

THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE



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COMMENTS FROM THE U.S. MAB CHAIRMAN...

I met with UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor while attending the Coordinating Council Meetings of MAB in November, and was heartened to find him deeply preoccupied by the global environment and with what UNESCO can do to help. Germane to all this will be the work of a special independent scientific advisory committee which will examine the work of MAB and recommend ways to augment its effectiveness.

Certainly at this time when the human species as a whole is living in a way which has exceeded the carrying capacity of the planet, the concept of MAB, and indeed the Biosphere Reserves, has never been more relevant. But, while our voluntary talent is great, the resources available for putting it to work are limited. So it behooves me to examine critically how we of U.S. MAB might deploy our funds and talent to greatest effectiveness. Accordingly, early January meetings of the Directorate Chairmen and the National Committee will focus on this topic.

Thomas E. Lovejoy

...AND FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

The response to U.S. MAB's FY89 request for proposals has been almost overwhelming to the Secretariat. Nearly 180 prospectuses were received. They all had to be duplicated and mailed out to members of various MAB Directorates for review. In most cases, each prospectus will be reviewed by at least two Directorates. The Directorates will make recommendations to the U.S. MAB National Committee which will then decide which principal investigators will be invited to submit full proposals for peer review and the final funding competition.

Given the quality and relevance evidenced in the prospectuses, these decisions will be most difficult. Over the next months I will be trying to secure additional agency and non-federal resources so that the largest number of proposals may be received, reviewed and funded. I am hopeful that existing federal contributors will increase their support as the U.S. MAB Program is, in my judgment, too heavily dependent upon one agency's (State's) contributions. As noted in Chairman Lovejoy's message above, agency representatives will have the opportunity at their next meeting to provide more focus and, hopefully, more support for the U.S. MAB Program.

As a final note, I know I will find MAB a rather different operation without the presence of Mrs. Phylis Rubin here in the Secretariat. Many, if not most of you, know the U.S. MAB Program through her outstanding work over the past eleven years. It will be impossible to replace her energy, drive and dedication to the MAB Program. And while we bid Phyl a happy retirement, as noted inside this BULLETIN, I am pleased to announce the very welcome addition of Don De Haven to our staff.

Roger E. Soles

U.S. MAB SECRETARIAT HAIL AND FAREWELL:

DON DE HAVEN joined the Secretariat staff in November as Senior Program Officer. In 1955 he joined the U.S. Department of State as a Management Intern and has held a number of increasingly responsible positions throughout the Department since then. He has been with the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs for over fifteen years, including an extended detail to the National Science Foundation where he served as Special Programs Manager in the Ocean Sciences Division. He has a keen interest in MAB activities and looks forward to working with you over the coming months. We are very pleased to have Don with us in the MAB Program.

PHYL RUBIN who has been with the Secretariat since 1977 and has served, in recent years, as U.S. MAB Program Officer and writer/editor of this BULLETIN, will retire from MAB at the end of February. Mrs. Rubin began her government career in the U.S. Foreign Service in 1952, first serving in Bonn, West Germany and later at the American Embassy in Warsaw, Poland where she married. When her children were grown she returned to the State Department, in MAB, and worked with former Executive Directors Oscar Olson, Jay Blowers and Brooke Holmes--to become the longest-serving member of the U.S. MAB Secretariat. She will retire to 1013 No. Terrill Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22304, where she plans to keep active within the environmental community and pursue other interests as well. We will miss her, and we wish her much happiness in retirement.

UPDATE OF U.S. MAB ACTIVITIES:

Major project grants for FY-1988 were described in the previous (July) issue of the BULLETIN. Since then, additional funding became available which enabled U.S. MAB to support the development and implementation of the following new National Park Service-related objectives:

● Initiate Preparation of a Georeferenced Ecosystem Database for Building a Model Biosphere Reserve in the Southern Appalachians:

This project is related to the U.S. Inventory of Macroreserves: Development of a National Ecosystem Conservation Database (U.S. MAB BULLETIN, March 1987). It will provide an automated regional database on the terrestrial ecosystems of the Southern Appalachian region. The database will furnish essential information for an ongoing interagency effort to develop a model biosphere reserve program, and will include research, survey, and applications components.

The research involves a comparative analysis of existing regional and subre-

gional ecosystem classifications developed for various scientific and management purposes. The analysis will provide the scientific basis for a unified ecosystem classification for implementing the "Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves" in this biologically diverse region (UNESCO 1984).

The survey component will generate information on ecosystem representation and management objectives in the region's management areas, as well as on special designations--such as natural landmarks and research natural areas--which encourage protection, monitoring and research.

The applications component will involve computerization of the georeferenced database, review by regional scientists and the federal and state agencies participating in the Southern Appalachian MAB program, and preparation of a preliminary assessment of the status of ecosystem conservation in the Southern Appalachians.

