

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**International Coordinating Council of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme**

Seventeenth session

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Item 9.2 of the Provisional Agenda: Seville + 5 Recommendations Addressed to the Secretariat

1. At its 16th session, the MAB Council had assigned a priority rating to the recommendations addressed to the Secretariat emanating from the Seville + 5 meeting. The Council had urged the Secretariat to start as soon as possible with these tasks and to report back on the progress made at the next session of the Council. The Secretariat first requested the advice of the MAB Bureau in March 2001 on action undertaken/planned to meet these recommendations. The MAB Council is invited to provide comments on the activities undertaken and information below.

All Seville + 5 recommendations

2. The Secretariat, in conformity with the Council's request (para 82 of the ICC Report), has published the Seville + 5 recommendations on the MABnet as a "Checklist for Action" according to responsibility for implementation (individual biosphere reserves, MAB National Committees, regional networks, Secretariat) (<http://www.unesco.org/mab/mabicc/2000/eng/SevilleAction.htm>). Hard copies of this Checklist were distributed to all MAB National Committees and Biosphere Reserve focal points together with the green ICC Report (which includes the complete set of Pamplona recommendations), calling attention to the action to be taken.

Comments on 'Action taken/suggested action', by recommendation

A.1 The MAB Secretariat should co-ordinate with the Secretariats of the relevant multi-lateral environmental agreements (e.g. the Convention on Biological Diversity) to promote biosphere reserves as instruments for their implementation at the national level, as possible through MAB National Committees. Guidelines should be prepared to harmonize research initiatives concerning the different conventions, for implementation at the national level.

3. The Bureau agreed that one of the most effective means of encouraging countries to use biosphere reserves to implement the multilateral agreements would be to prepare a short publication on 'Biosphere reserves and their relation to the environmental conventions'... The Bureau had made a number of specific recommendations on the target audience, style and partners for preparation. The Secretariat contacted UNEP-WCMC which has submitted a project outline for this document.

Proposed Action:

4. The MAB Council is invited to request its Bureau to examine the outline for the draft project summary submitted by the WCMC, and to oversee the preparation of this document with the MAB Secretariat.

A.2 The implementation of the BRIM programme should be accelerated, including explicit recognition of the need to integrate the social sciences in its activities. In this connection the BRIM meeting foreseen in Kiev (2001) should be used inter alia to generate inputs for the Conference of the European ministers of environment to be held in 2002.

5. See working document SC-02/CONF.201/9 and document SC-02/CONF.201/Inf.4.

A.3 The Secretariat should advise and act as a broker for Member States and groups of Member States/regional networks to help them to identify and submit proposals to potential donors/financing agencies and investors for strengthening biosphere reserves and, as appropriate, national biosphere reserve networks and regional networks. Special attention should be given to developing projects which serve to implement the recommendations of the periodic review.

6. The Bureau had requested the Secretariat to formulate a ‘planned strategy’ on its role as an adviser and broker for projects on biosphere reserves for discussion at its next meeting. For this the Secretariat submits below the following strategy consisting of a set of “guiding principles” and a list of potential regional/inter-regional initiatives. The draft below, if the Council so agrees, could be presented as a small brochure and/or as a page in the MABNet with hyper links to the funding agencies/organization concerned.

Proposed Action:

7. The MAB Council is invited to examine and comment on the following draft:

PROJECTS ON BIOSPHERE RESERVES¹ – TOWARDS A PLANNED STRATEGY

Guiding principles

Why projects concerning biosphere reserves?

Biosphere reserves have multiple functions – conservation, sustainable development, research and monitoring, training and education – and, as a member of the World Network, have a responsibility for international co-operation in these fields. Many biosphere reserve authorities, and especially those in developing countries and in transition countries, and/or those designated well before the adoption of the Seville Strategy, do not have the capacity nor the resources to enable them to meet this global mandate. Countries and biosphere reserve authorities are therefore encouraged to seek funding in the form of projects and/or endowment funds from appropriate donor countries,

¹ These guiding principles refer specifically to biosphere reserves and potential biosphere reserves but can also be used to guide the elaboration of projects for similarly managed sites.

multilateral funding sources (such as UNDP, GEF), regional development banks or agencies and, in certain cases, the private sector².

