

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

International Co-ordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

Thirty-first session

UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, Room II (Fontenoy Building)

17 – 21 June 2019

ITEM 8 OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA: Periodic Review Reports and Follow-Up Information Received since the last MAB International Coordinating Council (MAB ICC) Meeting

1. Since the last MAB Council in July 2018, the Secretariat received 25 reports and 32 follow-up information from 25 countries, including 34 reports and follow-up from 11 countries as implementation of the Excellence Process.
2. The Secretariat also received a letter from the Greenland Biosphere Reserve from Denmark, concerned by the Excellence process, for voluntarily withdrawal.
3. During its meeting held from 25 to 28 February 2019 in Paris, the Members of the Advisory Committee reviewed these periodic review reports and follow-up to the previous MAB Council recommendations. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on each of these sites are included in the Annexes I and II of this document. These recommendations have been transmitted to the concerned Member States for follow-up and any additional information provided by 15 May 2019 will be examined by the MAB Council and its Bureau at its thirty-first session.
4. The MAB ICC Bureau at its meeting last June 2017 adopted the Excellence Process. The Advisory Committee indicated clearly in the recommendations the deadline for submission of additional information to align with this strategy with specific timeline for sites concerned, and to inform the countries accordingly.
5. The Secretariat will prepare a colour table, which will summarize the results of these recommendations, so the Council can take its decision (green colour for sites that meet the criteria; red colour for sites that do not meet the criteria; pink colour for sites that are recommended for withdrawal; blue colour for sites for which more information is requested).
6. The MAB Council is invited to consider and endorse the recommendations made by the Advisory Committee, including the suggested changes to be proposed by the MAB Bureau during its meeting during the 31st Council session.



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Annex 1. EXAMINATION OF PERIODIC REVIEW REPORTS RECEIVED SINCE THE LAST ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Country	Name of the site	Comments
ARGENTINA	Pereyra Iraola	
AUSTRALIA	Noosa	
BRAZIL	Espinhaço Range	
	Mata Atlantica	
CAMEROON	Bénoué	Excellence process
	Dja	Excellence process
	Waza	Excellence process
CANADA	Mont Saint Hilaire	
CHINA	Dingushan	Excellence process
	Qomolangma	
	Xingkai Lake	
GUATEMALA	Maya	Excellence process
GUINEA	Badiar	Excellence process
	Haut Niger	Excellence process
	Monts Nimba	Excellence process
	Ziama	Excellence process
KYRGYZSTAN	Issyk-Kul	Excellence process Official letter confirming that PR to be submitted by 30-09-2019 as per decisions of 29th MAB-ICC
MEXICO	Huatulco	
	Laguna Madre y Delta del Rio Bravo	
	Los Tuxtlas	
	Sierra de Alamos – Rio Cuchujaqui	
MONGOLIA	Mongol Daguur	
NICARAGUA	Bosawas	Excellence process
	Rio San Juan	Excellence process
SOUTH AFRICA	Kogelberg	Letter received asking for delay

1. **Pereyra Iraola Biosphere Reserve (Argentina).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Pereyra Iraola Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2007. The reserve is located between the municipalities of La Plata and Berazategui on the banks of the Río de la Plata in the northeastern part of Buenos Aires Province in Argentina. It is the last protected area of the original riverside ecosystem and home to the greatest biological diversity in the province.

2. There have been no changes to the size of the area (10,248 ha) or the population (2,620 inhabitants) since the designation of the biosphere reserve.



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3. A Management Plan for the Punta Lara Natural Reserve for the period 2018-28 has been submitted. The Punta Lara Natural Reserve forms the core area of the biosphere reserve. However, a Management Plan for the entire biosphere reserve has not been supplied.

4. Over the last 10 years, the governance of the territory changed. A management agreement was signed between the new provincial authority of the territory (OPDS) and the Ministry of Agrarian Affairs that formalized an administrative management framework. The agreement established guidelines setting out which sectors were to be administered by the state agencies. The biosphere reserve does not have a Management Committee or a Management Plan.

5. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide** whether the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

6. The Advisory Committee therefore requests that the authorities submit by 30 September 2019:

- a new zonation that protects better the core area, including a proper buffer zone;
- an overall Management Plan for the entire biosphere reserve;
- information on how the participation of stakeholders will be secured in the biosphere reserve;
- confirmation of the creation of a stakeholder-based Management Committee for the site.

7. **Noosa Biosphere Reserve (Australia).** The Advisory Committee commended the Australian authorities on the submission of the first Periodic Review of the Noosa Biosphere Reserve (NBR), which was designated in 2007. The biosphere reserve is located in South East Queensland, Australia and encompasses the entire Shire of Noosa.

8. The site has 55% vegetation cover with many beaches, coastal headlands and hinterland areas. It is one of several biodiversity 'hotspots' on the east coast of Australia, where tropical and temperate land zones overlap. It has diverse ecosystem types. The local indigenous people have a close relationship with the land and waterways within the NBR.

9. The total area of the biosphere reserve increased from 93,446 ha (terrestrial 87,593 ha, marine 5,853 ha) to 110,728 ha (terrestrial 86,978 ha, marine 23,750 ha) as a result of the extension of marine areas up to 5.5 km from the coast. The core area increased from 24,870 ha to 42,282 ha as a result of the growth of a land protected area which now accounts for 36.5% of the land of Noosa Shire, while the terrestrial buffer zone and transition area were reduced accordingly.

10. The total population has increased slightly to 54,033 people by a rate of about 1% per year, while the general regional product increased by about 1% per annum due to increased revenues from both the tourism and non-tourism sectors. Noosa is a popular holiday destination for both domestic and international visitors.

11. A NBR Management Plan (2009-2012) was developed by various representatives of the community sector boards; the plan is currently under review.
12. Vegetation cover reduced slightly over the last 10 years and some native species such as koala declined, especially in urban areas. Pest species, especially feral animals, have affected wildlife. Key threats to the Noosa Biosphere Reserve were identified as climate change, weeds and pest species, vegetation clearing, habitat fragmentation and degradation processes.
13. Recent, major funded research areas include the restoration of fish, the restoration of koala populations and habitats, the development of local food and the management of tourism.
14. The NBR authorities actively monitor the health of various ecosystems and the richness of biodiversity within the reserve. In addition, monitoring is currently carried out on various variables of abiotic environmental factors and socio-economic factors.
15. The Advisory Committee noted that one of the objectives of the NBR is Zero Emission Noosa, and encouraged the authorities to continue their efforts to reach this goal.
16. Since plants and animals move across administrative boundaries, the Committee recommended communication and cooperation with neighbouring shires of Noosa. With regard to the conservation of migrating birds, the Committee encouraged the NBR to look for opportunities for cooperation with key stopover sites in Asia.
17. The Advisory Committee commended efforts to deal with feral animals that present major threats to biodiversity conservation and encouraged the authorities to share their research results and experiences with other biosphere reserves suffering from the same problems.
18. The Committee noted with satisfaction the successful Registration of Kabi Kabi First Nation as Native Title Claimants (traditional owners) of the entire biosphere reserve area.
19. The Advisory Committee commended the national and Noosa BR authorities for their efforts in the preparation of this high-quality Periodic Review report. The Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the statutory framework of the WNBR.
20. **Espinhaço Range Biosphere Reserve (Brazil).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the second Periodic Review of the Espinhaço Range Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2005.
21. The document in question does not follow the structure of a Periodic Review and was submitted in Portuguese. A huge increase in zonation is proposed that would expand the total surface area from about 3 million ha to 10 million ha.
22. The last Periodic Review submitted in 2016 met the criteria. The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the authorities submit a request for an extension of the biosphere reserve using an official document format (Periodic Review or Nomination file) found on the MAB website in one of the three official UNESCO MAB languages, and explain the feasibility

of the extension and cooperation with neighbouring biosphere reserves in relation to the planned extension.

