

UNESCO's first Biosphere Reserve in Iceland?

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

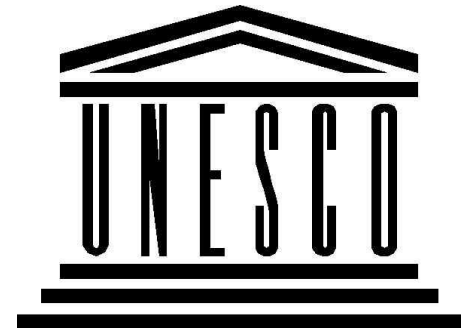


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What is a Biosphere Reserve?

An area designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a member of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

- Oversight through UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme



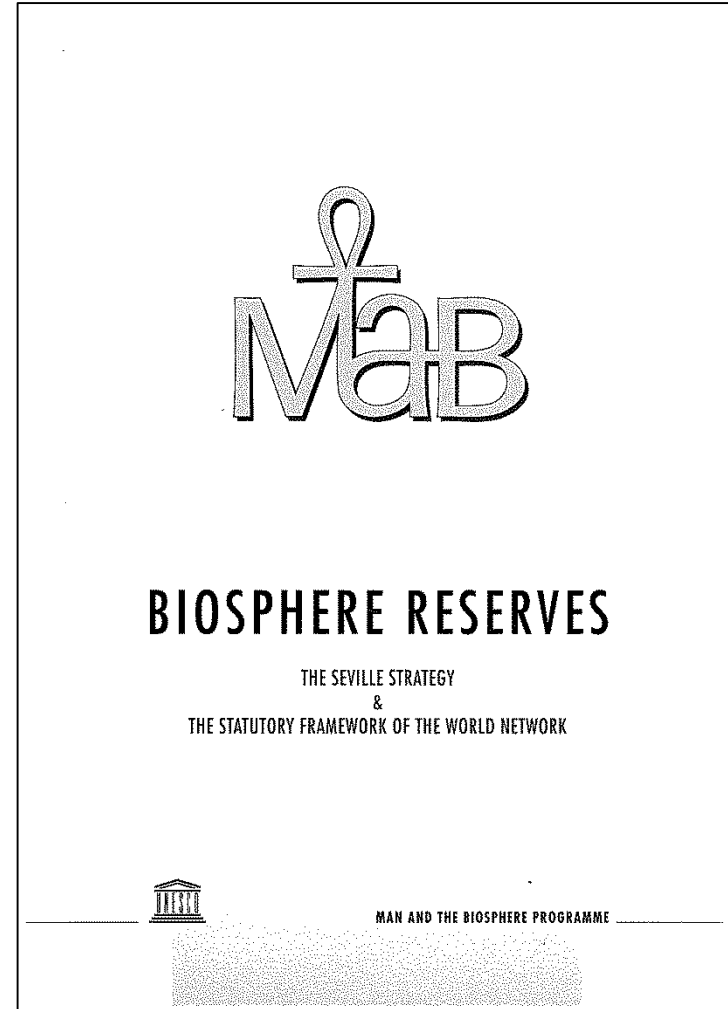
What is a Biosphere Reserve?

- A region with a **strong identity**
- **Globally recognised for:**
 - **biodiversity / environment**
 - commitment of **wide range of stakeholders** to **work together** towards a sustainable future
- **Neither restrictive nor exclusive** – apart from already legally designated core area(s) under national legislation

What is a Biosphere Reserve?

