



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Canadian
Biosphere
Reserves Association

ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

*Canada's UNESCO biosphere reserves:
People and nature - in balance.*

biospherecanada.ca

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

This has been an inspiring year for the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA), and I am excited by the momentum we are gaining as a network. I would like to start by recognizing the newest UNESCO-designated site – Aëtl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound Biosphere Region, which joined our network formally last September. Congratulations and welcome! We look forward to learning alongside you as we focus on our shared mandate of biodiversity conservation, sustainable development, climate action, and reconciliation. CBRA continues to be guided by its 2020-2025 Strategic Plan which outlines three priority areas aligned with the Man and the Biosphere Programme, which include organizational excellence, capacity building, and raising the profile of the 19 UNESCO-designated sites. Our achievements in these areas are made possible through the dedication and knowledge of Kate Potter, our executive director. Thank you, Kate, for your capacity to build relationships and provide support across the network!

Canada's BRs are designated within the traditional territories of over fifty Indigenous Nations. Thank you to the Indigenous Circle for your dedication to working together and building our relationship on our ethical space journey. Our connection throughout the difficult times of COVID helped to ground me through ceremony and relationship.

This year marked the beginning of a three-year contribution agreement with Environment and Climate Change Canada. This funding unites CBRA and its 19 BRs through a shared focus on Canada's biodiversity goals and targets. With this support, CBRA will build capacity and share knowledge across BRs for more effective conservation at the site level. I'm excited to see how these projects are developed across the network. As we've always said, each BR is unique and I'm certain that no two projects will be the same. As I wrap up my term as CBRA's Chairperson, it's been an honour to work alongside colleagues in our network and a privilege to meet on the lands which you call home. I'm inspired by your dedication to communities and ecosystems across Canada and I will treasure the time spent working together.

With tremendous gratitude.



Rebecca Hurwitz, Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association Chair,
chair@biospherecanada.ca



“

Canada's UNESCO biosphere reserves inspire a positive future. They bridge communities, organizations and sectors, building the relationships required to create a sustainable future for humans and nature.

”

WHAT ARE BIOSPHERE RESERVES?

Biosphere reserves, sometimes called biosphere regions (BRs), are areas that approach nature conservation in balance with economic development and the people who live, work, and play within the region. As UNESCO designations, all BRs worldwide operate under the same Man and the Biosphere Programme framework. The organizations that support the BR must continue to demonstrate that it maintains the high standards of the designation, every 10 years through a periodic review. Every BR integrates three main "functions":

- **Conservation of biological and cultural diversity**
- **Economic development that is socio-culturally and environmentally sustainable**
- **Logistic support, research, monitoring, education, and training**



WHAT ARE BIOSPHERE RESERVES?

These three functions are pursued through the BRs' three main zones:

Core Areas

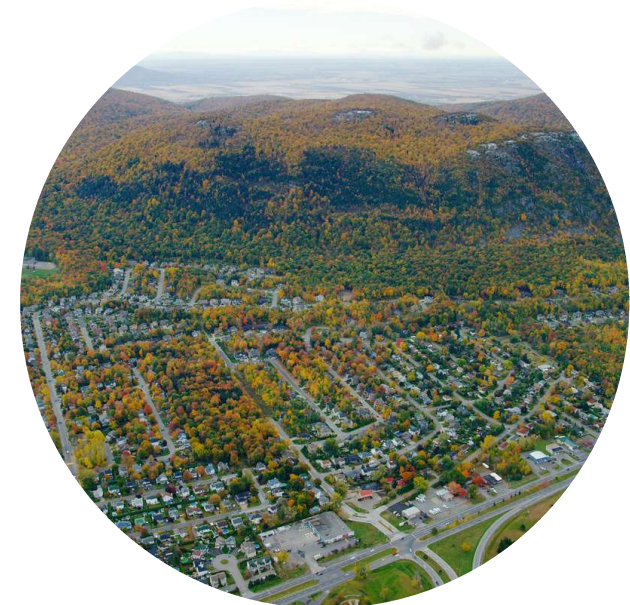
A strictly protected zone that contributes to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species, and genetic variation

