

mab notes

Linkage between European and North American biosphere reserves across biomes will strengthen as a result of recommendations made at the meeting of representatives of EUROMAB in Washington, DC, Feb. 5-7. First a little background. These recommendations relate to the *EUROMAB Biosphere Reserves Integrated Monitoring Program*, known as BRIM. This program was launched at the August 1991 meeting of EUROMAB in Strasbourg. BRIM will provide the basis for:

Improving detection and prediction of trends in environmental conditions on continental and global scales; understanding the variability of natural and human caused phenomena and differentiating between the two; understanding the appropriate geographic and temporal scales of environmental problems; producing optimal spatial and temporal resolution and synthesis of information; testing hypotheses; and initiating processes of environmental learning and education.

The program will be carried out by establishing (1) a broad-based network of biosphere reserves that conduct basic inventory and monitoring of biological, physical, socio-economic, socio-cultural, and behavioral parameters; and (2) smaller, representative "sub-networks" for in-depth monitoring and research on special issues.

At present, 26 countries and 166 biosphere reserves are involved in BRIM. Nine countries – the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Sweden, and former USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Spain – were represented at the February meeting. In particular, the group recommended further consideration of NPS methodologies for biological inventory assessment and recording information on flora and fauna as a potential model for the EUROMAB program. Mike Ruggiero, Chief of the NPS Wildlife and Vegetation Division, will be working with representatives from Czechoslovakia and Sweden to adapt the NPS model for use in BRIM.

Other recommendations include creation of a EUROMAB directory, which will list contacts, facilities, and activities in the biosphere reserves; assessment of permanent plots in the BRs and development of guidelines for permanent plots; establishment of a pilot global change project in Europe; more emphasis on sociocultural factors at BRs, including case studies on making BRs work on the ground; and various organizational measures to strengthen EUROMAB.

NATO may be shrinking, but the environmental war dictates a growth in trans-Atlantic alliances like EUROMAB.

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