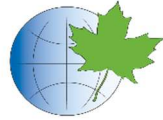




United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture



Canadian
Biosphere
Reserves Association

Association
canadienne des
réserves de la
biosphère

2020-2025

Strategic Plan

What is the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA)?

CBRA's governance structure was established in 1997 as a not-for-profit charitable society, governed by 18 directors, each of whom represents one of the 18 biosphere reserves (BRs).

Vision

A vibrant, supported and connected network of BRs and partners, learning from and supporting each other to become the sites of excellence in Canada and met the expectations of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme of its members.

Mission

Raise the collective profile and capacity of Canada's UNESCO BRs as leaders in reconciling relationships with the natural environment and with diverse cultures

Mandate

Foster connectedness between Canada's bio-culturally and geographically diverse BRs, raise the profile and build the capacity of Canadian sites, develop and manage national programs, and create opportunities for the MAB Programme to thrive in Canada.

Statement of Values

CBRA, building on the collective values of its member BRs, uphold these values:

- Achieves mutual solutions through collaboration, cooperation, transparency and understanding with our partners and stakeholders;
- Shares our skills and practices through mutual experience and exchange;
- Acts with respect and inclusion of Indigenous Knowledge of the lands, waters, air, and ecosystems and western knowledge systems.

Teachings shared at the Fall Gathering (2018)

hišukiš čawaak is a Nuu-chah-nulth principle meaning "everything is one, everything is interconnected"

Ginawaydaganuc is an Algonquin way of expressing the interconnectedness of all creation physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually

Indinawemaaganag is Ojibway for "all my relations"

Mamawatoskewin means "working together in a good way" in Cree

Msit No'kmaq ("Mm-sit Noh-goh-mah") is Mi'kmaw for "all my relations"

What are Biosphere Reserves?

The World MAB Network currently has 701 sites in 124 countries. As an UNESCO program, BRs are pioneers in mobilizing efforts and partnerships to help shape a sustainable future for their regions. BRs have strong potential to inspire other regions interested in transforming sustainability ideals into tangible initiatives. Biosphere reserves, both as geographic areas and convener organizations, are dedicated to achieving three functions: the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable development, and capacity building by providing support for research and public education.

Through the hundreds of projects, Canadian BRs work on the conservation of biodiversity, sustainable development, outreach, education, research and monitoring with a strong emphasis on climate change and Indigenous rights and reconciliation. Spanning an area of over 235,000 km², almost twice the size of New Brunswick, the BR program plays a positive role in the quality of life for the 2.3 million Canadians residing within their boundaries.

Sustainable Development

Canada's BRs establish collaborative initiatives and support policies that facilitate the development of sustainable livelihoods, allowing humans to meet their needs without compromising the needs of future generations.

Biodiversity Conservation

Canada's BRs are grounded in the *United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity* and support the achievement of domestic and international biodiversity targets. Where possible, BRs work with partners to test and apply interdisciplinary approaches that help understand and manage changes and interactions in social and ecological systems. BRs acknowledge the interconnection between cultural and biological diversity. BRs work collaboratively with governments, landowners, and others to achieve protection of biodiversity and sustainable resource management.

CBRA's Strategic Themes

The following themes are interdependent

1. CBRA is a network of individual BRs

As of 2019, Canada hosts 18 BRs, celebrating over 40 years of history of taking actions toward reconciliation, facilitating collaboration, coordinating participatory research, and supporting community initiatives that promote environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability. The country's BRs are situated within the traditional territories and Treaties of over 50 Indigenous Nations. Having comprehensive, open, and transparent means of information sharing is critical for all BRs working together. See Appendix A for a list of the individual BRs.

CBRA is facilitator of connections between BRs, provides the common tools to help BRs build on their successes and strives to bring all Canadian BRs to the same level of operation.

2. CBRA is as a national organization

As a national nonprofit organization, CBRA is an association composed of 18 member sites, spread across Canada from coast to coast to coast. As a nonprofit organization, CBRA has requirements that it must follow and requires a revised governance model to run an effective, transparent organization.

CBRA is a charitable nonprofit organization.

3. CBRA is a contributor to national initiatives and promoter of Canada's BRs on the national stage

Collectively, the BRs represent a national network of expertise in implementing biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. This expertise can be translated into meaningful contributions to national conversations while promoting BRs and identifying opportunities for potential new partnerships.

CBRA is a promoter of the collective work of Canadian BRs.

UNESCO created the MAB Programme in 1971. Canada's first BR was designated in 1978. The *Lima Action Plan for UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (2016-2025)* contains a comprehensive but succinct set of actions aimed at ensuring the effective implementation of the MAB Strategy 2015- 2025 (UNESCO, 2016).

The Lima Action Plan sets out established roles and requirements for the Member States (Canada), National Authorities (CBRA), National Commissions for UNESCO (Canadian Commission of UNESCO) and BRs (18 Canadian BRs). See Appendix B: Influencing Documents.

CBRA is an active participant in the implementation of the MAB programme in Canada.

