



ArabMAB Network

“the network of the MAB National Committees in Arab Countries”

Boshra Salem, ArabMAB Exec. Director, and
Rappreteur of the Nat. MAB in Egypt



Background and declaration

- **Notion:** explored at the second regional meeting of Arab national committees that was held in Cairo, in 1994.
- **Objectives and institutional structure** established in a follow-up workshop for in Syria in 1996
- Launched in Amman, in 1997 through the **Amman Declaration**



Amman Declaration

The Arab National Committees of the Man and Biosphere Programme (MAB),

Recognizing and guided by the Arab declaration on environment and Development as well as the recommendations of the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) in 1992 and the Seville Strategy on Biosphere Reserves in 1995;

Recognizing the need for cooperation in solving environmental problems in the Arab States;

Acknowledging the need for strengthening and coordinating efforts to reach healthy environment in the Arab region;

Decided To launch the “ArabMAB Network” for: a) Coordinating and enhancing collaboration in various disciplines related to the MAB Programme. b) Establishing principles of a common Arab Programme including the creation of biosphere reserves and other types of protected areas. c) Assisting member committees in adhering to relevant international conventions. d) Undertaking collaborative research projects and other activities according to proposals from member committees.



VISION

- Promotion of Knowledge and understanding of the natural resources of Arab Countries and the functions of their ecosystems in time and space.
- Facilitates and encourage wise use of natural resources and ecosystems
- Promotion of environmentally sound social and economic development and scientifically-based conservation of Biodiversity.
- Foster and support environmental research, education and training developing a model of cooperative integrated regional resource management.
- Coordinate information management activities and synthesis of across sites and among related national and international research programmes



Mission

- Provision of an international mechanism to promote MAB activities and the three functions of BRs
- Cooperation in the implementation of Madrid Action Plan 2008 for the benefit of sustainable development based on the work done in arab BRs. as laboratories
- Identification, design and implementation of studies and projects that explore and demonstrate links between conservation and sustainable socio-economic development of local people .
- Privude opportunities of education and training and media coverage on the role of BRs.



Bylaws

- The bylaws were adopted to serve the purpose of the MAB Programme and the Seville Strategy at the scale of Arab Countries



By-Laws (Selected Items)

- Arab Coordinating Council: Foundation of an “ACC” for the network formed from members of ArabMAB Committees, mandated for the formulation of general policies and decisions that promote the network and follow up their implementation.
- The ACC elects from its members a Bureau which acts as an executive body for administration and management between each two meetings of the council, consists of a Chairperson, an executive director, the ex-chairperson, and three representative members from Arab countries in the network.



By-Laws (Selected Items)

- **Membership of the network is not confined to countries but also to national and international organizations working in fields relevant to the MAB Programme and fulfilling its objectives.**
- **Members of the Network are to cooperate in the establishment and operation of the Network with UNESCO Cairo Office, UNESCO-MAB Secretariat and other organizations.**
- **The Bureau members elect a “Scientific Consulting Committee” of experts from Arab and international organizations to study the regional research projects approved by the Council and the Bureau and to formulate the scientific framework for these projects. Workshops can be organized to discuss the scientific and practical aspects of these frameworks.**



Bylaws (statues)

-
- In June 2007 it was decided to have a modified statues to harmonize with the recent development on the International scene



Basic Principles

- Membership is Voluntary and is open to primarily to Arab MAB Committees, Arab MAB focal points and interested organizations in Arab Countries
- The network works to achieve common goals and address complex regional environmental problems better solved by participatory cooperation and management among Arab Committees.
- The Network is concerned with BRs as laboratories for sustainable use of natural resources.
- Exchange of information, publications, research results is an essential part of the network activities to provide benefits for the network's members.



