



Stockholm

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From:

Swedish MAB Committee

## National Report of Actions during 2018-2019

### - Man and the Biosphere Programme Sweden

The MAB Programme has existed since 1986 in Sweden, which is when the first biosphere reserve (BR) was established. Since then, the programme has been reviewed and updated and currently consists of five BRs fully complying with the Statutory Framework and two regions that are candidates for becoming BRs in 2019 (**LAP A2.2, A2.3 & A6.1**). The Swedish MAB Programme is governed by a National MAB Committee constituted by five members representing transdisciplinary science, the Biosphere Council (the biosphere reserves), and public sector via national authorities (**LAP E2.1**). The Committee is hosted by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and have five to six meetings annually. The biosphere reserve coordinators are gathered in a Biosphere Council, which meets regularly via Skype and is chaired by a National MAB Coordinator. The Biosphere Council gives input on activities, strategies etc. to the MAB Committee.

The Swedish MAB Programme, with its BRs, is supported by the National Commission for UNESCO, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management. Together, these agencies currently provide Swedish MAB with annual core funding of \$460 000 for the National Committee and the BRs (**LAP E1.2**). This core funding, is being leveraged significantly by establishment of alliances, both nationally and locally (**LAP A3.2, A5.3, C3.2, C4.2 & C5.1**). The MAB Programme is also strongly supported by in-kind contributions of the members of the MAB National Committee, the National Commission for UNESCO, and locally through commitments made by stakeholders in the BRs.

Here is a summary of activities taking place since the 30<sup>th</sup> session of MAB-ICC:

## National activities

### Nomination of two new BRs

In September 2018, Sweden was proud to nominate two new areas to receive biosphere reserve designation. The processes leading up to the nominations, have been transparent and inclusive, and have involved many local stakeholders. Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka and Voxnadalen are two areas that have been developing for some years, and they have been active in our National MAB Programme

activities. Their nomination documents are published on the national website. The MAB-ICC will make the final decision of designation during its 31<sup>st</sup> session. **(LAP A2.2, A3.2, D1.1)**

## National MAB organisation

During 2018/2019 Swedish MAB have focused on further strengthening the National MAB Programme with the ambition to formalize a structure for collaboration between BRs to provide better opportunities for funding income streams, and to enhance the longevity of the Programme. **(LAP A4.3, A4.4, A5.3, C4.2, C5.1, E1.2, E2.1)**.

## Biosphere Reserves as Arenas for Implementing the 2030 Agenda

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly agreed on a global agenda for sustainable development. The Global Strategy for the MAB Programme with its associated Lima Action Plan (2016-2025) underlines the MAB Programme's instrumental role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. While the Agenda points out the priorities and the direction of global development, biosphere reserves can guide the local, regional and national implementation of the Agenda, by sharing generated know-how. In 2018, Sweden produced short films show-casing good examples of how the BRs are implementing the 2030 Agenda. The films are on Swedish MAB's Youtube channel: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMqgA\\_0Yz46woxfPbASXmSA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMqgA_0Yz46woxfPbASXmSA) **(LAP A1.1)**

## National day to acknowledge Biosphere Reserves, June 2<sup>nd</sup>

June 2<sup>nd</sup> is the National day of Biosphere Reserves. This day is celebrated in all BRs primarily with activities for the public in order to promote the BR. Here are a few examples: exhibits, designation of new biosphere ambassadors, guided bus tours, seminars to inspire actions for sustainable development, BR in focus in newspaper articles, and much more. **(LAP A1.5)**

## National conference for biosphere reserve board members

For the fifth consecutive time, BR board members convened to exchange experiences. In September 2018, BR board representatives met in Kristianstads Vattenrike BR to discuss common current themes such as branding, communication, and organisation development. **(LAP A.1.1)**.

## National conference for BR municipalities

In October 2018, Lake Vänern Archipelago BR hosted a national conference for lead executives and politicians in BR municipalities. The conference focused on how to use the UNESCO designation as inspiration to increase sustainability index in municipal activities, i.e. "How we can build a sustainable society and develop the role of municipalities in biosphere reserves?". There were concrete examples shared inter-mixed with interesting lecturers. The conference generated great thoughts and conversations and there is an ambition to repeat this forum every other year.

## Biosphere Ambassadors

Since 2007, Biosphere ambassadors have been appointed. Initially in Lake Vänern Archipelago BR and later applied in all BRs in Sweden. The ambassadors represent individuals, enterprises and organisations and they are trained specifically in the local BR, to become spokes persons for the BR. Today, there are more than 400 biosphere ambassadors that voluntarily promote their local BR and the MAB Programme by showcasing local solutions to global challenges in practise. **(LAP A1.1)**

## Communication

To enable a broader engagement and outreach, Swedish MAB and the BRs have communication plans (**LAP A2.4**) and communicate news and activities through websites and social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. We have developed a new hashtag #FramtidensLiv ('The Life of the Future') and we are also #MABProudToShare! (**LAP D3.1**)

A Swedish handbook for BRs on implementing Lima Action Plan in BRs was published in December 2017 and is used frequently. (**LAP A2.1**)

## International activities

### MAB-ICC 2018-2021 and MAB Bureau 2018-2019

In 2017, Sweden was re-elected as a member of MAB-ICC until 2021 (**LAP E1.1**). During this mandate period, Sweden will:

- support awareness raising of MAB and BRs and their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,
- emphasize the work of BRs as learning environments,
- emphasize quality aspects in the work of the WNBR,
- support sharing of good examples on how to increase sustainable management of BRs, contribute to the development of product branding in BRs,
- strengthen collaboration between BRs and private actors with a strong emphasis on social entrepreneurship and sustainable business ideas.