● Prepare Feasibility Studies to Provide the Basis for Cooperative Development of Functioning Biosphere Reserve:

UPDATE, U.S. MAB ACTIVITIES (Continued):

U.S. MAB will prepare reports to assess the feasibility of developing functional biosphere reserves having strong potential to fulfill the multiple objectives of the "Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves" in particular regions selected to achieve these objectives. Each study will include: identification of the boundaries of the MAB region; identification of local, regional, and extra-regional issues affecting maintenance of the biological diversity of the region; assessment of the interest of agencies, institutions, organizations, and community leaders representing conservation, science, and economic development sectors in the utilization of MAB as a framework for cooperation on scientific and educational activities to provide the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to address significant resource issues; recommendations on a mechanism, or alternative mechanisms, for institutionalizing a regional MAB program, which provides the basis for achieving biosphere reserve (BR) objectives.

U.S. MAB, through its Directorate on Biosphere Reserves, will: arrange to provide technical, logistic, and financial resources required to prepare feasibility studies for particular regions; coordinate meetings among potential constituencies to provide MAB orientation, information and perspective; arrange for publication/dissemination of the study; and secure endorsement of site administrators and coordinate the preparation of biosphere reserve nomination forms for sites recommended for addition to the BR network, or for boundary modification, as a result of the feasibility study.

● Implement Smithsonian-MAB Biological Diversity Protocol and Training Program in Southern Appalachians:

The Smithsonian Institution has undertaken an international program in cooperation with U.S. MAB, U.S. AID, and UNESCO to develop a network of permanent plots for recording and monitoring biological diversity in biosphere reserves (BR) and areas potentially suitable for BR designation. Initial emphasis has been on establishing

and inventorying 25-hectare plots in representative ecosystems of high species diversity in neotropical forests in accordance with a Smithsonian/MAB protocol, and on utilizing these locations as hubs for training students in the principles and practice of collecting biological specimens, surveying and monumenting permanent plots, etc. These sites also provide the focus for cooperative research in conservation-related sciences involving the U.S. and host country researchers. During its first year, the Smithsonian/MAB program has held successful workshops in Bolivia, Peru, and Puerto Rico.

Building on experience in the neotropics, this project would establish the first temperate zone application of the Smithsonian/MAB protocol in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park biosphere reserve unit as part of the Southern Appalachian MAB Program, now being launched officially by six federal and two participating state agencies (see pages 4 and 5). The project would have several components: technical evaluation of the Smithsonian/MAB protocol; establishment and inventory of permanent plots; convening of a workshop on the use of the protocol; determination of the feasibility of establishing a demonstration and training program in the So. Appalachians for U.S. and foreign students/scientists; and recommendations on application of the Smithsonian/MAB protocol in other United States biosphere reserves and protected areas, and integration with existing and planned inventory and monitoring programs for biological diversity.

● Provide Administrative Support for Southern Appalachian MAB (SAMAB) Program: (See pages 4 and 5.)

U.S. MAB will provide administrative services relating to the development of proposals for scientific and educational activities to implement the objectives of the "Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves" and the provision of the Interagency/Cooperative Agreement establishing the SAMAB Program. Meetings, technical assistance, information dissemination, and assistance with BR nominations would be provided.

UPDATE, U.S. MAB ACTIVITIES (Continued):

● Provide Support for Bilateral MAB Symposium and Workshop on Chihuahuan Desert Biosphere Reserves:

U.S. MAB coordinated a joint United States-Mexico MAB symposium on Biosphere Reserves as part of the Third Symposium on Resources of the Chihuahuan Desert Biosphere Reserves. It was held in Sul Ross University, Alpine, Texas, November 10-12, and provided an overview of the biosphere reserve concept, and of the programs of the three existing Chihuahuan Desert BRs (Mapimi, in Mexico, and Big Bend National Park and the Jornada Experimental Range in the U.S.). Opportunities for cooperation, especially as related to the general symposium theme of ecosystem restoration, were explored.

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* GOOD NEWS FROM THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS! *

* A milestone in the development of a model *
* integrated regional MAB project was at- *
* tained when the recently formed Executive *
* Committee for the Southern Appalachian MAB *
* Cooperative* met at the U.S. Forest Ser- *
* vice's Coweeta Hydrologic Station, Otto, *
* North Carolina, December 6 and 7. *
* * * * *

* An Interagency Agreement was signed by *
* six federal agencies in the region on *
* August 10, 1988. They are: U.S. *
* Forest Service, National Park Service, *
* Fish and Wildlife Service, Tennessee *
* Valley Authority, Department of Energy *
* and the Economic Development Authority. *
* All agencies had representatives on the *
* Executive Committee at this meeting. *
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(Continued on Page 5)

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CONVERSION OF TROPICAL FOREST TO PASTURES IN LATIN AMERICA:

A major workshop concerning the impacts of tropical forest conversion to pastures in Latin America was conducted in Oaxaca, Mexico in October, 1988 by the U.S. Man and the Biosphere Program's Directorates on Grazing Lands and Tropical Forests.

The workshop described the current situation of conversion of forest to pasture, provided historical reviews of livestock and forestry in Latin America, reviewed the economic, environmental, and social impacts and dynamics of deforestation, presented production alternatives including pasture production, rehabilitation of degraded pastures, reforestation, and agroforestry, provided development perspectives from business and research donor organizations, and identified research, technological, and policy options and priorities.