CBRA's Strategic Priority Areas

1. Enhance our Collective Capacity to Deliver on the BR program

- 1.1. Develop training, enhance knowledge transfer, disseminate pertinent information and create mentorship opportunities between Canadian, Indigenous and international networks;
- 1.2. Enhance inter-biosphere communication as well as create virtual and in-person networking opportunities; and
- 1.3. Leverage the learnings from core mandate successful projects and programs by individual BRs and scale these regionally or nationally;

2. Ensure Organizational Excellence

- 2.1. Develop a CBRA governance model that provides effective governance of a national organization;
- 2.2. Seek out sustainable, long-term core funding for program and operating support at the national and site level;
- 2.3. Learn about, develop, incorporate and honour ethical space and two-eyed seeing into all CBRA activities (See Appendix C: Ethical Space Definition);
- 2.4. Strengthen and clarify CBRA's relationship with the Canadian Commission of UNESCO (CCU); EuroMAB, and with the Indigenous Circle; and
- 2.5. Act as a conduit for national and international level information distribution to and from both CCU and the BRs.

3. Establish our National Biosphere Presence

- 3.1. Build the presence of BRs at a national level by showcasing and promoting the collective work of Canada's BRs as sites that are actively contributing to biodiversity conservation, sustainable development and outreach at the local level while achieving international commitments like the Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- 3.2. Build strategic national and regional partnerships in areas of Canada's international commitments, biodiversity, sustainable development, outreach and education, research, climate change ,and reconciliation; and
- 3.3. Quantify the collective, cumulative work of BR's.

Outcomes

In working on the above-mentioned Strategic Priorities, CBRA will be able to:

- Sustain itself as a national organization, assisting 18 members in an effective and cohesive manner;
- Capture and utilize the expertise with BR network to mentor their peers;

- Increase recognition of the work of the Canada’s biosphere reserves, the UNESCO BR brand and the recognition of individual BRs which will in turn create opportunities for the BRs to obtain funding, partners and recognition for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development related work; and
- Be recognized as an implementer of international and national commitments at a local level.

Key Partnerships

Canadian Commission for UNESCO (CCUNESCO)

In Canada, BRs are represented by the CBRA and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Both organizations play a role in helping Canada’s BRs build their capacities individually and collectively as well as help facilitate knowledge sharing between them. They also both play important roles in raising awareness of biosphere reserves among multiple levels of society in Canada. An additional role for the Canadian Commission for UNESCO is in standard-setting and international communications. This involves coordinating the assessment of BR nominations and periodic reviews. The Canadian Commission for UNESCO makes the final recommendation to UNESCO with regards to whether a BR should receive its designation or, in the case of periodic reviews, maintain its designation, and acts as a liaison for communications between Canadian BRs and the UNESCO MAB Secretariat. An additional role for the CBRA is in representing the collective interests of its members to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

Indigenous Circle

BRs recognize humans and the environment are interconnected and acknowledge that sustainable livelihoods can be practiced in a way that respects natural law. Over the next five years (and far beyond), CBRA will move forward in collaboration and partnership with the Indigenous Circle, building ethical space into its activities, and upholding the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

In this spirit we acknowledge that this CBRA Strategy and Action Plan is organized under the four focus areas of all Canadian BRs, but all elements are interconnected and in relationship with one another.

Reconciliation is the most recent area of focus and recognizes the direction provided by our ancestors at the Treaty of Niagara, the UN’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Final Report, and the direction provided by the Indigenous Circle. The three following (Sustainable Development, Biodiversity Conservation, and Outreach, Research & Education) have been identified by CCUNESCO and UNESCO as the operational and strategic focus areas of the world-wide network of BRs.

Appendix A: List Of The Canadian Biosphere Reserves With Their Designation Dates



1. Mont Saint-Hilaire (Quebec) -1978
2. Waterton (Alberta) - 1979
3. Riding Mountain (Manitoba) - 1986
4. Long Point (Ontario) - 1986
5. Charlevoix (Quebec) - 1988
6. Niagara Escarpment (Ontario) - 1990
7. Clayoquot Sound (British Columbia) - 2000
8. Mount Arrowsmith (British Columbia) - 2000
9. Redberry Lake (Saskatchewan) - 2000
10. Lac Saint-Pierre (Quebec) - 2000
11. Southwest Nova (Nova Scotia) - 2001
12. Frontenac Arch (Ontario) - 2002
13. Georgian Bay (Ontario) - 2004
14. Manicouagan Uapishka (Quebec) - 2007
15. Fundy (New Brunswick) 2007
16. Bras d’Or Lake (Nova Scotia) - 2011
17. Tsá Tué (Northwest Territories) - 2016
18. Beaver Hills (Alberta) - 2016

Appendix B: CBRA Influencing Documents

- United Nation’s Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s 94 Calls to Action (2018)
- United Nation’s 17 Sustainable Development Goals to 2030
- Aichi 2020 Biodiversity Targets
- United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992)
- United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) and the Paris Agreement (2016)
- Canada 2020 Biodiversity Targets (2016).
- What About We Rise Together, (2018)
- Canada’s Conservation Vision (2018)

Appendix C: Ethical Space Definition

Rather than giving a definition right now, with time and capacity, the definition for the ethical space, the IC and CBRA will evolve out of the relationship.