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UNESCO Biosphere Reserves and Sustainable Development



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UNESCO and sustainable development

- Sustainable development is the overarching paradigm of the United Nations, upon which Agenda 2030 is based
- The concept of sustainable development was described by the 1987 Bruntland Commission Report as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”
- For the UN sustainable development has three core elements: economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. These elements are interconnected and all are crucial for the well-being of individuals and societies.
- UNESCO adds a fourth: culture

Key Messages of UNESCO MAB Programme

- ✓ **MAB works through natural and social sciences for sustainable use of the resources of the biosphere and for the improvement of the relationship between people and their environment. From its inception, it was closely linked to idea of sustainable development and sustainability.**
- ✓ **The MAB Programme & its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) include both a comprehensive vision for sustainable development and a powerful implementation tool endorsed and adhered to by Member States.**
- ✓ **The WNBR is a major strategic tool for UNESCO to assist Member States, not only in achieving sustainable use and management of biodiversity but also in implementing the SDG's in a holistic and integrated manner.**




Biosphere Reserves and WNBR

- ✓ Biosphere reserves are 'learning places for sustainable development'. They are sites for testing interdisciplinary approaches to understanding and managing changes and interactions between social and ecological systems, including conflict prevention and management of biodiversity.
- ✓ **The WNBR consists of a dynamic and interactive network of sites of excellence.** It represents a unique tool for international cooperation through the exchange of experiences and know-how, capacity-building and the promotion of best practices among Biosphere Reserves.



Biosphere reserves in figures

727 
Biosphere Reserves


260 million people call Biosphere Reserves their home

Present in **131 countries** 

22 Transboundary Biosphere Reserves
3 in Africa, 12 in Europe & North America, 3 in Latin America & the Caribbean 
2 Transcontinental Biosphere Reserves
Intercontinental del Mediterraneo (Europe/Arab States) and Great Altay (Europe/Asia & Pacific)

 **5%**
of the world's surface
Altogether, **7,040,031 km²**, approximately the size of Australia 



UNESCO Designated Sites



- 1969 sites:
 - Biosphere Reserves: 727
 - Global Geoparks: 169
 - World Heritage : 1154
- 206 sites in SEE & Med:
 - Biosphere Reserves: 45
 - Global Geoparks: 25
 - World Heritage : 134

UNESCO Designated Sites IN SEE & MED

NO.	Countries	NO. OF Biosphere Reserves	NO. of Global Geoparks	NO. of World Heritage
1	ALBANIA	1	-	4
2	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA	-	-	4
3	BULGARIA	6	-	10
4	CROATIA	3	2	10
5	CYPRUS	-	1	3
6	GREECE	3	6	18
7	ITALY	20	11	55
8	MALTA	-	-	3
9	MOLDOVA	1	-	1
10	MONTENEGRO	1	-	4
11	NORTH MACEDONIA	1	-	1
12	ROMANIA	3	1	8
13	SERBIA	3	1	5
14	SLOVENIA	5	2	4
15	TURKEY	1	1	18

3 Main Zones: the three functions are pursued through the following zonation



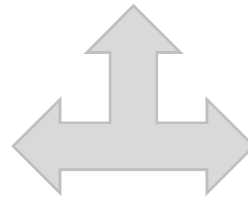
Biosphere Reserves involve local communities and all interested stakeholders in planning and management. They integrate three main "functions":



Conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity



Economic development that is socioculturally and environmentally sustainable



"Logistic" support, underpinning development through research, monitoring, education and training

MAB Strategy 2015-2025

MAB's Strategic Objectives for 2015-2025

- 1 Conserve biodiversity, restore and enhance ecosystem services, and foster the sustainable use of natural resources
- 2 Contribute to building sustainable, healthy and equitable societies, economies and thriving human settlements in harmony with the biosphere
- 3 Facilitate biodiversity and sustainability science, education for sustainable development (ESD) and capacity building
- 4 Support mitigation and adaptation to climate change and other aspects of global environmental change



