



# Newsletter

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## 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the WNICBR

8th meeting of World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves was held in May 22-26 in Menorca, Spain. The conference was co-hosted by UNESCO, Jeju Island and Spain. Over 100 people from 33 countries participated in the meeting, and successful cases on biodiversity management and ecosystem restoration, environmental vectors (water resources, waste, climate change), tourism, and marine management were presented. Participatory discussions were conducted to implement sustainable development goals and to discuss and define ways of networking for the next five years (2018-2022).

Jeju Secretariat of the WNICBR presented a joint research project on the strategies responding to climate change on BR having been conducted for the past five years, convened a workshop on how to utilize biosphere reserve area as a brand, and held hosted the Steering Committee on Fund-in-Trust Steering

Through the participation in this network meeting, we will continue to promote the status of the Coordinator of the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserve and to cooperate with UNESCO and Menorca in Spain to systematically manage the world network of island and coastal.



## 6<sup>th</sup> UNESCO World Network Island & Coastal Biosphere Reserve Manager Training Course

Recruitment of the participants in the training will be announced at the homepage of UNESCO and Jeju Secretariat. The participants will be selected through the following selection criteria.

<Priorities to be Considered in the Selection Process>

- ⊙ Recently designated biosphere reserves since 2015
- ⊙ Least developed countries
- ⊙ Regions that have not participated in any programme hosted by WNICBR
- ⊙ Equal allocation of participants by continent
- ⊙ The selection will be based on a first-application-first selected basis when other criteria are equal.

It would be a great opportunity to share useful information and to build management capacity.

For more information, you can visit Jeju Secretariat website. <http://wnicbr.jeju.go.kr>.

The organizers of the training hope your keen interest in this programme.



(Training course in 2017)

## Publishing final report on joint research project on climate change

World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves Jeju Secretariat has completed a joint research project to establish a strategy responding to climate change on biosphere reserves, which was undergoing two stages from 2014 to 2017.

The second phase of the project was conducted from March 2015 to March 2017, with the theme of the response strategy on the common vulnerability to climate change for the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves.

- Existing mitigation and adaptation measures as a means of climate change policy
- Protection strategies of protected areas
- International Protected Areas
- Climate change strategies - Ecological vulnerability, social vulnerability, economic vulnerability

The final report was presented at the session

of the 8th World Island Biosphere Conservation Area Network Conference held in Menorca, Spain from May 22 to 26. The final report was published in March, 2018 and can be downloaded from the Jeju Secretariat website <http://wnicbr.jeju.go.kr>.



## An exciting new phase for the Gouritz Cluster Biosphere Reserve (GCBR)

The opportunities are infinite, and the hearts and hands are willing – so watch this space for more exciting news as the story unfolds!

For the past three years since its designation in 2015 (and for *many* years before that) the organization has achieved numerous great successes for the natural environment and people, including landscape scale restoration, the acquisition of property now protected as a nature reserve, a multitude of ongoing and established school partnerships, quarterly insightful and thought-provoking forum meetings, to mention but a few! And this all done through the hard work of an almost entirely volunteer team!

That hard work has now paid off, with the GCBR being fortunate to secure funding allowing it to significantly upscale its activities (including employment of a core permanent staff, and funding for six projects).

Given what the GCBR has achieved so far with limited resources, the sky is the limit in this new phase!

The projects that are planned include:

- continuation of the landscape restoration project *Jobs for Carbon* (planting spekboom to restore landscapes)
- a project that aims to restore ecosystem resilience to a river and wetland system threatened by invasive

alien plants and erosion;

- a water-saving project which includes the creation of constructed wetlands as well as fixing leaking taps in households;
- environmental education through the rollout of the existing successful Green Clubs project in schools;
- bridging the communication and collaboration gap between the GCBR and local authorities; and
- the establishment of a tertiary education institute for skills development in the heart of the biosphere reserve.

Additionally, the GCBR will also have a place to call home, with the official head office being established in the beautiful town of Riversdale. The changes and blessings abound for this passionate little organization!



## Biosphere Reserves of Corvo Island and Graciosa Island celebrated 10 years in September 2017



The biannual meeting of the Portuguese National Committee of the Man & Biosphere Program was held in the Flores Island Biosphere Reserve in September 2017, and was preceded by field trips to the Biosphere Reserves of Corvo Island and Flores Island. At this meeting the Reports on the Periodic Review of the Biosphere Reserves of the Graciosa and Corvo Islands were presented and discussed, due to the fact that they completed, in the same month of September, 10 years since its distinction by UNESCO. The Periodic Review Reports of these Biosphere Reserves were coordinated by their Chairmen of the Management Councils, in a process that involved the local population and actors linked to heritage, culture and

socio-economic development. The Reports obtained the approval of the MaB National Committee. The Regional Secretary for Energy, Environment and Tourism of the Regional Government of the Azores participated in the meeting, stressing the importance of the work carried out over the last 10 years of the Graciosa and Corvo Islands Biosphere Reserves and the Azores' ongoing commitment to the conservation and preservation of natural heritage and to the implementation of a sustainability strategy.

The year 2017 was also important for marking the International Year of Tourism for Sustainable Development, a theme that the Azores Biosphere Reserves promoted throughout the year, with special emphasis on the celebration of International Biosphere Reserves Day, November the 3rd, with several activities for the local population in each of the Biosphere Reserves of the Azores archipelago. Among the 11 Biosphere Reserves that exist in Portugal, there are four in the Azores, namely those of the Graciosa and Corvo Islands designated in 2007, Flores Island, which was designated in 2009, and the Fajãs of São Jorge, whose designation occurred in 2016.

## UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (St. Mary's Reserve)

### Participation in MAB Workshop in Jamaica

Ms. Markysa O'Loughlin, MAB Coordinator for St. Kitts and Nevis, presented the St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve, and the UNESCO MAB National Committee at a MAB Workshop that was held on Monday, March 19 at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel in New Kingston. Activities over the four days included presentations by UNESCO experts, country presentations on proposed sites for biosphere nomination, preparation of the nomination dossier, and a tour of the Cockpit Country. The workshop concluded on Thursday March 22nd, 2018.



## UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (St. Mary's Reserve)

The UNESCO Man and the Biosphere programme in St. Kitts and Nevis continues to be a flag ship UNESCO project, here in St. Kitts, being implemented by the local UNESCO Secretariat, especially among the secondary schools and the residents of Cayon, and keys where the Reserve is located. In January in particular the students were engage in an extensive tree painting exercise, where students were given the chance to plant various trees on their school premises. The students were very enthusiastic, while they learn of the various agriculture growing and harvesting methods, including; the best time to water plants, how often to weed, when trees will bear etc. Students also interacted by speaking of traditional and medicinal uses of some of the plants like Soursop and Guava leaves. Mr. Winston Caesar, a MAB committee member, provided the necessary tools and guidance to complete this exercise.

Students also prepared items on the day before and created a work plan and executed their plan accordingly by promoting the activity to the school

and gave their presentations on the importance of utilizing reusable bottles.



On Thursday March 2nd, 26 students accompanied by 8 teachers went on a Historical Field Trip of Hermitage Estate in Cayon. The field trip was guided by Mr. Winston Caesar and Mr. Creighton Pencheon, who are members of the local committee on the Reserve. For this activity, students were taught of the cultural and historical importance of the Hermitage Estate.

These activities sensitize the students of the importance of preserving heritage, and encourage physical fitness accordingly, expose and educate students about Hermitage Estate and Hermitage Bay to the Cayon and Keys communities.

## Department of the Environment and Emergencies – Cabildo of Gran Canaria

### ECO-SCHOOLS

The Ecoescuelas (Eco-Schools) project, proposed by the Gran Canaria Biosphere Reserve (GCBR) Grass Roots Participation Council and included in the GCBR Action Plan 2013-2020, is a project aimed at the schools within the GCBR. Within the seven municipal districts that form part of the GCBR (Agaete, La Aldea de San Nicolás, Tejeda, San Bartolomé de Tirajana, Artenara, Mogán and San Mateo), the school population is a very important part of both the present and the future of the GCBR, which is why the objective of Eco-Schools is to roll out sustainability strategies in the schools in the Reserve that involve students, teachers and families. This is an opportunity for both students

and the education community to explain what it means to live in a Biosphere Reserve and to make their school an example of sustainability. Ecoescuelas is also a project that attempts to foster the open and active participation of students in maintaining the natural and cultural values of the natural environment that they live in.

The objectives of the actions to be implemented in this programme are:

- To involve the different social sectors of schools, promoting grass-roots participation and action
- To publicise and disseminate the natural, ethnographic and cultural values of the Gran Canaria Biosphere Reserve
- Best sustainable practises in water, waste and energy
- To raise environmental awareness among the population
- To exchange experiences and materials between schools

The Ecoescuelas (Eco-Schools) Project started in 2014 and is still in effect. It is implemented in a total of 13 schools and over 500 activities/workshops have been organised, directly involving over 1300 students.

These activities have included: workshops on re-cycling, laying out a botanical trail, repopulation in the immediate surroundings, refurbishing courtyards with native flora and maintenance and galvanising allotment activities, discovering the medicinal uses of these plants by involving relatives as a source of traditional knowledge, etc.

Other activities, such as "Cuando la vida era en blanco y negro" (When life was in black and white), which consists of asking students and their families for black and white photographs of the landscapes of their municipal districts, celebrations, holidays, work, portraits (when they were young and of adults), etc. The aim of all this is to be able "to paint" a picture of the area in which their parents and families grew up in the past, to be able to compare their lives with the lives of their grand-parents and great grand-parents.

Letter-writing is also important. This involves each group of children introducing themselves, recounting the peculiarities of the area they live in and how they celebrate their festivities, what the area they live in is like, the weather, etc.

The children taking part in the Ecoescuelas Project have also worked in co-operation with the Wildlife Recovery Centre in releasing Cory's shearwaters that have been rescued when they fall to the ground on their first flight, dazzled by the street lighting, and loggerhead turtles found caught up in fishing nets and plastic waste. In this activity, the children have learned about the life of these endangered birds that nest on the coasts of the island.

Other schools are implementing eco-audits that seek a more sustainable use of water, energy and the proper recycling of waste. They raise awareness among the children and promote a more critical attitude towards the consumption of these resources and act as an incentive to implement these same strategies at home.

Workshops on putting together a herb collection with plants from the surrounding environment and

excursions to experience nature to its full with all five senses have been a highly enriching experience, both for students and the teachers who have had the chance to give their classes in the immense laboratory of the Gran Canaria Biosphere Reserve. The aim of exchanging experiences among the schools involved is to create an "Eco-Schools Network" to act as the driving force of education.

