



inspire a positive future by connecting people and nature today

UNESCO MAB - Communicating the Biosphere Reserve

A Guide for Our World Network - 2020

Communicating the Biosphere Reserve

A Guide for the UNESCO World Network

This guide has been created by the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves to help tell a new story that responds to the current context we are all living in.

We are at a crossroad where anything is possible - economically, socially and environmentally. The connection between people and nature is in the spotlight, and now is the time for all of us to rethink this relationship.

People are looking for examples, stories and practices that demonstrate that a positive transformation is possible. Our new narrative firmly establishes the role of UNESCO MAB as a beacon of change that is being lived everyday in our biosphere reserves around the world.

This guide is part of how we hope to support the Network with solutions and to ensure we communicate consistently as one Network, with common values that reinforce why our work is important and essential.

Meriem Bouamrane
UNESCO MAB Secretariat

Using this Guide

This resource outlines the new narrative for the UNESCO MAB Network.

A story in three parts, the narrative is designed to bring consistency to how we all speak about the Network, the role of biosphere reserves, and how we all play a part in UNESCO's focus areas for biodiversity.

- Read through the narrative and key messaging
- Consider how these messages can form the foundation of how you communicate to your stakeholders
- Tailor the messaging based on the key audiences of UNESCO MAB
- Refer to the UNESCO MAB Global Communication Strategy to consider how you can reach your audiences in a powerful way with this new story

UNESCO MAB Global Communication Strategy

“Modern, open & transparent communication”

The way UNESCO MAB communicates is changing to more effectively engage people on what a biosphere reserve is, how the network works, why it is important to others and how people can get involved.

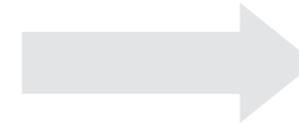
This “big shift” was outlined in the MAB Brand & Story Toolkit and has become inspiration for creating more dynamic and effective communication plans.

The UNESCO MAB Global Communication Strategy was created to address each of the shifts.

Our new narrative reinforces our role to inspire people with the opportunity to change through stories of change in action.

Changing how we engage:

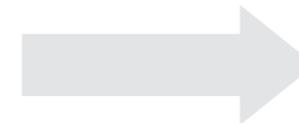
Broadcast



Conversation

Less talking to, more talking with

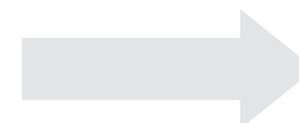
Explain



Inspire

Less words and justification, more inspiration and images

Place



People

Less geography, more human

Facts



Stories

Less data sharing, more storytelling

Regulation



Opportunity

Less about things people can't do, more about what they can



The Change

A New Narrative for Biosphere Reserves

There is a crisis that is touching, for the first time, the whole planet. We've been through the same experience, together. In this period we have had time to reflect on our role in the world and the issues that are most important to us.

2020 was to be a critical year for biodiversity. UNESCO MAB is engaged, alongside others, in shaping a post-2020 framework for biodiversity. Our biosphere reserves are places for solutions and implementing the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Suddenly the large multilateral events have been forced to be postponed - and yet the crisis facing biodiversity continues.

Around the world we are seeing that there are many issues that are engaging people. There is an opportunity as a Network to come together and inspire beyond our borders. Our new narrative reinforces the role of UNESCO MAB and allows us to share stories that demonstrate that there is hope, direction, and a way to live in harmony with nature.

How can we use our newly acquired knowledge from the pandemic to better share and promote sustainable development within the MAB Network? Question from our Spanish webinar

Over the pandemic period we have all had time to reflect on our role in the world and the issues that are most important to us. Now, we can turn that gained experience into transformative action. As a network, our role is to communicate through our stories what we stand for, what we have achieved, and how we can translate our knowledge to help to inspire our communities and partners into meaningful action.