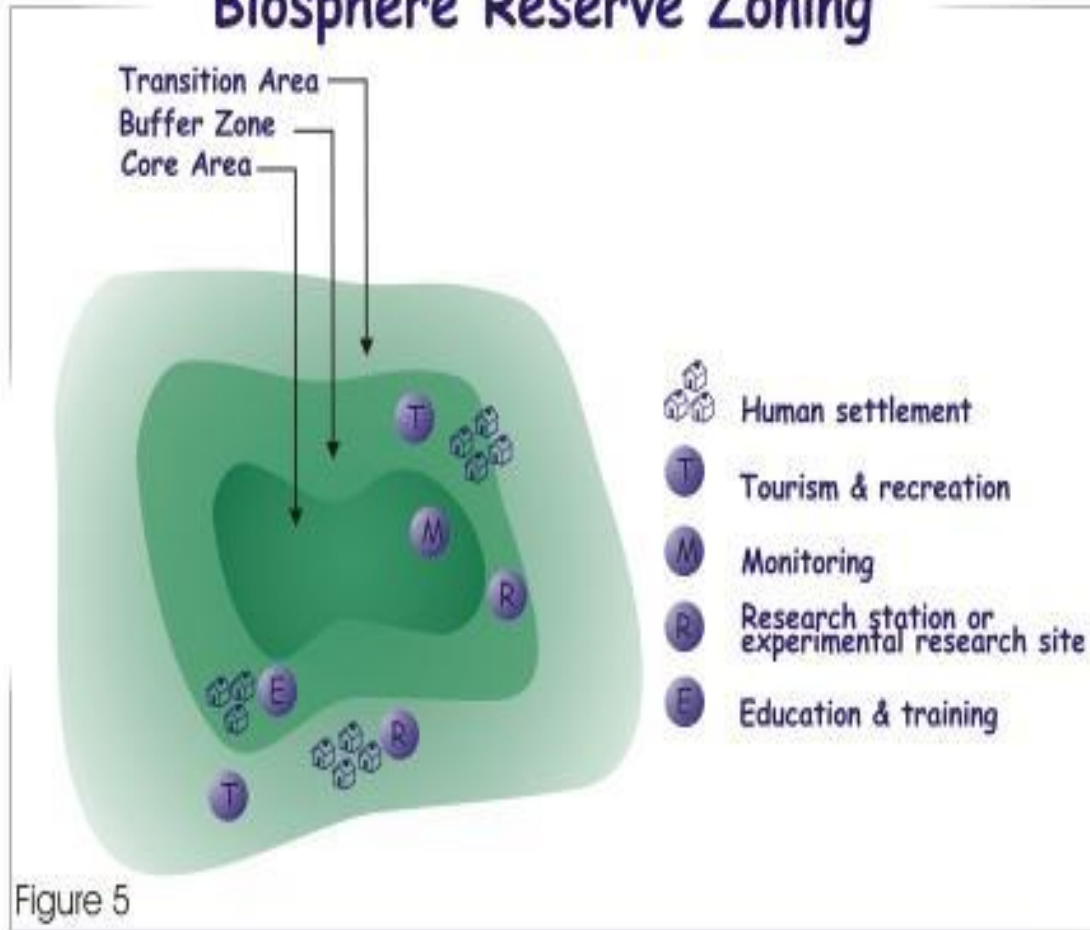
UNESCO criteria

- three types of zones:
 - core area(s)
 - buffer zone(s)
 - transition area
- stakeholder involvement
- management policy/plan



What is a Biosphere Reserve?

Biosphere Reserve Zoning



Core area: devoted to nature conservation & **legally protected**

Buffer zone: only activities compatible with conservation objectives of core area; **clearly defined boundaries**

Transition area: sustainable development promoted & developed; where most of the people live

What is a Biosphere Reserve?

- **Not** a reserve; **not** a “protected area”
 - though it must include one or more protected areas (core area, sometimes buffer zone)
- Does not have to be **named** “X Biosphere Reserve”, e.g.,
 - “X biosphere” (as are all UK Biosphere Reserves, for local use)
 - “X biosphere area”

