

Contact Information

UNESCO-MAB Programme

Mr Natarajan Ishwaran, Secretary
1, rue Miollis
75732 Paris Cedex 15
FRANCE
Tel: +33 1 45 68 40 67
E-mail: n.ishwaran@unesco.org
Web: www.unesco.org/mab

Pro-Natura International

Mr Guy Reinaud, President
15, avenue de Ségur
75007 Paris
FRANCE
Tel: +33 1 53 59 97 98
E-mail: pro-natura@wanadoo.fr
Web: www.pronatura.org



MAB – Pro-Natura Congo Basin Biosphere Bio-Carbon Forum

FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

21-22 April 2010

FORUM OVERVIEW

The MAB-Pro-Natura Congo Basin Biosphere Bio-Carbon Forum (Brazzaville, 21-22 April 2010) will bring together regional stakeholders to discuss concrete steps toward strengthening the biosphere reserve network in Central Africa and using Congo Basin biosphere reserves as pilot sites to combat deforestation, protect biodiversity, and promote sustainable development through bio-carbon modalities.

Building a sustainable future for the Congo Basin requires integrating conservation and development in order to alleviate poverty, protect traditional cultures and livelihoods, preserve biodiversity, and combat climate change. Tackling these complex challenges and delivering multiple benefits is the fundamental goal of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves are sites that are nominated by Member States and designated internationally by the MAB Council. Biosphere Reserves are managed to promote biodiversity conservation, enhance the socio-economic well-being of communities, and encourage learning and knowledge-building on sustainable development practice. As learning platforms for sustainable

development, biospheres are places uniquely suited to pioneering initiatives aimed at addressing critical contemporary issues, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and poverty eradication. The MAB Programme's Africa Bio-Carbon (ABC) Initiative seeks to develop strategies and models for bio-carbon sequestration projects in biosphere reserves in Africa through modalities such as REDD+, afforestation/ reforestation, biochar, and alternative energies.

The countries of the Congo Basin (COMIFAC Member States) are currently home to 12 Biosphere Reserves (BRs): 3 in Cameroon, 2 in Central African Republic, 2 in Congo, 3 in Democratic Republic of Congo, 1 in Gabon, and 1 in Rwanda. Discussions are also underway for the designation of several new BRs (including transboundary sites) and the expansion of existing biospheres.

Organized by the UNESCO-MAB Programme and Pro-Natura International, this Forum will bring together stakeholders from across the Congo Basin to discuss strategic directions for the MAB Programme and biosphere reserves in Central Africa, and will include an auxiliary ABC Initiative training session for MAB partners on bio-carbon opportunities, project design and management.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME 21-22 April 2010 Congo Basin Biosphere Bio-Carbon Forum

WEDNESDAY, 21 APRIL 2010

Welcome Address

Opening Addresses and Keynote Address

Workshop 1:

Congo Basin at a glance: Current scenario and state of the biosphere reserves

Lunch

Workshop 2:

Biosphere Landscapes as Opportunities for Climate and Sustainable Development Linked Investments – with concrete examples from sites in the WNBR

Reception

THURSDAY, 22 APRIL 2010

Workshop 3:

Institutional Strengthening and Expansion of the MAB Network in Central Africa: MAB National Committees and BR networks; trans-boundary

biosphere reserve potential; identifying potential new biosphere reserves

Lunch

Workshop 4:

Potential MAB Actions for the Congo Basin: Congo Basin Biosphere Assessment (CBBA); TRIDOM and the Atlantic Forests: pilot landscapes for the biosphere approach; ERAIFT and South-South Cooperation; a MAB Fund for Sustainable Development

SUMMARY DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

FRIDAY, 23 APRIL 2010

Field Visit

Note: The Forum is preceded on Day 1 by an ABC Initiative training session for MAB partners on bio-carbon opportunities, project design and management. The Forum is followed on Day 5 by a half-day planning session with biosphere reserve managers and MAB Network members to agree upon follow-up action

