town. Located in the Cape floristic kingdom, this biosphere reserve is known for its mosaic of diverse ecosystems and habitats which include marine, beach and frontal dune environments, pans, wetlands and rocky outcrops.

496. The MAB Council noted that the periodic review report has been elaborated by a consultant firm and followed a participatory process involving many stakeholders including institutional and non-institutional entities as well as individuals. The MAB Council noted that the management plan comprises of 3 different documents; Strategic Management framework (2003-2004: including strategic and business plans), Spatial Development Plan (2007) and a Framework plan (2010). It is strongly recommended that the management of the CWCBR be summarized in a single document.

497. The conservation, development and logistic functions of the biosphere reserve are clearly described and fully satisfactory. The governance structure which is composed with representatives of national institutions, municipalities, conservation bodies and land owners is highly participatory.

498. However, the MAB Council noted that the Koeberg Nuclear Plant (p.11) is located in the southern part of the CWBR. It is stated that “the major portion of the CWCBR falls within the area of nuclear influence of the Koeberg and Koeberg site includes a dedicated biodiversity conservation area which contributes to the conservation function of the CWCBR” but this nuclear plant nor the conservation area are clearly indicated in the zonation map.

499. The MAB Council would like to recall and draw the attention of the national authorities on recent discussions and decision taken by the MAB Council with regard to the presence of nuclear plants or facilities within biosphere reserves. Therefore, the MAB Council requested the national authorities to provide a detailed map showing the location of the Koeberg nuclear plant within the CWCBR before 30 September 2016 in order to enable the MAB Council to decide whether the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

500. **Alto Bernesga Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2005. The total area is about 33,000 hectares with a permanent population of about 4,700 people living in the transition area. The biosphere reserve suffers of depopulation, principally because of outmigration, and older people remain. Main economic activities: mining (canteras), construction, commerce, some agriculture and rural tourism. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the actions implemented to improve the participation of women in the activities of the biosphere reserve.

501. The MAB Council concluded that this site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, it encouraged the national authorities to reinforce the collaboration between the 2 municipalities of the site.

502. **Área del Allariz Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2005. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the implementation of several activities to encourage the economic development of the site, especially in the tourism sector, and also to improve the participation of

women in the activities of the Biosphere Reserve. The total area is 21,842 hectares (0.7% in 8 subareas of the core zone) and the total population is 9,941 people in 2011, mainly living in the transition zone. There exist a management committee, but there does not exist a management plan. It is recognized in the Report that a new zonation is needed, enlarging the core zone including some protected areas of the BR. The lack of a management Plan is also a requirement to achieve the functions of the Biosphere Reserve.

503. The MAB Council concluded that this site **does not meet** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and strongly supports the idea of revising the zonation as was mentioned in the report. The MAB Council also requested that the national authorities prepare a management plan for the biosphere reserve. The requested documents should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016

504. **Gran Canaria Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 2005.

505. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the development of promotional and information activities during this period to show the achievements made by the biosphere reserve. It also recognized the research activities implemented in the marine area of the biosphere reserve. It covers an area of 37,353 hectares and the total population is 19,781 people in 2010. The main economic activity is tourism. There is a functional management committee and management plan.

506. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

507. **Los Argüellos Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 2005. It noted with satisfaction the existence of a Management Plan, and also the important communication material prepared to give more visibility about the functions of the Biosphere Reserve. The total area is 33,260 hectares, and the total population is 1,276 inhabitants, all living in the transition zone. However, a significant reduction of the budget has affected the full implementation of the Management Plan. The most important economic activities are: tourism, small scale agriculture and cattle raising.

508. It also noticed the existence of touristic installations in the core area, and that the zonation is not adequate to the geographical features.

509. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, the MAB Council encouraged the national authorities to:

- a. include in the Management Committee representatives of the different stakeholders involved in the biosphere reserve.
- b. consider the possibility of revising the zonation in accordance with the designation of national protected areas and land-use practices.

510. **Sierra del Rincón Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 2005.

511. The total area is 7,625 hectares and the total population is 713 inhabitants living in the

transition zone. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the educational activities developed by the managers of the biosphere reserve, and the contribution of the government bodies during this period. The main economic activities are small scale agriculture, forestry and cattle raising.

512. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

513. **Valles de Omaña-Luna Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 2005. The total area of this biosphere reserve is 81,159 hectares and has a population of 3,577 inhabitants all living in the transition zone.

514. The most important economic activities are: tourism, forestry and cattle raising. The MAB Council noted a deficient operation of the governing bodies that resulted in some coordination problems between the municipalities included in this Biosphere Reserve.

515. The MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, the Committee encouraged the national authorities:

- a. revise the governing bodies to ensure the coordination of all the municipalities involved in the biosphere reserve;
- b. consider the possibility of revising the zonation in accordance with the designation of national protection areas, and land-use practices;
- c. provide an updated management plan according to the recommendation mentioned above.

516. **Dinder Biosphere Reserve (Sudan)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report from Dinder Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 1979 and acknowledged with appreciation the biosphere reserve's efforts over the years to comply with the biosphere reserve concept in line with the Seville Strategy.

517. Dinder Biosphere Reserve has been very successful in working with the National MAB Committee and developing collaborations with several universities and international agencies as well in raising funds for the monitoring, protection of and education on its rich biodiversity (including large mammals, birds and reptiles). Efforts have also been made to ensure the sustainability of crucial watersheds and forests, as for instance through the development of a Community Watershed Management Project, and to improve the vegetation cover in deforested areas through the establishment of community forests.

518. The MAB Council congratulated the biosphere reserve for the successful implementation of a pilot co-management and benefit sharing of natural resources model with local communities in ten villages at the northern side of the reserve. Similar initiatives to include local populations have been undertaken such as the formulation of Village Development Committees, meetings with the local community for better communication and the participatory establishment of a transitional zone in Rahad. Considering the challenges, the site is facing due to increased human settlement after extended droughts and civil strife in the Darfur State, the MAB Council highly supported the stated objectives for the coming years to integrate even more local communities living inside and along the borders of Dinder Biosphere Reserve, in order to ensure the sustainable use and management of the natural resources of the reserve.

519. Given the location of this biosphere reserve and interactions with neighboring Ethiopia, in particular through animal species seasonal migrations, the site is already collaborating with Ethiopian colleagues. In this regard, the MAB Council suggests considering the opportunity to propose a transboundary biosphere reserve with Ethiopia in the future.

520. In light of the aforementioned positive developments and ongoing work for further enhancements, the MAB Council concluded that Dinder Biosphere Reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

521. **Kristianstad Vattenrike Biosphere Reserve (Sweden)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 2005. Kristianstad Vattenrike Biosphere Reserve is located in the southernmost landscape of Sweden, Skåne. The area covers the lower catchment area of the River Helge å in Kristianstad Municipality and the coastal areas of the Hanöbukten bay, which forms part of the Baltic Sea. The area, which covers c. 105,000 ha, contains cultural landscapes and biological components of international, national and regional importance. It includes various types of ecosystems, such as wetlands of great importance for resting, nesting and wintering wetland birds, contains valuable flora and is home to many red-listed fish species.

522. The MAB Council noted the detailed findings of the on-site ten-year review carried out by the biosphere reserve staff with the consultation group for the biosphere reserve and involving stakeholders in workshops and interviews. This process revealed the achievements and lessons learned in the last ten years in the biosphere reserve, and also the challenges regarding the good status of 29 water bodies in the context of the EU water framework directive. It noted that no change occurred concerning the zonation of the biosphere reserve.

523. The MAB Council commended the establishment of the arena for dialogue and cooperation and named Consultation Group but also the completion of the visitor centre in 2010, which was visited by 500,000 people. The MAB Council noted also that the conservation work has been successful during the ten years of the biosphere reserve. Several new nature reserves have been established (2,275 ha), and the work related to sandy grasslands and freshwater and marine areas has been developed and the conservation issues have been better integrated with the work related to sustainable activities development.

524. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and encouraged the biosphere reserve to share their knowledge in the EuroMAB and World Network and to develop more cooperation for comparative research on social-ecological dynamics. It recommended that the periodic review report be considered as a model to be shared among the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

525. **General recommendation to Tanzania:** The MAB Council fully recognized the effort made by Tanzanian authorities to extend Serengeti-Ngorongoro, Lake Manyara and East Usambara Biosphere Reserves. However, this has to be reflected in a new proposal. Therefore, the MAB Council encouraged national authorities to submit a new nomination form for the 3 sites by 30 September 2016.

526. **Serengeti Ngorongoro Biosphere Reserve (Tanzania)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for the biosphere reserve in compliance with the MAB Exit Strategy and congratulated the authorities for the extensive stakeholder consultations and consensus-building approach used in conducting the review. Designated in 1981, this biosphere

reserve covers part of the Serengeti National Park and the Ngorongoro Conservation Area in the north of Tanzania. The plains of the Serengeti are mostly formed by crystalline rocks overlaid by volcanic ash with numerous rock outcrops; tropical grasslands and savanna are the main ecosystems.

527. The MAB Council observed the 66.4% increment in the size of the area originally nominated and the acquisition of a buffer and transition zone through negotiation with communities and the proposed reduction of the core area which would require the submission of a new biosphere reserve nomination form to cover the extension. The national authorities were commended for involving communities in the delineation of the new boundaries and for implementing programmes to enhance cultural tourism and gender equality with indigenous ethnic groups.