23. **Mata Atlantica Biosphere Reserve (Brazil).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the second Periodic Review of the Mata Atlantica Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1993. The biosphere reserve is the largest in the world, and covers significant areas of the Atlantic Forest which stretches across 13 states, the State of Minas Gerais and 12 coastal states (from Ceará to Rio Grande do Sul).

24. The document in question does not follow the structure of a Periodic Review and was submitted in Portuguese. A new zonation is mentioned, as part of 'Fase 7', which would lead to an increase of 10 million ha resulting in a total area of 89 million ha.

25. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide** whether the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

26. The Advisory Committee therefore requests that the authorities submit a request for an extension of the biosphere reserve using an official document format (Periodic Review or Nomination file) found on the MAB website in one of the three official UNESCO MAB languages.

27. **General recommendations to the Cameroon national authorities:**

28. On 6 February 2018, the authorities of Cameroon indicated to the MAB Secretariat, that they were continuously implementing the measures to address the recommendations of the 29th session of the MAB ICC on the Periodic Reviews regarding Cameroon's three biosphere reserves (Dja, Bénoué and Waza), which all fall under the "Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR".

29. The Advisory Committee noted that the MAB Secretariat has not received follow-up reports for all three sites. It has therefore requested the national authorities to provide a follow-up for each site by 30 September 2019. The Advisory Committee expressed its concern regarding the lack of communication on the part of Dja Biosphere Reserve.

30. **Bénoué Biosphere Reserve (Cameroon).** Since 2016, the authorities have been involved in a process to revise the Management Plan for the protected area, with the support of the German Technical Cooperation (GIZ). As a result of this process, a new zonation of the Bénoué National Park, which is compatible with the three functions of a biosphere reserve, should arrive in a timely manner.

31. Within the framework of the Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR, the MAB Secretariat offers to the national authorities its' technical assistance to elaborate produce the requested documents that are requested.

32. **Dja Biosphere Reserve (Cameroon).** As part of the ongoing review, the authorities have promised to correct inconsistencies in the Management Plan, identified during the 29th session of the ICC, concerning the description of the zoning. The new nomination form to be



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sent by the authorities as soon as possible will include all annexes as well as the zonation, in accordance with the requirements of a biosphere reserve.

33. Within the framework of the Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR, the MAB Secretariat offers to the national authorities its' technical assistance to elaborate produce the requested documents that are requested.

34. **Waza Biosphere Reserve (Cameroon).** As a follow up the 28th MAB ICC recommendations, the authorities informed that the core areas of the Waza Biosphere Reserve fall exclusively under the Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF), while the buffer zone is under participatory management following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the local stakeholders and the MINFOF. The zoning, consistent with biosphere reserves scheme and socio-economic data, will be updated after completion of the project 'Securing Local Livelihoods for the Sustainable Development of Waza National Park and its Peripheral Zone' which is implemented by MINFOF and IUCN. The authorities underline that the site is under threats of terrorists groups.

35. Within the framework of the Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR, the MAB Secretariat offers to the national authorities its' technical assistance to elaborate produce the requested documents that are requested.

36. **Mont Saint-Hilaire (Canada), extension.** The Advisory Committee welcomed the third Periodic Review (the first and second were in 1997 and 2008, respectively) of Mont Saint-Hilaire Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1978. Mont Saint-Hilaire was the first Canadian biosphere reserve.

37. Over the last 40 years, more than 400 scientific articles have been produced about the biosphere reserve, with McGill University the main scientific partner in this regard. In addition, new technologies (digital tablets and other innovative geomatic tools such as ArcGIS Online) have been introduced to provide tools adapted to the visitors and partners of various projects.

38. The Advisory Committee noted that the priority objective was to increase the protected areas of the site. The total area has increased fivefold from 56.5 km² (~30,000 inhabitants) to 293.7 km² (~44,000 inhabitants). The extension was initiated in 2010 and thereafter a new zonation was proposed to increase the conservation and protection functions in relation to the transition area. The core area increased from 500 ha (2007) to 1,053 ha (2010) and finally to 1,396 ha (2017). The buffer zone increased from 600 ha (2007) to 3,181 ha (2010) and finally to 4,530 ha (2017) ha – a sevenfold increase.

39. In a context of rising population, increasing urbanization and urban sprawl, these conservation gains were made possible thanks to the collaboration and sensitization of the elected officials, owners and other actors in the territory.

40. The Advisory Committee acknowledged the commitment of the Reserve Management Team with regard to long-term assignments. Over the last 10 years, low turnover has enabled the development of varied expertise and the ability to share this with the biosphere reserve's partners. The Advisory Committee also acknowledged the attachment of stakeholders

(citizens, businesses or organizations) to the territory, with 2,400 volunteer hours logged per year – a clear sign of support and citizen involvement in the area.

41. The Advisory Committee took note of the five steps carried out during the Periodic Review process:

- Collection, processing and analysis of data relating to the updating of the components of the site (mapping and zoning, ecosystem services, conservation programmes, economic activities, resources and logistical support activities, etc.)
- Strategic analysis and review of the biosphere reserve interventions
- Formal renewal of support for designation
- Site visit and meeting of partners by the external review committee
- Deliberations of the Canadian MAB National Committee, recommendations and production of the final report.

42. The Advisory Committee also took note of the four recommendations for the future that were formulated, including one scenario where the site would enlarge not only to the East, but also to the North, connecting with the territory of the Lake Saint-Pierre Biosphere Reserve.

43. The Advisory Committee welcomed this comprehensive, well-prepared and detailed Periodic Review report, recommended to approve the extension of the biosphere reserve and concluded that the site **meets** the criteria. The Advisory Committee expressed its congratulations to the management team on the expansion of the site and its close cooperation with the stakeholders. The Committee also expressed its appreciation for information received about prospective work for the future of the site, including two scenarios for future expansion.

44. **Dinghushan Biosphere Reserve (China).** This site falls under the ‘Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR’.

45. The Advisory Committee commended the Chinese authorities for the submission of the revised second Periodic Review report, together with a new zonation map, produced in response to recommendations from the review of the second Periodic Review report, which was evaluated at the 30th ICC in 2018.

46. The previous extent of the biosphere reserve matched the territory of the Dinghushan Nature Reserve, covering a total area of 1,133 ha. After the revised zonation, the total area was increased by about five times to 5,123 ha, following consideration of the ecological, environmental and socio-economic situation and consultation with stakeholders including the Zhaoqing Municipal People’s Government, the Zhaoqing Forestry Bureau and Jilongding Nature Reserve, and the three surrounding local communities.

47. Under the new zonation, the core area remains unchanged, but the new buffer zone includes the original buffer zone and most of the areas of the Jilongding Nature Reserve. The new transition area includes the original transition area, the transition area of the Jilongding



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Nature Reserve and the three local communities. Under the proposed expanded biosphere reserve, the total population will increase from 100 to 12,044.

48. This biosphere reserve has been very active in conservation, research, and education and training. The Advisory Committee believes that this expansion of the biosphere reserve will encourage diverse activities for sustainable development including ecotourism.