Sweden is also happy to contribute to the important work of the MAB Bureau during 2018-2019.

### Biosphere Forests for the Future – new project

Biosphere Forests for the Future is an initiative that aims to emphasize UNESCO biosphere reserves as model regions for climate adaptation in forest landscapes. Biosphere reserves from different climate and vegetation regions provide learning opportunities about forest ecosystems and forest management in different climates. International collaboration and exchange will increase the awareness of forest landscape's vulnerability due to climate change. Dialogue about practical experiences will result in an analysis of challenges related to climate, including an overview of how landowners and other actors can change their actions in order to create more climate-adapted forestry strategies.

In 2018, the Swedish Forest Agency funded a preparatory study with the aim to explore the need and interest of initiating an international collaboration between UNESCO biosphere reserves to address climate change adaptation in forest landscapes. An international Forest Symposium was arranged in Umeå in December 2018 and a project partner seek was arranged during EuroMAB in Dublin in April 2019. We have found that the interest is indeed great. In collaboration with Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, we are now preparing a Horizon2020 application to which 9 BRs in 6 countries within the EuroMAB region are contributing. (**LAP A1.4, A4.1, C5**)

For more information: <https://biosfarprogrammet.se/projekt/biosphere-forest-for-the-future/>

## Biosphere for Baltic

Biosphere for Baltic is a project that aims to facilitate learning and disseminate good practices from biosphere reserves in the Baltic Sea region, within and beyond the network of biosphere reserves. Also, to highlight the contribution of biosphere reserves to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 14 in particular) and the 2030 Agenda. The project focuses on two themes: *Source to Sea* and *Learning and Ocean Literacy*. Both themes are of great importance to sustainable development in the Baltic Sea and for the implementation of SDG 14 – Life below water. The themes are also broad, in the sense that they cover many topics and can be interpreted widely.

During 2018 and 2019, Biosphere for Baltic joins 9 biosphere reserves in three international exchange events. The first exchange event was held in Sweden in Kristianstads Vattenrike BR in May 2018, the second event was held in October in Archipelago Sea in Finland, and the third event was held in Slowinski BR in May 2019. Participating BRs are Kristianstads Vattenrike, Blekinge Archipelago, River Landscape of Nedre Dalälven (all in Sweden), Archipelago Sea in Finland, West Estonian Archipelago in Estonia, North Vidzeme in Latvia and Møn in Denmark, Southeast Rügen BR in Germany and Slowinski in Poland.

The project was fully funded by the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management and supported by Swedish MAB Programme. To enable the continuation of the project, an application to the Swedish Institute was submitted, which has been approved. Another two exchange events are planned during 2019/2020. **(LAP A1.1, C5)**

For more information: <https://biosfarprogrammet.se/projekt/biosphere-for-baltic/>

## Biosphere Challenge #5

All people living in a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve have a special opportunity to showcase good examples of sustainable ways of living in harmony with our planet Earth. The first Biosphere Challenge was initiated in 2015 by Biosphere Reserve Lake Vänern Archipelago in Sweden and Lake Vänern Museum. It is a challenge for elementary schools in UNESCO BRs. The purpose of the Biosphere Challenge is to show the effects of many people working together towards a common goal. Together we can create a change towards a more sustainable future!

The theme of the Biosphere Challenge 2018 was Our Best Environmental Action. The participating schools chose their own activity based on its relevance to have high environmental impact.

Schools in UNESCO Biosphere Reserves around the world are invited participate and to inspire others with their best activity for environmental benefit. The Challenge of 2019 involved 15 schools in BRs in Estonia, Sweden and the USA. The Challenge is offered by Swedish MAB in collaboration with *UNESCOS Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (GAP)*.

For more information: <https://biosfarprogrammet.se/projekt/biospherechallenge/>

## International exchange with Appennino Tosco Emiliano BR

In October 2018, Swedish MAB offered a study trip to Appennino Tosco Emiliano BR in Italy. The focus for the trip was collaboration with social enterprises, sustainable tourism and branding. Entrepreneurs from nearly all BRs in Sweden participated and they were introduced to businesses in Appennino T-E BR. For three days, they explored the region and the high quality activities of the BR: They engaged in interesting conversations in B2B meetings with local entrepreneurs. With great

thanks to our hosts, the study trip was a success and it will be offered again in October 2019. We Care Appennino! **(LAP A1.5, C6.2, C8.1)**

## EuroMAB

Sweden was represented by 16 people in Dublin during EuroMAB 2019. The event was much appreciated by the participants. Lake Vänern Archipelago BR applied for some funding from a local private fund, to enable participation of young people. The application was successful and three youth participated in Dublin and returned back to the BR full of inspiration. **(LAP B2.1)**

## Thematic Network of NordMAB

NordMAB is a thematic network within UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB), with the objective of enhancing cooperation among biosphere reserves in northern parts of the world. NordMAB is composed of Northern BRs that share common characteristics and challenges, as well as associates and partners that are interested in those challenges. The council of NordMAB is including coordinators and experts from all the BRs in Nord MAB.

Sweden participated in and contributed to the NordMAB event in 2018 in Lake Päijänne in Finland. The main objective of the meeting was to offer the opportunity for experience exchange between NordMAB BRs and to contribute to strengthening the identity of the network. A workshop about NordMABs roll as an implementer of the 2030 Agenda was included in the meeting. A full report from the NordMAB network has been sent to the MAB secretariat for publication on the MABwebsite. **(LAP B2.1, B5.1, E4.2)**

We hope you find inspiration in this selection of Swedish MAB activities occurring during 2018/2019.

Sincerely,



Göran Blom

Chair of Swedish MAB Committee