528. The MAB Council noted, with concern, the provision of partial data for the buffer zone and the management challenges arising due to different management plans being used by the different institutions collaborating in management and the fact that a significant section of the core area had no buffer.

529. The MAB Council requested national authorities to submit a new nomination for the current extension by 30 September 2016. The MAB Council encouraged the national authorities to further extend the buffer zone to protect the entire core area and to elaborate a management plan for the entire biosphere reserve in the future.

530. **Lake Manyara Biosphere Reserve (Tanzania)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for LMBR which was designated in 1981, in compliance with the MAB Exit strategy. This biosphere reserve is situated in the depression of the East African Rift Valley in the Lake Manyara Basin in northern Tanzania. Below the rift wall, perennial springs in the north support a ground water forest (characterized by *Trichilia roka* and *Croton macrostachyus* or the yellow fever tree (*Acacia xanthophloea*), but also riverine habitats, swamps, woodland and alkaline grasslands characterize the area.

531. The authorities were commended for revising the zonation scheme from that of a national park of size 8,550 ha to a biosphere reserve with a core area of 64,400 ha including the Marang catchment Forest, a buffer zone of 56,800 ha and a transition area of 266,600 ha. The MAB Council appreciated the authorities for their considerable efforts in resource use conflict resolution, the development of the Manyara Trust Land Conservation Area management plan which provides a common platform for NGOs, District authorities, ranchers enterprises and the village government to participate in management and for the implementation of 2 general management plans.

532. The MAB Council noted, with concern, the increased population in the biosphere reserve with a diversity of 120 ethnic groups and observed that the delineated buffer zone does not protect the entire core area from activities of the increasing human population.

533. The MAB Council requested national authorities to submit a new nomination for the current extension and to revise the zonation scheme to enhance the buffer zone and to initiate the development of a participatory management plan for the entire biosphere reserve by 30 September 2016.

534. **East Usambara Biosphere Reserve (Tanzania)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report for East Usambara Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2000. The

Usambara Mountains in the northeastern part of the country are fairly unique in East Africa with their natural regions still covered by tropical forests, which otherwise continentally remain primarily in Western Africa. Considered as ecologically significant, a biodiversity hotspot, there are many protected zones throughout the range, which are being expanded and supported by the Tanzanian government, associated NGOs, research teams, and donor countries such as Norway. Several species are endemic to the Usambara forests, including the Usambara eagle-owl (*Bubo vosseleri*), the Usambara akalat (*Sheppardia montana*), the Usambara weaver (*Ploceus nicolli*), the African violet (*Saintpaulia ionantha*), the tree species *Calodendrum eickii*.

535. The MAB Council appreciated the research, education, awareness and ecotourism programmes undertaken and the follow-up actions taken on recommendations by UNESCO for the development of a management plan after designation in 2000. It was reported that that management plans had been finalized for 3 core areas and drafted for 5 others, with plans for the acquisition of 770 ha more of forest for addition to the core area from the Kwantili Estate.

536. The MAB Council noted with concern, inconsistencies in the proposed extensions to the core area (an additional 30,000 ha presented in the spatial configuration table) and lack of information on the current population.

537. Copies of the management plans and the current and proposed zonation maps were also not provided. The MAB Council was, therefore, unable to determine if the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve due to insufficient information.

538. The MAB Council requested the national authorities to submit a new nomination form for the extension including the current and proposed zonation maps, information on current populations in the biosphere reserve as well as all relevant management plans by 30 September 2016. The authorities were also encouraged to initiate action for the development of an overall participatory management plan for the entire biosphere reserve.

539. **Shatskyi Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report of this site, designated in 2002, extended in 2011, and part of the West Polesie Transboundary Biosphere Reserve in 2012. The biosphere reserve is located North-western Polesie lowlands dominated by flat terrain, extensive development covering sandy sediments, a large number of lakes with low banks of pine forests, meadows, farmland and significant spread of wetlands.

540. The MAB Council noted that the creation of the Shatsk Interdepartmental Scientific and Research Laboratory is helping to develop a joint Strategy for cooperation between the institutions of the 3 countries, responsible for natural environment conservation within the Polish-Belorussian-Ukrainian borderland as well as preparation of these institutions for designing common projects.

541. It also noted the work in the field of environmental education through the establishment of a Visitor Centre, as well as information points on the most visited places and eco-educational paths and the publishing of popular scientific brochures and posters, the biosphere reserve website, the cooperation with universities and teams for environmental education in biosphere reserve schools.

542. It also noted, that some of the core areas in the western part of the biosphere reserve seem to lack buffering. The MAB Council regretted the lack of detailed information on the

management structure, stakeholder involvement and more in-depth information on the biosphere reserve projects to foster all biosphere reserve functions.

543. The MAB Council requested the authorities to submit the following information to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016:

- a. a more comprehensive and detailed periodic review form including detailed explanation on zonation as regards why all core areas are not being surrounded by buffer zones;
- b. further clarification of the coordination structure with a special emphasis on the composition of the administration of the biosphere reserve and the coordinating council and their position within other management structures;
- c. to provide more concrete and practical examples of how local authorities and communities support the activities of the biosphere reserve and their involvement in the management of the site;
- d. to provide detailed examples of projects and activities at the local level as well as the status of on-going cooperation within the West Polesie Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. The MAB Council looks forward to receiving the joint periodic review report from the 3 countries which is due in 2022.

544. **North Devon Biosphere Reserve - Renaming of former Braunton Burrows-North Devon (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)** The MAB Council welcomed the second periodic review report for this biosphere reserve, designated in 1976 and extended in 2002. The site is located north-west of Exeter. The core area protects 1,300 ha of dune system recognized as one of the best examples in the northern hemisphere. The rest of the coastline has some of the most diverse rocky foreshore habitat in Great Britain. The landscape is also made of cliff tops and coastal grasslands grazed by sheep and cattle, intertidal mudflats and salt marshes that are key habitats for waterfowl and rare plants. Grey seals and basking sharks can also be spotted along the sea shore. The terrestrial core area covers 1,333 ha, the buffer zone 2,956 ha and the transition area covers 229,206 ha. There is presently no marine core area but 1,341 ha of marine buffer zone and 148,397 ha of marine transition area. The 170,000 permanent residents are mostly in the transition area while the buffer zone is the place of 820 people. The biosphere reserve contributed to the UK biodiversity Action Plan, EU Habitat directive, marine spatial planning and policy, and EU water framework directive. The biosphere reserve involved and engaged stakeholders in the management of the site. The site implements the 3 functions.

545. Following previous MAB Council recommendations and aiming to address river watershed related issues, the transition area was extended to cover the catchments draining to the north Devon coast. The transition area was extended too into the marine environment to encompass Lundy. The name also changed from Braunton Burrows (the name of the core area) to North Devon's biosphere reserve which was agreed with stakeholders.

546. The MAB Council noted the great value to compare the condition of the biosphere reserve with the outside area to better appreciate its impact. It also welcomed the elaboration of the new biosphere reserve strategy during the review process and based on the state of the biosphere reserve report. The MAB Council recommended that the biosphere reserve strategy could be shared within the WNBR. The MAB Council commended the authorities for the quality of this periodic review report.

547. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the

Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and encouraged the Biosphere reserve (i) to twin with other biosphere reserves dealing with catchment issues, (ii) to share their knowledge in UK and in the EuroMAB network, especially concerning participatory process and stakeholders' involvement in the context of a whole catchment area; (iii) and to enlarge the core area by including the wetland special areas of conservation, enlarge the buffer zone and to create a marine core area where it is possible.

548. **Rocky Mountain Biosphere Reserve (United States of America)** The MAB Council welcomed the resubmission of this periodic review report for this biosphere reserve which was designated in 1976. It noted that the first report for this biosphere reserve was submitted in 2014.

549. The biosphere reserve is situated 100 km north-west of Denver, on the continental divide in Colorado, and it includes both Colorado and Missouri river watersheds. The altitude range is from 2,300 to 4,400 m above sea level. The landscape is a mix of montane forests, meadows and grasslands, and alpine tundra. The area is very rich in terms of plant diversity and is the habitat of wapiti, bighorn, and mule deer.

550. The MAB Council commended the progress made by the biosphere reserve staff (i) to use the official periodic review form, (ii) to clarify the zonation map by showing clear defined core area, buffer zone and transition area, and (iii) to revise the management plan aiming to reflect the integration of these zones in the biosphere reserve. The core area is made of 3 Research Natural Area totalizing 9,665 ha, the buffer zone is made of the national park (107,980 ha) and the transition area covers 2,600,000 ha in 4 counties. The 650,000 permanent residents are mostly in the transition area while the buffer zone welcomed each year c. 3.4 million visitors. The site contributes to several frameworks of cooperation including multilateral twinning agreements. Researches, studies and monitoring are developed to feed management decision and development choices. A diverse set of stakeholder groups are informed, invited to engage in significant management decisions. The MAB Council considered that the biosphere reserve implements the 3 functions of the biosphere reserve.

551. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and encouraged the biosphere reserve to share their knowledge in the USA, as well as in the EuroMAB network, especially concerning participatory process and stakeholders' involvement.

552. **Socotra Archipelago Biosphere Reserve (Yemen)** The MAB Council welcomed the first periodic review report from Socotra Archipelago Biosphere Reserve which was designated in 2003 and acknowledged the special situation of the site due to political instabilities. Socotra has become a governorate with more administrative and financial independence and thus currently experiencing an institutional transition.