Countries vs groups of countries

Countries are sovereign and have their own national priorities in the broad field of environment and development. In elaborating projects which focus geographically on sites which are biosphere reserves, mention of their biosphere reserve status should be explicit. However, projects which involve adjacent countries, or groups of countries offer more scope for playing out the mandate of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves for international cooperation and information sharing and should be given priority. Projects to develop transboundary biosphere reserves (TBRs) should receive special attention, using the recommendations endorsed by the MAB International Coordinating Council.

UNESCO's role

UNESCO's financial resources and the capacity of staff located both in headquarters in Paris and in the various field offices to help with project development design and implementation are limited. This being said, UNESCO can certainly offer technical guidance, scientific advice as to the orientation of the project, help identify suitable funding sources and provide supporting letters. In certain circumstances, UNESCO can grant seed funds to aid countries and groups of countries in elaborating projects and/or securing appropriate counterpart contributions. The UNESCO Field Offices are particularly well placed to advise countries and help the regional biosphere reserve networks to develop and apply for projects and to build synergistic links with relevant ongoing and planned activities in the region. For this, these Offices can act as a catalyst to build partnerships amongst national authorities, biosphere reserve management, other projects and programmes and the private sector. In this connection, these Offices can also help to improve the information flow, to ensure that MAB National Committees are aware of initiatives for projects involving "their" biosphere reserves, although their biosphere reserve status may not be explicit. *Vice versa*, MAB National Committees, UNESCO Commissions and UNESCO Permanent Delegations are encouraged to keep the UNESCO Secretariat informed of relevant projects in their countries.

Priority for projects on biosphere reserves

Priority should be given to projects aiming at making biosphere reserves fully functional with effective participation of local communities and different sectors of society and to projects which implement the recommendations for specific biosphere reserves resulting from the periodic review of the Statutory Framework. Projects should also be sought to implement the recommendations of the regional biosphere reserve networks, especially to create new biosphere reserves in under-represented areas and Transboundary Biosphere Reserves.

Content and orientation of projects

Projects on biosphere reserves should give emphasis to UNESCO's mandate in education, science and culture, and to the MAB approach, promoting the integration of the natural and the social sciences. Attention should be paid to cultural sensitivity, participation and benefits for local communities, tailoring scientific research to resolve natural resource use problems; fostering dialogue amongst different stakeholders, conflict resolution, biodiversity education and awareness raising, and training of specialists. Preference should be given to relatively small-scale projects with a long-term,

² It is recommended that projects with the private sector follow the UNESCO guidelines.

holistic view, and the building up of local and national capacity for land and water management and sustainable development.

Modalities for project execution

Project execution should whenever possible be the responsibility of the national or local institutions, and preference should be given to calling on experts and NGOs from the country or region concerned. In certain cases, some biosphere reserve authorities request, or are solicited to become recipient of, a number of projects funded by different bodies, with different objectives. For this, the biosphere reserve authority is encouraged to use the biosphere reserve as an integrating and coordinating mechanism giving coherence and direction to these various activities.

Capitalize on formal existence of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

The WNBR is the only intergovernmental network of sites of its kind devoted to meeting conservation, sustainable development and scientific co-operation objectives. It formally exists through the adoption of the Statutory Framework for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves by the UNESCO General Conference in 1995 (under 28C/Resolution 2.4). Projects on biosphere reserves should use their status as members of the WNBR as an attestation to their international importance and a guarantee to their long-term commitment to international conservation and sustainable development efforts.

Use the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves and Seville + 5 recommendations

These are the technical orientations for the work of the WNBR, resulting from international expert meetings (Seville 1995 and Pamplona in 2000) and endorsed by UNESCO and the MAB International Coordinating Council. They are therefore government-endorsed recommended actions at the site, national and international levels, which can serve to guide and justify specific projects involving biosphere reserves. The Seville Strategy implementation indicators should be used as part of the results-based project design and implementation.

Capitalize on the MAB structures: MAB National Committees and the MAB Council

MAB National Committees or Focal Points should proactively work with the GEF National Focal Points, the UNDP Resident Representatives and national contacts for the various development banks and/or regional economic development bodies, and/or the private sector, to develop projects involving biosphere reserves. The MAB National Committees should also serve as a technical bodies for ensuring quality control, transparency and accountability. They should also ensure appropriate liaisons amongst government authorities, academics and NGOs at the national level, as well as cooperation with the MAB National Committees of other countries. In turn, the MAB Council and its Bureau can be attributed with being responsible for continually monitoring and evaluating the overall implementation of the MAB Programme and the development of the WNBR, again giving an assurance on long-term commitment and quality control.