Our New Narrative

<p>This is a time of transformation, which brings both challenge and opportunity <i>(WHY)</i></p>	<p>Biosphere reserves represent a beacon for sustainable development globally and locally <i>(HOW)</i></p>	<p>We inspire with real stories of practical transformative action <i>(WHAT)</i></p>
<p>For us all to thrive, the relationship between people and nature must shift - addressing climate change, species loss, over-exploitation of natural resources, pollution, and the effects of urbanization.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on our world, and for many individuals, businesses and communities, this is a time of great challenge. The pandemic has brought into focus that the relationship between humans and nature has lost harmony.</p> <p>And so this is also a time of transformation - shifting the way we see our relationships with nature, with each other, and with our current ways of living and working.</p> <p>As a network, we have a unique opportunity to inspire better ways for people to live together in harmony with nature - and to help us all emerge from this challenging time stronger and wiser than before.</p>	<p>UNESCO biosphere reserves are examples of where sustainable living is making a difference and where a positive transformation is already happening.</p> <p>Our network of more than 700 places located in each and every ecosystem of the world are proof of sustainable development in action by acting through our shared cultural values. We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate life demonstrating that people’s wellbeing and the diversity of nature are inextricably linked • Empower people by creating a movement, building belief in what is possible and trusting each other • Model solutions for the future by exploring new ways of living every day that solves global challenges • Belong together by connecting people across disciplines, cultures and borders <p>Our role is to demonstrate that it is already possible to live in harmony with nature by demonstrating how to sustainably use and restore key ecosystems on the planet.</p>	<p>The MAB network brings education, science and culture together to develop tangible and transformative action. We are creating an alliance for biodiversity by living together in harmony with nature.</p> <p>We form an integral part of UNESCO’s focus to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore the relationships between people and nature - including restoring degraded ecosystems through education, sciences, local and indigenous knowledge • Conserve the harmony of our ecosystems - sustainably using key ecosystems in the planet by mobilizing the knowledge and know-how of committed and dedicated citizens and partners • Amplify the power of youth - providing universal access to diversity of knowledge, create possibilities and share solutions to empower the next generations <p>As a network we communicate what we stand for, what we have achieved, and how we can help to inspire our communities and partners into meaningful action.</p>

This is a time of transformation, which brings both challenge and opportunity

Key messages:

- For us all to thrive, the relationship between people and nature must shift
- The pandemic has brought into focus that the relationship between humans and nature has lost harmony
- This is also a time of transformation - shifting the way we see our relationships with nature, with each other, and with our current ways of living and working
- As a network, we have a unique opportunity to inspire better ways for people to live together in harmony with nature - and to help us all emerge from this challenging time stronger and wiser than before

Biosphere reserves represent a beacon for sustainable development globally and locally

Key messages:

- UNESCO biosphere reserves are examples of where sustainable living is making a difference and where a positive transformation is already happening
- We are proof of sustainable development in action by acting through our shared cultural values
- Our role is to demonstrate that it is already possible to live in harmony with nature by demonstrating how to sustainably use and restore key ecosystems on the planet

Our new narrative does not mention biodiversity under threat - shouldn't we be more explicit when we talk about the problem of biodiversity loss and conservation? Question from our French webinar

The new narrative reinforces our role to inspire transformation through stories of change in action, rather than solely focus on the problem. By amplifying examples of how biosphere reserves are the shift we need in the world, we are cultivating hope and connection within our communities.



We inspire change with real stories of practical transformative action

Key messages:

- The MAB network brings education, science and culture together to develop tangible and transformative action.
- We are creating an alliance for biodiversity by living together in harmony with nature.
- As a network we communicate what we stand for, what we have achieved, and how we can help to inspire our communities and partners into meaningful action
- UNESCO MAB forms an integral part of UNESCO's focus to Restore, Conserve and Amplify

Stories of transformation: Using our three focal areas to engage

Your biosphere reserve will already have great examples of Restore, Conserve and Amplify and how people and nature are living in harmony together. Find these stories and bring them to life in inspiring and engaging ways that demonstrate the proofs of sustainable living in action.

Restore	Conserve	Amplify
<p>Identify a flagship project in your biosphere reserve that demonstrates restored harmony in the relationship between people and nature</p> <p>Tell the story of how the project works, where the successes have resulted, and your learnings along the way.</p> <p>Putting people in the story and telling it from their point of view will help to make it relatable to others.</p> <p>And sharing how you got others involved will inspire the MAB Network to try a similar approach!</p>	<p>Find stories of how local ecosystems are being used sustainably by all stakeholders - including tourism, business and industry.</p> <p>Share the passion and dedication of people in the biosphere and their perspective on how important the local ecosystem is to their livelihood and wellbeing.</p> <p>Tip: Using the UNESCO MAB Proud to Share video format is a powerful way to inspire stakeholders with the dedication of people in conserving local ecosystems.</p>	<p>Encourage youth in your biosphere reserve to join regional MAB Youth Networks and get them engaged in local projects and decision making.</p> <p>Ask them how they would like to communicate about their work, and what is needed to build a bridge for intergenerational dialogue.</p> <p>Giving them a platform to share their stories of action will inspire other youth in the area and the World Network to engage and get involved.</p>

Your examples can inspire others in our World Network!