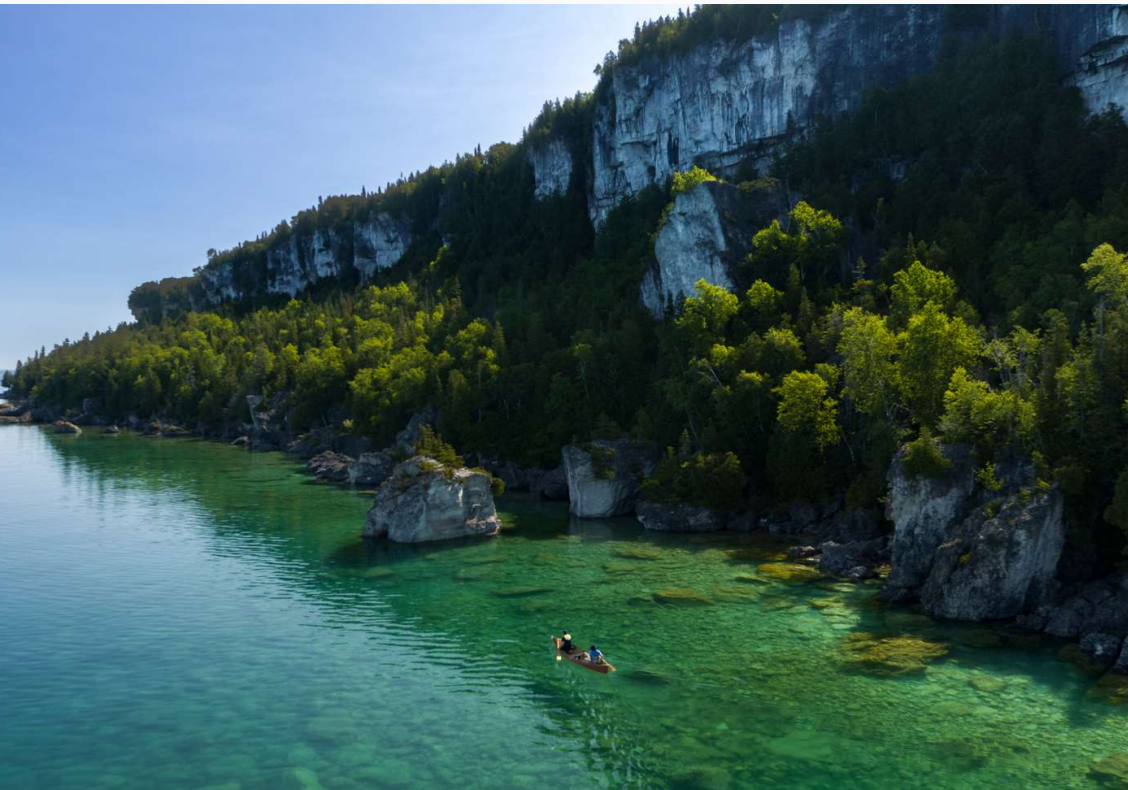
Buffer Zones

Surrounds or adjoins the core area(s), and is used for activities compatible with sound ecological practices that can reinforce scientific research, monitoring, training and education.

Transition Area

Communities foster socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable economic and human activities.





BRS IN CANADA

The biosphere programme in Canada has been in operation since 1978, with our most recent addition, Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound in September 2021. All Canadian BRs follow the same framework as listed in the page above but what that looks like at the individual site may vary. These BRs are home to a number of unique features, some of which include:

- ... last remnants of old growth deciduous forest ...**
- ... last large pristine arctic lake...**
- ... critical migratory bird flyway**
- ... largest contiguous stretch of primarily forested land ...**
- ... world's largest freshwater archipelago ...**
- ... home to the productive habitats salt marshes ...**

WHERE ARE CANADA'S 19 BIOSPHERE RESERVES?

235,000 Km²

Their collective area (bigger than the UK)

CLICK

on the name
of a biosphere
reserve to
visit their
website



DID YOU KNOW?