553. Socotra Archipelago has been supported by international agencies to implement several monitoring programs of its biodiversity. The MAB Council supports the site's further conservation objectives targeting to decrease the selling of land on coastal areas and the export of biological resources, as well as to facilitate research collaborations.

554. The Socotra Management Plan has been established on the occasion of the island's designation as UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008, but there is no specific management plan for the Socotra Archipelago Biosphere Reserve aiming at implementing the biosphere reserve concept. Many touristic activities are for instance reported to happen in the core areas and their

sustainability would critically need to be assessed. Further, though the MAB Council acknowledged the biosphere reserve's efforts to promote traditional knowledge among decision makers, it however also noted the absence of participatory and consultative processes, involving local communities in the management of the site.

555. Given the site's transitional situation, the MAB Council concluded that Socotra Archipelago Biosphere Reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council encouraged the national authorities to formulate a management plan for the biosphere reserve and to engage the local communities' participation in the management of the site.

**Follow-up to MAB COUNCIL recommendations considered by the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves during its 22nd meeting held at UNESCO Headquarters, 25-28 January 2016.**

556. **Chr ea Biosphere Reserve (Algeria)** At its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting in 2014, the Advisory Committee, while recognizing the good work undertaken over the years in the Chr ea Biosphere Reserve, as outlined in the periodic review of 2013, concluded that the site did not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework, and that in order to do so, the MAB Council invited the Algerian authorities to consider enlarging the biosphere reserve to extend it beyond the national park, with a clearly delimited buffer zone and transition area. The extended biosphere reserve should be accompanied by an integrated biosphere reserve management plan involving local communities and the private sector.

557. In reviewing the Algerian follow-up to these recommendations, the MAB Council took note with appreciation of the extension of the biosphere reserve that now includes areas also outside the biosphere reserve. The MAB Council examined the proposed new zonation, provided on relevant maps, which results in an extension of total area of the biosphere reserve from 12,400 ha to 38,000 ha; the management of which will encourage the involvement of a broader range of stakeholders. Therefore, the MAB Council considered with appreciation that all its recommendations have been met and that the site now **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

558. The MAB Council approved the extension of this biosphere reserve.

559. **Djurdjura Biosphere Reserve (Algeria)** At its 26th session in 2014, the MAB Council, while recognizing the good work undertaken over the years in the Chr ea Biosphere Reserve in the follow-up to its recommendations stemming from the 2011 periodic review, concluded that the site did not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework, and that in order to do so, the MAB Council requested the Algerian authorities to clarify the biosphere reserve zoning, which includes one national park, to facilitate the inclusion of human populations, to systematically conduct impact studies for new infrastructure developments and for important existing installations; to identify legal and regulatory means for enabling the biosphere reserve and national park to engage in, or benefit from, commercial activities to meet their operating expenses.

560. In its review of the materials submitted by the Algerian authorities in response to this request, the MAB Council noted with satisfaction the proposal of extension of the biosphere reserve. In addition to the extension, which was the main recommendation in 2014, the MAB Council was also satisfied that management policies for the extended biosphere reserve would successfully engage with key public and private stakeholders. Therefore, the MAB Council

considered with appreciation that its recommendations have been met and that the site now **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

561. The MAB Council approved the extension of this biosphere reserve.

562. **Laguna Oca y Herraduras del Río Paraguay (Argentina)** The MAB Council acknowledged the report submitted by the national authorities. The MAB Council observed that the additional information it requested in 2014 has not been provided. Therefore, the authorities are requested to:

- a. Provide clearer maps about the current extent of the zones and the proposed extension.
- b. Re-evaluate the importance of the buffer zone along the river as an element connecting different landscapes and contributing to maintaining biodiversity and ecological restoration in the urban, rural and natural environments
- c. Elaborate a management plan which will reflect all the changes in the biosphere reserve.

563. The requested information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

564. **Costeros del Sur Biosphere Reserve (Argentina)** The MAB Council welcomed the information provided by the Argentinian authorities following its recommendations in 2000.. The MAB Council noted the activities in progress and the achievements of this biosphere reserve. However, it requested that the national authorities present a new periodic review report in line with the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council also requested that the authorities provide a clear zonation map.

565. The requested information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

566. **Laguna Blanca Biosphere Reserve (Argentina)** The MAB Council welcomed the information provided by the Argentinian authorities following its recommendations in 2000. The MAB Council noted the activities being implemented and the achievements of this biosphere reserve. However, the MAB Council requested that the national authorities present a new periodic review report in line with the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council also requested that the authorities provide a clear zonation map.

567. The requested information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

568. **Nancuñan Biosphere Reserve (Argentina)** The MAB Council welcomed the information received by the Argentinian authorities following its recommendations in 2000. The MAB Council noted the activities being implemented and the achievements of this biosphere reserve. However, the MAB Council requested that the national authorities present a new periodic review report in line with the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council also requested that the authorities provide a clear zonation map.

569. The requested information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

570. **San Guillermo Biosphere Reserve (Argentina)** The MAB Council welcomed the information received by the Argentinian authorities following its in 2000. The MAB Council noted the activities being implemented and the achievements of this biosphere reserve. However, the MAB Council requested that the national authorities present a new periodic review report in line with the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council also requested that the authorities provide a clear zonation map.

571. The requested information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

572. **Long Point Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2014.

573. The MAB Council acknowledged that a segment of local landowners believed that delineation of a buffer zone would impact their land rights. The MAB Council acknowledged also that there is a local feeling that rejecting the addition of Bachus Woods to the core area for a question of buffer zone might be considered as a huge step backwards in the growth and community acceptance of the UNESCO biosphere reserve program in the Long Point area. The MAB Council also acknowledged that the new proposed core area is being buffered, and therefore recommended the approval of the new core area.

574. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

575. **Waterton Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2014. The MAB Council noted that the formalization of zonation regarding the transition area was still in progress and not yet finalized. It appreciated the provided information concerning the participatory process to elaborate delineation and to organize cooperation. It also acknowledged that the staff will continue during the next months to work with all partners to complete the Cooperation Plan to guide the future work of the biosphere reserve.

576. The MAB Council considered that the site does not meet the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

577. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue their progress in the update of the zonation and preparation of the cooperation plan. The MAB Council recommended that the authorities:

- a. Finalize the zonation revision and explore the possibilities that the integration of the brown areas in the transition area (lands managed by the Municipality of Crowsnest Pass, the Piikani Nation, and the Blood Tribe) could be considered at a later stage in the process in order to avoid further delays;
- b. Provide a high-quality map giving a clear explanation of the functions for each zone, to meet the criteria;
- c. Provide the cooperation and management plan for the biosphere reserve.

578. The national authorities are requested to submit the above information to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

579. **Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the

follow-up information related to the activities undertaken since the last review in 2014.

580. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction the new design of the governance with a new start based on the memorandum of understanding between Vancouver Island University and the city of Parksville succeeding the foundation. The MAB Council appreciated the update and adaptation of the strategy and action plan, and noted the creation of a university-based research institute that is directly associated with the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve. New research actions and events had been developed. The MAB Council noted that the biosphere reserve joined the EuroMAB indigenous working group and the new authorities engaged partnerships with local communities and First Nation members.

581. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue their efforts and to implement the planned actions outlined in the strategic and action plan (2013-2018).

582. The MAB Council considered that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

583. **Charlevoix Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2014. The MAB Council noted the change in the zonation and appreciated the explanations and the new provided map. The proposed area is made of 4 core areas with a total of 905 km<sup>2</sup>, a smaller buffer zone of 3,115 km<sup>2</sup> and transition area of 3,209 km<sup>2</sup>. However, the information provided is not consistent concerning the zones and their related surface, and should be addressed. The new map should also update the legend with the wording of UNESCO for the zonation. The authorities should also explain why there is no buffer zone surrounding the new integrated core zone that is a Marine Protected Area (Parc Marin). The MAB Council requested the authorities to delineate a buffer zone that would totally or partially surround this new core area.

584. The MAB Council commended all the efforts to create a new collective dynamic in the governance of the biosphere reserve. It also appreciated the progress made to answer the recommendations made by the experts in charge of the last periodic review report. The MAB Council noted the engagement of the local authorities to find funding to provide an adequate coordination of the site.

585. Based on the information in the report the MAB Council concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve is high. However, the MAB Council requested the authorities to provide to the Secretariat rationale on the absence of buffer zone around/adjacent to the marine core area and to provide them with a clear zonation map by 30 September 2016.

586. **Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2014.

587. The MAB Council appreciated that its recommendation was implemented and that the biosphere reserve refrains from modifying the status of the “escarpment protection” areas from the buffer zone to core area until the legal status of this latter new core area was secured in 2015. Concerning the transition area, the MAB Council noted that the authorities acknowledged the interest of extending its boundaries beyond the present Niagara Escarpment Park area, in order to explore cooperation with adjacent watersheds authorities.

588. The MAB Council noted the progress made to promote the sustainable development

function of the biosphere reserve based on a more balanced vision between human needs and nature conservation, and on collaboration with stakeholders with the organization of a conference and the appointment of a NEBR representative to develop social and collaborative networks.

589. The MAB Council appreciated the participation of the NEBR representative to the EuroMAB Network and the efforts made to promote understanding of the function of biosphere reserves to local communities and institutions in charge of development and nature conservation. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue their engagement for the biosphere reserve and its human and non-human residents.

