



9th MEETING OF THE WORLD NETWORK OF ISLAND AND COASTAL BIOSPHERE RESERVES

Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve, 16-19 September 2019

STATEMENT

Gathered in Gourikwa Reserve, South Africa, representatives of:

Great Sandy BR (Australia), Guanahacabibes BR (Cuba), Waddensea of Lower Saxony BR (Germany), Hallasan Research Institute (Republic of Korea), Jeju Island BR (Republic of Korea), Korea National Park Service (Republic of Korea), MAB National Committee of Korea, Yakushima and Kuchinoerabu Jima BR (Japan), Ministry of Environment of Maldives, Macchabee / Bel Ombre BR (Mauritius), Commander Islands BR (Russia), Garden Route BR (South Africa), Gouritz Cluster BR (South Africa), Kogelberg BR (South Africa), Cape Winelands BR (South Africa), Protected Areas Multilateral Programmes, Department of Environmental Affairs (South Africa), National Parks Autonomous Agency (OAPN) (Spain), Fuerteventura BR (Spain), Mariñas Coruñesas e Terras do Mandeo BR (Spain), Gran Canaria BR (Spain), Urdaibai BR (Spain), Menorca BR (Spain), Spanish MaB Program, and the UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB).

Following the 9th meeting of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves in which diverse presentations have been made on:

- Experiences under the topic “Coastlines in Balance” and within the areas of tourism, environmental vectors, climate change, biodiversity conservation, population, local development and marine management;
- A research proposal on the value of island and coastal biosphere reserves as a source of carbon sink; in which cultural heritage and traditional knowledge associated with coastal resources have been presented;
- An update on the current status of the WNICBR Workplan (2018-2022),
- A revision on the activities of the Zero Plastic Working Group, together with a collection of initiatives to be developed in the near future.

The next conclusions have been adopted:

CONCLUSIONS

1. Internal organisation

The Network is growing and new countries have been incorporated during 2019. Jeju and Menorca, as technical secretariats, will be responsible for formalizing the adhesion process through the signature of a membership letter.



2. Workplan development and priority areas

The joint secretariats of Jeju and Menorca will continue cooperating with UNESCO in order to operate the network and to carry out the main activities contained in the Workplan (2018-2022), which was defined in the VIII Meeting (Menorca 2018) on the topic enhancing interaction and knowledge exchange, focusing on the priorities defined in the successive annual meetings.

To the extent possible the plan will be periodically checked and evaluated with the participation of the involved biosphere reserve members.

3. Working Groups on priority topics

The Zero Plastic Working Group, created from the Zero Plastic campaign in Lanzarote and launched in May 2018 at the VIII Meeting, in alliance with the Marine Science for Society research network, will be enhanced as a collaborative and interdisciplinary framework to face the global problem of plastic pollution.

The active participation of Network's members in working groups can enhance the Network's role in providing global perspectives to the local problems. In addition it can promote the biosphere reserves as early warning systems, as well as performing an advocacy work in the current context of ecological and social crisis.

4. Next training course

The 7th Training Course for Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserve Managers is scheduled for October, 2019. Its aim is to share experiences and build the capacities needed to adapt our biodiversity reserves to climate change and achieve sustainable development. BR managers of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves, are encouraged to participate, especially those from areas recently designated, or those who have not yet participated.

5. Next Meeting

It is foreseen that the next meeting will take place in May/June 2020, Germany in the Waddensea of Lower Saxony BR. For 2021, the representative of the Great Sandy BR, Australia, proposed as venue for the 11th meeting of the Network.

6. Dissemination and publications

Jeju Secretariat will publish the 9th Meeting proceedings book and will disseminate it among the members, who will collaborate in its further distribution.

Menorca and Jeju secretariats will keep websites and, newsletters, among others, as a mean of communication and dissemination of the Network's activities. Moreover both will make all the relevant information available to the members.

Gourikwa, 19th of September 2019