



UNESCO's reconciliation strategy to implement the Global Biodiversity Framework and its 30 x 30 target

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The UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB)

- The MAB Programme is an intergovernmental scientific Programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for enhancing the relationship between people and their environments.
- The World Network of Biosphere Reserves is composed of **748 biosphere reserves in 134 countries**, including 23 transboundary sites, as of 2023.
- **262 biosphere reserves are located in 39 European countries**, including 14 transboundary sites.



Source 2019-2020



Target 3

Ensure and enable that **by 2030 at least 30 %** of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, (...) are **effectively conserved and managed** through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of **protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures**, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, (...).

Headline indicator of the GBF monitoring framework: **Coverage of protected areas and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs)**

Biosphere reserves can contribute to :

- **Area-based targets** as they contain within their territories both protected areas and other areas which can be considered as Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs)
- **Non area-based targets** as they promote the reconciliation of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use in a holistic manner.

Biosphere reserves :

- Are areas under equitable and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning
- Offer a portfolio of management options
- Promote a system-based and land/seascape-level approach to reconciling conservation, sustainable use, and human settlements
- Consider the territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.



Biosphere reserves contribute to the GBF in a holistic manner





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Biosphere reserves are recognized by IPBES as good practices of inclusive governance



Inclusive governance

Summary for
policymakers of the IPBES
assessment of the
Sustainable Use of Wild
Species

“(C.2.1) Robust governance systems tend to be adaptive to changes in social and ecological conditions and include participatory mechanisms (well established)” [...] Collaborative governance arrangements that meaningfully engage these key actors, **such as biosphere reserves designed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization** can ensure that policy decisions on sustainable use are equitable (well established).”



Target 1

Ensure that all areas are under **participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning** and/or effective management processes addressing land and sea use change, to bring the loss of areas of high biodiversity importance, including ecosystems of high ecological integrity, close to zero by 2030, while respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities

UNESCO designated sites enhances **connectivity** across ecosystems, landscapes and people. Environmental management in biosphere reserves is based on good practices, creating and maintaining complex landscape heterogeneity that improves connectivity.

Mura-Drava-Danube Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Hungary, Serbia)

World's first 5-country biosphere reserve designated by UNESCO in 2021. The Mura-Drava-Danube transboundary biosphere reserve is the largest riverine biosphere reserve in Europe :

- Total area of 930,000 hectares, with a core area of 300 000 hectares
- Extends along 700 km of the Mura, Drava and Danube Rivers
- Population of almost 1 million people
- Boasting outstanding natural and cultural heritage
- Key example of connectivity, connecting a network of 13 major protected areas - stretching from the Alps through the Carpathian Basin to the foothills of the Balkan Mountains.



Target 2

Ensure that **by 2030 at least 30% of areas** of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems are under **effective restoration**, in order to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, ecological integrity and connectivity.

Headline indicator of the GBF monitoring framework: **Area under restoration**

As a collaborating agency of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, UNESCO supports the protection and revival of ecosystems all around the world, for the benefit of people and nature. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves contributes to raise the area of degraded ecosystems under restoration,

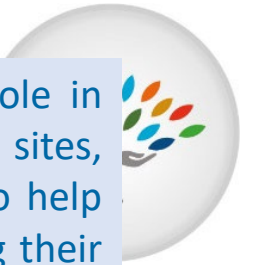
Flores Island Biosphere Reserve (Portugal)

Implementation of a peatland restoration project addressing threats such as inappropriate land use, with the transformation of large areas of peatland into pasture and/or production forest.

Identification of effective restoration strategies :

- Artificial introduction of Sphagnum by clusters and the planting of Juniperus, showed results more than 10 years after their implementation :
- In the areas where Sphagnum was introduced, there was an increase in its distribution area of around 40% and a 15% reduction in the cover of aggressive herbaceous plants.
- In the areas where Juniperus was planted, there was an increase in the cover of wetland species and a 30% decrease in aggressive herbaceous plants.

Source : Mendes, Cândida & Pereira, Dinis & Dias, Eduardo. (2022). Restauro de Turfeiras Pastoreadas nos Açores, tendências de uma década.