MAB's Strategic Action Areas for 2015-2025

- A The World Network of Biosphere Reserves comprised of effectively functioning models for sustainable development
- B Inclusive, dynamic and results-oriented collaboration and networking within the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves
- C Effective external partnerships and sufficient and sustainable funding for the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves
- D Comprehensive, modern, open and transparent communication, information and data sharing
- E Effective governance of and within the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

Lima Action Plan for MAB and its WNBR(2016-2025)

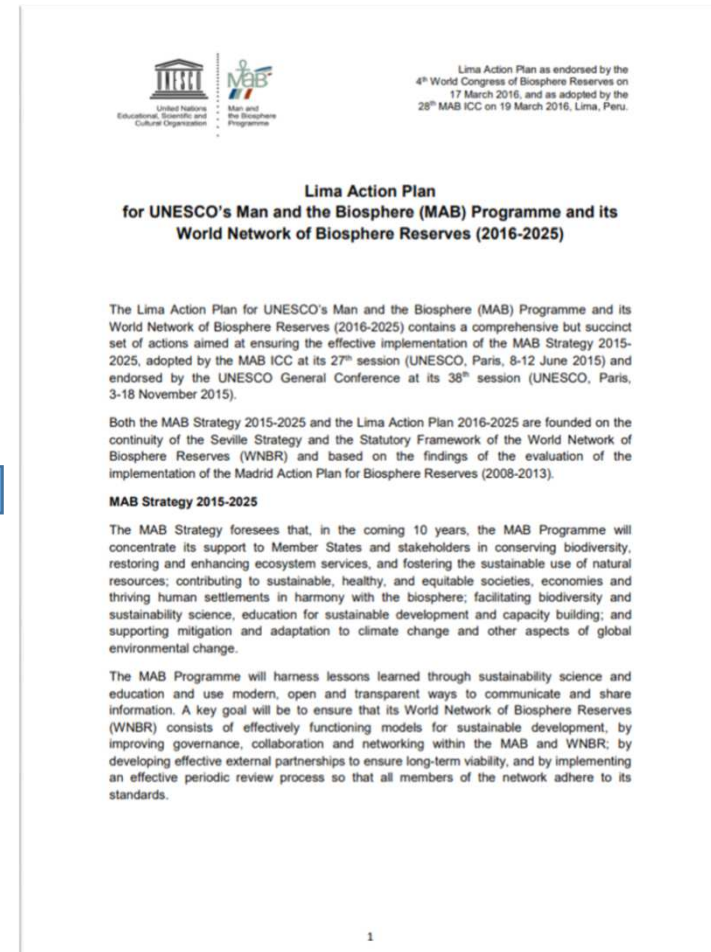
Strategic Action Area A. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves consisting of effectively functioning models for sustainable development

Strategic Action Area B. Inclusive, dynamic and result-oriented collaboration and networking within the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

Strategic Action Area C. Effective external partnerships and sufficient and sustainable funding for the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

Strategic Action Area D. Comprehensive, modern, open, and transparent communication, information and data sharing

Strategic Action Area E. Effective governance of and within the MAB Programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves



Showingcasing best practices of the WNBR

#ProudToShare



Launched in 2017, the campaign has collected from 74 sites in 30 countries **showcasing biosphere reserves and their initiatives.**

In 2020, videos by 24 biosphere reserves were submitted.