590. The MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

591. **Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2014. The MAB Council appreciated the progress made and information provided. The core area is the riding mountain national park that covers 308,924 ha, the new buffer zone (locally called cooperation area) completely surrounds the core area and covers 465,354 ha and the transition area covers a total area of 737,356 ha.

592. The MAB Council took note of the recognition by the boards of directors of an expansion of membership and the work in progress to reinforce the management committee and to facilitate community dialogue. The adoption of an integrated model as a framework for the coordination plan was appreciated as the completion of a comprehensive work plan. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue their efforts to conciliate local communities' well-being, biodiversity conservation and sustainable activity development

593. The MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

594. **Southwest Nova Biosphere Reserve (Canada)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2014. It noted with satisfaction that the authorities maintained a high level of engagement despite the dramatic change in the local economy and the lack of funding for the coordination of the biosphere reserve. It also noted the implementation of most of the local recommendations and appreciated the new management plan adapted to its current financial status. The MAB Council noted the information provided regarding the engagement with local communities, conservation and cultural heritage. It pointed out, however, that the provided zonation map is still not clear.

595. Without clear zonation map the MAB Council could not assess if the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

596. The MAB Council therefore requested clear zonation maps showing all areas, as well as clarification of their impact on implementation of the biosphere reserve's 3 functions. The requested information should be submitted to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

597. **Archipel de la Guadeloupe Biosphere Reserve (France)** The MAB Council welcomed follow-up information with regard to its recommendation of 2015.

598. The MAB Council appreciates the efforts made to (further) develop the management plan. This plan appears to be quite detailed, and seems to have received the support from many

of the local communities – through the local government institutions. Nevertheless, in the schedule detailing the activities and the time plan, it appears that most activities relating to community development and support (especially relating to objective 4) have not yet started.

599. The MAB Council also appreciated the efforts made to increase the linkages with enterprises through labelling processes, and the efforts made to develop projects together with local communities – 28 have been financed since July 2014. Details on the kinds of projects that were supported are, however, missing. However, it is not clear whether local communities are actively participating in the management of the biosphere reserve. Research and monitoring seem to have been improved significantly, with the support of many different partners. The development of the Atlas is highly appreciated.

600. The MAB Council understands the difficulties experienced in expanding the biosphere reserve to include local communities. The map provided does indicate that zones of ‘adhesion’ (support) have been delineated and adhesion signatures have been collected from local municipalities but it is not clear whether local communities are actively participating in the management of the biosphere reserve.

601. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council encouraged the national authorities to send further information on the participation of the local communities in the management of the biosphere reserve.

602. **General recommendation to Germany:** The MAB Council expressed appreciation for the presentation made by the German delegation to explain rationale and progress in changing zonation scheme in the 3 sites in order for them to meet the criteria. It also welcomed the information provided on the plan to create one biosphere reserve under one joint management structure. It took note that this effort may request additional time. It requested the authorities to provide updated information and progress made on the zonation on the 3 sites by 30 September 2016.

603. **Waddensea of Hamburg Biosphere Reserve (Germany)** The MAB Council welcomed the requested additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve. It noted that for reasons previously mentioned in the periodic review reports of 2004 and 2014, the Wadden Sea of Hamburg Biosphere Reserve cannot establish its own transition area, as the Wadden Sea belonging to Hamburg is already a designated biosphere reserve with a core area and a buffer zone.

604. It welcomed that the authorities present a Strategy for the Wadden Sea of Hamburg Biosphere Reserve to support a transition area for the Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony Biosphere Reserve in the Cuxhaven area (2015-2023). It states that the administration of the Wadden Sea of Hamburg Biosphere Reserve will support the transition area in Lower Saxony adjacent to the existing biosphere reserve, based on the functional links between the 2 biosphere reserves. The core areas and buffer zones of the 2 biosphere reserves are already connected. Moreover, the mainland around Cuxhaven (Lower Saxony) is adjacent to the south-east and forms part of the proposed transition area. Both biosphere reserves plan to work together to develop this site into a formal transition area with the participation of the municipalities in a bottom-up process. The goal is to establish a transition area on the mainland adjacent to the 2 existing biosphere reserves.

605. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to continue the revision and supports the

proposed change to the current zonation.

606. **Wadden Sea and Hallig Islands of Schleswig-Holstein Biosphere Reserve (Germany)** The MAB Council welcomed the requested additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve.

607. The response includes further information on sustainable development activities and cooperation with local stakeholders. The MAB Council also noted that the potential of this marine biosphere reserve to increase the transition area almost reached its limits as the current transition area comprises nearly the whole of the terrestrial area managed by humans. However, the authorities indicate the continuation of the process of enlarging the transition area in cooperation with the neighbouring municipalities.

608. The MAB Council also received clear zonation map, indicating that the zonation scheme **does not meet** the criteria as some of the core areas lack the presence of buffer zones and are adjacent to the biosphere reserve border or to the transition area. In one case, the transition area is embedded into a core area.

609. The MAB Council therefore encouraged the authorities to continue the revision of the zonation in order that the core areas are properly buffered and/or provide rationale on the absence of the buffer zones. It further encouraged the authorities to continue the process of extension of the transition areas.

610. **Waddensea of Lower Saxony Biosphere Reserve (Germany)** The MAB Council welcomed the requested additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve.

611. It welcomed the information about the effort to increase the transition area. It noted that the negotiations have been started in July 2014 and municipalities in the region have been invited to join in the process, some of them already confirming to participate in creation of a new transition area. These municipalities would represent increase of 50% of terrestrial transition zone. The additional information provided includes evidence of activities with regards to the development function. It also noted that the authorities suggested that the process of agreeing on the revision of the zonation and creation of a formal transition area with the coastal municipalities will be concluded in 2016. It noted that the new zonation of the Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony Biosphere Reserve will be submitted to UNESCO. The MAB Council also received with thanks a clear zonation map.

612. Despite praiseworthy and needed efforts to increase the transition area, the zonation scheme **does not meet** the criteria as some of the core areas lack the presence of buffer zones and are adjacent to the border of the biosphere reserve or the transition areas. The MAB Council therefore encouraged the national authorities to continue the revision of the zonation in order that the core areas are properly buffered and/or provide rationale on the absence of the buffer zones. It further encouraged the authorities to continue the process of enlargement of the transition areas.

613. **Gorge of Samaria Biosphere Reserve (Greece)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following the second periodic review report for this biosphere reserve.

614. The MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and it therefore requested

that the authorities:

- a. Provide a rationale for the absence of buffer zones at the north part of the core area
- b. Send to the Secretariat a copy of the revised management plan with a zonation map in concordance with the criteria set by the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve.

615. It requested that all these elements be sent to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

616. **Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve (Hungary)** The MAB Council welcomed the information on follow information with regard to its recommendations. It acknowledged that the zonation now meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework. It also noted with appreciation that the Aggtelek Biosphere Reserve has implemented several actions to cooperate with stakeholders along the line of a newly developed management plan.

617. It however noted that the active participation of local communities in the management and in decision making process is not yet finalized in a management structure as requested by the MAB Council.

618. The MAB Council noted that the authorities designed a management structure to make the reserve more inclusive of stakeholders and to ensure the direct participation of stakeholders in managing the biosphere reserve.

619. The MAB Council considered that the site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

620. **Lake Fertő Biosphere Reserve (Hungary)** The MAB Council welcomed additional information provided by this biosphere reserve. It noted that the managers are involving stakeholders in some promotion and education activities but recommended that the site further develop the participatory process for engaging communities in the biosphere reserve management. It welcomed the finalization of the management plan.

621. The MAB Council therefore considered that, the site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

622. **Pilis Biosphere Reserve (Hungary)** The MAB Council welcomed this additional information provided by the biosphere reserve, following its recommendation.

623. It acknowledged that the authorities provided a management plan and conducted assessments of the impact of tourism on the area and provided explanation on how tourism was managed in the area. It also noted with satisfaction that the cooperation is maintained through well-developed educational activities and conservation actions as well as involvement of volunteers and local people is the Vadonleső (“Wildwatcher”) Programme.

624. The MAB Council welcomed the proposal for changes in zonation but noted that the revision is still in the planning process. It noted that the discussion started in 2015 with the local government. It also noticed that some parts of the core area are not adjacent to buffer zones in the north and that the buffer zone in the western part is not adjacent to transition areas.

625. The MAB Council concluded that the site does not meet the criteria in the Statutory

Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

626. The MAB Council requested additional information on the rationale for this planning. It further encouraged the authorities to work on the zonation and to provide a zonation map with clear boundaries for the biosphere reserve by 30 September 2016.

627. **Hortobágy Biosphere Reserve (Hungary)** The MAB Council welcomed the information on follow up of its recommendations. It acknowledged the finalization of the management plan that address local economy. It noted that the authorities stated that stakeholders and cooperation partners are active in the management of the site and regretted that no detailed information is provided on the participatory approach.

628. The MAB Council therefore considered that the site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

629. The MAB Council encouraged the biosphere reserve to pursue the involvement of local people and present detailed information on the procedures for involving local communities in the management of the biosphere reserve.

630. **Kiskunság Biosphere Reserve (Hungary)** The MAB Council welcomed this additional information following its recommendation.