Target 8

Minimize the **impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity** and **increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions**, including through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, while minimizing negative and fostering positive impacts of climate action on biodiversity.

UNESCO recognizes that resilient and healthy ecosystems play a vital role in disaster risk reduction. UNESCO, through its networks of designated sites, supports disaster risk reduction and good management of ecosystems to help build resilience of vulnerable communities and countries while supporting their livelihoods, and meeting their basic needs, such as providing food, water and shelter.

LIFE Biospher' Adapt project (France)

10 biosphere reserves in France, including a transboundary site with Italy designed and submitted a project to set up active and effective territorial support to help change practices in the context of climate change (8 million € over 5 years)

- Drawing up adaptation plans at biosphere reserve level: analysis of the climate profile of each territory and its evolution; carrying out a vulnerability and opportunity diagnosis.
- Mapping of local stakeholders and local strategy mechanisms.
- Creation of a local dynamic enabling the exchange, sharing and dissemination of information to all stakeholders, development of a "climate culture".
- Creation of tools to mobilize and raise awareness among local players and residents.
- Implementation of concrete solutions for adapting to climate change.



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Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve (Germany)

The Bliesgau Biosphere Reserve is characterized by a wide variety of soils and microclimates.

It is committed to halving its energy consumption by 2050, and reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by up to 95%, by investing in renewable energies (wind power, photovoltaics, woodchip-fired thermal power stations), electromobility and land-use planning to create new green spaces, through collective work within a Biosphere Association and with the Saarland Ministry of the Environment and Consumer Protection.



Target 21

Ensure that the **best available data, information and knowledge are accessible** (...) to guide effective and equitable governance, integrated and participatory management of biodiversity, and to **strengthen communication, awareness-raising, education, monitoring, research and knowledge management** (...).

Headline indicator of the GBF monitoring framework: **Indicator on biodiversity information for the monitoring the GBF**

UNESCO Biodiversity Portal

The first interdisciplinary and intersectoral database common to the World Heritage Center, the International Geoscience and the Man and the Biosphere Programmes:

- Provides a mapping of UNESCO designated sites and activities
- Demonstrates UNESCO's contribution to the biodiversity international agenda, including local and traditional knowledge and know-how
- Supports scientific research, monitoring, reporting and communication by providing open access to scientific and evidence-based data and indicators



Target 22

Ensure the **full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making**, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by **indigenous peoples and local communities** [...] as well as by **women and girls, children and youth**, and **persons with disabilities** and ensure the full protection of **environmental human rights defenders**.

Biosphere reserves are sites promoting inclusive and collaborative governance and decision-making, bringing together all stakeholders to co-design management plans and policies, including government entities and national agencies, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs, researchers, the private sector and other civil society organizations such as indigenous organizations.

Minett Biosphere Reserve, Luxembourg

An extensive consultative procedure was implemented for the designation of the biosphere reserve, which involved the following steps:

- Several information meetings with local elected officials from eleven municipalities
- Consultative meeting with the four relevant national ministers
- Presentation of the project to business networks (representing 15% of the Luxembourgish workforce)
- Consultation of 125 students from three high schools
- Establishment of an information and consultation mechanism for local populations



Way forward and cooperation

UNESCO biosphere reserves are relevant and actionable tools to foster UN-wide cooperation on biodiversity and climate change at local, national, regional and global levels

- Biosphere reserves **provide frameworks** to support biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, inclusive governance, ecosystem restoration, climate change mitigation and adaptation, monitoring, etc.
- Biosphere reserves could be used to implement **joint UN projects and/or workshops** (through **GEF fundings** for instance) on key priority areas such as governance, economic development, youth, ecological restoration...
- Biosphere reserves are territories where the linkages between biological and cultural diversity are reinforced. Biosphere reserves could be used for **pilot projects to implement the *Joint Programme of Work on the Linkages between Biological and Cultural Diversity*** adopted by the CBD COP15 under the leadership of UNESCO-CBD-IUCN.

THANK YOU!

MERCI ¡GRACIAS!

СПАСИБО!

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