49. The Advisory Committee commended the efforts of Chinese authorities in revising the Periodic Review report and establishing the new zonation and associated management structures. The Advisory Committee recommended that the Chinese authorities avoid mass tourism and develop a good model of ecotourism which can be beneficial to biodiversity conservation and the local economy. It also recommended more active involvement on the part of local people and other stakeholders in activities and the decision-making process.

50. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee recommended the Chinese authorities to establish a new comprehensive management plan covering the new areas based on the submitted Zonation, Management Coordination Mechanism and Development Plan of this extended biosphere reserve. It also encouraged them to monitor various ecological and socio-economic variables in order to prepare the next Periodic Review report in 10 years.

51. The Advisory Committee recommended the approval of the extension of the biosphere reserve and concluded that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the WNBR. The Advisory Committee requested an updated management plan by 30 September 2019.

52. **Qomolangma Biosphere Reserve (China).** The Advisory Committee commended the Chinese authorities on the submission of the first Periodic Review for the Qomolangma Biosphere Reserve. It noted that the Periodic Review should have been conducted in 2014, but acknowledged that the process was unavoidably delayed due to the earthquake in Nepal, which caused a great number of deaths, toppled many houses and damaged roads in the biosphere reserve.

53. The Qomolangma Biosphere Reserve covers a large area more than 7,400 metres above sea level. It has a distinct vertical distribution of ecosystems ranging from lower altitudes to higher alpine altitudes. Local residents traditionally engaged mainly in agriculture and husbandry, manufacturing and production (silverware, forest products, etc.), with only a handful of local residents involved in tourism. Following its accession to the WNBR, a number of other industries have developed in the biosphere reserve, with local residents practising more diverse livelihoods. Tourism, border trade, business, ethnic arts and crafts, and labour have become the main sources of income. This change has alleviated resource depletion and promoted the conservation of wildlife and forests.

54. The People's Government of Shigatse City administers the site and nominates the administrative officers of the Qomolangma Biosphere Reserve Management Bureau. The operation of the reserve falls under the supervision of the competent forestry agencies of the Central Government, the government of the autonomous region and the People's Government of Shigatse City.



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55. There are 4 counties, 31 towns and 292 administrative villages in the reserve. The total population was 88,938 in 2000 and 97,705 in 2016.

56. The core areas cover a land area of 1,032,500 hectares and the buffer zones cover 625,300 hectares. These areas are key biodiversity conservation areas. Direct development activities are prohibited in these areas, with the exception of research and monitoring. The transition area covers a land area of 1,724,100 ha and is the site of experiments and learning activities carried out by people using natural resources in a sustainable manner. In this zone, the local communities and other stakeholders agree to work together to manage and use the area in sustainable ways that will benefit those who live there.

57. The Advisory Committee noted that Qomolangma Biosphere Reserve Management Bureau has established close relations with local communities and has invited local residents to participate in the management of the reserve. Furthermore, it noted the submission of management plan for the biosphere reserve.

58. The Committee encouraged the Chinese authorities to use cultural diversity and traditional knowledge for the conservation of biodiversity. It further encouraged them to exert greater effort to monitor biodiversity and research the impacts of climate change in this regard. The Advisory Committee also encouraged the Chinese authorities to utilize ecotourism to improve the livelihoods of local people.

59. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of statutory framework of WNBR.

60. **Xingkai Lake Biosphere Reserve (China).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of the first Periodic Review for Xingkai Lake Biosphere Reserve.

61. The site is situated in the Xingkai Lake Basin. The west side of the site borders Mt. Laoye in the Changbai Mountain Range and the east side borders the Sikhote-Alin Range in the Russian Federation.

62. The Xingkai Lake Wetland was added to the List of Important International Wetlands in 2002 and designated a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 2007.

63. The total area of the reserve is 298,985 ha with a core area of 57,454 ha, a buffer zone of 7,923 ha and a transition area of 233,808 ha.

64. The Xingkai Lake Community-based Co-management Committee was established with a view to ensuring the inclusion of neighbouring communities in the development, planning and management of the reserve.

65. Local communities within the reserve work mainly on Xingkaihu Farm, Xingkaihu Aquaculture Company and Baipaozi Township. "Xingkaihu" brand rice has been labelled as one of China's organic products. The farm's annual production of aquatic products reaches 200 tonnes, and its paper mill exports six products to 21 countries and regions including Canada and Japan.



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66. There are 691 plant species in the biosphere reserve. The site is also home to wild animals including 414 species of vertebrates, among which are 40 species of mammals, 289 species of birds, 8 species of reptiles, 7 species of amphibians, 2 species of cyclostomata and 68 species of fish.

67. The Joint Protection Committee of Xingkai Lake Reserve, a co-management organization, was set up to incorporate the development of surrounding communities into the development plan of the reserve.

68. The Advisory Committee commended the efforts of Chinese authorities on the conservation of wetlands and the restoration of degraded areas. It recommended the creation of specific policies on tourism management and the elaboration of a comprehensive management plan

69. However, the Advisory Committee recognized that the buffer zones are relatively small (about 3% of the total area), and are mostly composed of a thin linear strip. It also noticed that the buffer zone and the transition area are not easily discerned. In addition, it found a discrepancy in data in the core areas.

70. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

71. By 15 May 2019, the Committee requests the Chinese authorities to:

- justify how sufficient buffering functions are fulfilled in all core areas, and if they are not, consider rezonation to increase buffer zones
- submit a revised zonation map that shows a clear distinction between the buffer zone and the transition area
- correct a discrepancy in the data on the core area.

72. The Committee encouraged the authorities to cooperate more closely with the neighbouring Khankaiskiy Biosphere Reserve of the Russian Federation, which shares the same lake, and to examine the possibility of establishing a Transboundary Biosphere Reserve.

73. **Maya Biosphere Reserve (Guatemala).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

74. The Advisory Committee welcomed the second Periodic Review of the Maya Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1990. The Maya Biosphere Reserve is located in the Petén region of northern Guatemala and, together with the Maya Forest of Belize and Mexico, represents one of the largest areas of tropical forest north of the Amazon and the northernmost tropical forest in the Western Hemisphere.

75. The submitted zonation map is not clear and has not employed the official terminology specified by the Statutory Framework. The total surface area covers 2,090,000 ha, and approximately 175,000 inhabitants live in the biosphere reserve of which 15% reside in the

core area. In the description of activities that have taken place over the last 20 years, the authorities state that without the designation, a large amount of protected area would probably have been lost quickly. A Management Plan was submitted and a Management Committee has been established.

76. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR).

77. The Advisory Committee therefore requests a new zonation map with the proper MAB terminology, according to the zonation defined in the Statutory Framework of the WNBR, by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe.

78. **General comments for Guinea:** The Advisory Committee commended the Guinean authorities for completing the periodic review process and sending the reports of their biosphere reserves, as well as their efforts to comply with the requirements of the Process of Excellence and Enhancement within time.

79. **Badiar Biosphere Reserve (Guinea).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of the second Periodic Review for the Badiar Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2002. The reserve is located in the northern part of Guinea along the boundary with Senegal and consists of forests. It has a current core area of 101,064 ha, a buffer zone of 89,058.5 ha and a transition area of 314,877.5 ha. The area is inhabited by nearly 130,205 people and is home to many species of birds and mammals including chimpanzee.

80. The Advisory Committee commended the authorities for the updated zonation map and documents with annexes, as well as for the participatory approach used to produce the Periodic Review.

81. The Advisory Committee noted the investment in improving pools infrastructure and tourist observation points, which promote scientific and historical achievements as well as development actions for local communities.

