



**31th Session of the International Co-ordinating Council (ICC)
of the UNESCO Man and Biosphere Programme (MaB)**

**Paris (France)
June 17-21, 2019**

SPANISH REPORT

Period: from July 2018 to June 2019

1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MAB PROGRAM IN SPAIN AND OF THE SPANISH NETWORK OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES IN APPLICATION OF THE LIMA ACTION PLAN (LAP), WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL PARKS AUTONOMOUS AGENCY OF THE MINISTRY FOR THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION

The National Parks Autonomous Agency (OAPN) of the Ministry for the Ecological Transition is in charge of the coordination and promotion of the MAB Programme in Spain. The Spanish MAB Committee, attached to the OAPN, and its two advisory bodies, the Board of Managers of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves (49 members) and the Scientific Council (21 members), are institutional coordination and promotion bodies of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves.

1. Actions to boost the MAB Programme in Spain

• **Secretariat of the MAB Programme in Spain**

The OAPN carries out the functions of the Secretariat of the Spanish MAB Committee and its advisory bodies (the Scientific Council and the Board of Managers), and coordination functions of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves (RERB). It also functions as a clearinghouse of information and external dissemination and hosts the headquarters of the Secretariat.

• **Approval of new proposals and modification proposals of existing biosphere reserves and periodic review reports (June 2018).**

At the 30th session of the ICC (July 2018), held in Palembang, the proposal of new biosphere reserve, Ponga BR (Asturias) was approved.

On the other hand, the ICC analyzed and reported, favorably, the periodic review reports of the following biosphere reserves:

- Río Eo, Oscos, e Terras de Burón BR (Galicia)
- Lanzarote BR (Canary Islands)
- Intercontinental Biosphere Reserve of the Mediterranean (TBR: Morocco / Spain)

- **Presentation of new proposals, modification proposals of existing biosphere reserves and periodic review reports.**

During 2018, the Spanish MaB Committee reviewed and approved the processing of the proposal of 3 new BRs, 2 extensions and 1 rezoning to UNESCO, which is pending the final decision of the ICC at its 31th Session, Paris (France):

- New proposals:
 - Valle del Gabriel BR proposal (Aragón / Castilla-La Mancha / Valencian Community)
 - Alto Turia BR proposal (Castilla-La Mancha / Valencian Community)
 - La Siberia BR proposal (Extremadura)
- Extension and Renaming:
 - Cuenca Alta del Río Manzanares BR
- Extension
 - Menorca BR
- Rezoning:
 - Omaña y Luna BR rezoning.

- **Training**

Within the framework of the Training Programme of the National Environmental Education Centre (CENEAM) of the OAPN, 2 courses addressed to managers, technicians of biosphere reserves and scientific teams related to reserves have been programmed in 2018.

- The first course was held from the 10th to the 14th of September 2018, in CENEAM, Segovia, with the theme "*The process of depopulation in the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves. Methods of study and diagnosis. The role of the Biosphere Reserves*".
- The second course was held from the 3th to the 5th of June 2019, in Mariñas Coruñesas e Terras do Mandeo BR (Galicia), with the theme "*Methodology for the evaluation of environmental services of the Biosphere Reserves*".

- **Coordination and support to the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves (RERB)**

The coordination of the RERB, exercised from the Secretariat in the National Parks Autonomous Agency, is an effective aid for the development of the biosphere reserves.

During this period, different specific actions have been developed that support biosphere reserves in the fulfillment of their functions:

- Communication Strategy of the RERB.

As part of the implementation of the Lima Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves, the National Parks Autonomous Agency (OAPN) has developed a Communication Strategy of the RERB. Its objective is to identify the communication actions to be developed by the Secretariat of the MaB Programme and by the managing bodies over the next few years, to enhance the image of the Biosphere Reserves and plan support for the products and services they generate.

- Strategy on depopulation in the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves

The main objective of this document is to expose the usefulness of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves as pilot sites in which to implement the necessary actions to achieve compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals of The 2030 Agenda. Precisely, the sustainable development of the rural environment is the main tool to fight against depopulation

– Phenological Monitoring and Climate Change: Citizen Science Programme in the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves

During the year 2018 and part of 2019, OAPN staff visited several schools and town halls of different Spanish Biosphere Reserves that participate in the *Phenological Monitoring and Climate Change: Citizen Science Programme*, in order to promote and reinforce this environmental disclosure and citizen science programme.

For more information: <http://rerb.oapn.es/fenologia>

In order to reward the efforts of observers who participate by registering their data in the phenological monitoring programme, the 2nd Edition of the **Fenosfera Awards** was held and awarded to individual observers and teaching centers with the highest number of registrations. These were: the Social Center of Becerreá of Ancares Lucenses Biosphere Reserve (first), the Tejeda Compulsory Teaching Center of Gran Canaria Biosphere Reserve (second), and the Technical Team of Sierra del Rincón Biosphere Reserve (third).