Plan of Action

- Supporting national and regional activities related to environmental problems and particularly to the MAB programme and the Madrid Action Plan 2008.
- Serve as a forum to provide a supporting umbrella structure that helps to link different environmental entities in Arab Countries.
- Harmonization of databases and information systems and building capacity for electronic communications



Management

- The management of the network should ensure clarity of objectives, transparency in the allocation of funds, and a high level of participation.
- The network has the duty to support efforts of all its stakeholders
- The network will be managed in a way that will ensure the collective efforts of its members will result in a more efficient use of their limited human and physical resources
- While the presidency of the network is by rotation among its members of Arab National MAB Committees, its secretariat must reside in one of these committees to ensure continuity and sustainability.
- The network should establish formal collaboration with the UNESCO MAB Programme and other related organizations, UNESCO regional offices, and national UNESCO Commissions through cooperation Agreements protocols that define the responsibilities of each Party.



ArabMAB Current and Future Activities

The implementation of all the activities could not have been realised without the support of the UNESCO-HQ, UNESCO-Cairo Office, UNESCO-Doha office and UNESCO-Beyrouth office and the full coordination with Alecso and Arab national MAB Committees



BRs in ArabMAB

- BRs: 30 in 11 countries in the Arab States
- Countries: (United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen).



Activities

- **Establishment of new biosphere reserves in Arab countries**
- **Translation (English to Arabic) of UNESCO Nomination form of biosphere reserve and the Seville strategy of biosphere reserve, Lima ActionPlan in the process**
- **Capacity building (Training workshops)**
- **Environmental Awareness (Brochures and websites)**
- **Established a Thematic networks of “ Rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems in Arab Countries ”**



5 th ARAB MAB MEETING

6-8 June 2007

SHARM EL SHEIKH - EGYPT





Recent Meeting

- The eighth (8th) meeting of ArabMAB was held in Dana BR (Jordan) during 12-13, April, 2013,
- followed by the regional workshop on "Green Economy and Biosphere Reserves" whose main recommendation is enhancing capacities and exchange of experiences through field visits and the presentation of successful development projects in the BRs.
- Training for BR managers on climate change assessments and impact was conducted in April 2014 on Socotra (Yemen). – did not happen
- Joint workshops with with IHP of the Arab Region.
- Consultation meeting of environmental experts and managers of BRs was held during 4-6 May 2015, in Agadir (Morocco) on "Challenges of Biosphere Reserves in the Arab Region". The workshop aimed to bring together experts in Environmental issues and Biosphere reserves managers to discuss and identify environmental challenges of the BRs in Arab Region.




- During 1-3 December 2015 a regional workshop on "Effective management of Biosphere Reserves in the Arab Region" was held in Algiers (Algeria)
- attended by 14 managers of BRs and experts who discussed topics concerning the impact of climate change, the role of media and ecosystem services in the BRs.
- The next ArabMAB Meeting will take place in, Algeria from 22-24 May 2017.



ArabMAB meeting in Lima March 2016

To implement the Arab MAB Network •
activities in the 4th World congress on
Biosphere Reserves, 14-17 March 2016,
Lima; Peru

A banner at the top of the slide features several logos and images. From left to right: a stylized blue classical building, a globe with 'MAB' written on it, the 'MAB' logo with a leaf and the Italian flag colors, and a bald eagle. The background of the banner shows a collage of wildlife including an elephant, a gazelle, and a lion.

4 World Congress of Biosphere Reserve (4WCBR)
Lima- Peru, 14-17 March 2016
Arab MAB Network Meeting
15 March 2016

- **Chaired by Ms. Houria KHELEIFI**
- **attended by members representing Arab countries : (Morocco, Algeria, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, and United Arab Emirates),**
- **UNESCO Secretariat**
- **UNESCO Cairo Office (Prof Abdelaziz Zaki)**