Videos featured on website and UNESCO's Youtube

New area on the website



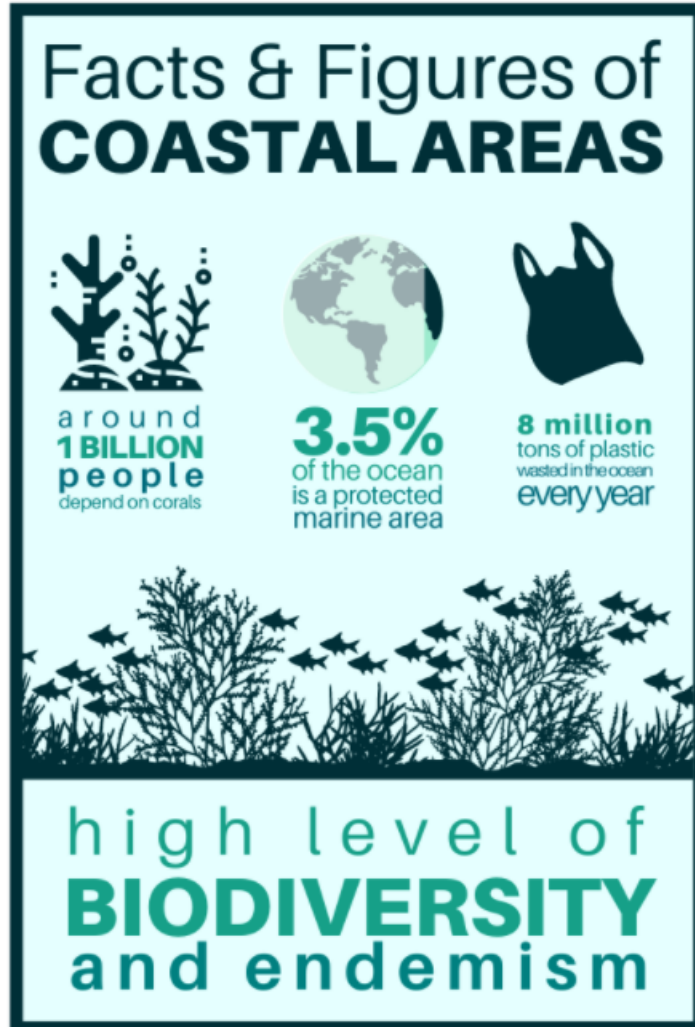
Organized by SGDs and by countries, this new area on our website features **case studies and #ProudtoShare** videos submitted by Biosphere Reserves

Exhibition "Our Biosphere, Our Future"

Featuring projects in Biosphere Reserves **addressing each SDG**, the exhibition was held in Paris (MAB ICC, 2019) and in Madrid, Spain (COP25). The latter was sponsored by the Abertis Foundation.



Marine, Coastal & Islands Biosphere Reserves



- The role of marine, coastal & islands biosphere reserves have evolved into land and seascapes that are dedicated to experimenting with principles and practice of sustainable development, taking into account as well the geographical and political dimensions.
- Marine, coastal & islands biosphere reserves are places for people and nature to coexist and find concrete ways of interacting with one another that can guide sustainability in action for the future.
- The blue carbon ecosystems of these biosphere reserves highlight the critical environmental value of these habitats.

World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves

IX Meeting of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves

15 to 20 September 2019

Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve | South Africa

33
delegates
from 11 countries

- Ecotourism
- Plastic waste
- Environmental education
- Community involvement



Zero Plastic working group in the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves

- Growing from the Zero Plastic campaign in Lanzarote, which has been ongoing since 2009, the “Zero Plastic” working group was launched in May 2018 at the annual meeting for the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves.
- The Zero Plastic working group unites Biosphere Reserves impacted by plastic pollution.

United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)

- The United Nations has proclaimed a **Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)** to support efforts to reverse the cycle of decline in ocean health and gather ocean stakeholders worldwide behind a common framework that will ensure ocean science can fully support countries in creating improved conditions for sustainable development of the Ocean.
- As mandated by the UN General Assembly, the [Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission](#) (IOC) of UNESCO will coordinate the Decade's preparatory process, inviting the global ocean community to plan for the next ten years in ocean science and technology to deliver, together, **the ocean we need for the future we want!**



The Ocean We Need
for the Future We Want



One Planet, One Ocean



The United Nations
Decade of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development
(2021-2030)