82. The Advisory Committee noted that two of the three core areas in the northern part of the biosphere reserve, which are both national parks, are not delineated by a buffer zone to effectively ensure their long-term conservation.

83. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve (WNBR) and requested the authorities to provide, by 30 September 2019, a new zonation map and a rationale as to why there is no formal buffer zone around two of the core areas and indicate what buffering functions are in place, or provide a new zonation map.

84. **Haut Niger Biosphere Reserve (Guinea).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of this second Periodic Review for the Haut Niger biosphere reserve, designated in 2002. The reserve consists of forests. It has a current core area of 55,400 ha, a buffer zone

of 364,100 ha and a transition area of 227,500 ha. The area is inhabited by nearly 338,805 people and is home to many species of birds, mammal species and plants.

85. The Advisory Committee commended the authorities for the zonation map and documents with annexes. It also appreciated the participatory process used to produce the Periodic Review.

86. The Advisory Committee recognized the transfer of a large number of agents to the central area, to undertake conservation and development actions for local communities, as evidence of strong political will.

87. The Advisory Committee noted that the zonation map does not indicate a transition area, but does include a core area, referred to as the 'noyau central', and a 'forêt classée' and two buffer zones.

88. The Advisory Committee concluded that it **does not have enough information to assess whether the site meets or does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve (WNBR) and requested the authorities to submit, by 15 May 2019, an improved zonation map of the biosphere reserve using the official terminology according to the criteria of the Statutory Framework.

89. Within the framework of the Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR, the MAB Secretariat offers the national authorities its technical assistance to produce the requested documents.

90. **Mont Nimba Biosphere Reserve (Guinea).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of this third Periodic Review for the Mont Nimba Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1980. The reserve is located in the northern part of Guinea along the boundary with Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. The site consists mostly of forests. It has a current core area of 12,540 ha, a buffer zone of 35,140 ha and a transition area of 88,280 ha. The area is inhabited by about 65,024 people and hosts many endemic species notably the viviparous toad, mammals and plants.

91. The Advisory Committee commended the authorities for the updated zonation map and documents with annexes, as well as the participatory process used to produce the Periodic Review.

92. The Advisory Committee observed the use of regulations to ensure the protection of core areas, the limitations imposed on the mining company's license to exclude it from operating in the core area of Déré, and the involvement of two CEGENS-Centres de Gestion de l'Environnement and one scientific research station devoted to development actions.

93. The Advisory Committee also noted the possibility of establishing a transboundary biosphere reserve with Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and the opportunity to strengthen education, communication and awareness raising to promote the participation and ownership of local communities in the biosphere reserve.

94. The Advisory Committee noted that the three core areas are not indicated with the same colour in the legend of the zonation map.

95. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) and encourages the authorities to improve the zonation map by using the same colour for the three core areas. It also encourages cooperation with neighbouring countries with a view to eventually creating a transboundary biosphere reserve.

96. **Ziama Biosphere Reserve (Guinea).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of this third Periodic Review for the Ziama Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1980. The reserve consists exclusively of forests. It has a current core area of 41,169 ha, a buffer zone of 74,220 ha and a transition area of 120,500 ha. The area is inhabited by about 90,000 people and is home to many endemic species, notably migratory elephants.

97. The Advisory Committee commended the authorities on the new zonation which addresses the recommendations of the 29th session of the MAB ICC (i.e. the extension of the biosphere reserve to include the villages in the transition area through a participatory process).

98. The Advisory Committee observed the enforcement of regulations to ensure the protection of core areas, and the establishment of contracts for the transfer of exploitable bottomlands in the transition area.

99. The Advisory Committee also noted that the core area in the south-east of the site does not have a sufficient large buffer zone to ensure its long-term protection.

100. The Advisory Committee concluded that it **does not have enough information to assess whether the site meets or does not meet** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR). It therefore requested the authorities to discuss with stakeholders the possibility of establishing a buffer zone to protect all flanks of the core area of the southeastern portion of the site. The Advisory Committee requested the authorities to submit an application for an extension of the site as soon as possible to extend the size of the transition area.

101. The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to submit the requested information by 15 May 2019.

102. Within the framework of the Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR, the MAB Secretariat offers to the national authorities its' technical assistance to elaborate produce the requested documents that are requested.

103. **Issyk Kul Biosphere Reserve (Kyrgyzstan).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

104. The Advisory Committee acknowledged the official letter of Kyrgyzstan and thanked the national authorities for providing a detailed work plan and timeline in order to submit the

Periodic Review by 30 September 2019, in compliance with MAB ICC 2017 decisions on the Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR.

105. General recommendation for the Mexican authorities:

106. The Advisory Committee welcomed the four Periodic Reviews submitted by the Mexican authorities and recognized the effort made by the country.

107. All biosphere reserves have a Management Plan and a Management Committee, but the Advisory Committee noted that the Management Plan does not include the transition area. The Advisory Committee recommends that the authorities establish a Management Plan with stakeholder involvement for the biosphere reserve that includes a transition area.

108. Huatulco Biosphere Reserve (Mexico). The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Huatulco Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2006. The biosphere reserve is located in the physiographic province of the Sierra Madre del Sur, which is characterized by bays, cliffs and rocky escarpments.

109. Approximately 45,000 people currently live in the biosphere reserve. Conventional tourism along the coastline and bays near tourist areas (Chahue Bay, Santa Cruz, Organ-Maguey, Cacaluta and San Agustín) presents a threat to fishermen, while divers and marine tourists provoke damage with boat anchors, solid waste and overfishing, upsetting the balance of marine communities and endangering the reproductive capacity of marine wildlife. One of the most important changes in recent years was the inclusion of the municipality of Santa María Huatulco in 2015 within the 'Programa de Ordenamiento Ecológico Territorial'.

110. There is no separate biosphere reserve Management Plan, as the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) governs all reserves. The Commission established the National Programme of Protected Natural Areas 2014-2018 (PNANP) with a clear mission and vision, as well as objectives and goals to be achieved in matters of conservation relating to ecosystems in Mexico identified through the creation and management of Natural Protected Areas. Through its 2040 Strategy, CONANP is developing a long-term strategy that will function as the framework for institutional planning, guiding actions over the short and medium term, with a view to strengthening and consolidating the institution and its important mission for the benefit of Mexico. It should be noted, however, that there have been a number of institutional changes in directors and managers at national, regional and local levels over the last 10 years.

111. The Advisory Committee considers that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, it recommends that the authorities establish a Management Plan for the biosphere reserve that includes the transition area.

112. Laguna Madre y Delta del Rio Bravo Biosphere Reserve (Mexico). The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Laguna Madre y Delta del Rio Bravo Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2006. Laguna Madre is located in a coastal plain of the Gulf



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of Mexico. The reserve is one of two large hyper-saline coastal wetlands in North America (the other is located in Texas in the United States) and one of seven in the whole world.

113. The last 10 years have seen zonation changes to the reserve in line with the management programme, published in 2015. These changes decreased the core area from 317,290 ha to 61,001 ha, and increased both the buffer zone from 255,518 ha to 511,807 ha and the transition area from 234,160 ha to 1,059,129 ha. The total surface area has thus increased from 806,968 ha to 1,631,937 ha. These zonation changes better protect the core areas and their mangroves forests. Mangrove restoration programmes have also been established in the area. Under the original zonation, the total population amounted to about 500,000 inhabitants. As a result of zonation changes, which excluded urban areas no longer part of the biosphere reserve, the total number of inhabitants has decreased to 17,000.