Share your stories of our three focal areas with the MAB Secretariat. We want to expand the case studies in our Global Communication Strategy to help biosphere reserves learn from each other.

Using Our New Narrative

Practical ways to tell our story

Using the Key Messages

The key messages have been written for clarity and consistency. Use them as your guide when you are communicating - they are the foundation to how you communicate with your stakeholders.

- Consider how you inspire first with the opportunity for change in your local region
- Use the common MAB values as a way to show that biosphere reserves are places where sustainable development is happening
- Use the focus areas of Restore, Conserve and Amplify as consistent ways to speak about our role in transformational change

Making the Narrative Relevant for Your Biosphere Reserve

- Use real stories to bring the narrative to life
- Find examples that demonstrate how the MAB values are lived in the biosphere reserve
- Share how your biosphere reserve is driving change through the focus areas of Restore, Conserve and Amplify

Tailoring for Audiences

The Global Communication Strategy outlines four key audiences that are critical to engage on the biosphere reserve and our Network. These audiences include Community Leaders, Local Businesses, Children & Youth, and Local Residents.

- Use the Global Communication Strategy to consider what these audiences care about most
- Choose stories that resonate with what the audience cares about and demonstrates the impact of the MAB Network and biosphere reserves
- Engage audiences to share their own stories of what is most meaningful to them today

Choosing the Right Way to Engage

- For each audience, consider who is the best messenger for the MAB story. Who does the audience tend to listen to most?
- Find the best way to reach your audience. Use the Global Communication Strategy for inspiration and tips on the best method for engaging different groups

Communicating the Biosphere Reserve

Questions from the World Network

How is the Restore, Conserve and Amplify message different to other UNESCO and UN agencies? *from English webinar*

UNESCO biosphere reserves are examples of where sustainable living is making a difference and where a positive transformation is already happening. We are already living proof of sustainable development in action - our narrative and the focal areas of Restore, Conserve and Amplify reinforce that. We differentiate our role by demonstrating that it is already possible to live in harmony with nature.

With our focus of promoting harmonious living, what do we really need to do differently to make this message come to life?

from English Webinar

It's important that we step into the shifts needed to communicate our narrative in this new way as outlined in the Global Communication Strategy. Rather than talk at people, we can have more meaningful conversations. Rather than explain, we can inspire change through storytelling focused on the opportunities that biosphere reserves present. These shifts in how we communicate will help to bring the biosphere reserve message to life.

What are the best practices of how biosphere reserves can implement the new narrative? *from English webinar*

Our values are a set of behaviours for everyone in our network to step into. Along with the new narrative, our values act as a framework that enables your biosphere reserve to revisit your communication with the new messaging provided. With inspiration from the Global Communication Strategy, you can engage target audiences through sharing stories and #ProudtoShare videos that demonstrate that there is hope, direction, and a way to live in harmony with nature.

How do we use the new narrative to focus on creating a more desirable future for locals in our communities who may not have embraced the changes as we have as a network? - *from French webinar*

When engaging audiences in your local communities, focus on the “why” messaging from our new narrative. Share stories demonstrating why this is a time of transformation, which brings both challenge and opportunity. We have a unique opportunity to inspire better ways for local people to live together in harmony with nature - and to help us all emerge from this challenging time stronger and wiser than before.

How can we use the travel limitations brought on by the pandemic to stimulate activity for biosphere reserves within our local communities? - *from English webinar*

The new narrative forms the basis of engagement for local business, youth, and tourism partners. Each of these stakeholders have been impacted by the pandemic, and will be looking to engage local communities. We can inspire these groups to find new opportunities coming out of the pandemic, and engage them on the biosphere reserve. Continue to follow our series of guides to explore more on how to get these audiences involved.

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