2021 United Nations Decade
2030 of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration

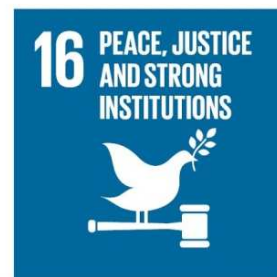
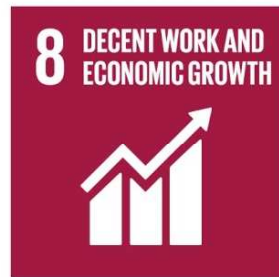
- The UN Decade positions ecosystem restoration as a major nature-based solution towards meeting a wide range of global development goals and national priorities, as does UNESCO's strategy for Biodiversity. UNESCO's strategy for biodiversity is implemented in its designated sites.
- UNESCO is one of the six core UN collaborating agencies to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration that is led by UNEP and FAO.
- As a partner of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, UNESCO's ambition is to change the mindset of 100% of humans so that they reconcile with the rest of nature and become all custodians of Earth, our common home and heritage, that we inhabit and share with all other living species.





SDG implementation in Biosphere Reserves

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



The Five Ps and MAB programme



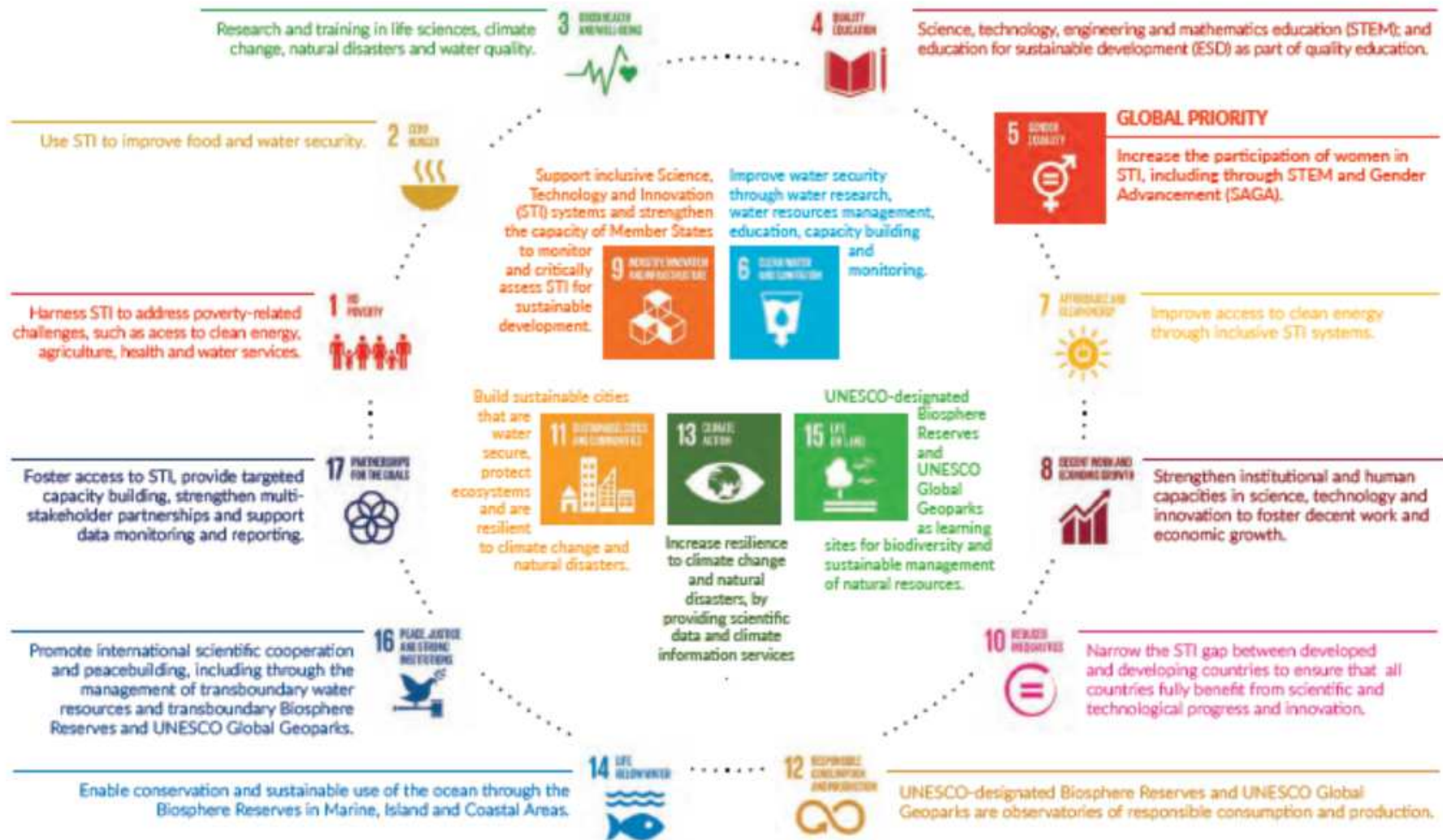
The UNESCO's contribution to SDGs



The UNESCO's contribution to inclusive quality education and lifelong learning for all



The UNESCO's contribution to transboundary water, climate change, biodiversity



The UNESCO's contribution to protection and sustainable management of the ocean



Implementation of SDGs at the regional level: IBC on Environment and Climate Change



The Regional UN System agreed to consider an Issue-based Coalition (IBC) on Environment in May 2019. The Coalition is composed of 18 members among the agencies, funds and programmes, with the full support of the Regional DCO. The IBC is co-chaired by UNESCO, UNEP and UNECE.



3 Pillars



PILLAR 1

Strengthening environmental and climate change governance and implementing the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda

PILLAR 2

Supporting countries in the environmental and climate change dimension of UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and Common Country Analysis (CCA) processes