631. It acknowledged with thanks the receipt of a zonation map that still need to be shared with local municipalities for consultation and that this new zonation map is uniting the different clusters into one entity. It also welcomed the finalization of a management plan for the entire area.

632. It concluded that the site does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, the MAB Council congratulated the authorities for all the progress made and requested that once the consultation on zonation with local municipalities have been finalized, that the authorities submit the revised zonation by 30 September 2016 in order for the changes to be endorsed by the MAB Council.

633. **Mt. Carmel Biosphere Reserve (Israel)** The MAB Council welcomed the efforts made to implement its 2015 recommendation. It considered that much progress has been made in ensuring the tangible engagement of the local communities in the biosphere reserve management. It welcomed the meetings that have taken place between the MAB national committee and the Israeli Nature and Parks Authority (INPA) representatives.

634. It also noted that the national authorities have indicated that the inclusion of local communities in the biosphere reserve management will come into effect provided that (a) the biosphere reserve's management plan, prepared jointly and in full cooperation of the INPA and the local communities is in place by September 2016, and (b) a joint biosphere reserve management mechanism in which the local Druze communities are represented, is in place by September 2016. In September 2016 representatives of the INPA and of the Druze communities of the Mt. Carmel Biosphere Reserve will assess their achievements with respect to both targets.

635. The MAB Council welcomed this positive development and strongly encouraged the authorities to jointly implement the management plan and activities with the local communities, especially the local Druze communities and to implement the joint biosphere reserve

management mechanism as soon as possible.

636. The MAB Council further recommended that further decision-making will take place on the basis of the outcomes of the joint assessment by the Druze communities and the INPA. The MAB Council requested that outcomes of the meetings, possible examples of activities deriving from the discussions and the joint management of the area are submitted to the Secretariat by 30 September 2016 in order for the MAB Council to decide if the site is meeting the criteria.

637. **Tuscan Islands Biosphere Reserve (Italy)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow up information related to its recommendations from 2015.

638. The MAB Council commended the authority on very well prepared explanations and elaboration of documents requested. It noted that the monitoring and assessment of impacts of tourism was presented as well as the study of ecosystem services, compiling the research studies addressing the sustainable development.

639. The revised zonation is meeting the Statutory Framework criteria. It noted that the management plan is being prepared through participatory process that is well established. It also noted with appreciation that the communication strategy is finalized and creates opportunities for involvement of local people.

640. The MAB Council considered that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and further encouraged the site to participate in WNBR.

641. **Hustain Nuruu Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia)** The MAB Council recalled that the Mongolian authorities submitted a report on this biosphere reserve in 2015 covering activities implemented from 2004-2014. In 2015 the MAB Council was not able to conclude whether this biosphere reserve meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves due to the lack of a zonation map. Hence, the national authorities were advised to re-submit the periodic review report using the official periodic review forms with clear zonation maps.

642. The MAB Council noted with appreciation the re-submission of the periodic review report using the prescribed form and accompanied by a clear zonation map, showing the limits of the core area, buffer zone and transition area. The MAB Council also noted the submission of a management plan for the Hustain National Park.

643. The MAB Council concluded that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and encouraged the national authorities to update the management plan to include the whole biosphere reserve.

644. **Bialowieza Biosphere Reserve (Poland)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up to the MAB Council recommendations of 2014. This report also comes in response to the recommendations made in 1998 and 2013. The MAB Council underlined the high biodiversity value of Bialowieza Biosphere Reserve and its importance within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. In 2014 a steering committee for the site was established to set up the basis of the agreement to establish a transboundary biosphere reserve with Belarus. It welcomed the management plan detailing the management of each area of the biosphere reserve. The involvement of stakeholders, the research, and collaborative activities contributed also to the development function of the site, especially tourism activity.

645. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction that the previous recommendations have been addressed and therefore considered that the biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue their efforts to engage local stakeholders and to develop a transboundary biosphere reserve.

646. **Slowinski Biosphere Reserve (Poland)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up to the with regard to its recommendations of 2014. The MAB Council commended the new proposed zonation of the biosphere reserve that covers a total area of 1,040.23 km<sup>2</sup>. The extension of the core area to the external borders of the National park, and the extension of the transition area to the borders of the neighbouring municipalities is not yet finalized. The MAB Council welcomed the additional information on the state of, and future plans for, sustainable use of renewable energy.

647. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

648. The MAB Council acknowledged that actions to enlarge and to establish a good governance of the site have been undertaken. It encouraged the authorities to continue engaging in constructive efforts towards achieving sustainable development in the biosphere reserve.

649. The MAB Council requested that the authorities provide the letters of support and submit the nomination form by 30 September 2016.

650. **East Carpathians Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Poland/Slovakia/Ukraine)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up to its recommendations of 2014. It acknowledged with satisfaction that the Coordinating MAB Council of the transboundary site provided additional information regarding previous comments and recommendations related to scientific studies.

651. The MAB Council underlined the high level of activities in term of researches in the site. It appreciated the adoption of the management plan by the coordination MAB Council in 2015 and the series of measures developed to address local issues related to tourism, culture conservation and promotion. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue their efforts to promote a sustainable development of their biosphere reserve and congratulated the authorities for the progress made and achievements obtained.

652. The MAB Council concluded that the transboundary biosphere reserve **does address** the Pamplona recommendations for transboundary biosphere reserves.

653. **Tatra Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Poland/Slovakia)** The MAB Council welcomed this follow-up to its recommendations of 2014.

654. The MAB Council appreciated the provided information related to human population change. It noted that an intensive participatory management planning process is ongoing on Slovak and Polish sides of the biosphere reserve. As the management plan is expected to be completed by the end of 2016 or in early 2017, the MAB Council requested to receive the final version of the plan by 2017.

655. The MAB Council encouraged the authorities to pursue the engagement of local

stakeholders and requested update and detailed information on the intensive participatory management planning process ongoing as well as endorsement by local stakeholders about their participation in the biosphere reserve management by 30 September 2016.

656. **Paúl do Boquilobo Biosphere Reserve (Portugal)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information provided by the Portuguese authorities with regard to its recommendations of 2014.

657. The MAB Council noted that the requested map with appropriate zonation has been submitted. The management of the biosphere is being undertaken by 2 entities: the Executive MAB Council (the most important body) constituted by representatives of the communities, NGOs and the government; and the Monitoring Committee, consisting of several local agents, as well as agents from areas concerned with the environment and nature conservation, economic activities, public administration institutions and different scientific fields.

658. The MAB Council also noted that the biosphere reserve has developed a well-defined participation plan for the local communities. The plan incorporates a variety of financial resources to implement the proposed projects and activities.

659. Taking into account these submissions, the MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

660. **Danube Delta Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Romania/Ukraine)** The MAB Council welcomed this follow-up to its recommendation of 2014. It recognized the high ecological and cultural value of the transboundary site and its importance in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council noted that despite recent efforts from the authorities the joint management structure is not yet established to coordinate joint activities and projects for the benefits of local communities and managers. The MAB Council appreciated also the new provided map using the same methodology and terminology for both sides. The map reflects the existence of the transboundary biosphere reserve. The MAB Council noted the progress made by the authorities to increase the visibility of the transboundary site in the various projects being implemented and planned. It noted with interest the objectives of the outlines of the action plan.

661. The MAB Council concluded that the site **does not address** the Pamplona recommendations for transboundary biosphere reserves but encouraged the authorities to pursue their efforts and requested that the authorities submit the following information by 30 September 2016:

- a. To provide a joint working plan with specified objectives, milestones and vision for the transboundary biosphere reserve, especially as regards scientific projects and sustainable development activities and implementation of the results in practice;
- b. To establish the joint management structure;
- c. To document processes of involvement of individual sites and stakeholders in the management of the site.

662. The MAB Council further encouraged national authorities of both countries to initiate cooperation with other transboundary biosphere reserves within the WNBR.

663. **General recommendation to Russian Federation:** The MAB Council welcomed the efforts made by the Russian authorities to provide elements and information to address its previous recommendations made by the MAB Council. It also acknowledged the unique contribution of the Russian biosphere reserves to conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems

as well as their contribution to scientific research. It also commended the efforts made by the authorities to create transition areas and involve local communities where possible. It recommended to the authorities to consider the withdrawal of the sites that cannot meet the criteria and encouraged the submission of new proposals.

664. **Ubsunurskaya Kotlovina Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed this follow-up to its recommendation of 2010, following the periodic review of 2007. The MAB Council noted that information on zonation was provided presenting only 4 of the core areas (O-Shynac, Ubsur–Nuur, Tsuger Els and Yamaalyg) and that a transition area has been established. It noted that the management plan has been prepared for State Nature Biosphere Reserve Ubsunorskaysa Kotlovina for 2008 – 2012.

665. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction that the cooperation between Russian Federation and Mongolia is on-going. It welcomed the preparation of a Joint Plan of Management of Transboundary Protected Areas of the Russian Federation and Mongolia “Ubsunorskaya Kotlovina” for 2010-2015. It also welcomed the information that a transboundary biosphere nomination file will be submitted.

666. The MAB Council requested that the comprehensive zonation map with all 9 core areas be submitted by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

667. **Darvinskiy Biosphere Reserves (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve and its request of 2014.