– Exchange Programme of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves:

In the last six month of 2018, the first call of the exchange programme of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves was launched. In it, 3 biosphere reserves participated: Ordesa-Viñamala, Mariñas Coruñesas and Menorca.

– Brand “Reservas de la Biosfera Españolas”.

During this period, the Secretariat and the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves have continued to work with companies located in the biosphere reserves for the licensing of the Brand: " Reservas de la Biosfera Españolas ". 5 licenses have been granted to different companies located in the reserves.

- A Castrexa (honey and other products made with honey)
- A Castrexa (fruits and vegetables preserves)
- Olor y Sabor (fresh fruits and vegetables)
- Obreras de Aliste (Honey and other bee products)
- As Camposeiras (jams and fruit preserves)

– Open Catalog of Demonstrative Experiences of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves.

In 2018, the preparation of an open catalog of demonstrative experiences was began. This publication aims to constitute a catalog of good practices that can serve as an example for other geographical contexts and whose dissemination can help increase the capacity for innovation and replication in other territories. So far, 39 experiences from 23 biosphere reserves have been included.

For more information: <http://rerb.oapn.es/red-espanola-de-reservas-de-la-biosfera/catalogo-experiencias>

- Electronic publication of the Catalog "Introduction to the Geoheritage of Tourist Interest of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves", December 2019.

For more information:

http://rerb.oapn.es/images/PDF_publicaciones/Patrimonio_geologico.pdf

- Catalog of the Intangible Heritage of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Currently, the Secretariat and the Spanish Network of BRs are working in a new Intangible Heritage Catalog, whose general objective is to promote the intangible heritage of the Spanish Biosphere Reserves as an essential part for the conservation of the natural heritage, according to the objectives, needs and services of the BRs themselves in terms of Conservation, Sustainability and Well-being.

- First Youth Forum of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves

In October 2019, the First Youth Forum of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves will held in the RB of Marismas Coruñesas y Terras de Mandeo, with the aim of preparing a Youth Declaration and a Youth Action Plan of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves.

- **Communication and Dissemination of the Spanish Network of BRs**

Continuing the usual line of information and communication, and in order to expand its dissemination, various communication actions have been carried out, such as:

- Continuation of the electronic edition of the Bulletin of the Spanish MaB Committee and the RERB (last number was published in June 2019) <http://rerb.oapn.es/documentacion-y-difusion/boletines>
- Content update on the web page of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves and the MaB Programme (<http://rerb.oapn.es/>). This website consists of a public space with information about the MaB Programme, the Spanish Committee of the MaB Programme, Biosphere Reserves, the Spanish Network and its activities, and a private space that gives digital support to the working groups of the Network.
- Publication of a new informative brochure about the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves.
- Assistance to fairs and other events to publicize the existence of Biosphere Reserves located in Spain, such as: CONAMA, MADbrid-Bird, Salón del Deporte y del Turismo Activo y de Montaña, Active and Mountain Sports and Tourism Fair (Ileida), etc..

- **Other activities:**

Support to the Scientific Council through agreements with universities or research centers for the fulfillment of its functions. In 2018, € 24,360 was invested and an investment of € 29,040 is planned for 2019.

In 2019, the Scientific Council is making the following reports:

- Report of a new proposal for Biosphere Reserves: Valles Pasiegos (Cantabria)
- Report of the rezoning proposal of Babia BR.
- Two periodic review reports: Fuerteventura BR and Gerês-Xurés TBR.

2. INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATION OF IBEROMAB AND OTHER NETWORKS

During this period, Spain has continued with its intense international participation in the MaB Programme:

IberoMaB Network

- Action Plan for the IberoMaB Network (PAI 2018-2025)

The Action Plan for the IberoMaB Network (PAI 2018-2025) has been published electronically. This document was finalized and adopted by the members of the IberoMaB Network during the 18th Meeting of the Network (Santa Marta, Colombia, May 2018).

For more information: http://rerb.oapn.es/images/PDF_publicaciones/PAI_2018-2025.pdf

- Update of the electronic publication "Ibero-American Biosphere Reserves: Basic Information"

During this period, the electronic publication of the Ibero-American Biosphere Reserves (IberoMaB Network) has been updated, with the collaboration of UNESCO, the managers of the BRs and the National Committees and the MaB focal points. They have provided new information to the IberoMaB Secretariat, the basic information sheets for the reservations have been updated, the new RRBB files declared in 2016, 2017 and 2018 have been prepared, and new maps of the countries and the IberoMaB region have been designed.

For more information:

http://rerb.oapn.es/images/PDF_publicaciones/Cat%C3%A1logo%20Red%20IberoMaB_Abril_2019.pdf

- Open Catalog of demonstration experiences of the Ibero-American Network of Biosphere Reserves (IberoMaB)

In November 2018, from the Secretariat of IberoMaB in the OAPN, a new initiative has been launched to develop a Catalog of demonstration experiences in Ibero-American MAB Network, in line with the "Open catalog of demonstration experiences of the Spanish Network of Biosphere Reserves"

The idea comes from the Gender Equality Working Group of IberoMaB that intends to carry out a catalog of demonstration experiences carried out in the Biosphere Reserves of the IberoMaB Network in which action on women or equity has played a leading role.