PILLAR 3

Monitoring and reporting on the environmental and climate change dimension of SDG

IBC Task Teams



Topic	Co-leads	Contributors
Socioeconomic assessments and post-pandemic recovery strategies (build back better, green & circular economy)	UNECE, UNEP, UNESCO	UNDP, UN Women, UNOPS, WHO, OHCHR, UNDRR, ILO, UNFCCC, UNICEF, IOM
Climate change and disaster risk reduction	UNFCCC, WMO, WFP, UNDRR	UNDP, UNEP, UNOPS, FAO, WHO, OHCHR, UNECE, UNESCO , WMO, UNICEF
Biodiversity & nature-based solutions	UNEP, UNESCO	UNOPS, OHCHR, UNECE, UNDP, UNFCCC
Air pollution	UNECE	UNDP, UNOPS, OHCHR, WMO, UNICEF, WHO
Sustainable consumption and production (including decarbonization/carbon neutrality & waste)	UNOPS, FAO, UNEP	UN Women, OHCHR, UNECE, WHO, UNFCCC, UNIDO
Water management	UNECE, UNESCO	UNOPS, WHO, WMO
Food security and land management	FAO, WFP	OHCHR, WMO
Sustainable infrastructure	UNOPS, UNEP	WHO, UNECE
Environment and youth	UNICEF	UN Women, UNOPS, WHO, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNESCO , UNEP and IBC Youth
Environment and gender	UN Women	IOM, UNOPS, OHCHR, UNFCCC, UNICEF and IBC Gender
Migration, environment & climate change	IOM	IBC Migration

IBC contributes to SDG 6



UNESCO and UNECE, which hosts the Secretariat of the Water Convention, are co-leading the **IBC's task team on water resources management** in the region.

Members: UNESCO, UNECE, UNOPS, WHO, WMO

Past results:

- 27 May 2020 webinar on the **2020 United Nations World Water Development Report “Water and Climate Change”** for RCs and UNCTs of **Europe and Central Asia**
- 7 July 2020 webinar on **transboundary cooperation based on water management in the Drin and Drina river basins**
- Input to the Compendium of practical measures on post-COVID green recovery on measures related to water

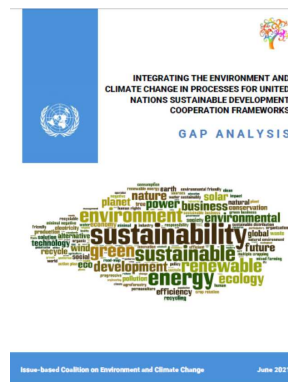
Proposal future activities:

- Webinar on **preventing water conflicts through improving transboundary water cooperation** in the Pan-European region, 25 October 2021