114. The development of the Management Programme of the Área de Protección de Flora y Fauna Laguna Madre y Delta del Río Bravo took into account the points of view of academia, productive groups (livestock, agricultural, fishing and tourism), government and civil society. The management programme does not include the transition area, however.

115. The National Commission of Natural Protected Areas (CONANP) established the National Programme of Protected Natural Areas 2014-2018 (PNANP) with a clear mission and vision, as well as objectives and goals to be achieved in matters of conservation relating to ecosystems in Mexico identified through the creation and management of Natural Protected Areas. Through its 2040 Strategy, CONANP is developing a long-term strategy that will function as the framework for institutional planning, guiding actions over the short and medium term, with a view to strengthening and consolidating the institution and its important mission for the benefit of Mexico.

116. The Advisory Committee considers that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, it recommends that the authorities establish a Management Plan for the biosphere reserve that includes the transition area.

117. **Los Tuxtlas Biosphere Reserve (Mexico).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Los Tuxtlas Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2006. The reserve is an area of high geological and ecological complexity and human activity. It presents a high diversity of environments that correspond to nine types of vegetation. Los Tuxtlas represents the northernmost limit of the rainforest on the American continent and its different types of forests and rainforests, from the seacoast to the summit of the volcanoes, make it a unique case in Mexico and North America.

118. The surface of the biosphere reserve has not changed (334,000 ha), while the population increased from around 278,000 to 307,000 inhabitants, mainly in the transition area.

119. There has been an expansion of community services oriented towards rural ecotourism, which has generated greater appreciation for the environmental services offered by the biosphere reserve. In addition, a greater number of civil society organizations have emerged with the objective of protecting the environment.



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120. The biosphere reserve is administered by the National Commission for Protected Areas (CONANP) and has an Advisory Council that promotes the participation and integration of civil society in the tasks of conservation and the development of protected natural areas. In December 2014, the composition of the Advisory Council altered due to several causes, including changes of representatives in the local, municipal and state governments, as well as in research institutions, and diverse non-governmental organizations that work with communities in the area. The biosphere reserve has a management programme that was approved in 2009 which does not include the transition area.

121. CONANP established the National Programme of Protected Natural Areas 2014-2018 (PNANP) with a clear mission and vision, as well as objectives and goals to be achieved in matters of conservation relating to ecosystems in Mexico identified through the creation and management of Natural Protected Areas. Through its 2040 Strategy, CONANP is developing a long-term strategy that will function as the framework for institutional planning, guiding actions over the short and medium term, with a view to strengthening and consolidating the institution and its important mission for the benefit of Mexico.

122. The Advisory Committee considers that the site meets the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, it recommends that the authorities establish a Management Plan for the biosphere reserve that includes the transition area.

123. **Sierra de Alamos – Rio Cuchujaqui Biosphere Reserve (Mexico).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Sierra de Alamos – Rio Cuchujaqui Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2007. The protected area of Sierra de Álamos – Río Cuchujaqui falls within the geographical provinces of the Western Sierra Madre and the Northwest Coastal Plain, which consists of an elevation gradient of vegetation, ranging from tropical deciduous forest to the Sierra Madre evergreen forest.

124. The area defined in 2006 responded to the will and commitment of local owners. However, following the publication of the Management Programme in 2015, a new zonation was established, in order to clearly define which activities were and were not allowed in the area. This decreased the core area from 20,169 ha to 9,956 ha and increased both the buffer zone from 72,720 ha to 82,933 ha and the transition area from 42,982 ha to 97,697 ha. The total surface area thus increased from of 135,872 ha to 190,587 ha. The population also increased from 9,120 inhabitants to around 10,500.

125. The biosphere reserve has had a management programme since 2015, which functions as the planning instrument guiding the conservation and management of natural resources, through strategies and actions based on knowledge of local problems in the area. The management programme does not include the transition area, however.

126. The National Commission of Protected Natural Areas (CONANP) has established the National Programme of Protected Natural Areas 2014-2018 (PNANP) with a clear mission and vision, as well as objectives and goals to be achieved in matters of conservation relating to ecosystems in Mexico identified through the creation and management of Natural Protected



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Areas. Through its 2040 Strategy, CONANP is developing a long-term strategy that will function as the framework for institutional planning, guiding actions over the short and medium term, with a view to strengthening and consolidating the institution and its important mission for the benefit of Mexico.

127. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Advisory Committee therefore requests the authorities to submit a rationale for the extension and zonation change and recommends that they establish a Management Plan with stakeholder involvement for the biosphere reserve that includes the transition area.

128. **Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the submission of the first Periodic Review for the Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve.

129. The steppe and wetland territory of the Mongol Daguur comprises mainly low mountainous landscapes supporting a variety of species of fauna and flora. The area is rich in biodiversity, and the site provides nesting and breeding grounds for globally endangered species. Situated in the eastern tip of Mongolia where it borders China and the Russian Federation, the biosphere reserve functions as a transboundary ecosystem. This enables Mongolia to act as a buffer against desertification in China.

130. The Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve was designated in 2007. In 2017, the Landscape of Dauria, which includes the Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve, was inscribed as a transboundary World Heritage property shared between Mongolia and the Russian Federation, as an outstanding example of the Daurian Steppe eco-region extending from eastern Mongolia into Russian Siberia and northeastern China.

131. The total area of the biosphere reserve is 103,016 ha and includes a core area of 15,600 ha, a buffer zone of 51,600 ha and a transition area of 35,800 ha. Over the last 10 years the population has increased from 200 (transition area) to 1,957 (400 in buffer zone and 1,557 in the transition area). The Advisory Committee has invited the authorities to offer an explanation for this growth in population.

132. One of the immediate threats to the transition zone of the Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve is illegal hunting. The majority of illegal hunting in the biosphere reserve targets gazelles and marmots. Illegal hunting also causes desertification and loss of important wildlife habitats and is totally unsustainable over the long term in the transition areas.

133. Climate change poses a huge challenge to the reserve, causing the permafrost to dry and parts of the wetland to die. Research is being conducted on this subject with a view to slowing down this process and restoring the environment.

134. The Advisory Committee noted that, since 1994, the three countries have been cooperating under the framework of the China-Mongolia-Russian International Protected Area Agreement (DIPA). The Committee encouraged the Mongolian authorities to establish a transboundary biosphere reserve with the Daurian Biosphere Reserve in the Russian



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Federation, and possibly with the Dalai Lake Biosphere Reserve of China, although the latter is not contiguous with the Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve.

135. The Committee further encouraged the authorities to study and find solutions to human-wild animal conflicts including illegal hunting in all three zones.

136. The Advisory Committee also invited the authorities to increase international cooperation on research and ecotourism, and to seek funding opportunities for ecotourism from other countries. Funds generated from ecotourism can be used for the protection of wild animals.

137. Although there has been interest locally in forms of income generation such as vegetable gardening or intensive farming, the Advisory Committee would not recommend intensive farming in the area as it will accelerate desertification.

138. The Committee noted that the World Heritage Property Area of Mongol Daguur covers 580,080 ha, while the total area of the Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve covers only 103,016 ha. The Committee therefore invited the national authorities to provide a map with the juxtaposed boundaries of the Mongol Daguur SPA, the Mongol Daguur Biosphere Reserve and the world heritage site of the Landscapes of Dauria, and explain the rationale underlying the spatial differences between the SPA, the biosphere reserve and the World Heritage site by 15 May 2019.