2M+

People live in Canada's BRs



30K

Hours are volunteered by over 1,500 people who support their local BRs

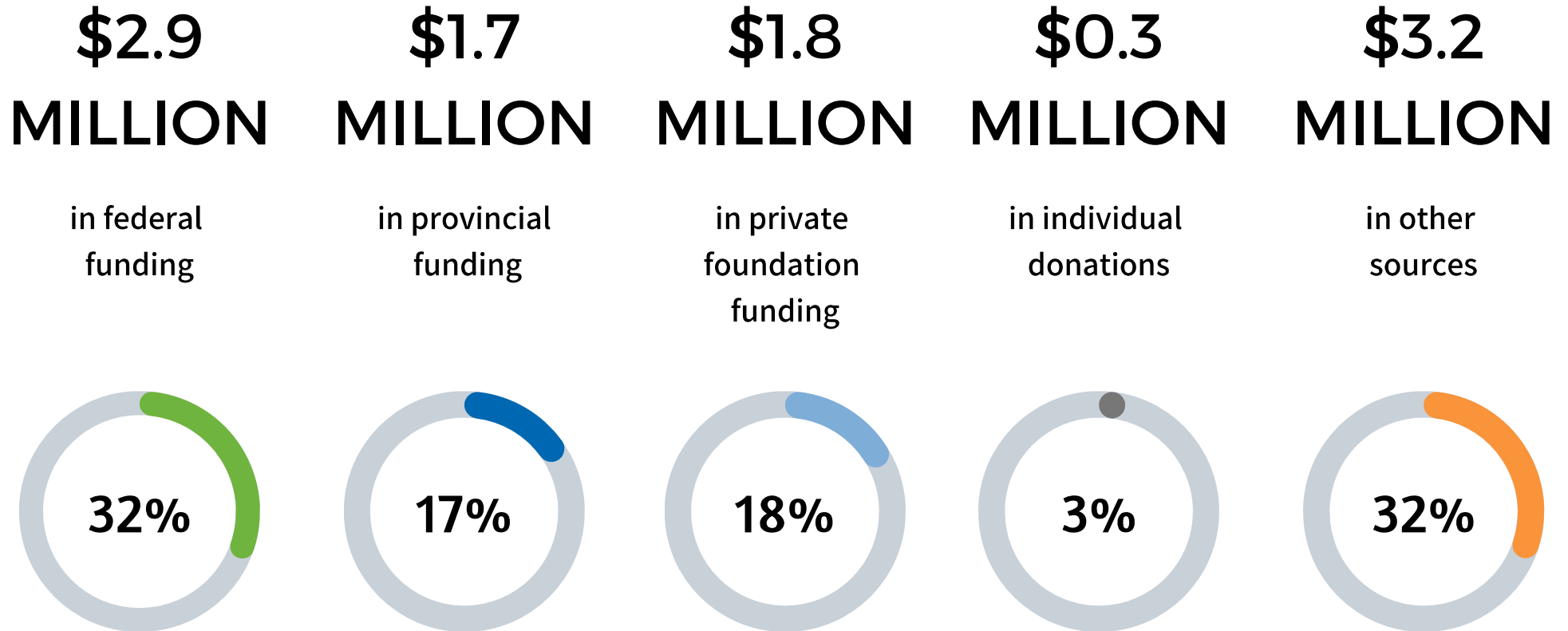


180

People are employed by BRs



IN ONE YEAR OF THE BIOSPHERE NETWORK



For a total of
\$9.9 MILLION

dollars of funding per year for work in Canadian BRs

In 2022, an additional \$6 million of federal and other matching dollars was fundraised, due to an investment from the Government of Canada for biodiversity conservation work. This work and yearly contribution will continue until at least 2024.

WHAT IS THE CANADIAN BIOSPHERE RESERVE ASSOCIATION?

The Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA) is the national organization that supports and promotes the work of the collective work of biosphere reserves in Canada. The CBRA's Strategic Plan was approved in 2019. It continues to drive the activities of the national organization and its actions to support the 19 local sites. The major themes are listed to the right.



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ENHANCE OUR COLLECTIVE CAPACITY

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.

EX. CBRA has established regional collaboration calls, produced monthly knowledge transfer newsletters, and helped with the development of multi-BR proposals.

ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

CBRA is a charitable nonprofit organization.