IBC contributes to SDG 13



- Task Team on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation: **Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation for Risk-informed and Climate-smart Development**, coordinated by UNDRR and contributed by IBC members
- Mainstreaming guidance of **integrating the environment and climate change in processes for UNSDCF**, led by UNESCO, in coordination with UNDCO contributed by IBC members
- Water and climate change: 27 May 2020 webinar on the **2020 United Nations World Water Development Report “Water and Climate Change”** for RCs and UNCTs of Europe and Central Asia organized by UNESCO and UNECE, in coordination with UNDCO.
- Input to the Compendium of practical measures on post-COVID green recovery on measures related to climate change
- Organization of the peer-learning round table, **Partnerships for a sustainable recovery: Initiatives to accelerate the achievement of the environment and climate goals of the 2030 Agenda**, related to the climate policy actions, at the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the ECA region



Contribution to UN Country Teams



- Representing UNESCO in the UN–RCP (Regional Collaborative Framework) for Europe and Central Asia (and liaising in this framework as needed with the Almaty, Tashkent and Tehran Offices).
- Contributing to rollout and implementation of CCAs/UNSDCFs in the framework of the Peer Support Group (PSG) broadly and in the areas of science in countries of Europe and Central Asia.
- Contributing to the Results Groups and SDGs working groups at country levels.
- Co-chairing and/or contributing the Inter Agency issue-based Coalitions (IBC) for Europe and Central Asia to support UN Country Teams.
- Participating in UN-led regional projects
- Contribution to regional forum on sustainable development roundtables on environment and climate change

4

QUALITY
EDUCATION



The port looks after the wildlife as well as the ships.



6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION

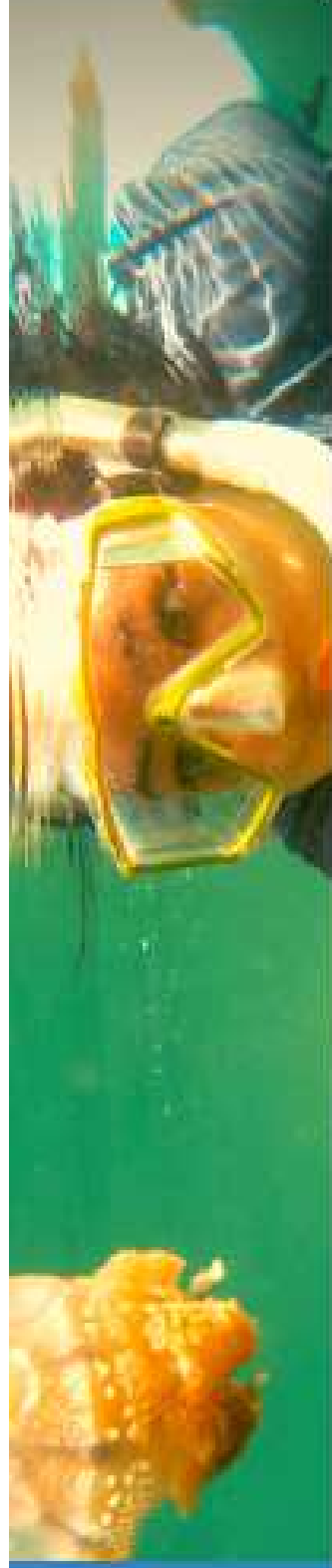
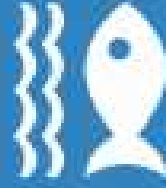


