



Regional
Bureau
for Science
and Culture
in Europe



Biosfera Delta Po
man and nature together

2017 MAB
YOUTH
FORUM



UNESCO MAB Youth Forum

Po Delta Biosphere Reserve, Italy,

18-22 September 2017

Final Declaration of the Forum

Preamble

We, the MAB Youth, 282 representatives from 142 Biosphere Reserves in 85 countries, gathered in Po Delta Biosphere Reserve during 18-23 September 2017 at the first MAB Youth Forum; Thankful to had the chance to attend a highly interactive and participatory forum, with over 50 workshop in 8 locations within the Po Delta BR.

We would like to thank the people of the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve, organizers, sponsors participants, hosts, and volunteers for their hospitality and commitment to making us feel at home. This forum has been an amazing opportunity to share and collaborate with our peers to form a collective vision for the future of youth in Biosphere Reserves. Despite the fact that we come from diverse backgrounds we are united on the objectives and actions for the Biosphere Reserve, World Network of Biosphere Reserves and to the MAB programme.

Declaration

As MAB Youth Forum delegates, we ask all Biosphere Reserves to commit to creating attractive and long-term employment opportunities linked to the values of Biosphere Reserves (in particular conservation of Biodiversity and habitat restoration), involving local enterprises and cooperating with local stakeholders. In particular we suggest:

- To create **hubs and incubators** to support sustainable business ideas in each Biosphere Reserve;

- To create an open **database** to share information concerning employment opportunities connected with Biosphere Reserve values;
- Develop **training programmes** in order to develop youth skills and employability in Biosphere Reserves.

As MAB Youth Forum delegates, we ask all Biosphere Reserves to commit to spreading scientific and traditional knowledge connected to the values of Biosphere Reserves, to raise awareness; sense of belonging and guarantee its transfer to future generations.

As MAB Youth Forum delegates, we commit ourselves and also ask BRs to implement these actions:

- To organize periodical events on cultural, ecological, economic topics involving local stakeholders and communities;
- To organize summer camps, workshops and conferences for training young people to be ambassadors of their Biosphere Reserve.

We ask all Biosphere Reserves to develop relationships with educational institutions, at all levels and within and out with Biosphere Reserve borders. In particular:

- To develop specific curriculum and programmes, in schools and universities dealing with Biosphere Reserve characteristics, values and tools;
- To develop **cooperation** between research institutions and local economic organizations in order to improve applied research and internships.

As MAB Youth Forum delegates We recommend that the Network of Biosphere Reserves improve the exchange of information, ideas, knowledge and good practices among Biosphere Reserves, especially through tools that stimulate the involvement of young people. In particular, we suggest:

- The organization of periodic, **regional youth forums**;
- To develop and maintain a **digital open access Biosphere Reserve platform** (e.g. APP webinar meetings and on-line courses).

- To create **Thematic Networks**: such as, **Biosphere Reserve School** and **youth clubs** programmes, working to build a network among schools and within communities dealing with BR themes.

We ask to promote youth exchange and cooperation in realizing concrete projects which are connected with Biosphere Reserves and Biosphere Reserve networks. Such as volunteering programmes in Biosphere Reserves and exchange visits between countries.

As MAB Youth Forum delegates, we commit ourselves to create hosting projects for young people in Biosphere Reserves such as Air bnb and couch surfing.

We call for the facilitation of access to regional and inter-regional funding to support young people's long term projects. Through:

- Establishing a "**funding expert**" or a "funding advisory board" to find funding and raise resources;
- Promoting the construction of a **MAB crowdfunding platform**;
- Verifying the possibility to create a Biosphere Reserve **carbon certificate** to sell to enterprises.

As MAB Youth Forum delegates, we ask the MAB International Coordinating Council (ICC) to improve communication, at all MAB levels, in order to be effective with young people:

- Promote a MAB survey in all BRs in order to get data on youth involvement;
- Incorporate youth perspective in MAB communication guidelines and toolkits by revising existing and future documents;
- Create an annual MAB Youth Award for the best project;
- Create specific summary of official MaB documents in "youth friendly language".

We ask the MAB International Coordinating Council (ICC) to spread globally the knowledge and awareness of the vision, mission and activities of the MAB programme. We propose to:

- Engage public figures as ambassadors to represent the MAB programme values;
- Organize a periodic MAB expo.

We, as MAB Youth Forum delegates commit ourselves to develop and promote interactive tools for sharing information about the MAB programme at all levels (for examples; social media, story-telling, comics).

We recommend the involvement of youth in MAB governance, by selecting "**youth representatives**" at all levels, especially in crucial moments of the decision process.

We ask the ICC to include youth as observer members.

We encourage countries to include mandatory youth in national delegations, national MaB Committees, and in Biosphere Reserve governance.

Finally we commit ourselves to report back to our BR and young people of our territory what the MAB Youth Forum participant 2017 have learned, and we ask UNESCO to establish a platform and a mechanism to monitor the MAB Youth Forum 2017 Action Plan and submit a periodic report.