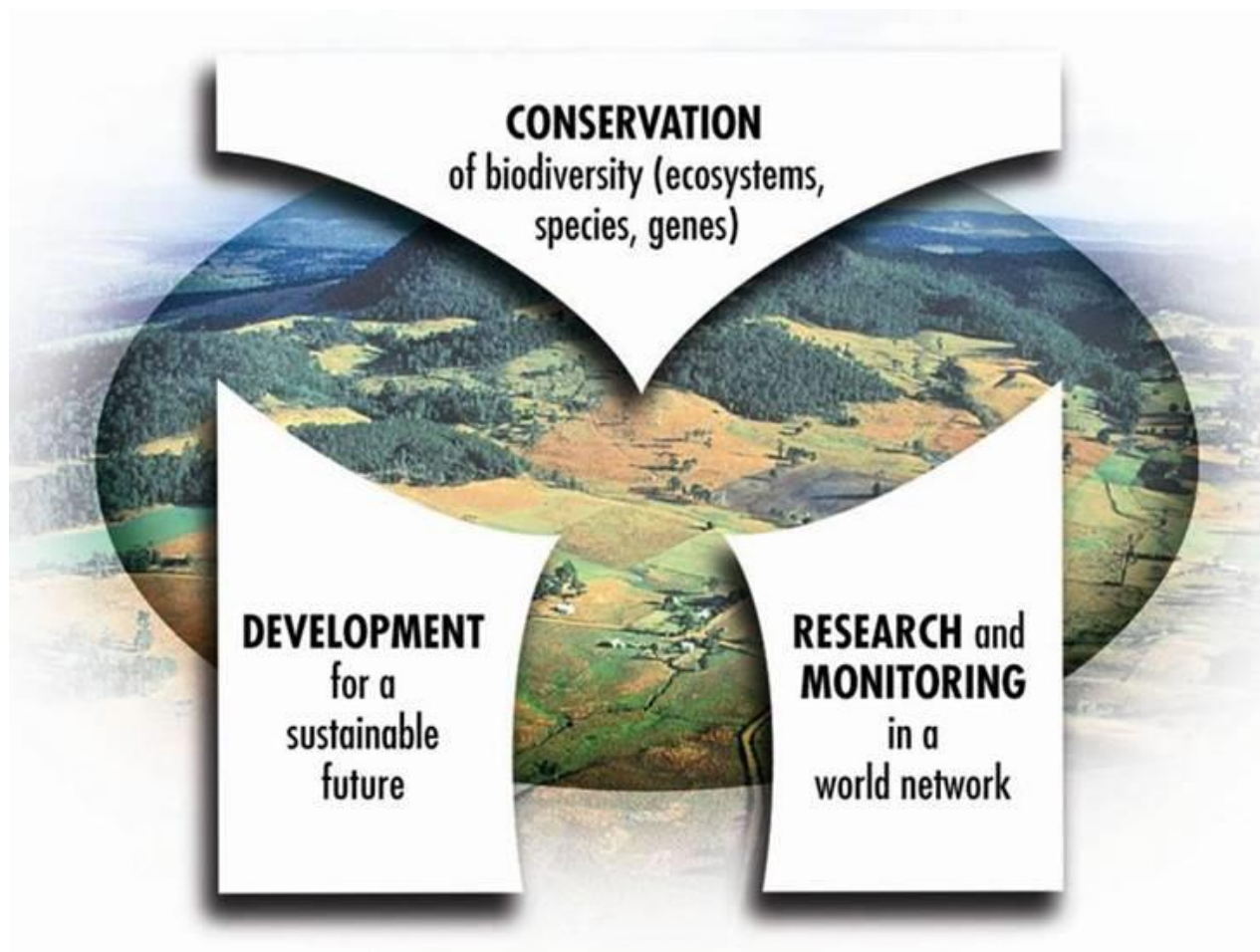
What is a Biosphere Reserve?