EX. CBRA has initiated an internal governance review and identified ways to find efficiencies and collaborations between government and non-government partners.

ESTABLISH OUR NATIONAL PRESENCE

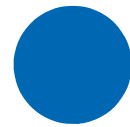
CBRA is a promoter of the collective work of Canadian BRs. CBRA is an active participant in the implementation of the MAB programme in Canada.

EX. CBRA has promoted the work of the Canadian BRs through presentations, engaging in national conversations and developing relationships with key partners.

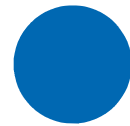
HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021-2022



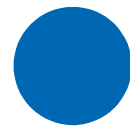
Our 19th biosphere reserve - Congrats to Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound (BC).



CBRA and the 19 sites received generous funding for biodiversity funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada.



CBRA, in partnership with the Canadian Colleges and Universities Environment Network, conducted a Biodiversity Summit, showcased the research happening in Canadian biosphere reserves.



CBRA used the 2-minute video created by the Canadian Commission of UNESCO, to promote the work of the Canadian biosphere reserves (see next page).

VISIT THEM. LEARN FROM THEM. PARTNER WITH THEM.

In 2021, the Canadian Commission for UNESCO produced a 2 minute video compiled from the Striking Balance documentary series footage. It has been a great tool to communicate the uniqueness of Canada's BRs.

CLICK

on the image
below to play
the video.

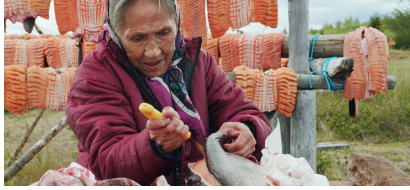
CANADA'S BIOSPHERE REGIONS

People and nature - in balance

▶ ▶| 🔊 1:48 / 1:58



THE PEOPLE IN CANADIAN BRS AND CBRA GOVERNANCE IN 2021-2022



Executive Committee

Chair: Rebecca Hurwitz, Clayoquot Sound, BC

1st Vice-Chair: Pam Shaw, Mount Arrowsmith, BC

2nd Vice-Chair: Jennifer Dingman, Fundy, NB

Treasurer: Greg Mason, Georgian Bay, ON

Secretary: Brian Illnicki, Beaver Hills, AB

Directors

Bill Dolan, Waterton, AB

Brian Craig, Long Point, ON

David Sollows, Southwest Nova, NS

Dolphus Tutcho, Tsá Tué, NWT

Eileen Crosby, Bras d'Or Lake, NS

Éric Malka, Mont Saint-Hilaire, QC

Guillaume Proulx, Manicouagan-Uapishka, QC

Julie Campeau, Charlevoix, QC

Larry Hawrysh, Redberry Lake, SK

Lindsey Dickie, Frontenac Arch, ON

Louise Corriveau, Lac Saint-Pierre, QC

Patrick Robson, Niagara Escarpment, ON

Ruth Simons, Átl'ka7tsem/Howe Sound, BC

Valerie Pankratz, Riding Mountain, MB

All of the photos above are from the Striking Balance series except the second last row, far right (Charlevoix) and the last row (Capilano University).

OTHER WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT BRS

AMAZING PLACES

The Amazing Places project is now thriving in five Canadian BRs. The project goal is to identify and promote significant natural sites for residents and visitors to explore in order to encourage better knowledge of ecological features and inspire a commitment to conservation.

RECONCILIATION PAPERS AND VIDEOS

In 2018, with support from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO and the Community Conservation Research Network, CBRA developed a series of reflection papers and videos describing stories of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canadian BRs. The stories are authored by individuals who are connected to the BRs and provide diverse perspectives on how meaningful relationships are developed and how knowledge can be respectfully shared between cultures.

STRIKING BALANCE

In 2016, TVO started a journey across Canada to look at our nation's BRs in a two-season cinematic documentary series called Striking Balance. Each episode explores one particular biosphere reserve and highlights some of the local gems and what makes them special, from geological, ecological, historical, and cultural perspectives. Almost all of the photos used in this annual report are from Striking Balance episodes.



CONTACT US

info@biospherecanada.ca

PO Box 662
Parry Sound ON P2A 2Z1

www.biospherecanada.ca