

UNESCO's „Man and the Biosphere“ programme in Germany

Resolution of the 67th General Assembly of the German Commission for UNESCO, Dessau, 28 June 2007

The German Commission for UNESCO

1. **recognizes** that UNESCO's "Man and the Biosphere" programme has made an important contribution since 1970 to shaping and directing the relationship of man and the environment towards the future,
2. **underlines** the significance of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves for solving global environmental problems, for equitable development throughout the world and for preserving sustainable ecosystems as a precondition for the sustainability of society,
3. **states** that the Biosphere Reserves are particularly apt for local implementation of the Agenda 21, adopted at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992,
4. **welcomes** the German Biosphere Reserves' active participation in implementing and advancing the programme,
5. **expresses** its gratitude to the MAB National Committee for its work as a link between the biosphere reserves, the federal states (Länder) responsible for their establishment and UNESCO.
6. **The German Commission for UNESCO calls on all politically responsible institutions and experts in Germany:**

To recognize and utilize the opportunities provided by the MAB programme for all aspects of regional development, and for shaping the necessary structural transformations; and, to that end,

- a) to shoulder the responsibility for biosphere reserves across departments at the level of Länder governments,
- b) to pool administrative activities at the level of biosphere reserves and to enable them to play a key role in the integrated development of the region,
- c) to use funding programmes provided by the Länder government to create models for self-supporting regional development in biosphere reserves and their surroundings,
- d) to use the distinctive designation as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in order to build identities in competition between regions,
- e) to promote the participation and identification of the population with the objectives and measures of the biosphere reserve as part of a world network,
- f) to recognize biosphere reserves as an especially apt instrument for implementing the UN Convention on Biological Diversity,
- g) to ensure that German biosphere reserves are cooperating in the world network,
- h) to support international, comparative research projects in and about biosphere reserves, to recognize biosphere reserves as especially suitable sites for research projects and to make the knowledge generated through research and monitoring in biosphere reserves internationally accessible, as an important contribution to solving the problems of the environment and of international development,
- i) to make the establishment of new biosphere reserves dependent on what these territories can contribute to the German and the worldwide networks,
- j) to promote the establishment of transboundary biosphere reserves using integrated management of protected areas and local development,

to provide the administrations of biosphere reserves with such personnel and such funding that they

- k) are able to perform the functions specified by UNESCO for a biosphere reserve in a comprehensive manner – protection and sustainable use as well as research, education and public relations,
- l) are able to draw up and continuously advance a "framework concept" in order to meet the international and national criteria,
- m) are able to contribute to developing transferable strategies for coping with climate change and for protecting biological diversity,
- n) are able to initiate regional development processes and to establish themselves as competent permanent contacts for these processes,
- o) are able to utilize the content of the MAB programme for interdisciplinary educational programmes in the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.