



SOUTH AFRICAN BIOSPHERE RESERVE NATIONAL COMMITTEE

**BIENNIAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LIMA ACTION
PLAN**

***UNESCO MAN AND BIOSPHERE PROGRAMME ICC INTERNATIONAL
COORDINATING COUNCIL 31ST SESSION, PARIS, FRANCE 17-21 JUNE 2019***

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Coordination of Man and Biosphere Programme

South Africa has started participating in the Man and Biosphere (MAB) Programme since 1995 at the Seville Conference in Spain. The South African National Biosphere Reserve Committee (SA BR NATCOM), which is chaired by the National Department of Environmental Affairs coordinates the Man and Biosphere Programme in South Africa. The SA MAB NATCOM is financially supported by the National Department of Environmental Affairs. The SA MAB NATCOM is operational in accordance with the Lima Action Plan and is comprised of representatives from National, Provincial, local, Non-Profit Organisations and research institutions. SA National BR Committee has met once since the previous MAB ICC Session, in June 2018. South Africa is the current member of the MAB International Coordinating Committee (ICC) elected in November 2017 and also a member of the African Network of Man and Biosphere (AfriMAB) Bureau as coordinator for Southern Africa sub-region, elected in September 2017. The provinces supports Biosphere Reserves with operational funding.

At the local level, there are Biosphere Reserve Forum, which meets on quarterly basis. These Forums are comprised of Provincial Government, Local Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and Biosphere Reserve Coordinators.

2. SOUTH AFRICA'S BIOSPHERE RESERVES

To date, South Africa has 10 designated Biosphere Reserves and are as follows:

- a) Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve (designated 1998) www.kogelbergbiosphere.org.za
- b) Cape West Coast Biosphere Reserve (designated 2000) www.capebiosphere.co.za
- c) Waterberg Biosphere Reserve (designated 2001) www.waterbergbiospherereserve.org (new website under construction)
- d) Kruger-to-Canyons (K2C) Biosphere Reserve (designated 2001) www.kruger2canyons.org
- e) Cape Winelands Biosphere Reserve (designated 2007) www.capewinelandsbiosphere.co.za
- f) Vhembe Biosphere Reserve (designated 2009) www.vhembebiopshere.co.za
- g) Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve (designated June 2015) www.gardenroutebiosphere.org.za
- h) Magaliesberg Biosphere Reserve (designated 2015) www.magaliesbergbiosphere.org.za
- i) Garden Route Biosphere Reserve (designated 2017) www.gardenroutebiosphere.org.za
- j) Marico Biosphere Reserve (designated 2018) www.maricobiosreserve.org

NB. Detailed implementation of activities may be obtained on the above-mentioned websites.

3. AFRICAN NETWORK OF MAB SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

During the 5th General Assembly of AfriMAB that took place in Ibadan, Nigeria in September 2017, South Africa was re-elected to the AfriMAB Bureau as the coordinator for the Southern Africa Sub-region. In fulfilling its role as the coordinator of the Southern Africa sub-region of the AfriMAB, South Africa hosted learning exchange visit in the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve in March 2019. The learning exchange was attended by delegates from Eswatini and Zambia.



Delegates from Eswatini and Zambia in Waterberg Biosphere Reserve learning visit

4. NATIONAL MAB STRATEGY

South Africa is currently in the implementation phase for the South African National Biosphere Reserve Strategy which serve as guideline in the implementation of MAB Programme across all levels of management of biosphere reserve. The South African Biosphere Reserve Strategy is aligned to the UNESCO MAB Strategy and Lima Action Plan.

https://www.environment.gov.za/sites/default/files/reports/southafricanstrategy_biospherereserve2016_2020.pdf

5. HIGHLIGHTS OF THE LIMA ACTION PLAN (LAP) IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Strategic Action A. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves consisting of effectively functioning models for sustainable development (LAP A1 to A6)

a) Biosphere reserves as model for Multi-Lateral Agreements

Biosphere Reserve Programme is one of models which must be used for the implementation of the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Programme. This is also supported by the inclusion of the MAB Programme in the National Biodiversity Strategic and Action Plan (NBSAP). Different District and local Municipalities recognize BR in their Integrated Development Plans as one of the mechanisms to implement community related projects. The Provincial Government Department recognizes amongst other things MAB Programme as one of the mechanisms for the implementation of expansion of Protected Areas. In the past three years, Biosphere Reserves have contributed immensely in the expansion of Conservation Estate in South Africa. Currently, 13.2% of land is under conservation (16, 102, 838,4 ha/ 121, 991, 200ha). Since the implementation of the Lima Action and the National Biosphere Reserves Strategy, Biosphere Reserves contributed over 800 000 ha of land into conservation estate which amounts to approximately 5% of the land under conservation.