139. The Committee also encouraged the Mongolian authorities to continue enhancing stakeholder participation processes related to management of the biosphere reserve, and to consider an expansion of the biosphere reserve zones, especially the core areas based on the zonation of the World Heritage site.

140. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

141. **Bosawas Biosphere Reserve (Nicaragua)**. The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

142. The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Bosawas Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1997. Bosawas is located in the north of the country next to the border with Honduras. The reserve constitutes the so-called 'Heart of the Mesoamerican Biocorridor' together with the three neighbouring protected areas of Honduras 'Río Patuca' National Park, 'Tawhaka' Anthropological Reserve and 'Río Plátano' Biosphere Reserve.

143. The Periodic Review document reports for the period 2004-14, and not until 2018.

144. In the nomination file, it was indicated that the size of the core area was 329,800 ha, the buffer zone was 523,700 ha and the transition area was 1,328,000 ha. However, during the periodic review process, adjustments were made based on geographical information systems with greater precision.



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145. Based on the current calculations, the extension of the Biosphere Reserve is 1,994,187.31 ha, of which 806,595.16 ha correspond to the core area, 850,063.22 ha to the buffer zone and 337,528.94 ha to the transition area.

146. In total, more than 450,000 inhabitants live in the biosphere reserve out of which 50,000 inhabit the core area. These are indigenous communities (miskitos and mayangnas) living from several sustainable small-scale activities such as fishing and agriculture.

147. The biosphere reserve has submitted a management plan for the biosphere reserve. A management structure is also in place, led by the Ministry of Environment of Nicaragua, which coordinates actions with governmental and non-governmental institutions, research institutions, local organizations and the private sector.

148. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Advisory Committee therefore requests the authorities to provide a rationale on the buffering functions of the core areas by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe.

149. **Rio San Juan Biosphere Reserve (Nicaragua).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

150. The Advisory Committee welcomed the first Periodic Review of the Rio San Juan Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2003. The biosphere reserve encompasses a significant variety of ecosystems representative of tropical humid forests and wetlands, tidal marsh, coastal lagoons and estuaries, which are important shelters for rare or threatened animals and plant genetic resources of the meso-American tropics.

151. The Periodic Review document reports for the period 2004-14, and not until 2018.

152. The total surface area of the biosphere reserve covers 1,834,107 ha, and a proper transition area of 514,641 ha has been added to the zonation map. Approximately 255,000 inhabitants live in the reserve of which a small majority live in the buffer zone, while a small indigenous community of 300 people inhabits the core area. There is currently no Management Plan for the biosphere reserve, and in its absence the authorities adhere to relevant national policies. A management structure for the biosphere reserve is in place, led by the Ministry of Environment of Nicaragua, which coordinates actions with governmental and non-governmental institutions, research institutions, local organizations and the private sector.

153. The Advisory Committee considers that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. However, the Advisory Committee requests the authorities to send more information on the Management Plan and stakeholder involvement by 30 September 2019.

154. **Kogelberg Biosphere Reserve (South Africa).** The Advisory Committee acknowledged the official request sent by the Chair of the MAB National Committee to extend the date of submission of the dossier for the second Periodic Review for the Kogelberg



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Biosphere Reserve, which is still underway, to 30 September 2019. The Advisory Committee commended the authorities for their efforts to meet Article 9 of the Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

155. The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to submit the dossier by 30 September 2019.

Annex II RECOMMENDATIONS OF PERIODIC REVIEWS ENDORSED BY THE MAB ICC

Country	Name of the site	Comments
ARGENTINA	Costero del Sur	Excellence process
	Laguna de Pozuelos	
	Yaboti	
BOLIVIA	Beni	
	Pilon-Lajas	Excellence process
	Ulla Ulla	Excellence process
CANADA	Frontenac Arch	
	Fundy	
CHILE	Lauca	Excellence process
	Torres del Paine	Excellence process
CROATIA	Velebit Mountains	Excellence process
CUBA	Peninsula de Guanahacabibes	
	Sierra del Rosario	
DENMARK	Northeast Greenland	Letter of withdrawal Excellence process
FRANCE	Cevennes	Excellence process
HONDURAS	Rio Platano	Excellence process
ITALY	Monte Peglia	
MEXICO	Islas de Golfo de California	Excellence process
MONTENEGRO	Tara River Basin	Excellence process
POLAND	Tatra	National Zonation map Excellence process
RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Mountainous Urals	Designated 2015
SLOVAKIA	East Carpathians	National Zonation map Excellence process
	Tatra	National Zonation map Excellence process
SWITZERLAND	Val Müstair	Change of name
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Apalachicola (former Central Gulf Coastal Plain)	Excellence process
	Glacier Bay-Admiralty Island	Excellence process
	Organ Pipe	Excellence process



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	San Joaquin	Excellence Process
	Virginia Coast	Excellence process
	University of Michigan Biological Station	Excellence process
	Yellowstone	Excellence process

156. **Costero del Sur Biosphere Reserve (Argentina).** The site falls under the ‘Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR’.

157. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Argentinean authorities. The submitted zonation map is not clear and has not used the official required terminology specified under the Statutory Framework. Therefore, the Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It requests the authorities to send a clear zonation map using the official terminology in line with the Statutory Framework of the WNBR, including justifications and information on the populations living in the zones, by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe.

158. **Laguna de Pozuelos Biosphere Reserve (Argentina).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Argentinean authorities following the recommendations of the MAB Council in 2018. A management committee has been established in which each stakeholder will take an active part in the development of a Management Plan. Given the short period, the Management Plan has not yet been completed, but the authorities have submitted a schedule of activities and a work strategy for its elaboration. An updated map including the proper zonation was attached to the recommendation document.

159. The Advisory Committee considers that the site **meets** the criteria.

160. **Yaboti Biosphere Reserve (Argentina).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Argentinean authorities following the recommendations of the MAB Council in 2018. The requested information that was received is not satisfactory. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It therefore requests the authorities to provide a clear Management Plan for the biosphere reserve, as well as a zonation map, by 15 May 2019.

161. **Beni Biosphere Reserve (Bolivia).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Bolivian authorities. The national authorities have provided a revised zonation map with the proper terminology and the following explanation as to why the transition area does not surround the biosphere reserve: the whole biosphere reserve is surrounded by four External Buffer Zones (ZEA), which function as national conservation mechanisms for protected areas that ensure connectivity to maintain the flow of species in natural biological corridors.



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162. The biosphere has begun work on their new Management Plan which supplants the previous one from 2006. According to the submitted work schedule the new Management Plan will be finalized in 2019.

163. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Advisory Committee requests the authorities to submit an explanation confirming whether or not the current zonation structure fulfils the development functions by 30 September 2019.

164. **Pilon-Lajas Biosphere Reserve (Bolivia)**. The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

165. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Bolivian authorities. The national authorities have provided a revised zonation map with the proper terminology and the following explanation as to why the transition area does not surround the biosphere reserve: the western part of the biosphere reserve is surrounded by the Madidi National Park (protected area), the southern part is surrounded by 'tierras comunarias de Origen – TCO' (original community lands) and the eastern part is surrounded by an External Buffer Zone (ZEA). These functions as national conservation mechanisms for protected areas that ensure connectivity to maintain the flow of species in natural biological corridors.

166. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Advisory Committee therefore requests the authorities to submit an explanation confirming whether or not the current zonation structure fulfils the development functions by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe.