A “site of excellence to explore and demonstrate approaches to conservation and sustainable development on a regional scale”

= A global accolade for an area demonstrating excellence in sustainable development practice

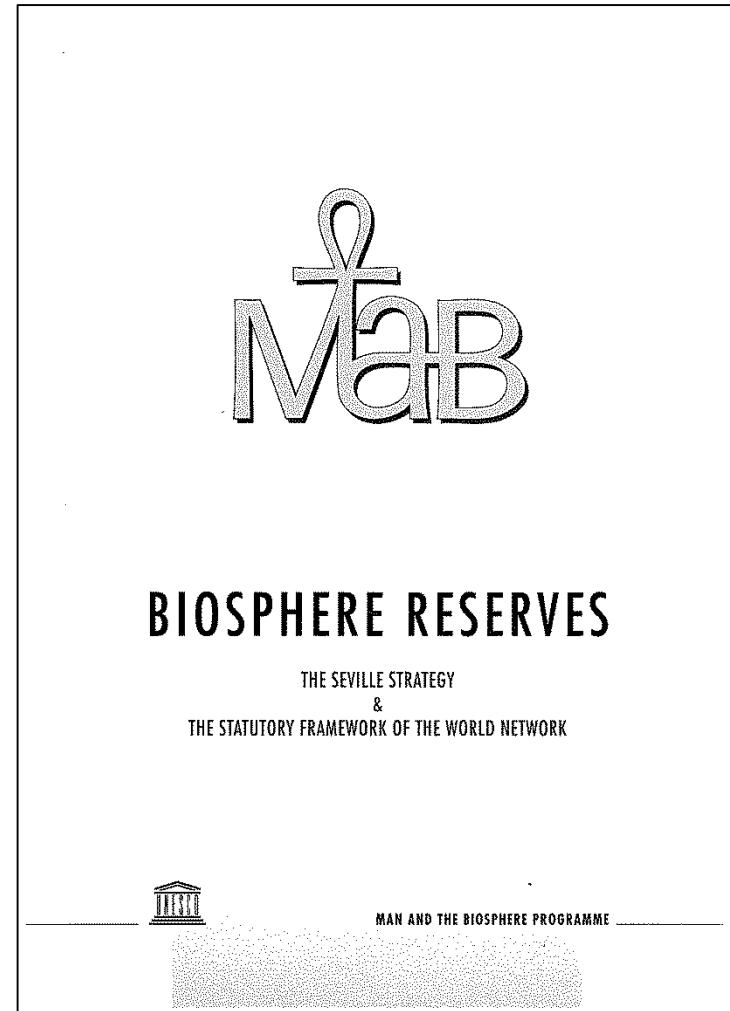
➤ Periodic review every 10 years

The three linked functions of Biosphere Reserves



Criteria for designation

Defined in the
Statutory
Framework of the
World Network of
Biosphere Reserves,
1995



Criteria for designation

Biodiversity

- encompass a mosaic of ecological systems ...including a “gradation of human interventions” (levels of human influence)
- of significance for biological diversity conservation

Sustainable development

- provide opportunity to explore & demonstrate approaches to sustainable development on a regional scale

Zoning

- appropriate size to serve 3 functions of biosphere reserves
- include functions through appropriate zoning

Criteria for designation

Governance

- organizational arrangements for involving a range of stakeholders in designing & implementing the functions of a BR
- mechanisms to manage human use & activities in buffer zone(s)
- management policy or plan for area as BR
- designated authority/mechanism to implement policy or plan

Programmes for research, monitoring, education & training

Potential benefits/opportunities

- **international recognition**
 - a globally respected accolade, including quality assurance
- **a focus on “place” and identity**
 - the human-natural system - whose characteristics can improve through implementation of the BR
- **marketing opportunities**
 - for sustainably produced products or sustainably managed environments
 - e.g. branding, charters
- **international networks**
 - through which to share experience and develop partnerships

Potential benefits/opportunities

- **international networks**

- World Network of Biosphere Reserves
 - 701 Biosphere Reserves in 122 countries
- Thematic networks, e.g.,
 - coastal and island: regular meetings
 - youth: 2nd World MAB Youth Forum, Changbaishan Biosphere Reserve, China, September 2019
- EuroMAB
 - 302 Biosphere Reserves, National MAB Committees and scientists in 36 countries (including USA and Canada!)
 - biennial meetings: next in Austria, 2020
 - thematic working groups
 - projects
- NordMAB
 - annual meetings
 - projects



