

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL
ORGANIZATION**

International Co-ordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

Twenty-ninth session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room IV (Fontenoy Building)
12 – 15 June 2017

FINAL REPORT

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785. **Zembra and Zembretta Biosphere Reserve (Tunisia).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the report from Zembra and Zembretta Biosphere Reserve (received after the deadline of September 2015) as a reply to the recommendations issued by the MAB ICC in 1999. Tunisian authorities were invited to consider the relevance of maintaining the site as a biosphere reserve because of its isolation and the lack of people living on the site. A response was requested by the end of 2000 at the following Advisory Committee and Tunisian authorities replied in 2002, reiterating the reasons why Zembra and Zembretta constitute a valid Biosphere Reserve.

786. The Advisory Committee acknowledged that the biosphere reserve has the regular tripartite zonation as well as a management plan according to this zonation since 2004. With regard to the presence or absence of a local population in the Biosphere Reserve, it appears that this is a question of interpretation. Civilians are not housed on the site (there is a military base), but local people from the nearby coast, mainly traditional fishermen make their living from using the resources of the BR's transition zone. The latter is thus an important part of the life of many local families.

787. The Advisory Committee took note that the management plan is currently under revision and it is planned to extend the transition area to the coast around Jebel Haouaria and Sidi Daoued, where environmental education activities focusing on the Zembra archipelago are carried out since 2005. In the Terms of Reference regarding the updating of the management plan, reference is explicitly made to the criteria of the MAB Programme, including zonation and participatory involvement of the population in drafting the new management plan.

788. Subsequently, the Advisory Committee considers the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of World Network of Biosphere Reserves and encourages the work in progress regarding the extension of the transition zone to the nearby mainland.

789. **Askania Nova Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the additional information following the request from MAB Council in 2016. The Advisory Committee welcomed the zonation map presented with a core area surrounded by the buffer zone except in small part in the centre where village and road are buffering the core. Three parts of buffer area on the east, south and north do not have transition area adjacent due to the forests as evidenced in the map.

790. The Advisory Committee concluded that the biosphere reserve **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

791. **Carpathian Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine) - Extension.** The Advisory Committee welcomed the additional information provided upon recommendation from the MAB Council in 2016. The Advisory Committee noted with satisfaction that zonation was changed in 2016 due to enlarged transition area that encompasses all cluster of core area and was designed in order to establish ecological corridor. The transition area has 124,300 ha and the total biosphere reserve has 181,138.8 hectares. The zonation complies with the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

792. Transition area was established in agreement with management authority of biosphere reserve and the Transcarpathian Regional Forestry and Hunting Department. A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed demonstrating the commitment to ensure forest management based on the principles of sustainable development in the region. A new management plan is in the process of elaboration in order to comply with the change in zonation.

793. The Advisory Committee noted that in 2012 and 2013 a memorandum of understanding with the local governments and municipalities of Rakhiv and Tiachiv districts of Transcarpathian region was signed and included provisions for the involvement of local communities in activities and management of biosphere reserve. It also noted the recreational infrastructure, taking into account the economical, environmental, social and other interests of local communities, and measures to increase the environment.

794. The Advisory Committee concluded that the biosphere reserve meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

795. **Shatkskyi Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the updated zonation map of the biosphere reserve. The Advisory Committee concluded that the zonation meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve.

796. The Advisory Committee furthermore welcomed the additional information about the involvement of local authorities and communities in the management of the site. The updated periodic review report mentions that the Coordination Council includes representative of local authorities and communities, forest and agricultural enterprises, and NGOs. The list provided of permanent members of the council indeed includes the local District Chairpersons. The Advisory Committee encourages the Council to further work towards designing and elaborating the development function of the biosphere reserve.

797. The Advisory Committee concludes that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

798. **East Carpathian Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Ukraine).** The Advisory Committee requested the authorities to send the national periodic report for this transboundary biosphere reserve by 15 May 2017 in order to assess if the site does meet or does not meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

799. **General recommendation to USA.** The Advisory Committee expressed its great appreciation of the efforts made to adapt the USA sites in order to meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of World Network of Biosphere Reserves. An impressive number of sites have (re)submitted detailed periodic review reports and adopted significant changes. Many sites have been extended to fulfil the zonation criteria and functions. The Advisory Committee has taken into account the agreement in relation to the terminology used by most of the USA sites maps, and has reviewed the new zonation accordingly. However, in its recommendations, the Advisory Committee applies the official zonation terminology in accordance with the Statutory Framework of World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Advisory Committee also recommended that when possible the sites could change their names in order to fully reflect the biosphere reserve designation as distinct from national parks that often serves as core areas. It also encouraged the authorities to work on a specific communication and branding strategy at the national level. The Advisory Committee encouraged other US sites to follow the successful examples of upgrading the biosphere reserve by submitting new nomination and /or periodic review reports. Finally, the Advisory Committee greatly encouraged the authorities and the biosphere reserves to actively participate in the WNBR meetings and MAB activities.

800. **Big Bend Biosphere Reserve (USA) – Extension.** The Advisory Committee welcomed this follow-up to the MAB Council recommendation made in 2014 after the submission of first periodic review report. The Advisory Committee recognized the efforts done