



# MAB -- Man and the Biosphere

- **UNESCO** 's Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) develops the basis, within the natural and the social sciences, for the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity, and for the improvement of the relationship between people and their environment globally.





# MAB = Managing our Biosphere

- 30 years after being launched, MAB is focusing on new approaches. By taking advantage of UNESCO 's mandate in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, MAB is promoting both scientific research and information gathering, as well as linking with traditional knowledge about resource use. It must serve to help implement Agenda 21 and related Conventions, in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity.





# MAB's Programme Structure

## ➤ INTERGOVERNMENTAL

UNESCO's intergovernmental structure gives MAB the potential to help national governments support the planning and implementation of research and training programmes. Participating countries establish MAB National Committees to coordinate their national contributions to the Programme.





# Main themes: for Research and Development

The MAB ICC in November 2000 laid down some main lines of action for 2002-2003. One of these is the:

- **The ecosystem or bioregional approach,** reconciling biodiversity conservation and rural/peri-urban development while enhancing and supporting cultural values, working with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management.





# **MAB already has a physical presence in countries**

Over the last 30 years, the MAB Programme has developed a network of sites for experimentating the MAB approach – these sites are called « biosphere reserves »





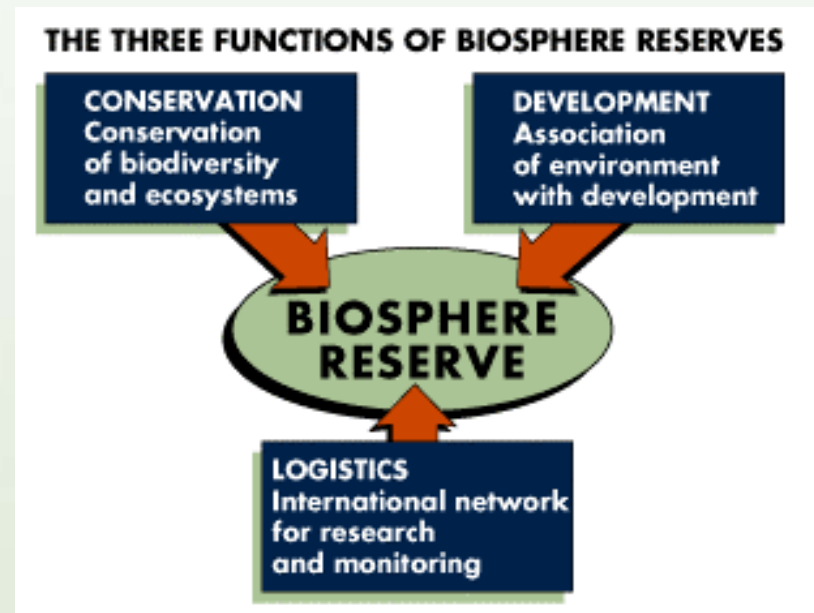
# Definition of biosphere reserves

- “Areas of terrestrial and coastal-marine systems which are internationally recognised for promoting and demonstrating a balanced relationship between people and nature”



# What do biosphere reserves do?

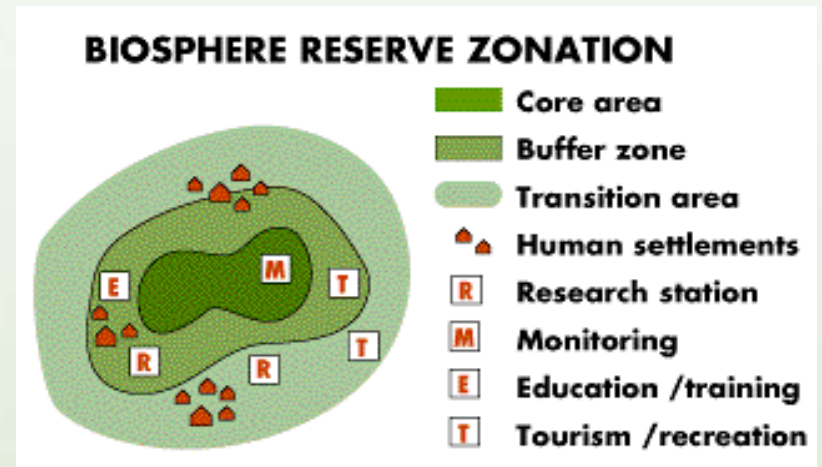
- Each Biosphere Reserve is intended to fulfil three basic functions, which are complementary and mutually reinforcing. It is the synergy of these functions which makes it a biosphere reserve