668. It noted with satisfaction that all requested information has been provided, concerning the zonation and that a map was provided. It also welcomed the description of industrial activities in Cherepovets and the monitoring of their impact. The MAB Council noted that the management plan has not yet been finalised. It also noted that information on communication policy was provided. It also welcomed information on participation of local population, engaged in meetings and annual presentation of the work of the biosphere Reserve and the plan to establish the Coordinating MAB Council for future cooperation.

669. The MAB Council therefore concluded that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

670. **Sokhondinskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve and its request of 1998. The MAB Council considered the zonation is not in line with statutory framework, since one of the core area is not surrounded/adjacent to a buffer zone and that the buffer zone located in the north is not large enough. It requested that the authorities provide further clarification on these issues and consider possible extension of the buffer zones. The MAB Council noted that the preparation of a management plan in cooperation with the local population is on-going.

671. The MAB Council requested that the above mentioned information regarding the zonation be submitted by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

672. **Tzentralnosibirskii Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council

welcomed this additional information provided by the biosphere reserve, following its recommendation in 2005. The MAB Council noted the involvement of the local people and rangers activities as well as cooperation of the biosphere reserve authority with local authorities. It noted that the information provided on the zonation is not in line with the statutory framework. The core area is not surrounded by a buffer zone which is only located in the south western part. The transition area is divided in different types of areas that are not connected.

673. The MAB Council therefore concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

674. The MAB Council requested the authorities to provide additional clarification on the above mentioned issues, as regards the rationale of the zonation, especially concerning the absence of the buffer zone and the fragmentation of the transition area. The national authorities are requested to submit the information to the MAB Secretariat by 30 September 2016.

675. **Astrakhanskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve and its request of 2005. The MAB Council acknowledged the involvement of local communities, local and regional authorities, scientific and educational institutions as well as NGOs environmental organization in preparation of the Management Plan 2010 – 2015. It welcomed the information on the participation of local communities in activities for nature conservation and education. It also noted information provided on the process of changing the actual zonation of the biosphere reserve to assure the sustainable use of natural resources in Volga's delta. The MAB Council noted the legal instruments and support of regional authorities are facilitating the process that is expected to be finalized by 2017-2018.

676. The MAB Council also noted the zonation map, showing that the zonation does not meet the criteria as some of the core areas lack the presence of buffer zones and are adjacent to the biosphere reserve border. The terminology used is not in line with the Statutory Framework. The transition area is not delineated and does not provide a connection among 3 core areas.

677. The MAB Council concluded that due to the current zonation, this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

678. The MAB Council therefore encouraged the national authorities to continue the revision of the zonation in order that the core areas are properly buffered. It further encouraged the authorities to continue the process of enlargement of transition area. It requested the authorities to provide an updated zonation map and clarification on the above mentioned issues by 30 September 2016.

679. **Baikalsky Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2005. It noted that the basic information is provided on the zonation of the biosphere reserve with a map showing that the zonation is meeting the criteria.

680. It also noted that the authorities briefly described activities in the field of sustainable development, with mention of the Programme of small business credits (2007 – 2010) as a result of work of stakeholders, participating in the Coordination MAB Council. This Coordination MAB Council was created within the framework of Programme development of sustainable livelihood for people living on the territory of Baikalsky Biosphere Reserve cooperation". It also noted that

tourism coordination work of “South of Baikal Association” leading to Tourism development program of Kabansky district, supporting environmentally friendly tourism.

681. The MAB Council concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

682. **Kavkazskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2005. It noted that according to the current zonation, the whole biosphere reserve is a core area. It noted that the zonation could be extending with buffer zone and transition areas but it is indicated this extension would not be welcomed by surrounding communities.

683. It also noted that the management policy or plan was not finalized and the authorities indicated that there is no such management tool in place. It also noted that there is no population inside the biosphere reserve. The MAB Council noted that there is mention of cooperation with other biosphere reserves.

684. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The MAB Council recommended that the national authorities consider withdrawal of the site.

685. **Kronoktskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2005. It noted that the authorities did not address the issues raised in the previous recommendation and requested that the authorities submit at latest by 30 September 2016 a zonation map as well as detailed information on development function, activities in transition area and the involvement of local communities in the site.

686. The MAB Council concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria.

687. **Prioksko Terrasnyi Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 1999. It noted that the authorities expressed difficulties to establish a transition area with reference to the Russian Federal legislation, however it is suggested that the transition area is made of the territory of municipal district of Serpukhov Moscow region.

688. It noted that the management policy/plan for the whole area as a biosphere reserve, including mechanisms for local participation and the promotion of sustainable development is not reported in details as only minor activities are mentioned.

689. The MAB Council requested the authorities to provide more information on progress achieved as regards the implementation of the management plan and evidence of the implementation of the development function as well as clarification on the status of the transition areas, including a clearer zonation map. It requested that the above mentioned information be provided by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

690. **Sikhote Alin Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2005. The MAB Council welcomed the zonation map and the establishment of core areas and praised the consultation of local population in the definition of the zonation. It further encouraged the authorities to pursue this dialogue in the revision of the zonation.

691. The MAB Council requested the following information to be provided by 30 September 2016: i) finalize the revision of the zonation and clarify the reasons for the definition of the transition area; ii) define a management plan/policy and implement it with involvement of local population; iii) provide information on the implementation of the development function in order to assess if the site meets the criteria.

692. **Nijeegorodskoe Zavolje Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the efforts made by the authorities to implement the its recommendation made in 2015 with regards to the inclusion of populations in the biosphere reserve and the management of it, and the strengthening of the research function.

693. The MAB Council understood the difficulties in changing legislation, and welcomed the efforts to take a first step by concluding agreements concerning cooperation and joint activities in promoting the sustainable development of the biosphere reserve with the authorities of the Voskresensky district of Nizhny, and the Novgorod Semenovskiy district of Nizhny Novgorod. The MAB Council also appreciated the establishment of a Coordinating MAB Council in which the population is said to participate. However, it regretted that information on how the participation is regulated is not provided.

694. The MAB Council concluded that with the lack of a management plan – which the authorities indicate cannot be developed due to lack of funding – and a zonation map that still not conform requirements, the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves.

695. The MAB Council requested the national authorities to send detailed reports on how local populations are represented and included in the Coordinating Council, as well as endorsements from representatives of local communities by the 30 of September 2016.

696. **Okskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council appreciated the efforts made to implement the recommendations made by the MAB Council in 1998, and noted that the zonation of the biosphere reserve has been adapted to include a transition area.

697. However, the MAB Council expressed concern about the small size of the transition area. It noted that in terms of participation of the local communities, details are missing on their involvement in the management of the biosphere reserve. The MAB Council also noted that the remarks about the development function of the biosphere reserve do not provide enough details either.

698. The MAB Council concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

699. The MAB Council requested the national authorities that detailed reports on the above mentioned issues: i) size of the transition area; ii) details on the involvement of local communities; iii) development functions are provided by the 30 of September 2016.

700. **Pechoro-Ilychskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the information provided as a reply to its recommendation made in 2015. It welcomed the information provided on the importance of the forest in the core area, and the programme to reintroduce reindeer.

701. One of the recommendations concerned a request to study the possibilities of expanding the transition area, and adapt the zonation to conform to the criteria of the Statutory Framework. However, the MAB Council noted that the authorities indicate that an extension of the transition area is not envisaged, and the zonation therefore still **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves.

702. The MAB Council noted that the authorities mentioned a business plan that had been drawn up in 2010, which also included plans to support the traditional mode of life and culture of the local population. The response, however, does not provide any details on the business plan, nor on whether or in what ways local communities are involved in the management of the biosphere reserve.

703. The MAB Council concluded that since no transition area is foreseen to be created in the near future despite request from the MAB Council, the MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves and recommended to the authorities to consider the withdrawal of the site from the WNBR.

704. **Tsentral'nolesnoy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the information provided as a reply to its recommendation made in 2015.

705. The MAB Council noted that the response contained some statements on the extension of the transition/cooperation area, but in the text there is some confusion about the boundary between this area and the buffer zone. Without a zonation map, it is not possible to verify whether the zonation meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

706. The MAB Council noted that the authorities indicated that harmonization of the Administration of the Tver region with the Russian MAB national committee mid-term management plan has taken place, and that a significant part of the planned activities have been conducted. However, information on the specific management plan for the biosphere reserve is missing. It concluded that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves.

707. The MAB Council encouraged that the national authorities submit the management plan and a revised zonation map before the 30 of September 2016.

708. **Barguzinsky Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2012. The MAB Council welcomed the information about the extension of the buffer zones. It welcomed the zonation map provided in the document, however, the MAB Council noted that the map still does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework. No information is provided on the transition area as requested by the MAB Council in 2015.

709. The MAB Council noted the very brief (bullet points) description of the management plan and activities planned for all 3 zones. Details, however, are lacking, and the MAB Council considered difficult to ascertain how, for instance, businesses and social organizations are engaged in the development of ecotourism or environmental education.

710. In response to the MAB Council's request for more information on the status of biodiversity in the 3 zones, the MAB Council noted that numbers of species are mentioned – and these do indicate high levels of biodiversity – but these are very broadly classified; information

on whether these species are threatened or vulnerable are missing. It concluded that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

711. The MAB Council recommended to the authorities to submit a revised zonation map, as well as a detailed management plan including details on the participation of local communities and enterprises by the 30 of September 2016.

