

Curtis Bohlen, former Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, has appointed Dr. Frank H. Talbot as the new **chairman of the U.S. MAB National Committee**. He will serve for three years, 1993-1995. Dr. Talbot is Director of the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution. He succeeds Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, who served for five years. Under Lovejoy's chairmanship, U.S. MAB streamlined its structure by reducing the 14 directorates to 5. It began core directorate projects, and concentrated MAB upon interdisciplinary social and natural science research. In leaving his MAB post, Dr. Lovejoy noted "that the greatest assets of U.S. MAB are the biosphere reserves themselves ... [but] we have yet to come successfully to grips with how we can capitalize on this impressive network ... The ... biosphere reserve managers workshop currently being organized will be a significant step in that important direction."

Regional MAB and MAB-related programs are progressing all around the country. For example, planning activities are underway in the Sonoran Desert, Ozark Highlands, Champlain-Adirondack Area, Colorado Rockies, and western Lake Superior. Regional work on the ground continues in the Mammoth Cave Area, the Southern Appalachians, and the Central California Coast. Since these regional programs are working examples of cooperation in implementing biosphere reserve concepts, I will highlight one in each MAB Notes column.

The **Central California Coast Biosphere Reserve (CCCBR)** was established in 1988. The first biosphere reserve to involve a major urban area, it is culturally and ecologically extremely diverse, with an impressive array of management, research, and educational institutions. Its 13 public and private land and water units, centered in the San Francisco area, include Audubon Canyon Ranch; Bodega Reserve of the University of California, Davis; Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries; Farallon National Wildlife Refuge; Golden Gate National Recreation Area; Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve of Stanford University; Marin Municipal Water District; Mt. Tamalpais, Samuel P. Taylor, and Tomales Bay State Parks; Point Reyes National Seashore; and the San Francisco Water Department Peninsula Watershed Lands.

A feasibility study funded by U.S. MAB and a subsequent planning report funded by the Marin Community Foundation guided

development of the CCCBR structure and operating procedures.

The work of the CCCBR is planned by councils; three—Managers, Science, and Education—have been established. Two others—Sustainable Economic Development and Public Participation—will be created when leadership is identified. The councils' activities are facilitated by the non-profit CCCBR Association.

The Association's Board of Trustees consists of the Chairs of each Council and additional representatives from science, education, and other communities. The Board reviews Council proposals for the Association's endorsement and support. The Association receives funds from government agencies and private sources for carrying out projects of the biosphere reserve.

A Memorandum of Understanding, signed in 1992-93 by agencies and organizations participating in the biosphere reserve, sets forth the background and objectives of the BR program. It is not surprising that getting the signatures of BR administrators and other interested parties took some time, as agencies and organizations had to be assured that the agreement would not conflict with their individual mandates. The CCCBR's office is at Fort Mason, in Golden Gate NRA. The CCCBR sees itself primarily as a coordinator, convener, and facilitator of communication for the many groups engaged in resource management, conservation, environmental education, and research on natural and human systems in the central California coastal region. Several projects are underway. One is organization of a symposium on biodiversity of the central California coast, including the greater San Francisco Bay region. The symposium, to be held in winter 1993-94, will look at the status of biodiversity in the region, the resources at risk, and strategies and tools for sustaining biodiversity. Another project is development of an integrated GIS system for the CCCBR. This involves determination of the present GIS capacities of the CCCBR member agencies, and development of a questionnaire to obtain information needed to identify objectives and assess opportunities for an integrated GIS system. The general goal is to improve the information base for multi-sector and cross-boundary resource management and restoration and to improve the utility and cost effectiveness of existing GISs.

With a dedicated, well-functioning Board, clear project goals, and a small but growing bank balance, the CCCBR appears to be off to a good and promising start.

Napier Shelton, NPS Wildlife and Vegetation Division, WASO.