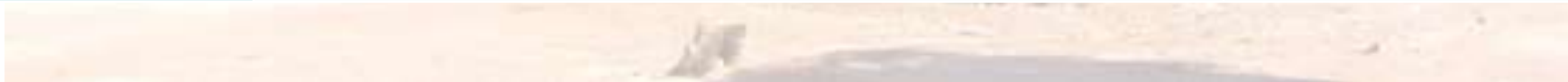
Messages from ArabMAB

- Revisiting the communication strategies to revive the ArabMAB activities
- Exchanged experiences about business plans and value the ecosystem services of BRS
- Need to improve and adapt the management plans of the BRs to LAP as to the SDGs
- Achieved by awareness and advocacy programs
- Innovative proposals:
- Compile the indigenous knowledge of the local communities on biodiversity with technical data in a participatory approach and mainstream such data with policies to contribute to achieving the SDGs and Aichi targets of CBD
- Commitment to implement LAP according to the realities of the region and the priorities set up by the members of the region

| Level of Action | Priority Action | Relevant outcomes to LAP |
|------------------|--|--------------------------|
| BR level: | Improve management plans of existing BRs and capacity to achieving SDGs goals and multi-lateral environmental conventions (Priority 1) | (A1) + (A2)+(A4) |
| | Develop a business plan for income generation and revenues (Priority 3) | (A5) |
| | Establish partners with relevant universities and research centers (A4, and develop a research Agenda (Priority 4) | (B7) |
| | Identify ecosystem services qualitatively and quantitatively (Priority 5) | (A7) |
| | Develop guidelines and establish private sector partnerships for national committees and BRs (Priority 6) | (C4) |
| | Establish a strengthened BR brand with associated national and international guidelines (Priority 7) | (C7) |
| | Activate communication strategy and ensure advocacy with all stakeholders including local communities (Priority 2) | (B2) |



| Member state (national level) | Awareness about the SDGs implementation (Priority 3) | (A1) |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| | Establish MAB committees (renewal of existing ones if necessary) with balanced composition of multidisciplinary members, and active participation of at least a representative of the MAB-ICC (Priority 1) | (E1)+(E2) |
| | Recognize BRs in national policies and programs (Priority 2) | (A3) |
| | Submit annual national reports on MAB activities to Arab MAB network (Priority 4) | (B1) |
| | | |



| Regional level | | |
|----------------|---|-------------------------------|
| | Organize Training on BR nomination files, periodic reviews management plans and participatory approaches using indigenous Knowledge, sustainability science , ensuring the participation of all stakeholders (Priority 4) | (A2) + (A4) + (A6) +(B1)+(B2) |
| | Develop a business plan including fund raising for ArabMAB to be endorsed by the ICC (Priority 2) | (C1) +(B3) |
| | Establish a network of managers and scientists working in BRs in the Arab region, develop a communication strategy using social media and IT and share data and MAB documents (Priority 3) | (B7) +(D2)+(D3)+ (D1) |
| | Create opportunities and develop proposal and discussions with other UNESCO programs (Priority 5) | (C2) |
| | Develop plan with objectives, performance assessment mechanism and timeframe for ArabMAB with annual reporting to the ICC (Priority 1) | (E4) |



As a result from the Arab MAB Session, the following is concluded:

The Arab MAB network needs to be re-activated.

The role of BR in the Development Agenda should be prioritized and promoted in the Arab region

More Biosphere Reserves needs to be proposed from the Arab region

Creation of critical mass for BR effective management in the Arab region should be prioritized

The MAB NATCOM structure and framework needs to be reviewed by the Arab member states

Inclusion of Private sector and civil society the Arab MAB NATCOM and networks needs to be considered



More fund raising efforts to be exerted jointly between UCO and the MAB NATCOMs. Potential areas for fund raising may be:

- BR role in Climate Change vulnerability assessment and adaptive management

- BR governance

- Introduction of the BR concept in education for school students

The involvement of UNEP, IUCN, ALECSO and ISESCO needs to be re-activated

Approaching the Arab Environment Ministerial council and LAS is a crucial action at the present time.



Meetings

Several Arab Coordinating council (ACC) meetings and the ArabMAB Bureau (AB) were:

ACC Meetings : Amman- Jordan (June 1997), Morocco- Agadir in (September 1999) , Damascus – Syria (September 2001). Beirut- Lebanon, March 2004, Egypt –sharm el sheikh, June 2007



Thank you