SHAPE



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014–2020



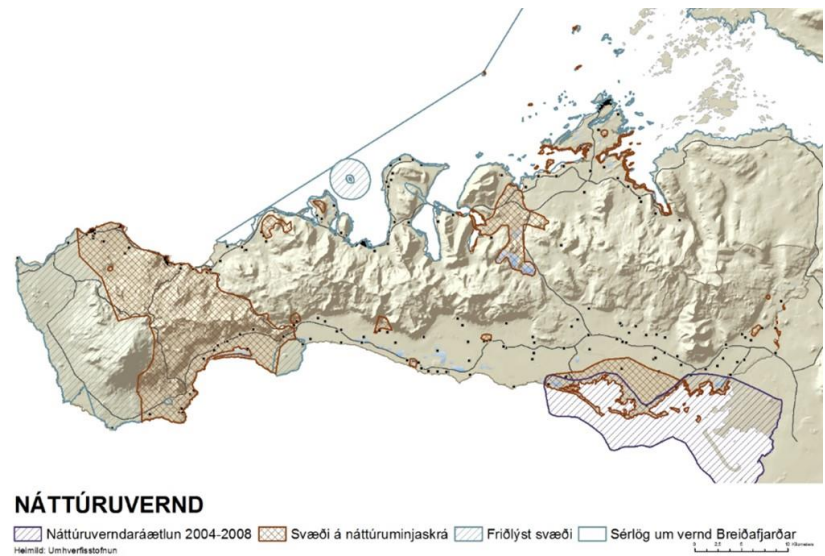
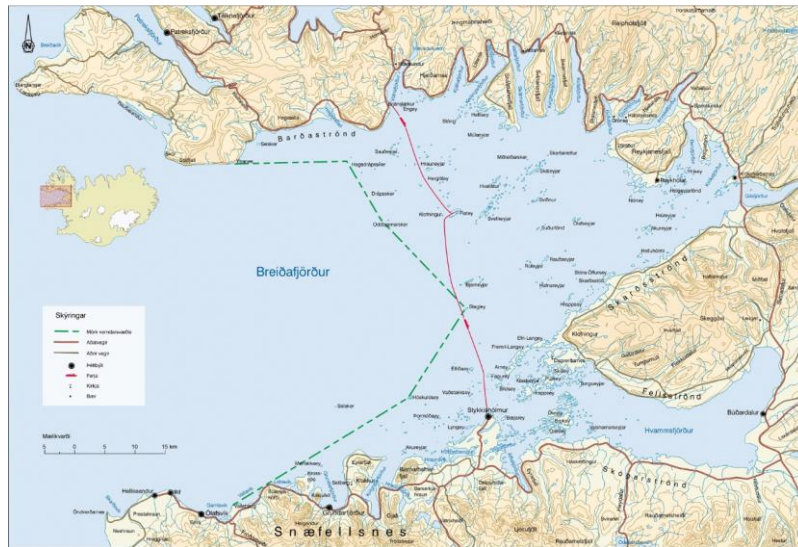
EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
European Regional Development Fund

Potential benefits/opportunities

- **links** to other Biosphere Reserves
- increase **pride** in the region's natural and cultural heritage and how it is managed
 - inject / attract dynamism into the local economy
 - branding / marketing / charter
- lever in support or project **funds** related to:
 - the quality of the environment
 - sustainability of the local economy
 - opportunities for education, research, training
- deliver on Government **policies**
 - Sustainable Development Goals
 - rural development
 - environment/nature protection
- local authorities can refer to the designation in **policies for sustainable development** (e.g. planning)

Iceland's first Biosphere Reserve?

- Existing and developing protected and regulatory areas



- Regional park: Governance structure and plan

Many thanks for your attention!
Some questions?