1 PAS
DE PAUVRETÉ



It aims to help reduce poverty

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

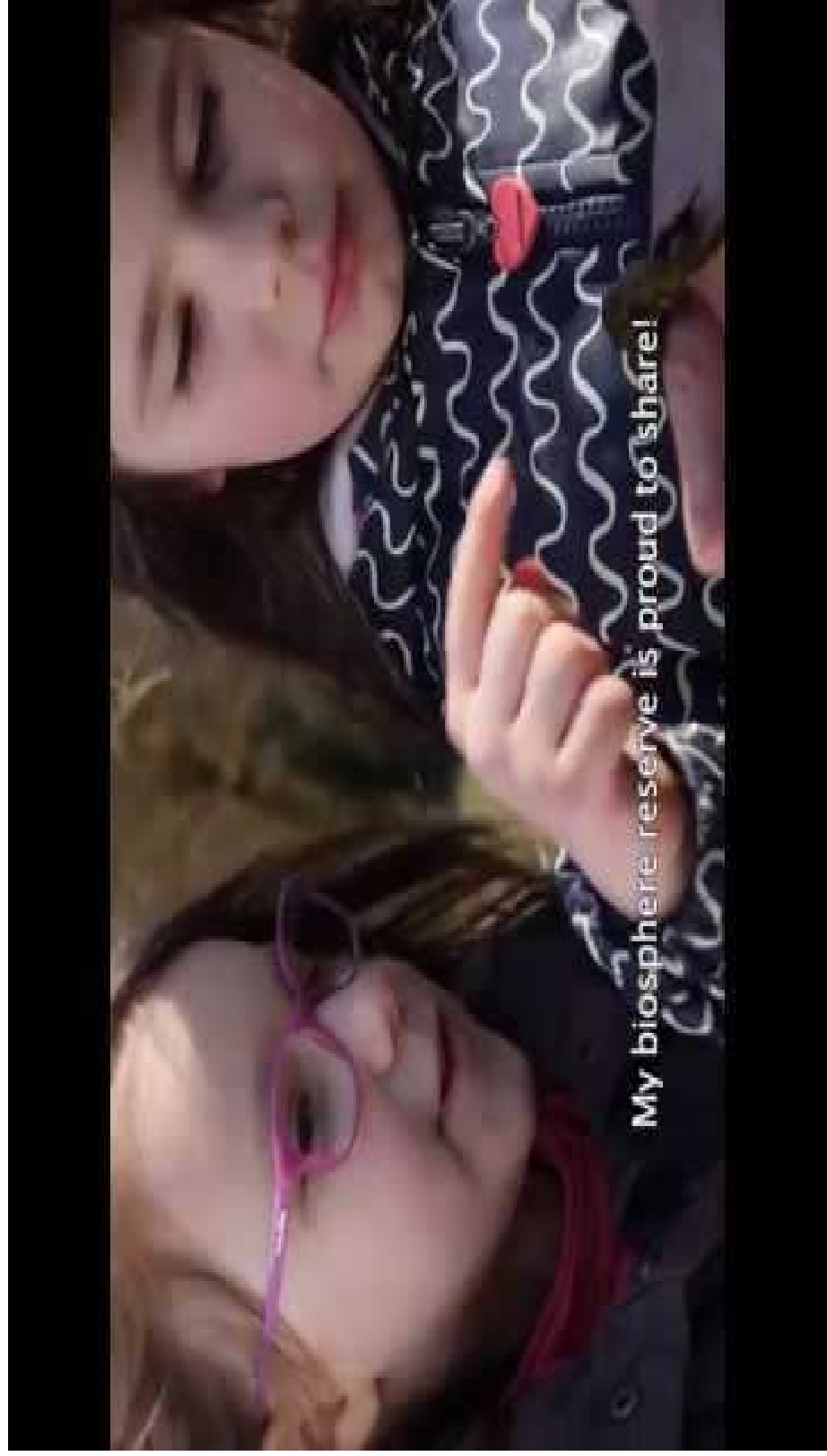


CHILE | JUAN FERNÁNDEZ ARCHIPELAGO BIOSPHERE RESERVE | SUSTAINABLE FISHING PRACTICES



The Juan Fernandez Archipelago Biosphere Reserve in Chile is situated 650 km from the Chilean coast in the Pacific Ocean. It encompasses the entire archipelago including the islands of Robinson Crusoe, Alexander Selkirk and Santa Clara, as well as all the islets in the area. With 262,000 km² of protected ocean and a committed community, the reserve is working towards securing the unique biodiversity of the archipelago. The islanders make their livelihood from fishing rock lobster (*Jasus frontalis*), which like 90% of the creatures that inhabit the waters around the islands is unique to the Juan Fernandez Archipelago. As the rock lobster supports 70% of the economy, local fishers follow century-old practical rules to protect this valuable species lobsters and their livelihoods. Lobster fishing on Robinson Crusoe Island is only allowed between October and mid-May and the specimens caught must be at least 12 to 14 years old. Sustainable fishing practices over the last 120 years highlight elements of traditional management, the use of passive environmentally friendly gear and collaborative efforts to collect key fishery data.