# How are they organised?

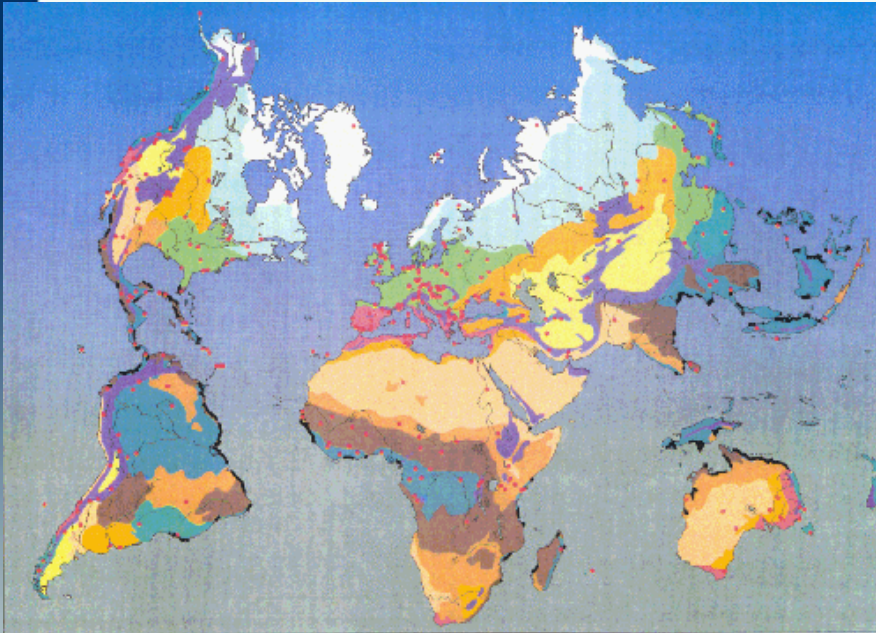
- **Three inter-related zones**  
-- core area (s), buffer zone and an outer transition area or area of cooperation
- **this schema can be used creatively for different ecological, socio-cultural and legal settings**







# World Network of Biosphere Reserves



- formally recognised by 188 Member States of UNESCO
- tool for conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of biological resources (thus contributing to the Convention on Biological Diversity)
- individual biosphere reserves remain under the sovereign jurisdiction of the States where they are situated





# Networking

The World Network fosters exchanges between biosphere reserves and facilitates co-operative activities, including scientific research and monitoring, environmental education and specialist training.





# The Vision from Seville...

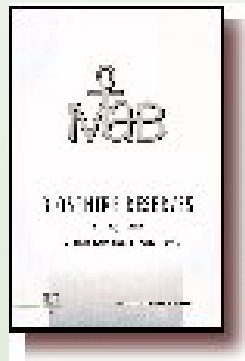
- “...biosphere reserves ..offer working examples that encapsulate the ideas of UNCED for promoting both conservation and sustainable development. These examples can only work if they express the social, cultural and economic needs of society and are also based on sound science...”





# The Vision from Seville

- “...In short, biosphere reserves are more than protected areas...”





# Today, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.....

- is made up of 393 sites located in 94 countries
- only some 40% can be said to be “operational” due to the fact that most were designated using “old” criteria before Seville
- a periodic review process is serving to improve old sites or delete others





# Biosphere reserves and mining?

- Issue has not yet been specifically broached by the MAB Council
- Secretariat however would like to be in a position to best advise Member States
- Certain that many of 393 sites have mining activities of some sort





## Legal aspects -

- World Network governed by a Statutory Framework adopted by the 186 Member States of UNESCO at the 1995 General Conference
- Statutory Framework is « soft law »





## Legal aspects – core area

- « a legally constituted core area or areas devoted to long term protection, **according to the conservation objective of the biosphere reserve**, and of sufficient size to meet these objectives »







## Legal aspects – buffer zone

- « a buffer zone or zones clearly identified and surrounding or contiguous to the core area or areas, **where only activities compatible with the conservation objectives can take place** »





# Legal aspects – transition area

- « an outer transition area where sustainable resource management practices are promoted and developed »





# Biosphere reserves and mining?

- Yes, in certain circumstances,
- as models of best practices,
- as sites for mediation of conflicts
  - ◆ Examples in Canada for logging (Clayoquot Sound) or for cleaning up polluting metal industries (Lac St Pierre)





# For more information...

- [Www.unesco.org/mab](http://www.unesco.org/mab)
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