167. **Reserva de la Biosfera Area Natural de Manejo Integrado Nacional Apolobamba (former Ulla Ulla Biosphere Reserve) (Bolivia)**. The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

168. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Bolivian authorities. The national authorities have provided a revised zonation map with the proper terminology and the following explanation as to why the transition area does not surround the biosphere reserve: the eastern part is surrounded by the Madidi National Park (protected area), by mountain peak areas that cannot be accessed and by 'Territorios Indígena Originario Campesinos Titulados' (TIOC).

169. The national authorities have also sent updated numbers regarding the size of the human population.

170. Finally, an official request to change the name of the biosphere reserve has been made.

171. The Advisory Committee considers that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and recommends that the renaming

of the site to 'Reserva de la Biosfera Area Natural de Manejo Integrado Nacional Apolobamba' be approved.

172. **Cerrado Biosphere Reserve (Brazil).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the information sent by the Brazilian authorities. The Cerrado Biosphere Reserve sent a Periodic Review in 2016, later in 2017, which met the criteria, and a follow-up (that was not requested) in 2018.

173. The document sent by the national authorities does not follow the structure of a Periodic Review. It proposes a huge increase in zonation from 25 million ha to 76,240,779.83 ha (88,215,853 ha, different numbers are given), on the grounds that the authorities would like to preserve the Cerrado biome.

174. As the Cerrado Biosphere Reserve previously sent a Periodic Review in 2017 that met the criteria, the Advisory Committee recommends the authorities to submit a request for an extension of the biosphere reserve using the official documents and explaining the feasibility of the extension and cooperation with the neighbouring biosphere reserves in relation to the planned extension.

175. **Bistrishko Branishte (Bulgaria).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the follow-up information provided by the Bulgarian authorities. The representatives of the Bulgarian National MAB Committee informed the Advisory Committee of their work on the update of the Bistrishko Branishte Biosphere Reserve to meet the criteria. The Sofia Municipality declared their willingness to upgrade the site and to continue its participation in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. Preparation of the nomination form for an extension was initiated with a consultation on the first draft with the main stakeholders at a meeting held on 18 September 2018. The final version was supposed to be submitted to the MAB Secretariat in mid-November 2018, however it has not yet been received by the Secretariat.

176. As the site is subject to the Excellence and Enhancement process of the WNBR, the Advisory Committee requested that **the nomination form be submitted no later than the final deadline of 30 September 2019.**

177. **Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve (Canada).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the letter sent by the authorities on 27 September 2018, which accompanied the evaluations formulated by the Canadian MAB Committee. The Advisory Committee equally appreciated the interim report on the progress made by the authorities of the Frontenac Arch biosphere reserve towards the fulfilment of the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It noted that the final report would be submitted by 15 June 2019.

178. The Advisory Committee appreciated the meetings organized by the authorities with representatives of indigenous communities, as well as other stakeholders to ensure a sound financial basis as well as support for the biosphere reserve. The Advisory Committee also noted the improvements made in relation to fulfilling the logistical function of the biosphere reserve.



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179. The Advisory Committee noted that the zonation still **does not meet** the requirements of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Canadian MAB Committee has requested that the zonation be adapted to the requirements by 15 June 2019, after which time the committee will decide whether to withdraw the site from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, or to request to maintain the area's status as a biosphere reserve.

180. The Advisory Committee therefore requests the authorities to submit the Engagement Plan and Process, the TORs for the Biosphere Advisory Council and an updated zonation map by 15 May 2019, for consideration by the MAB Council at its next session.

181. **Fundy Biosphere Reserve (Canada).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the letter sent by the authorities on 27 September 2018, which accompanied the evaluations formulated by the Canadian MAB Committee. The Advisory Committee equally appreciated the interim report on the progress made by the authorities of the Fundy Biosphere Reserve towards the fulfilment of the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It noted that the final report would be submitted by 15 June 2019.

182. The Advisory Committee appreciated the new strategic partnerships, which will help to diversify income-generating strategies – notably the foraged beer production. The Advisory Committee equally appreciated the inclusion of first nation members in the board of directors of the biosphere reserve, and encourages the management to further enhance inclusion of first nation people in the management and strategies of the biosphere reserve.

183. Additional information was provided on the activities and impacts of wind farms and mining in the biosphere reserve. While the wind farms are monitored and no negative impacts were noted, the Advisory Committee noted that impact studies of mining are still lacking, and urges authorities to address this omission.

184. The Advisory Committee appreciated the steps taken to improve the buffering of the core areas of the biosphere reserve, and recognized that many of the areas surrounding the core areas are subject to the Crown Lands and Forest Acts. The Advisory Committee urged the authorities to continue negotiations with license holders and private landowners to increase the de facto buffering functions of the areas surrounding the core areas. The Advisory Committee concluded that at the moment the site **does not meet** the requirements of the Statutory Framework. The Canadian MAB Committee has requested that land management in the areas surrounding the core area be adapted to the requirements by 15 June 2019, after which time the national committee will decide whether to withdraw the site from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, or to request to maintain the area's status as a biosphere reserve.

185. The Advisory Committee requests the submission of an updated zonation map and information on the impact of mining operations by 15 May 2019, for consideration by the MAB Council at its next session.

186. **Lauca Biosphere Reserve (Chile).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.



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187. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Chilean authorities. A Management Plan has been submitted for the three national protected areas but not for the biosphere reserve, as this is still under preparation. Mentioned is made of a management committee, however, the information supplied does explain clearly how this committee functions.

188. The Advisory Committee concluded that it is **not able to decide whether the site meets the criteria** of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. It therefore requests the authorities to submit a Management Plan for the biosphere reserve, as well as clear information on the functioning of the management committee by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe.

189. **Torres del Paine Biosphere Reserve (Chile).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

190. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Chilean authorities. A revised zonation has been received, however the requested explanation as to why no buffer zone exists in the northwestern part of the reserve is still missing. A management plan for the period 2018–2021 has been submitted and a management committee has been created.

191. The Advisory Committee requests the authorities to confirm that areas lacking formal buffer zones have buffering functions provided by the national park by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria.

192. The Advisory Committee recommends that the Management Plan should refer to the Lima Action Plan and the new MAB strategy instead of the Madrid Action Plan.

193. **Velebit Mountain Biosphere Reserve (Croatia).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the letter sent by the authorities on 17 December 2018, and the additional explanation regarding the added transition area. The Advisory Committee appreciated the cooperation with the city of Zadar in terms of tourism, cultural heritage and education. The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to seek cooperation with the other communities adjacent to Zadar and the other transition area, in order to connect the different transition areas. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria.

194. **Peninsula de Guanahacabibes Biosphere Reserve (Cuba).** This site has already met the criteria but extra information was requested.

195. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Cuban authorities. The requested Management Plan has been received. However, the requested revised zonation, including a continuous marine buffer zone, is still missing and should be sent by 30 September 2019.

196. **Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve (Cuba).** This site has already met the criteria but extra information was requested.



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197. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Cuban authorities. The requested Management Plan has been received.

198. **Northeast Greenland (Denmark).** The Advisory Committee took note of the letter of Greenland indicating their intention to withdraw, and regrets that the northeast Greenland Biosphere Reserve authorities decided to withdraw the site from the WNBR. The Advisory Committee expressed its thanks to the biosphere reserve staff for their contribution to the MAB Programme and its WNBR and encouraged the authorities to continue their participation in the MAB Programme, and to make every effort to nominate a site in the near future.

