
mab notes

Encouraging words for the international MAB program came from biochemist Federico Mayor of Spain, the new head of Unesco. At a reception in his honor at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., he said that the MAB program would be his highest priority in the Science Sector of Unesco.

In June the U.S. MAB National Committee will decide on funding for research proposals. Recent MAB developments include the following:

Southern Appalachians Agreement. A draft inter-agency agreement for establishing and operating a Southern Appalachian Man and the Biosphere Cooperative (SAMAB) is in final review; signing is expected this summer. The agencies involved are the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Tennessee Valley Authority, Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Energy, and the Appalachian Regional Commission. The purpose is to cooperate on a wide range of scientific, educational, and demonstration activities which foster better resource management and ecologically sound economic development in the Southern Appalachian region. At a meeting March 28-29 in Gatlinburg, Tenn., agency representatives discussed creation and funding of a MAB office, and recommended as the first research project development of a regionwide classification of ecosystems and a geographic information system. The proposal is awaiting action on funding by the U.S. MAB National Committee. Wilson Crumpacker (University of Colorado) is the principal investigator and Peter White (University of North Carolina) the coinvestigator.

Ozark Highlands Biosphere Reserve. A managers' workshop held on March 30 considered creation of an Ozark Highlands BR centered on the watersheds of the Buffalo River in Arkansas and the Current-Jacks Fork rivers in Missouri, with possible satellite sites elsewhere. An important resource issue here is the relation between land use and water quality of the river systems, much of

which lies in NPS areas. A patchwork of national forests, state, and private land occupies the rest of the watersheds. Participants at the meeting, representing federal, state, and private landowners, agreed to seek funds for a MAB feasibility study to identify regional resource issues, determine interest in MAB, recommend coordination mechanisms, and provide a basis for a possible future biosphere reserve nomination.

Northern Science Network Plans New Action. Meeting in Helsinki last March, representatives from member countries of the Northern Science Network decided on five topics to pursue, through symposia or in other ways, during the 1988-1991 period: (1) Protected Areas and Biosphere Reserves in Northern Regions; (2) Birch Forest Ecosystems and Ecotones/Treelines; (3) MAB and Sustainable Development in the North; (4) Geosphere-Biosphere Observatories; (5) Monitoring of Environmental and Social Change in Northern Regions.

The Northern Science Network was organized in 1982 under the aegis of Unesco's Man and the Biosphere Program. Member countries are Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, the Soviet Union, Greenland (represented by Denmark), Canada, and the United States. Iceland and the Soviet Union were not represented at the March meeting. The Network has previously held four major symposia – on northern land use and grazing, subarctic birch forest ecosystems, monitoring in biosphere reserves, and Arctic science policy – and has published the proceedings.

Chihuahuan Desert Symposium. A session on the role of biosphere reserves in addressing desertification and resource depletion in the Chihuahuan Desert is planned for the Third Chihuahuan Desert Symposium, to be held at Sul Ross University in Alpine, Texas, November 10-13, 1988. A workshop is scheduled during the symposium to develop an agenda for cooperative research among biosphere reserves in the Chihuahuan Desert, which include Big Bend NP and Jornada Experimental Range in the U.S. and the Mapimi Biosphere Reserve in Mexico.

Biosphere Reserve Brochure. The U.S. MAB Secretariat will fill requests for up to 25 copies of the recently published international brochure on biosphere reserves, as long as the supply lasts. Write to: Executive Director, US-MAB Secretariat, Department of State OES/ENR (MAB), Washington, D.C. 20520. Or phone FTS 632-2786 or (202) 632-2786. A second printing, including French and Spanish versions, is planned for later this year.

MAB-8 Elects New Slate of Officers. In March the MAB-8 Directorate elected Paul Risser as Chairman, Peter White as Vice Chairman, and Bill Gregg as Secretary. These elections reflect some of MAB-8's current research priorities. Risser, Vice President for Research at the University of New Mexico, has been particularly involved with the issue of global climate change. White, formerly an NPS scientist and now head of the botanical garden at the University of North Carolina, has done much work related to biological diversity. Bill Gregg, the NPS MAB Coordinator, had held the co-chairmanship of MAB-8 since 1980, with Stanley Krugman of the Forest Service, who had served since the Directorate's inception in 1976. The NPS will continue to have a lead role in the establishment and functional development of U.S. biosphere reserves.

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