This initiative has been very well received by the Biosphere Reserves of IberoMaB Network and will be an open catalog of demonstration experiences with the vocation of being an inventory in constant updating of the work that is being developed in the Biosphere Reserves. Currently, 19 experiences have been selected from different biosphere reserves.

- IberoMaB 2018 Seminar: "Risk Management in the face of natural threats from the Ibero-American Region and the Caribbean: protected natural spaces as areas of action".

This Seminar was held from 6 to 9 November 2018, in Akumal, Mexico. Organized by the IberoMaB Network, the National Parks Autonomous Agency of Spain (OAPN), the UNESCO MaB

Programme, through its BRESEP Project, and the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) of Mexico.

The objective was to support the management of Ibero-American and Caribbean Biosphere Reserves through the prevention, management and reduction of disaster risk with the greatest incidence in the region. The participants had the opportunity to share good practices, experiences and challenges related to threats as diverse as forest fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, droughts, landslides, yellow fever and depopulation.

- I Youth Forum of the Biosphere Reserves Network of Ibero-America and the Caribbean (IberoMAB) of UNESCO.

This meeting was held from 5 to 8 December, in Loja (Ecuador) with the presence of 92 young people, from 43 Biosphere Reserves, from 23 different countries.

The Spanish Delegation, with nine representatives, was one of the most numerous, thanks to the support of the National Parks Autonomous Agency (OAPN), the Abertis Foundation, which has collaborated in the event within the framework of the Agreement signed between Spain and UNESCO for the Mediterranean Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the UNESCO Center for the Basque Country.

- First Central American Meeting of Biosphere Reserves, held within the framework of the IberoMaB Network, from May 6 to 10 in Copán, Honduras.

This meeting was organized by the Institute of Forest Conservation of Honduras, the UNESCO Cluster Office in San José and the MaB Program, with the financial collaboration and participation of the OAPN of the Ministry for the Ecological Transition of Spain.

During this meeting the Copán Declaration was approved, the MaB Committee of Honduras was formed and it was agreed to support the creation of the MaB Committees of Guatemala, Nicaragua and Panama.

- IberoMaB 2019 Seminar.

The seminar "Roadmap for Gender Equality in IberoMaB Biosphere Reserves: Diagnosis, mainstreaming and development of action capabilities" is scheduled to take place from 4 to 8 November 2019 in La Antigua, Guatemala. It is being organized by The National Parks Autonomous Agency of Spain and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), UNESCO and the IberoMaB Network.

Mediterranean Network of Biosphere Reserves

- The 5th ordinary meeting of the Board of Directors of the UNESCO II International Center for the Network of Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves

The meeting was held on 19 September, 2018, in the headquarter of National Parks Autonomous Agency of Spain. It reviewed the activities carried out during the year 2017 and part of 2018, and agreed the Action Plan for the years 2018-2019.

- UNESCO International Center on Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves Meeting.

The meeting was held on 25 April 2019 in Castellet, Barcelona (Spain). It reviewed the activities carried out during 2018 and part of 2019, and agreed to a new agreement between UNESCO and

the Kingdom of Spain, concerning the International Centre on Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves.

During this meeting the project "*Edu-BioMed - Capacity Development for Higher Education and Research in UNESCO Biosphere Reserves*" was presented. This project seeks to strengthen the academic offer and the research activity of Lebanese and Moroccan universities in interdisciplinary studies in Biosphere Reserves, for 3 years (November 2019-November 2021) and a budget of € 929,230 (funds from the European Union for Universities).

EuroMaB Conference Dublin 2019

This Conference was attended by a delegation of representatives of the Spanish Biosphere Reserves (Urdaibai BR, Menorca BR, Lanzarore BR and Terras de l'Ebre BR), technicians of the Secretariat of the MaB Committee in Spain (OAPN), of the UNESCO Chair from the University of the Basque Country and the UNESCO Etxea Organization.

The different representatives of the Spanish delegation participated in several of the workshops with contributions of the themes and projects that are carried out in the Spanish Network.

Other Activities

- Reforestation and sustainable development Project in La Selle Biosphere Reserve (Haiti)

This project, which will be executed in collaboration with UNESCO, has a completion deadline of 36 months and will be financed by Spain through a contribution of extra-budgetary funds of € 50,000. The project has the support of the AECID, which has contributed € 250,000, and is carried out within the framework of the OAPN International Cooperation Program for the IberoMaB Network.

Between October 22nd and 26th, 2018, a delegation from UNESCO and OAPN visited the area in which this project is developed to evaluate the progress made in it. Currently the first results have been completed, so that the areas to be reforested have already been identified, the beneficiary families with which agreements will be signed and the list of species with which 200 ha will be reforested. In this occasion has been possible to verify on the ground the favorable evolution of the first reforestation carried out in different points of the territory of the reserve.

- Update of the map of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves 2018-2019.