Take advantage of the regional MAB and Biosphere Reserve networks

Although these regional networks differ in size, structure and operations, every effort should be taken to use the planned meetings, training courses, publications and web-sites of these networks for information exchanges and capacity building. The regional biosphere reserve networks offer the added values of providing a framework for activities in a number of sites within similar ecological and/or cultural systems, often providing a gradient of parameters. They are tailor-made for facilitating

exchanges and pooling of resources, and they can address the application of the ecosystem approach in “bioregions”, and building large-scale ecological corridors.

Use biosphere reserves as tools for implementing the main Environmental Conventions

- Convention on Biological Diversity: projects should build on the fact that MAB’s emphasis on the ecosystem approach and sustainable use of the landscape fits well with the aims of the Convention. (see “Solving the puzzle: the ecosystem approach and biosphere reserves” available from www.unesco.org/mab).
- Ramsar Wetland Convention: a joint Ramsar-MAB workplan has been elaborated by the Secretariats, under which a selection of sites with both BR and Ramsar status have been proposed, giving synergy to this work (contact the MAB Secretariat for details).
- UN Convention on Combating Desertification: biosphere reserves can be site-based tools for integrated land management and can be used for testing out and demonstrating approaches to combating desertification, as stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding concluded between UNESCO and the UNCCD as from November 1999. To this end, a joint project proposal is currently being developed by UNESCO-MAB, the United Nations University (UNU) and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) entitled “Sustainable Management of Marginal Drylands”. Using an interregional comparative approach, this project will focus on some biosphere reserves in Northern Africa and Asia, as well as similarly managed areas, with a view to rehabilitate degraded drylands in buffer and transition zones using relatively undisturbed core areas as reference sites for potential natural vegetation.
- World Heritage Convention: Certain core areas of biosphere reserves meet the criteria of outstanding universal value of the World Heritage Convention. The presence of a buffer zone and an outer transition area, and particularly the focus of biosphere reserves on people’s participation, serve to reinforce the protection necessary for World Heritage. (See Article by M. Batisse in *PARKS* Vol. 11 (1), 2001).

Highlight Biosphere Reserves during the International Year of Mountains (IYM) (2002)

The MAB Bureau in September 2001 noted a list of activities under the IYM which are of direct relevance to the MAB Programme (see document SC-01/CONF.217/8 paragraph 104) to which future projects could refer, as a concrete follow up. An up-dated list of the activities are contained in document SC-02/CONF.201/Inf.5. Of particular importance to biosphere reserves is the “Mountain Research Initiative” by IGBP, IHDP and GTOS in which mountain biosphere reserves could be used as monitoring sites for assessing the impact of global change. Moreover, the new initiative of UNESCO, IUCN and WWF on the importance of natural sacred sites for biodiversity conservation will include mountain biosphere reserves to explore the mechanisms of culture-based environmental conservation.

Biosphere reserves and the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) (2002)

Under the auspices of the CBD, a draft set of “International Guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and coastal, and mountain ecosystems” were drawn up in 2001. These make explicit references to the biosphere reserve concept and to the WNBR. UNESCO has been invited to consider testing and applying them. The MAB Secretariat has therefore invited Members States to prepare project proposals on ecotourism in biosphere reserves for this purpose (see MAB Circular Letter 6/2001). Several promising proposals have already been received by the MAB Secretariat.

Enhance visibility

All project documents, reports, information brochures, web-sites should mention and make cross references to biosphere reserve status under UNESCO's MAB Programme. MAB National Committees should also inform the MAB Secretariat of any new projects or project results so that this information may be incorporated as appropriate into MAB publications and the MABnet.

Project initiatives by region

The Secretariat is serving as a "broker" and/or technical adviser to the countries concerned to help develop and implement the following projects involving biosphere reserves in the period 2002-2003 and beyond:

Africa

- UNEP-GEF/UNESCO-MAB regional project "Building Scientific and Technical Capacity for Effective Management and Sustainable Use of Dryland Biodiversity in West African Biosphere Reserves" This PDF-B Phase is being carried out in 2001 with the aim of identifying co-financing for a full project over a four year period.
- "W" Transboundary biosphere reserve project (Benin, Burkina Faso, Niger), in cooperation with UNDP and the EU.
- Possibility of elaborating a project for biosphere reserves in Southern Africa in conjunction with the IUCN-Sustainable Use Initiative, as follow up to BRAAF and AfriMAB.
- Possibility of joint project with FIBA-IUCN-WWF on coastal and marine ecosystems in West Africa.
- Under the former Mananara Nord project Phase II in Madagascar, UNESCO has financed the elaboration of a project for Phase III, which has been submitted to the European Union for funding, for implementation by the Malagasy authorities.
- BRIM-AAAS project for building up capacity for biodiversity information management in six biosphere reserves in Africa.

Arab States

- The UNEP-GEF Secretariat has indicated its interest to explore the possibility of a regional project in the Arab region along the same lines as the UNESCO-MAB/UNEP-GEF project in West Africa.

Asia

- Project on Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve, Cambodia with the Asian Development Bank.
- Project on cooperative management of Siberut Island Biosphere Reserve (Ommersteyn Foundation)
- Altai region – exploring possibility of establishing a TBR (China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russian Federation) with partners such as the German Government.
- Two or three projects within EABRN and SeaBRNet on transboundary cooperation using biosphere reserves, for example exploring the possibility of establishing a TBR in the Lower Tumen River area (China, DPR Korea and the Russian Federation) with UNDP.
- UNESCO is submitting a complementary project to ASPACO (see below) on the Pacific Islands for funding by the private sector.
- A regional project on Biosphere Reserves in Sustainable Management of Coastal and Island Systems in Southeast Asia and East Asia, based on the Ecotones network, SeaBRNet, EABRN and ASPACO (multidonors).

Latin America and Caribbean

- UNESCO is negotiating with the Inter American Institute for Global Change Research a project to be implemented in the Mata Atlantica Biosphere Reserve in Brazil.
- UNESCO, in cooperation with the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), has submitted a large project proposal on Eco-corridors in Latin America to a number of potential donors such as UNEP-GEF and the Turner Foundation. This proposal includes Biosphere Reserves, natural World Heritage sites, National Parks and other protected areas.
- Possibility of elaboration of a project for the proposed biosphere reserve network for the Caribbean Islands.

Europe

- Exploring possible thematic projects with support from EU and bilateral donors, including for South East Europe (SEE) - to be discussed at EuroMAB 2002.
- The UNEP-GEF Secretariat has indicated its interest to explore the possibility of a regional project for transition countries along the same lines as the UNESCO-MAB/UNEP-GEF project in West Africa.

Inter-regional

- The ASPACO Project (Asia-Pacific Co-operation for the Sustainable Use of Renewable Resources in Biosphere Reserves and Similarly Managed Areas) implemented by UNESCO and funded by the Government of Japan.
- UNESCO is implementing the REDBIOS network involving biosphere reserves and potential sites in the Spanish Canary Islands, Morocco, Senegal, Cape Verde, Azores and Madeira (Portugal). Spain is the main sponsor.
- UNESCO-MAB, in collaboration with The United Nations University (UNU) and the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) is preparing a joint project entitled "Sustainable Management of Marginal Drylands" which will include biosphere reserves in Northern Africa and Asia.
- UNESCO-MAB, in collaboration with IUCN and other partners, such as the UNESCO World Heritage Centre is preparing a project on Natural Sacred Sites for Biodiversity Conservation, which will include biosphere reserves in Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

A.4 *The MAB Secretariat should facilitate the establishment of a task force, including biosphere reserve managers and local specialists, on developing quality economies at site level. Issues which such a task force should consider include:*

- *defining 'quality'*
- *development of criteria (social, environmental and economic)*
- *branding and the criteria behind the image or the meaning of the brand*
- *critical analysis of branding, labelling, marketing, and associated mechanisms/structures (including successes and failures)*
- *formulating communication and marketing strategies for biosphere reserves addressing all sectors, with specific follow-up actions.*
- *use of the media.*

8. Based on nominations submitted by Member States for the UNESCO Roster of Experts on the Development of Quality Economies in Biosphere Reserves, the MAB Secretariat has established a Task Force on the same topic. The composition of the Roster and the Core Members of the open-ended Task Force can be consulted on the UNESCO MABnet. The first meeting of the Task Force

will be held on 21 March 2002 in conjunction with the MAB-ICC. This meeting will be open for all interested MAB Delegates and observers. A separate information document available to the MAB-ICC highlights some of the key issues identified for examination of the Task Force. However, it is expected that the exact work programme of the Task Force, which will be based on the above-mentioned list of key issues, will be established only at its first meeting.

9. The Task Force is expected to carry-out most of its deliberations using e-mail communications and a dedicated section on the MABnet, thereby making it possible for a majority of interested MAB National Committees, MAB Focal Points and Biosphere Reserves to actively participate in the discussions.

Proposed Action:

10. The MAB Council is invited to comment on this work.

A.5 The regional networks, with the assistance of the Secretariat, should undertake a survey and critical analysis of existing biosphere reserve co-ordination structures in the coming months, with the objective of developing a set of guidelines on the creation, roles and functioning of such structures. The Secretariat should ensure that the Advisory Committee should pay particular attention to criterion 7 (c) of Article 4 on co-ordination mechanisms when evaluating new biosphere reserve proposals.

11. In March 2000, the Bureau noted that this question was becoming more and more important, as new biosphere reserves consisted increasingly of clusters of different land management entities and no longer corresponded to traditional protected areas governed and managed by one single unit. The question of defining responsibilities and co-ordination was therefore becoming one of the most crucial issues for biosphere reserves management. The Bureau agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to undertake a survey and critical analysis of existing biosphere reserves structures, identify those of particular interest, conduct a more detailed study of some of them, and, as a second step, organize a meeting to compare experiences and elaborate some guidelines on the issue. The Bureau considered that this work should include an analysis of those specific legislations on biosphere reserves which have been adopted in some countries; the mechanisms which are set up in biosphere reserves to involve the various local stakeholders in the decision making should also be examined, thus responding to recommendation B2 of the Pamplona meeting.

12. Since the Bureau meeting, a preliminary survey of the existing mechanisms in 18 biosphere reserves³ has been carried out on the basis of the available data within the MAB Secretariat, i.e. mostly information included in the nomination forms.

13. This very preliminary survey has made it possible to identify the issues that should be studied in more depth, such as:

- biosphere reserve zonation and competence of the various bodies for each zone,

³ The sites concerned are: Fitzgerald River and Bookmark, Australia; Grosses Walsertal, Austria; Mata Atlantica, Brazil; Lac St Pierre, Canada; Mont Ventoux, France; Rhoen and Schaalsee, Germany; Siberut, Indonesia; Amboseli, Kenya; Calakmul, Mexico; Mananara Nord, Madagascar; Arganeraie and Oasis du Sud marocain, Morocco; Manu, Peru; Kogelberg, South Africa; Entlebuch, Switzerland; Ranong, Thailand.

- the competent authorities at various levels (national, regional and local) and how they interact,
- specific mechanisms put in place for the biosphere reserve and its field of competence,
- consultation with local communities (mechanisms, periodicity, issues discussed),
- representation of the scientific community, scope and limits of the management plan, etc.

14. The preliminary study has also shown that solutions are very different from one biosphere reserve to another, and very much depend on the overall legal, institutional and cultural context of the country concerned. Finally, it has shown that the data available in nomination forms are not detailed enough to study the question and that they generally need to be expanded and clarified. It is therefore proposed to continue this study as follows:

- Ask the authorities of the biosphere reserves which have already been studied to examine the preliminary text and clarify the issues which were found unclear.
- Invite all biosphere reserves, by a MAB circular letter to Member States, to contact the Secretariat if they are willing to participate in the study.
- Request Member States, by the same circular letter, to identify experts in legal and institutional matters in order to constitute a roster of experts.
- Prepare a general framework of points to be examined and send it to all biosphere reserves which have accepted to participate.
- Convene, at a later stage, a task force to analyse all the material which has been gathered and to elaborate guidelines on co-ordination structures.

Proposed Action:

15. The MAB Council is invited to study and comment on the above proposal.

A.6 To improve follow-up of recommendations on the periodic review, the ICC and the Secretariat should ensure that information on measures taken should be provided in time for the following meeting of the Advisory Committee.

16. The Secretariat confirms that this has been done systematically (see document SC-02/CONF.201/3).

B.1 The MAB Secretariat should develop a concise, user-friendly, practical guide to the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework to be translated into as many languages as possible with the assistance of the National Committees. The guide should highlight the importance of sustainable development and cross-link the different goals and objectives both within and between the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework. It should also clarify the added values of biosphere reserves and their products to social development and provide a clearer definition of MAB services, products and tools for sustainable development for national decision makers.

17. The MAB Bureau considered that this practical guide should take a similar form as the brochure *Solving the Puzzle: The Ecosystem Approach and Biosphere Reserves* and should present the results of the survey of the Seville implementation indicators and be illustrated by good working examples. The Bureau welcomed the Secretariat's proposal to update and rework the document 'Solving the Puzzle' as this 'Practical Guide'. MAB National Committees would be encouraged to make their own language versions using the basic illustrations provided by the Secretariat.

18. As this "Practical Guide" would be a key component of the MAB communications strategy, the Secretariat has included a proposal for its preparation in working document SC-02/CONF.201/8.

Proposed Action:

19. The MAB Council is invited to examine the Secretariats' proposal for the "Practical Guide" in document SC-02/CONF.201/8

In addition, the Secretariat should use the results of the survey on the implementation of the Seville Strategy indicators to create a web-accessible database of information about each biosphere reserve and encourage non-respondents to provide their information/reply.

20. The Bureau noted that certain data obtained from the survey are being incorporated into the Biosphere Reserve Directory on the *MABNet* for each biosphere reserve concerned. This information will be updated on an annual basis (the last update was done in January 2002) with requests for information sent to the contact persons of individual biosphere reserves. One important aspect of the information available on the *MABnet* is the 'Related Links', where links are made to other initiatives on the site level (such as TEMS Sites under GTOS, ILTER sites, Ramsar Wetlands etc.). This is particularly important to BRIM since the ICC at its sixteenth session recommended that BRIM should build on existing relevant monitoring initiatives.

21. The Bureau also noted that the research and monitoring aspects of the MAB database were being expanded, thus allowing users to perform different types of queries throughout the whole database. Research and monitoring can now be searched by typing different keywords. In the near future, it will also be possible to search using predefined lists under four different categories: abiotic, biodiversity, socio-economic and integrated monitoring. This has been developed within the framework of the BRIM programme.

B.2 *The Secretariat should help Member States and/or regional networks to devise their own guidelines for identifying the stakeholders concerned for the three zones and the three functions of biosphere reserves. Such guidelines should be aimed at facilitating stakeholder participation in the practical management of biosphere reserves.*

22. See A.5 above.

B.3 *The MAB Secretariat should, in co-operation with biosphere reserve co-ordinators and MAB national committees, develop on-line and hardcopy tutorials on the concept of biosphere reserves and the Seville Strategy and disseminate through appropriate processes such as workshops, favouring a participatory approach and integrating indigenous knowledge and appropriate communication technologies.*

23. The need for such “tutorial” material for use by Biosphere Reserve managers was highlighted at a number of regional meetings, for example the IberoMAB meeting in September 2001. The proposals for the “Practical Guide to MAB” are aimed at meeting this need.

Proposed Action:

24. The MAB Council is invited to endorse this position and to review the proposals for the “Practical Guide to MAB” (see B 1 above).

The MAB Secretariat should also help MAB National Committees to develop and implement integrated courses in biodiversity conservation and resource management particularly in biosphere reserves with emphasis on the ecosystem approach.

25. In this context, of particular relevance and utility will be the guidelines being prepared by the MAB Secretariat on the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach in biosphere reserves. These guidelines are also intended to contribute to guidelines on the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach which will be developed by the Convention on Biodiversity’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice by the end of 2003.

26. Integrated courses in biodiversity conservation and resource management are the leitmotif of the *Ecole régionale post-universitaire d’aménagement intégré des forêts tropicales* (ERAIFT), the regional graduate school on integrated forest management for francophone Africa. Other relevant training activities include the UNESCO-MAB Training Seminar on Biosphere Reserves for specialists in the Russian Federation and Belarus, held in Krasnoyarsk (Russian Federation) in June 2001. Training activities on biosphere reserves have also been identified as one of the priorities for South East Europe for the next few years, to be led by the UNESCO Venice Office.

Proposed Action:

27. The MAB Council is invited to comments on these initiatives.

B.4 *The MAB Secretariat should provide support for the compilation, dissemination and critical analysis of national experiences of the review process, possibly through workshops. The MAB Secretariat, including UNESCO’s regional offices, should also provide support, when requested, for the preparation of reviews and implementation of recommendations.*

28. See document SC-02/CONF.201/3 on the Periodic Review.

C.1 *The MAB Secretariat should use existing overviews of the different conventions of relevance to the MAB programme to prepare guidelines on their implementation in the framework of MAB. These should be translated in as many different languages as possible, with assistance from the MAB National Committees.*

29. See A.1 above.