

## 25 NEW SITES JOIN THE WORLD NETWORK OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES IN 2020

The International Co-ordinating Council of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB-ICC) has added [25 new sites in 18 countries to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves](#) during its online meeting held from 27 to 28 October 2020. The Council approved these additions along with the extension or re-zoning of five existing biosphere reserves, which in most cases also led to a change in their official names.

[Biosphere Reserves](#) are areas comprising terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems. Each reserve promotes solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. Their objective is to give rise to innovative sustainable development practices and combatting the loss of biodiversity by accompanying communities and Member States in their work to appreciate and safeguard the living environment.

The 25 new Biosphere Reserves joining the MAB World Network in 2020 are located in Andorra, Benin, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Greece, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Maldives, Mongolia, Nigeria, Peru, Portugal, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago. The Complex W-Arly-Pendjari (WAP) Transboundary Biosphere Reserve is located in Benin, Burkina-Faso and Niger.

Andorra, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Luxemburg and Trinidad and Tobago join the MAB Network in 2020 with the designation of their first sites. New Reserves are designated every year by the MAB International Co-ordinating Council, a body with a rotating elected membership of 34 UNESCO Member States.

There are currently 714 biosphere reserves in 129 countries, including 21 transboundary sites, that belong to the [World Network of Biosphere Reserves](#).

Established by UNESCO in the early 1970s, the [Man and the Biosphere](#) is an Intergovernmental Scientific Programme that aims to improve relations between people and their natural environment. It is a pioneering initiative at the origin of the notion of sustainable development. UNESCO Biosphere Reserves harmonize conservation of biological and cultural diversity with economic and social development. They also contribute to the transition to green societies by experimenting with green development options such as sustainable tourism and training for eco-jobs.

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 socio-culturally and



environmentally sustainable; Logistic support, underpinning development through research, monitoring, education and training.

In 2020, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves covers all major representative natural and semi-natural ecosystems. It spans over a surface of 6,812,000 km<sup>2</sup> in 129 countries. There are about 257 million people living in Biosphere Reserves worldwide.

The World Network of Biosphere Reserves promotes North-South and South-South collaboration and represents a tool for international co-operation through sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences, building capacity and promoting best practices.

### **To know more**

[News in UNESCO website](#)

[New Reserves 2020 image-gallery](#)

[World Network of Biosphere Reserves](#)

[Man and the Biosphere MAB Programme](#)

[Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2025](#)