712. **Daursky Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2010. The MAB Council welcomed the information provided on the zonation of the biosphere reserve, as well as the discussion to redefine the transition area as a zone of cooperation. It acknowledged the zonation map.

713. It also welcomed detailed information about a survey that was conducted among local residents about their high appreciation of the biosphere reserve, and the ways in which residents wish to interact with the biosphere reserve. These modes of cooperation as well as activities supported by the residents are now in the process of being implemented. It noted that the biosphere reserve's management takes into account regional development plans which are discussed with representatives of local communities, and reserve staff are involved in working groups at local government level.

714. The MAB Council welcomed the on-going discussions as well as joint activities that have been developed with the Mongolian and Chinese Biosphere Reserves. A Transboundary World Heritage Site is in the process of being established, involving Russia and Mongolia.

715. The MAB Council requested the national authorities that a zonation map be provided with further clarification on the status of the 2 federal refuges within the statutory framework criteria terminology and that this map and clarifications be submitted by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves.

716. **Taimyrsky Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2010. The MAB Council welcomed the initiative taken to cooperate with reindeer herding brigades and the development of environmental education activities with students. The MAB Council also welcomed the attempt to adapt the zonation of the biosphere reserve but noted confusion between the transition area and the biosphere reserve polygon, as well as the absence of resident human population inside the transition area. It concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria.

717. The MAB Council requested the national authorities to submit a new zonation map with an extended transition area that does include population as well as a detailed plan on how to involve these populations in the management of the biosphere reserve by 30 September 2016.

718. **Vodlozersky Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the information provided as a reply to its recommendation made in 2012.

719. The MAB Council appreciated the development of a buffer zone as well as a transition area/ zone of cooperation included in the biosphere reserve. The authorities also mentioned the development of a polygon, which partly overlaps with the buffer zone and transition area, but seems to have different functions from the buffer zone and transition area. The MAB Council considered the zonation map does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

720. The MAB Council welcomed the information about environmental education programmes that have been initiated, and the development and promotion of tourism activities. However, contrary to the recommendation of the MAB Council, no provision is made for community participation in the management of the biosphere reserve; the reason provided is that there are no issues that require the involvement of residents. The MAB Council considered that this reply indicates that the site will not meet the criteria.

721. The MAB Council concluded that the biosphere **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and recommended to the authorities to consider the withdrawal of the site from the WNBR.

722. **Teberda Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the information following the periodic review report for this biosphere and as a reply to its recommendation made in 2010

723. It noted that information provided mentions the development of a buffer zone as well as a transition area. In the periodic review however, it is indicated that neither of these zones is inhabited. The core area is inhabited by 200 people, which is more or less the number of staff members – from the periodic review report it is not clear whether these are the same people. The periodic review report also mentioned local people as consumers of some ecosystem services and participating in the management of the site. The periodic review report mentions tourism as the only development activity, but it is not clear whether this involves those residents mentioned as consumers and co-managers.

724. It also noted that no management plan is available but that the authorities mentioned that one could be provided in 2016. However, the periodic review report mentions a plan that does not need to be changed.

725. On the basis of the information provided, the MAB Council concluded that the biosphere reserve **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the Network of Biosphere Reserves and recommended to the authorities to consider the withdrawal of the site from the WNBR.

726. **Katunsky Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following its recommendation and the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve in 2014-and the follow-up information received in 2015.

727. The MAB Council welcomed also the zonation map provided and concluded that the site **meets** the criteria.

728. The MAB Council noted with satisfaction that the nomination file for the establishment of a transboundary site with the Republic of Kazakhstan and further encouraged the cooperation between the 2 countries.

729. The MAB Council requested to the authorities submit a zonation map with further clarification on the status of zone of traditional land use, zone of strict protection and zone of recreational development within the statutory framework criteria terminology.

730. **Visimskiy Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed this follow-up to the MAB Council recommendation of 2015. It welcomed the updated zonation map

that presents the added biosphere polygon on the southern part of the core area.

731. The MAB Council took note of the several projects related to education, cooperation with tourist organizations, and with universities. It also welcomed that the continuous ecological educational program was developed with Urals State Pedagogical Universities in order to strengthen the development and logistic function of the biosphere reserve. The MAB Council still requested that more detailed information as regards development and logistic functions be submitted.

732. The MAB Council also noted that local communities are involved in the management of biosphere reserve through a volunteer programme as well as in educational activities. It also acknowledged with satisfaction that the establishment of Supervisory Board that would include local authorities, NGOs and local population is planned for 2016.

733. The MAB Council recommended that the authorities provide a zonation map using the statutory framework criteria terminology.

734. **Commander Islands Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed this additional information provided by the biosphere reserve, following its recommendation of 2015.

735. The MAB Council noted the plan to involve local community, local and regional authorities, experts and various stakeholders in preparation of the Integrated Management Plan, to be finalized by 2015–2016. It also welcomed information about projects successfully implemented in the biosphere reserve. The MAB Council also noted the intention to involve local communities in the Scientific and Technical MAB Council. It requested to receive updated information on the involvement of the local communities in the integrated management once approved.

736. The MAB Council therefore considered that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

737. **Nerusso-Desnyanskoye Polesye Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following its request and the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve.

738. The MAB Council noted that the periodic review report on the updated form was not sent as requested. It also took note of the reply from the authorities as regards the suggestion of the MAB Council to enlarge the buffer zone to include Skripinsky State natural sanctuary was not possible due to existing legislation.

739. It noted the information on the process of preparing a management plan as well as the creation of a Coordinating Committee for the biosphere reserve. It also noted that information was provided on several project related to nature conservation and activities related to monitoring.

740. The MAB Council therefore requested that the authorities provide the periodic review report using the updated form with a zonation map by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

741. **Far East Marine Biosphere Reserve (Russian Federation)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following the periodic review report for this biosphere reserve and its request made in 2014.

742. The MAB Council noted that the village Vitjaz is now included in a buffer zone. It took note that information was provided on the ecological education activities implemented in the biosphere reserve. It noted that local population is involved in the work of biosphere reserve through meetings and consultation and there is intention of strengthening this involvement.

743. The MAB Council therefore requested that the authorities submit: 1) a new zonation map with the village inclusion; 2) the endorsement letters of the local authorities of the Vitjaz village to be part of the biosphere reserve; 3) a detailed plan for sustainable development activities; 4) a plan for participatory management of local communities in the biosphere reserve by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere.

744. **Polana Biosphere Reserve (Slovakia)** The MAB Council welcomed the information on follow-up of its recommendations made in 2001 and 2013.

745. It noted that the management authority of the site established cooperation with local tourism agencies and clubs, NGOs and local entrepreneurs in order to promote sustainable development and improvement of tourism infrastructure.

746. It also noted that a Biosphere Reserve Coordination Board was established in 2014 and consists of representatives of local stakeholders, research community, local community and interested stakeholders and Polana Protected Area Administration, acting as a coordinator. Within the Coordination Board, some working groups were established to address issues for different activities. A specific working group was established to address the socioeconomic research and a long-term programme is in preparation.

747. It also welcomed the development of a new management plan along a Biosphere Reserve Action Plan, through a participatory process and which was approved in 2014 by the Coordination Board. It also welcomed the information provided on participation of the site in the Network at local and international levels. It also welcomed the submission of the extension of the transition area, including the inclusion of traditional small terrace fields, representing an addition of 3 798 ha, following previous recommendations made by the MAB Council. It also welcomed the information provided on the local participation in economic development.

748. The MAB Council therefore considered that the site **meets** the criteria in the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

749. **Slovensky Kras Biosphere Reserve (Slovakia)** The MAB Council welcomed the response to its recommendation made in 2015. The MAB Council appreciated the detailed information provided about the different gradients of human influences on the landscape, as well as the environmental importance of the area. The MAB Council also noted the detailed information about the zonation. It noted that the text on the zonation, however, does not seem to match the map – the legend of the map is also not very clear.

750. The MAB Council appreciated the information provided about the 3 functions of the biosphere reserve, including the development function. It details the economic situation in the area – including high levels of unemployment due to the closing of mines – and provides

examples of how the biosphere reserve aims to improve this situation. The authorities do mention a number of research and monitoring activities, however, these could be expanded beyond monitoring by the government.

751. The MAB Council noted that in 2015 a Coordination Board was established, which includes ten representatives from local municipalities, interest groups and NGOs, but allows for the participation of more stakeholders should these present themselves. A management plan has been developed for the area, and the response indicates that various legislation adopted already was applicable in the different zones.

752. The MAB Council concluded that some information is lacking which makes it difficult to assess whether the site meets or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

753. It therefore recommended that the authorities submit an updated zonation map which will match the descriptions provided in the response to the recommendations. Furthermore, the MAB Council requested the authorities to submit the new management plan, as well as endorsements from the representatives serving on the Coordination Board, as well as detailed information on the procedures of their involvement in the management of the biosphere reserve by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

754. **The Karst Biosphere Reserve (Slovenia)** The MAB Council concluded in 2014 that the site meets the criteria and can be used as a model.

755. The MAB Council welcomed the response provided by the authorities with regard to the possibility of extending the biosphere reserve to municipalities in the north, east and south. The MAB Council is looking forward to receive the results of the discussions with the relevant stakeholders at local and national levels as announced by the authorities. The MAB Council requested for more information about the alignment between the extension of the biosphere reserve with existing plans to create other designations (i.e. geoparks, world heritage).

