



The 4th Meeting of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves

Duration: 17-20 June 2014 (four days)

Venue: Palawan Biosphere Reserve, Philippines

Participants: 26 Biosphere Reserves from 19 countries

Subject: Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves under the Impact of Natural Disasters

STATEMENT

Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves of the world are unique ecosystems that host abundant biodiversity, but their sustainability is endangered by climate change and other threats that represent obstacles to true sustainable development.

The World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserve (WNICBR) was established to find solutions for some of the common issues facing 16 biosphere reserves, and to implement recommendations of the Madrid Action Plan. The first meeting of the Network took place in Menorca in February 2012.

The network focuses on research and training for island and coastal biosphere reserves with regard to conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources, and the mitigation of or adaptation to climate change. These initiatives follow the recommendations of the Madrid Action Plan.

The 4th Meeting of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves, held in Palawan, Philippines, on 17-20 June 2014, included representatives from 26 biosphere reserves from 19 countries. Participants came from Australia (Noosa BR), Chile (Cabo de Hornos BR), China (Nanji Islands BR), Denmark (North-East Greenland BR), DPR Korea (Mount Chilbo BR), Estonia (West Estonian Archipelago BR), Finland (Archipelago Sea Area BR), Haiti (La Selle BR), Indonesia (Siberut and Wakatobi BRs), Jamaica (future Portland Bight BR), Maldives (Baa Atoll BR), Mauritius (Macchabee/Bel Ombre BR), Portugal (the three BRS in the Azores Corvo/Flores/Graciosa and Santana Madeira BR), the Philippines (Palawan BR), the Republic of Korea (Jeju Island and Gochang BRs), Sao Tome & Principe (Principe BR), Spain (Menorca, Gran Canaria, La Palma and El Hierro BRs), St. Kitts and Nevis (St. Mary's BR), Sweden (Blekinge Archipelago BR) and Yemen (Socotra Archipelago BR), as well as the MAB National Committees of the Republic of Korea and Spain, and the UNESCO/MAB Secretariat. Together they examined future action plans and made the following decisions.



Conclusions

1. Suggestions on research projects and a training workshop

Jeju Island Biosphere Reserve is implementing joint research projects on climate change and Menorca Biosphere Reserve is implementing a project on sustainable development. Suggestions from biosphere reserve personnel to improve the effectiveness of these research projects are appreciated. A training course for biosphere reserve managers was also held on Jeju Island in 2013 and a second course is scheduled for October 2014.

2. Publication of a casebook study

The Menorca Secretariat with support from Jeju will publish a casebook study containing a wide range of information and experiences presented at this meeting. To this end, all presenters should provide appropriate content as soon as possible.

3. Dates and venue of the next meeting

The 5th meeting of the World Network will be held in 2015. UNESCO and the Secretariats of Jeju and Menorca will promote participation among the island and coastal biosphere reserves.

4. 5th meeting will focus on climate change and sustainable development

The dual sessions of the next meeting will focus on two main themes: climate change and sustainable development. The Jeju Secretariat will lead the climate change session and the Menorca Secretariat will lead the sustainable development session. Biosphere reserve members may select one of the two sessions, which will generate intensive discussion around each theme. UNESCO will present an introduction to newly designated biosphere reserves.

5. Participation in IUCN World Parks Congress 2014

The 6th IUCN World Parks Congress will be held in Sydney on 12–19 November 2014. WNICBR will attend the congress and participate in a one-day event to promote the activities of the network. To this end, the Secretariats of Jeju and Menorca will formulate a plan and notify all biosphere reserve members of the details.

6. Sharing information on the Web

Jeju, Menorca and UNESCO have already established respective websites for the Network. Biosphere reserve members are expected to exchange information through these websites.

7. The Network's newsletter

Jeju Secretariat will prepare the next issue of the Network's newsletter, which will be published on the Jeju and Menorca websites.