b) Climate Change

The National Climate Change Response white paper is in place. Climate Change Vulnerability Assessments and Response Plans for Provinces and District Municipalities have been developed through the Local Government Climate Change Support Programme which was a collaborative effort amongst different stakeholders. The vulnerability assessment and response plans covers 44 District Municipalities and all Ten Biosphere Reserves falls within these districts. The metropolitan Municipalities have various frameworks which forms basis for climate change response plans. These Assessments and Response plans may be obtained at www.letsrespondtoolkit.org. Kruger to Canyon Biosphere Reserve has completed its vulnerability assessment

c) Criteria for nomination

Criteria for nomination of Biosphere Reserves in South Africa has been developed and it is part of the Implementation Plan, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the South African Strategy for the Biosphere Reserve Programme (2016-2020).

d) Zonations and spatial plans

South Africa has National Protected Areas Register, and biosphere reserves forms part of the huge component of the Protected Areas and conservation areas. The service can be accessed on the following link. <http://mapservice.environment.gov.za/PAR/MAP.aspx>. All South African Biosphere Reserves have websites where zonation plans including descriptions maybe obtained. In addition the Kruger to Canyon

Biosphere Reserve has a mobile APP available on online stores (**K2C Biosphere info APP**) which is an interactive application with information regarding Biosphere Reserves in South Africa.

e) Monitoring of Biosphere Reserve

The monitoring and evaluation framework which is in existence is the Reporting Framework which is part of the South Africa implementation plan for Biosphere Reserves. The Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool used mainly in Core Areas and the buffer of the BRs to assessment management effectiveness. The current monitoring systems is depended on the reports provided by the Biosphere Reserves and the results of various scientific assessments such as National Biodiversity Assessment.

5.2 Strategic Action Area D: Comprehensive. Modern, open and transparent communication, information and data sharing. (LAP D2.2 to D3.1)

a) Implementation of the UNESCO Communication Strategy

South African Biosphere Reserves (Magaliesberg and Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserves) participated in the #proudtoshare awareness campaign which showcase the importance of biosphere reserves towards Sustainable Development.

<https://youtu.be/TqmKXtoUQB8> (Magaliesberg Biosphere Reserve #proudtoshare video)

<https://youtu.be/NIRZhoRE0T0> (Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve #proudtoshare video)

The South African Biosphere Reserves are very active in the Social media platforms as part of engaging young people implementation of the MAB Programme. Monthly electronic newsletters are also distributed using various social platforms.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Kogelberg-Biosphere-Reserve/>

<https://www.kruger2canyons.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/cwabr/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Waterberg-Biosphere-Reserve/>

<https://www.facebook.com/capewinelandbiospherereserve/>

<https://www.facebook.com/maricobiosphere/>

<https://www.facebook.com/vhembebiospherereserve/>

<https://www.facebook.com/magaliesbergbiosphere/>

<https://www.facebook.com/gardenroutebiosphere/>

<https://www.facebook.com/gouritzclussterbiosphere/>

5.3 Strategic Action Aea E: Effective Governance of and within the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

The South African National Biosphere Reserve National committee is comprised of multi-sectoral stakeholder has met twice during the period under review. At the local level, currently there are two Biosphere Reserve Regional Forums, namely Western Cape Biosphere Reserve Forum and Limpopo Biosphere Reserve Forum. These forums meet on quarterly basis to discuss emerging issues and share experiences on the implementation of the MAB Programme. These Forums are also used a mechanism to monitor progress on the implementation of the MAB Programme as well as awareness raising initiatives. The Limpopo Biosphere Reserve Forum is held back to back with biosphere reserve open day where various stakeholders participate in the exhibition and awareness raising initiatives.

6. CURRENT RESEARCHES WITHIN BIOSPHERE RESERVE UNDER CURRENT REPORTING PERIOD

1. Vulnerability assessment of fynbos vegetation to changes in climate and fire regime in the Cape Floristic Region, Western Cape (Cape Winelands, Cape West Coast and Kogelberg Biosphere Reserves).
2. Reducing roadkill in the Kruger National Park in the Kruger to Canyon Biosphere Region.
3. The Potential use of Critically Endangered Renosterveld Plant Species for the Phytoremediation of Glyphosate and Fertilizers, Conserving South Africa's Freshwater Systems, Western Cape (Cape Winelands, Cape West Coast and Kogelberg Biosphere Reserves).

PRIORITY AREAS FOR 2019/20

There is a need to improve on the implementation of the LAP Strategic Action Areas C, to ensure that Biosphere Reserves have proper marketing plans and sustainable financing mechanism

1. Nomination of one Biosphere Reserve.
2. Conduct a National Biosphere Reserve awareness Event in the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve.
3. Prepare and submit Periodic Reviews for Kogelberg and Vhembe Biosphere Reserves.
4. Establishment and hosting of the National Youth Biosphere Forum (This shall be implemented under the existing National Youth Conservation Programme).

5. Negotiations for the establishment of Transboundary Biosphere Reserves with neighbouring countries.
6. Develop Marketing Strategies for Biosphere Reserves
7. Create opportunities for entrepreneurs and social enterprises in Biosphere Reserves through training