756. **Sierra de las Nieves y su entorno Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information provided by the Spanish authorities with regard to the its recommendations made in 2007.

757. The MAB Council noted that the requested management committee was clearly defined in an agreement signed in April 2014. However, the biosphere reserve is still working on its management plan.

758. The MAB Council requested to the national authorities that the management plan be submitted by 30 September 2016.

759. **Marismas del Odiel Biosphere Reserve (Spain)** The MAB Council welcomed the follow-up information provided by the Spanish authorities with regard to its recommendations made in 2004.

760. However, the MAB Council noted that the biosphere reserve is still implementing the its recommendation made in 2004 regarding the proposed extension and, in particular, the enlargement of the outer transition area, including marine zones and urban centres, in order to meet the criterion concerning 'approaches to sustainable development at a regional scale'.

761. The MAB Council requested the Spanish authorities to submit the new extension proposal by 30 September 2016.

762. **Val Mustair-Parc Naziunal Biosphere Reserve (Switzerland)** The MAB Council welcomed the information provided by the authorities and appreciated the efforts made by the authorities to extend the site as per its recommendation.

763. The MAB Council welcomed the extension of the biosphere reserve, in particular the extension of the buffer zone in the Central Western part of the site and the fact that one community has voted in favour of the establishment of this buffer zone. The MAB Council requested to the authorities submit the management plans before 30 September 2016, as indicated in the letter responding to the recommendations.

764. **Mae Sa - Kog Ma Biosphere Reserve (Thailand)** This biosphere reserve was designated in 1977. The first periodic review report was submitted in 1999, however it did not have a transition zone then. The MAB Council welcomed this revised second periodic review report for this biosphere reserve in response to its recommendations made in 2014.

765. The MAB Council noted with appreciation that the above recommendations have been addressed in this periodic review report. The MAB Council concluded that this biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

766. **Hauy Tak Teak Biosphere Reserve (Thailand)** This biosphere reserve was designated in 1977. The first periodic review report was submitted in 1999 and the second in 2014.

767. In 2014, the MAB Council concluded that this site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves but noticed that there was a mistake in the legend of the zonation map. Hence, the national authorities were advised to resubmit a corrected version of the map.

768. The MAB Council acknowledged with appreciation the submission of the revised map.

769. **Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following its request provided the periodic review report and its recommendation.

770. The MAB Council acknowledged that the national authorities provided information on the extension mentioned in the periodic review report. It noted that that a Decree of the President of Ukraine "On the extension of the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve" was adopted to increase the area by 4,405.8 ha in Rakhiv district of Transcarpathian region. The newly-joined area was assigned for the direct use of the reserve from the state forest enterprises and the main purpose was the inclusion of the critical biodiversity areas, as well as the extension of the transition area.

771. The information provided also included information related to zonation. The Carpathian Biosphere Reserve currently consists of 8 sections, which are the basis of the regional ecological network. These sections are linked by ecological corridors that are not parts of the site. The MAB Council strongly supports the authorities' considerations to include ecological corridors to the biosphere reserve as transition areas which would increase the biosphere reserve's ecological integrity as well as the problem of fragmentation of the site. It welcomed that the authorities mentioned that it is planned to discuss and sign the Memorandum with local governments to include the ecological corridors to the transit zone of CBR at the beginning of 2016.

772. It welcomed that the CBR participated in the international project "Bioregio-Carpathians: Integrated management of biological and landscape diversity for sustainable regional development and ecological connectivity in the Carpathians" that sets the ground for establishment of the Romanian-Ukrainian Transboundary Biosphere Reserve, with the existing CBR and the Maramures Mountains Nature Park in Romania. It also welcomed that the administrations of both protected areas signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of transboundary biosphere reserve in May 2014 and currently Romania works on the nomination form in coordination with local communities. It also noted that additional information was provided on the compliance of the Carpathian Biosphere Reserve with the Statutory Framework criteria.

773. The MAB Council concluded that with the absence of transition areas and until the finalization of the revised zonation, the site **does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

774. The MAB Council further encouraged the authorities to pursue the changes of the current zonation in the way described by the authorities, using ecological corridors to connect the fragmented biosphere reserve sections and expand its transition area and submit these elements by 30 September 2016.

775. **Askania Nova Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following its request and provided as a follow-up to the periodic review report. It thanked the authorities for providing a map clearly showing the biosphere reserve zonation as requested.

776. It noted that the zonation scheme includes all 3 required zones, but the MAB Council required more explanation as some parts of the core areas lack the presence of buffer zones and are adjacent to the transition areas. It requested that this information be provided by 30 September 2016 in order to assess if the site meets the criteria.

777. **Chernomorskiy (Black Sea) Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine)** The MAB Council welcomed the additional information following its request and provided as a follow-up to the periodic review report.

778. The MAB Council welcomed the information provided and a new zonation map but considered that the new zonation is not clear as regards the extension of the transition area and the creation of a buffer zone around the terrestrial core area.

779. It also noted that some information was provided on the involvement of local communities, including on the current composition of the biosphere reserve coordinating council which includes representatives of the scientific curator, local governments, non-governmental organizations and the local communities.

780. The MAB Council welcomed the information provided on long-term monitoring, including on opportunity to use wind energy as an alternative source of energy. The MAB Council noted the management policy aimed at preserving the typical and unique socio-ecological system. The MAB Council welcomed the information provided and the steps taken to create a new zonation and to improve management of the entire biosphere reserve.

781. However, the MAB Council considered that the site **does not meet** the criteria of the

Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The terrestrial core area is not surrounded by or adjacent to a buffer zone.

782. The MAB Council requested that the authorities provide by 30 September 2016: a) a new zonation map, enlarging the transition area to encompass farmland, and create a buffer zone around the terrestrial core area; b) detailed information on the involvement of local communities in the coordination MAB Council and how they participate in the decision-making process.

### **XIII. Update on status of implementation of the Exit Strategy**

783. The representative of the Secretariat provided updated information on the status of the implementation of the Exit Strategy to the members of the MAB Council. She stated that all action has been taken by the Secretariat and that the ultimate deadline for submission of all pending periodic review reports and follow-up information on recommendations made by the MAB Council to countries was reached at the end of September 2015.

784. She indicated that the MAB Council at its last session in June 2015 decided that the final decisions as regards the Exit Strategy would be taken when it meets in UNESCO in Paris in 2017. Countries and sites which submitted their reports in 2015 and for which the recommendations indicate that they are still not meeting the criteria would have until 30 September 2016 at the latest to address and reply to recommendations made by the MAB Council at this session.

785. Several delegates reaffirmed the importance of respecting the agreed deadline and recalled that it was decided at the 27th session of the MAB Council that the final decisions as regards the Exit Strategy will not be made at this MAB session but at its 29th session in UNESCO in Paris. One delegate suggested that it would be appropriate if the names of countries that have not yet responded is disclosed together with the names of the respective biosphere reserves in order to ascertain whether these countries need help or if it just an issue of a lack of commitment on the country's part to the MAB programme.

786. Several delegates confirmed their commitment to the implementation of the Exit Strategy but also expressed difficulties and concerns as regards languages issues, time needed for participative review process and involvement of local stakeholders. Capacity building needs and possibility of support from other countries were also expressed by some delegates.

787. The Secretariat indicated that a comprehensive document on the Exit Strategy, including list of countries and sites which did not reply by the 2015 deadline and sites which provided reports but for which the recommendations of the MAB Council indicate that they do not meet the criteria would be prepared for consideration by the MAB Council at its next session in UNESCO in Paris in 2017.

### **XIV. Discussion on the Lima Action Plan and the Lima Declaration**

788. The Chair then introduced the LAP, and requested the Mr Martin Price of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as the Rapporteur of the MAB Strategy Group to provide a summary of the work undertaken towards the finalization of the document. Mr Price outlined the procedure by which improvements were made to the LAP during the 4<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Biosphere Reserves, concluding with its endorsement by acclamation in plenary on the final day of the Congress. Mr Price expressed his hope that the MAB Council would approve

the LAP.

#### **XV. Adoption of the Lima Action Plan**

789. Following brief remarks from 2 Member States in support of the LAP, the Chair proposed that the MAB Council adopt the document. The MAB Council then adopted the LAP by acclamation.

#### **XVI. Adoption of the Lima Declaration**

790. The Chair introduced the Lima Declaration, taking note that the document acknowledges the work and conclusions of the 4th World Congress. He then proposed that the Lima Declaration be adopted and annexed to the LAP. The MAB Council agreed to this proposal.

#### **XVII. Date and venue of the 29th session of the MAB Council**

791. The MAB Secretariat proposed that the 29th session of the MAB-MAB COUNCIL will be held in the period May, June or early July 2017 in UNESCO in Paris, France. The MAB Secretariat will inform all MAB Council members once a date is determined.

#### **XVIII. Other matters**

Austria highlighted its support to the Biennial Activity Report. Noting however the lack of quality photographs, they asked that biosphere reserves send professional photos to the Secretariat who could make them available in a photobank.

Burkina Faso asked that countries and partners that support the MAB programme should be acknowledged in the report in order to further encourage support to MAB. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland then thanked Han Qunli for his excellent work as MAB Secretary, taking note that this would be his last MAB Council. The MAB Council then gave the MAB Secretary a standing ovation. The Philippines informed the MAB Council of their proposal to create a Global Academy of Biosphere Reserves, which they plan to submit to UNESCO's Executive board.