Sixty-six representatives from ten countries participated--scientists, technicians, environmentalists, writers, administrators, peasants.

If sufficient interest exists, Westview Press is considering publishing a book based upon the papers presented at this workshop and the recommendations developed.

If you would be interested in such a publication, please contact Dr. Henry A. Pearson, USDA Forest Service, Southern Forest Experiment Station, PO Box 5500, Pineville, Louisiana 71360.

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GOOD NEWS! (Continued):

The Committee decided to provide funds to set up a coordinating office and establish leadership for the program; the Great Smoky Mountains National Park has offered space, secretarial, and support services, and it is expected that the Executive Director position will be advertised in March or April in appropriate journals. Tom Gilbert has served, and will continue to serve, as Program Advisor. The Committee also decided to establish the Southern Appalachian MAB Foundation to broaden public participation and private sector support (the charter and bylaws have been prepared and are now being reviewed by participating agencies.) The Executive Committee agreed to support an annual MAB conference, beginning in 1990, focusing on a topic of regional importance.

The states of Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia are expected to join the Cooperative and participate in the Program. There will be special meetings to organize state participation by representatives from the North Carolina Division of Natural Resources and Community Development.

Subcommittees were organized to plan specific cooperative activities in environmental education and training, economic development, public involvement, natural resource management, and research. (The representative of the Economic Development Administration said his agency would like to have a proposal by mid-January and the Committee decided to develop one to prepare comparative case studies and a data base on the impact of tourism in several areas in the region.)

The Committee also decided that the Smithsonian/MAB protocol would be demonstrated in the Great Smokies next spring.

A principal of rotation of Chairs among supporting agencies was established, and a representative of the U.S. Forest Service will be the next Chairman of the Executive Committee. The Forest Service will also provide secretarial services for the Secretariat.

Everyone expressed great appreciation to both Gary Everhardt, Superintendent of Blue Ridge Parkway and a former Director of the National Park Service, who chaired the planning group during this past year, and Art Allen, Assistant Superintendent for Resource Management, Blue Ridge Parkway, who has been the key resource person in getting the Cooperative off to a good start.

The Committee has decided to develop a brochure/slide program to explain the Cooperative to local people and to interpret the objectives of the Program and the Cooperative.

* FREE PUBLICATIONS FROM U.S. MAB:

* We are still working on a backlog of publications requests and beg your patience. Some orders cannot be filled because names and/or addresses are missing.

* New items are listed below. REMEMBER, ENCLOSE YOUR SELF-ADDRESSED MAILING LABEL (OR LABELS IF YOU ARE REQUESTING SEVERAL ITEMS).

* We Did This Ourselves, a Case Study of the INAFOR/CARE/Peace Corps Soil Conservation and Forest Management Program, Republic of Guatemala. Produced under the AID/PC Forest Resources Management Project. December 1987.

* CONNECT, UNESCO-UNEP Environmental Education Newsletter. Vol. XIII, No. 2, June 1988. Sustainable Development via Environmental Education.

* CONNECT, UNESCO-UNEP Environmental Education Newsletter. Vol. XIII, No. 3, September 1988. Urban Problems and Environmental Education

* InfoMAB, No. 10. September 1988. UNESCO/MAB Newsletter. Includes items about MAB National Committees, most MAB project areas, and MAB calendar through September/90

- Park Science, A Resource Management Bulletin. Volume 9, Number 1. Fall 1988. Published by U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
- Biology International, News Magazine of the International Union of Biological Sciences. Special Issue 17. A New Look at Ecotones: Emerging International Projects on Landscape Boundaries, Edited by F. di Castri, A. Hansen, and M. Holland
- What is a Biosphere Reserve? Poster/Map (based on a classification by Miklos Udvardy, 1975) with listing of international biosphere reserves as of January 1987
- People and the Tropical Forest. A Research Report from the United States Man and the Biosphere Program. Summaries of research resulting from twenty project grants under the U.S. MAB/Agency Research Consortium. Edited by members of the U.S. MAB Directorate on Tropical Forests: Ariel E. Lugo, John J. Ewel, Susanna B. Hecht, Peter G. Murphy, Christine Padoch, Marianne C. Schmink, and Donald Stone. 1987
- Ecological, Physical, and Socioeconomic Relationships Within Southern National Forests. Proceedings of the Southern Evaluation Project Workshop, Long Beach, Mississippi, May 1987. Compiled by Henry A. Pearson, Fred E. Smeins and Ronald E. Thill. Published by So. Forest Exp. Sta., USDA Forest Service. 1987

Although I look forward to the next chapter in my life, I will sorely miss the people--the men and women in the biosphere--with whom I have worked and become friends over more than a decade. Keep making MAB make a difference, all of you! Our work is more important than ever. Thank you all for your inspiration and many kindnesses over the years. MAB has, for me, been truly an enriching experience.

Phyl Rubin, Editor

U.S. MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE PROGRAM, OES/ENR/MAB

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