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MEETING OF THE WORLD NETWORK OF ISLAND AND COASTAL AREA BIOSPHERE RESERVES IN MENORCA (SPAIN)



WORKSHOP MEETING TO START OPERATING THE INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OF JEJU AND MENORCA FOR THE WORLDWIDE NETWORK OF ISLAND AND COASTAL AREA BIOSPHERE RESERVES

MEMBERS OF THE WORKING TABLE:

Mr. Miguel Clüsener-Godt, Programme Specialist in the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, UNESCO

Mr. J. Francisco Cantos, Autonomous Body of National Parks, Department of Agriculture, Food and Environment

Mr. Fernando Vilallonga, councillor of Economy, Environment and Hunting of Consell Insular de Menorca

Mr. José Luis Orfila, island director of Economy, environment and Hunting of Consell Insular de Menorca

Mr. Chung-il Choi, MAB National Committee of the Republic of Korea

Mr. Ko Kil Rim, Head of Jeju Island Biosphere Reserve, special autonomous province of Jeju

Mr. Dong-Hui Kang, Jeju Island Biosphere Reserve section, special autonomous province of Jeju

SUMMARY:

Work session among the different participants of the working table with the collaboration of the representatives of other biosphere reserves as listeners sitting on the conference.

The work session started with the intention to include any changes deemed necessary to the proposal presented by Menorca, both made by the Jeju island biosphere reserve and by any of those attending the session. The goal is to achieve an active participating structure, being pragmatic and also engaged, not only regarding both organising headquarters but also the rest of present and potential members.

Afterwards, the proposal of Menorca was read, along with its goals and ways and measures to implement them. Jeju agreed the plan although they considered that this should include more



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specific details about climate change (indicators, information, documentation...). This point was also backed by Menorca. Jeju continued stating that research and close collaboration and communication should be essential in this sense.

Afterwards, some contributions were made by the audience attending the meeting, who supported ideas such as planning, research and documentation as well as the relevance of teaching all these knowledge and experiences in schools. Also the funding issue was commented with regard of the current difficult situation of world financial crisis. And the idea of making the best and major weapon out of diversity was put on the table in order to look for a common goal among all biosphere reserves. Hence, it was said we should share the same solutions for the same common problems.

The conclusions reached by the working table after listening carefully to all parties and participants were the following:

As many countries as possible should be able to join this network, which must be open although in a pragmatic and ordered way. The grounds should be homogeneous and established after reaching a consensus so as to be more dynamic and efficient.

Jeju accepted the proposal made by Menorca as long as it included in its preamble and general goals the climate change issue. In this sense, Jeju would be in charge of making any amendments and write a new draft that would be ratified, if appropriate, in July in the upcoming congress in Paris.

Then, Mr. Miguel Clüsener-Godt on behalf of MaB Programme of UNESCO summarised the next steps that should be carried out after reaching a consensus between Jeju and Menorca:

1. To make a list that includes all the participating biosphere reserves and the network members and their contact details: full names, addresses and specific posts so as they can be easily available online and updated for all the members and users. The UNESCO commits itself to open a new window to include this list about biosphere reserves on its website.
2. The technical offices shall be clearly established both in Jeju and Menorca. A person in charge, either physical or institutional, should be appointed along with the corresponding contact details, as the first action concerning the responsibility of being part of this network.



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3. The present proposal plan should be approved. Both parties should work in a final version jointly to include all the details that have been dealt during this meeting. Then the planning shall be submitted to approval before the governments of both countries (Spain and Korea) as well as before the UNESCO. That is to say, this will be a five-hand agreement. The agreement signature by these five parties will take place in the upcoming meeting to be held in Paris where a final text will be ready. Anyway, regardless of whether an agreement is reached or not, UNESCO will draft a report and will include it in the next ICC of the MAB Programme.
4. A second meeting in Jeju will be necessary, so a delegation might go to the upcoming World Conservation Congress in September.
5. A publication or book should be elaborated about the successful experiences of all the biosphere reserves integrating the network. Each contribution should be 10-15 pages long where to describe the main objectives and values of each biosphere reserve. Either Menorca or Jeju should coordinate this publication. As a result, a text of about 200 pages at the most, written in English and Spanish, should be published where to disseminate this project and the worldwide network of island and coastal area biosphere reserves.
6. Under the leadership of Jeju and Menorca, a global project of the network as a strategy how to get funding for this network shall be elaborated. Funding is needed to support meetings, activities, publications... and this could be searched both in public and private sectors such as donors, foundations, etc. all over the world.
7. The network shall be open to each and every one wanting to join and be part of it.
8. It is important to know how to be operational in the future, so it should be established how often the network members shall meet, for example every two years.

Finally, the commitment approval came by all the participants where they ratified the candidates of biosphere reserves of Menorca and Jeju as headquarters of the thematic network of island and coastal area biosphere reserves for its approval in the upcoming ICC of the MAB Programme.

In Maó, 14th February 2012