- Other related SDGs: SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production, SDG 13 Climate Action





MAB and Youth engagement

Regional & National youth forums and networks

- Many countries are organizing regional or national youth forums.
- They have also created their youth networks to ensure the implementation of initiatives.



2017 MAB

YOU

FORUM



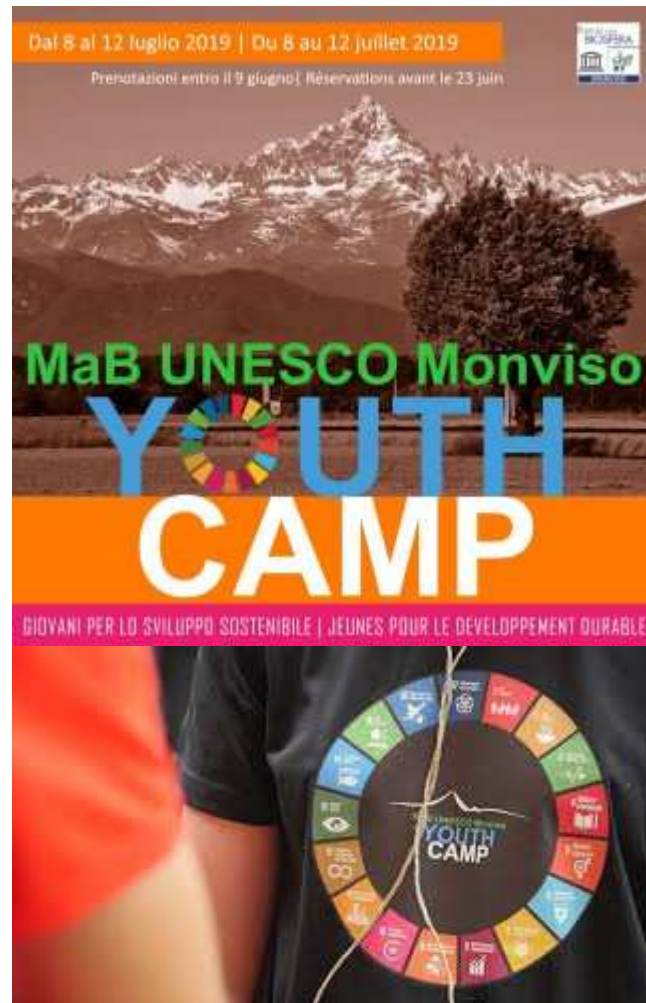
2019 MAB Youth Forum



Participants of the 2nd MAB Youth Forum, China. © Changbai Mountain

- From 15 to 18 September 2019, 176 young people from 83 countries gathered in the Changbaishan Biosphere Reserve in China for the 2nd MAB Youth Forum.
- UNESCO has brought young people together to work together under the theme 'Committed to Biodiversity'.

Monviso MAB UNESCO Youth Camp



- The project was initiated following the MaB Youth Forum in 2017.
- The **Monviso MAB UNESCO Youth Camp** is a residential campus of 5 days, held in 2018 and 2019.
- Very much a replicable format

References

- *Lima Action Plan for UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (2016-2025)*
- *MAB Strategy 2015-2025*
- *UNESCO moving forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*
- <https://en.unesco.org/themes/biodiversity/decade>
- <https://en.unesco.org/ocean-decade>
- <http://zeroplastic.islandbiosphere.org/Contingut.aspx?IdPub=1026>
- <http://www.islandbiosphere.org/>
- <https://en.unesco.org/mab/about>
- <https://en.unesco.org/mab/strategy/goodpractices>

Thank you