199. **Cevennes (France).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the additional information sent on the zonation and the adherence of local communes/municipalities to the site. Regarding the zonation, the submitted map shows the extensions of the buffer and transition zones. The Advisory Committee also appreciated the progress made in terms of reaching agreements with the remaining communes, and noted that 84% of the communes in the area now have signed the biosphere reserve's charter. The remaining communes are involved in the biosphere reserve through separate contracts. The Advisory Committee appreciated that several fundraising and labelling initiatives have contributed to this increased support for the site. The Committee recognized the legal restrictions on including communes who have not signed the charter, but is satisfied with the additional contracts concluded with the remaining communes that ensure a de facto buffering of the core areas. The Advisory Committee encourages the authorities to continue to seek cooperation with the remaining communes. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site meets the criteria, and reminded the authorities that the next Periodic Review report is due in 2028, when the charter expires.

200. **Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve (Honduras).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

201. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Honduran authorities. The requested management plan was received in addition to the following explanation as to why a transition area is missing in the southern and eastern region of the biosphere reserve: in the south, the core area borders the Tawahka Asangni protected reserve; in the east, only a buffer zone exists as this region has remained free of high-impact human interventions. The area forms part of the ancestral habitat of the Miskitu indigenous peoples, and has a population density of 0.01 inhabitants/km².

202. The Advisory Committee considers that the site meets the criteria.

203. **Monte Peglia (Italy).** The Advisory Committee acknowledged with thanks the Management Plan for the Monte Peglia Biosphere Reserve, designated in 2018.

204. **Islas del Golfo de California Biosphere Reserve (Mexico).** The site falls under the 'Process of Excellence and Enhancement of the WNBR'.

205. The Advisory Committee welcomed the information provided by the Mexican authorities. In October 2018, the MAB Secretariat received a letter from the authorities explaining that due to the large area of the biosphere reserve and the significant number of



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islands, they will need more time to revise the instruments and mechanisms, in order to produce an operational zoning proposal.

206. In December 2018, the Mexican authorities sent a new letter informing the Secretariat that, following several consultations, the Government of Mexico, through its National Commission for Protected Areas, has decided not to withdraw the biosphere reserve from the World Network, and instead plans to rethink the overall design with a view to elaborating a new vision that would allow the reserve to comply with the zonation and the legal and national political regulations.

207. The Advisory Committee recognizes the efforts of the Mexican authorities to implement a transition zone to meet the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

208. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **does not meet** the criteria. It therefore requests the authorities to send the new zonation with a transition zone and its management plan by 15 May 2019, in order to adhere to the excellence process timeframe.

209. **Tara River Basin Biosphere Reserve (Montenegro).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the additional information provided by the authorities of Montenegro. The Committee acknowledged the creation of the biosphere reserve coordination body, which consists of various stakeholders including the representatives of local communities. The action plan for the biosphere reserve was also well received by the Committee. As regards the zonation, the Advisory Committee acknowledged the written explanation of the rationale based on the zonation of the national park.

210. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. The Advisory Committee also encouraged the authorities to strengthen stakeholder involvement in biosphere reserve management by including representatives of business into site management structures.

211. **Tatra Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Poland).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the reply by the Polish authorities, and expressed its encouragement for the creation of a new multi stakeholder-based coordination body for the biosphere reserve. It also welcomed the information related to the extension of the biosphere reserve outside the national park and planned changes in zonation, and considered it to be a very positive development. The Advisory Committee understands that all the actions described are difficult and will take time. The Committee supported the steps and actions taken so far and encourages the authorities to continue the process. The Advisory Committee acknowledged the plan for meetings with authorities that took place in January and February 2019 and subsequent public consultations, and requested an update on their outcomes by 30 September 2019.

212. The Advisory Committee also encouraged the Polish authorities to participate in the forthcoming EuroMAB regional network meeting and to seek technical support from the MAB Secretariat, as well as peer consultations within the WNBR with the representatives of sites that face similar problems.



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213. **Mountainous Ural (Russian Federation).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the letter sent by the authorities on 1 October 2018. In this letter, the authorities state that the parties involved in the management of the biosphere reserve have submitted proposals for the Management Plan detailing the development of the protected areas as well as the municipalities in the biosphere reserve. The Advisory Committee commended the progress made but urges the authorities to finalize the Management Plan and submit it by 15 May 2019, along with a clear description of a stakeholder-based management structure for the biosphere reserve.

214. **East Carpathians Biosphere Reserve (Slovakia).** The Advisory Committee thanked the authorities for sending the new zonation map indicating the buffer zones for this site, which **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

215. **Tatra Biosphere Reserve (Slovakia).** The Advisory Committee thanked the authorities for sending the new zonation map indicating the buffer zones for this site, which **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

216. **Biosfera Engiadina Val Müstair (renaming of former Val Müstair – Parc Naziunal Biosphere Reserve) (Switzerland).** The Advisory Committee took note of the change of name of this site to reflect the inclusion of new communities and the ongoing extension process.

217. **Apalachicola (former Central Gulf Coastal Plain) (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the additional documents related to the site zonation and encourages the US authorities to continue its cooperation with local stakeholders in order to ensure proper buffering functions to concerned core areas.

218. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

219. **Glacier Bay Admiralty Island Biosphere Reserve (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee welcomed this resubmission of the Periodic Review report for the Glacier Bay Admiralty Island Biosphere Reserve, designated in 1986, and located in southeastern Alaska. Its sparsely populated territory covers over 1.5 million ha of unique marine and terrestrial ecosystems of the Sitkan Biogeographic Province of North America. The site consists of two units: Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve and Admiralty Island National Monument. The Glacier Bay area is a typical example of ice-affected landscapes, while the forest of Admiralty Island is the greatest remaining block of productive old-growth temperate rainforest in the world.

220. The Advisory Committee noted that the biosphere reserve is managed by the National Park Service (Department of the Interior) and the United States Forest Service (Department of Agriculture), and that frequent consultations take place with various stakeholder groups (e.g. indigenous people). The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to consider the creation of a formal overall biosphere reserve advisory/coordination body, based on permanent stakeholder participation, which would operate continually rather than on a case-to-case basis. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.



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221. **Organ Pipe (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee acknowledged the information provided by the US authorities stating that the site has changed management body from the National Park Service to the International Sonoran Desert Alliance and requesting a deadline extension to update the Periodic Review report under the new management. The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to finalize the report and to submit it by 30 September 2019 for consideration by the MAB Council.

222. **San Joaquin Biosphere Reserve (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee took note with regret of the decision of the San Joaquin Biosphere Reserve authorities to withdraw the site from the WNBR. The Advisory Committee expressed its thanks to the San Joaquin Biosphere Reserve staff for their contribution to the MAB network and encouraged the authorities to undertake all efforts to make the indicated necessary changes and re-nominate the site at some future date.

223. **Virginia Coast (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the updated map indicating the buffer zones. The explanations previously provided demonstrated that through Protective land use agreements and conservation easements, these areas do function as buffer zones. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

224. **University of Michigan Biological Station (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the information on the consultation processes initiated by authorities with neighbouring landowners, including first nation groups and local conservancies. The Advisory Committee encouraged the authorities to continue the consultation processes aimed at reaching agreements about buffering functions of areas adjacent to the core area. The Advisory Committee noted the intention to change the name of the site, and recommended that the authorities announce it together with the Periodic review report, with an appropriate zonation, by 30 September 2019.

225. **Yellowstone (United States of America).** The Advisory Committee welcomed the additional information on agreements of cooperation and the promotion material. The Advisory Committee concluded that the site **meets** the criteria of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves.