

MAB in Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwe Man and Biosphere Committee brings together a broad range of stakeholders. Many more are expected to join the efforts to establish a model area for conservation and development.

The following organisations are members of the MAB Committee

University of Zimbabwe
Forestry Commission
Zimbabwe Wildlife and Environment Society
UZ Kariba Lake Research Station
The Zimbabwe Academy of Sciences
UZ Institute of Environmental Studies
The Zambezi Society
National University of Science and Technology
Environmental Management Authority
National Commission for UNESCO
Parks and Wildlife Management Authority
CAMPFIRE
Bindusa State University
Africa University



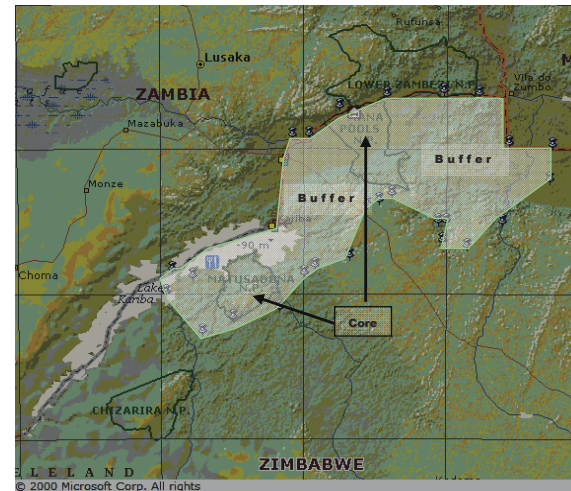
The Middle Zambezi Biosphere Reserve (MZBR)

The Middle Zambezi Biosphere Reserve in Zimbabwe was inscribed on the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) by the International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) for the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) on 2 June 2010 during the 22nd session of the ICC held in Paris.

Stretching over approximately 40,000 km² in the Zambezi valley, the site features riverine and terrestrial ecosystems, unique to the subcontinent, including part of Lake Kariba, the world's largest man-made lake.

The Mana Pools National Park, part of the core area, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Controlled safari sport hunting in parts of the buffer zone provides employment for hundreds of people, while the lake caters for an important fishery industry.

The area also comprises human settlements, notably the town of Kariba, which depends largely on fishing in Lake Kariba for protein and income. The total human population is approx. 40000. The fishery of the pelagic fish, *Limnothrissa miodon*, with an annual output of about 30,000 tonnes estimated at a value of US\$40 million, rivals major lake fisheries in the region.

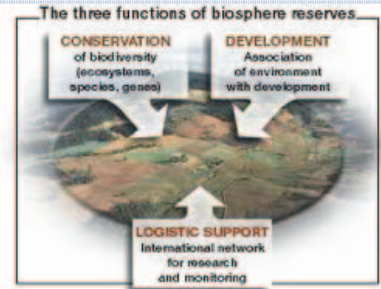


THE BIOSPHERE RESERVE - CONCEPT AND TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Within UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) Biosphere Reserves are a concept and a tool to achieve a sustainable balance between conservation of biological diversity, promoting human development and maintaining associated cultural values.

Nominated by governments, BR are internationally recognised terrestrial, coastal or marine areas, intended to fulfil three complementary functions:

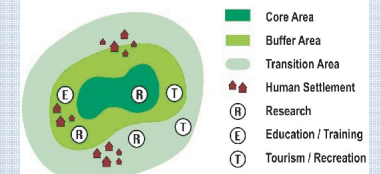
- **The Conservation function**
Protect threatened genetic resources, species, ecosystems and landscapes
- **The Development function**
Foster sustainable economic and human development compatible with conservation
- **The Logistic function**
Facilitate demonstration projects; environmental education/training; research and monitoring in function of the conservation and development functions.



Ideally, a BR has three elements allowing it to fulfil these functions:

- One or more **protected areas** to conserve biodiversity; monitor ecosystems and undertake non-destructive research and non consumptive recreation
- A clearly identified **buffer zone**, surrounding or adjoining the core areas to provide a phased change from non consumptive activity to mixed use
- A **transition area** with more flexible sustainable socio-economic use

Structure of a model biosphere reserve.



For additional information on MAB and the Middle Zambezi Biosphere Reserve:

The MAB National Committee

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The Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB) and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR)

The Man and Biosphere Programme was launched as a long-term intergovernmental and interdisciplinary scientific programme by UNESCO's member states in 1970 as a direct result of the Intergovernmental Conference of Experts on the Scientific Basis for Rational Use and Conservation of the Resources of the Biosphere, known as *the Biosphere Conference*, organised by UNESCO in 1968.

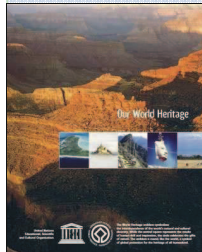
The focus of the research, monitoring, education and pilot projects within the MAB programme, has been on the search for trade-offs and balance between the human responsibility to maintain nature and conserve biodiversity and, the human need to use natural resources for enhancing social and economic well-being of peoples

Based on the concept of *Biosphere Reserve* developed with different partners, in particular IUCN, a Worldwide Network of Biosphere Reserves was launched in 1976, with currently 531 sites in 105 countries.

The WNBR is governed by its International Coordinating Council (ICC), with UNESCO acting as its secretariat.

Three major World Congresses have guided the methodology of the programme: the first in Minsk (1983); the second in Seville (1995); and the third in Madrid (2008).

Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore Safari areas: World Heritage Site and core area of the MZBR



The World Heritage List of places of **Outstanding Universal Value** was created after the adoption, in 1972, of the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, known as the *World Heritage Convention*. Currently 187 states parties have ratified the convention.

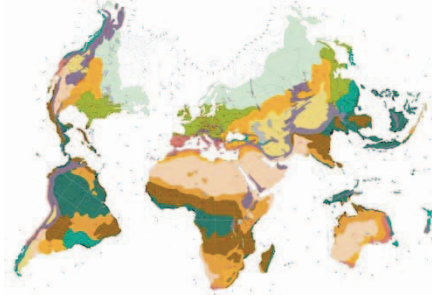
Whilst fully respecting the national sovereignty, and without prejudice to property rights provided by national legislation, the States Parties to the Convention recognize that the protection of the World Heritage is the duty of the international community as a whole.

The list currently includes 108 *natural*; 704 *cultural* and 27 properties in 151 states parties. When a site's unique characteristics are threatened, it can be inscribed on the list of World Heritage in Danger, which is a powerful tool for conservation by giving worldwide visibility to the threats.

Mana Pools was included in the World Heritage list in 1984 based on criteria vii; ix; and x.

During its 34th session, in July 2010, the WH Committee expressed its concern regarding the reported threats to Mana Pools from mining projects.

Zimbabwe has 4 other sites listed: Great Zimbabwe; Khami Ruins and Matobo Hills (cultural) and Victoria Falls/Mosi-oa-Tunya (mixed)



Into the 21st Century: the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves

The first world Congress of the MAB programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves was organised in 1983, in Minsk (then USSR now Belarus) by UNESCO and UNEP in cooperation with FAO and IUCN, and led to a first « Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves »

The second MAB Congress was organised in Seville in 1995, 3 years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), popularly known as the « Rio Conference », which resulted in 4 major global environmental commitments: the UNCED Declaration known as Agenda 21; the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD); the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). saw a clear definition of the BR model and its functions.

In the Seville Declaration, the functions and structure of biosphere reserves were clearly defined; and the Seville strategy became the principal policy document for the MAB programme for more than a decade.

In February 2008, the Third World Congress was held in Madrid, Spain. The debates in Madrid included emerging challenges; utilisation of BR to test approaches in learning, governance, adaptive management, innovative research and capacity building; the role of subregional networks such as AfriMAB; the constraints and potential of the zones; and the role of the ICC.

The Congress has adopted an exciting and challenging new « Madrid Action Plan » (MAP), which identifies 3 major emerging challenges:

- (1) climate change;
- (2) biodiversity loss and consequent loss in ecosystem services and
- (3) urbanisation as the main pressure on ecosystems

and has identified 4 major action areas:

- (1) Conservation, Management and Cooperation
- (2) Zonation– linking functions to space
- (3) Science and Capacity Enhancement
- (4) Partnerships

totalling 31 specific targets and 62 actions



AfriMAB The African Man and Biosphere network

The World Network is organized in regional sub-networks. For Africa this is the AfriMAB network. Currently there are 59 Biosphere Reserves in 29 countries. The network has been more developed in West, Central and East Africa, but Southern Africa has been catching up in the past decade.

Although AfriMAB does not have the resources at its disposal that eg EuroMAB has; with support from UNESCO it now has two-yearly meetings, a rotating presidency, and increased information exchange among members.



AfriMAB has also developed a Charter, outlining mission, objectives and strategy; as well as its organizational setup. It plans to establish an Environmental Trust Fund to support the network.

AfriMAB is expected to become the main vehicle for promotion of the BR concept, influencing policy; guiding research and monitoring in Africa.

