

UK MAB Terms of Reference



Purpose of UKMAB

1. General statement

The UK MAB National Committee (UK MAB) is the National Committee that oversees and manages the application of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) in the UK, its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. The MAB Programme is an intergovernmental science programme which proposes an interdisciplinary research agenda and capacity building aiming to improve the relationship of people with their environment globally. Biosphere Reserves are a major focus for the implementation of the MAB Programme.

2. The Committee will specifically:

2.1. Provide a UK focal point for the UNESCO MAB programme, maintaining liaison with the UK National Commission for UNESCO, the MAB secretariat in Paris, EuroMAB and, as appropriate, MAB national committees in other countries;

2.2. Through the MAB secretariat in Paris, and in consultation with the UK National Commission for UNESCO, ensure wider awareness of and interest in current UK approaches to enhancing biodiversity and sustainable development;

2.3. Establish and maintain links with other relevant UK structures relating to sustainable development both nationally and internationally;

2.4. Promote in the UK and more widely the UNESCO MAB Programme concerns for:

2.4.1. the conservation of biological diversity;

2.4.2. sustainable development;

2.4.3. the development of human and institutional capacity to cope with environment/development issues;

2.5. Identify where UK MAB can undertake its own programmes and can influence and add value to other relevant UK initiatives and programmes;

2.6. Guide and support the work of the UK Biosphere Reserves and facilitate links between them and with Biosphere Reserves in other countries;

2.7. Maintain oversight of UK Biosphere Reserves and the Biosphere Reserve periodic review process, providing a high-level stakeholder forum for considering BR nominations and adaptations to inform ministerial decisions;

2.8. Develop and monitor a rolling work programme guided by the UNESCO and MAB Programme strategies.

3. Structure of Committee

3.1. The Committee shall comprise key stakeholders, and include:

3.1.1. representatives of the relevant national Government departments/devolved administrations and their statutory agencies and local

government;

3.1.2. Membership from institutions that represent the inter-disciplinary nature of the Programme. This will include: conservation, economic sector, social/cultural sector and the education sector;

3.1.3. Representatives from established Biosphere Reserves;

3.1.4. The committee may appoint independent experts as either corresponding members or full members. Such positions are for two years, renewable once.

4. Linkage to UK National Commission for UNESCO

4.1. The Committee will maintain a collaborative arrangement with the UK National Commission to UNESCO, in particular through participation in its sciences committee and its working group relating to the other Intergovernmental Science Programmes. The Committee will advise the National Commission on issues relevant to UNESCO General Conferences and Executive Boards and UNESCO programmes that interact with the MAB Programme.

5. Frequency of Meetings

5.1. The Committee shall meet at least twice a year. Meetings shall be coordinated with UK National Commission for UNESCO meetings and meetings of the MAB International Co-ordinating Council (ICC).

6. Conduct of meetings

6.1. The decisions of the Committee will be by consensus.

7. Officers

7.1. The officers of the Committee will include a Chair and Vice-Chair. The offices will be held for two years, renewable twice. Appointment will be by consensus of the Committee.

7.2. Chair: The office of chair will be filled by a person who is independent of national government and the devolved administrations when possible. The position does not benefit from an honorarium or salary. The key roles will be to:

7.2.1. preside over meetings;

7.2.2. be UKMAB representative on the UK National Commission for UNESCO's sciences committee and its relevant working groups;

7.2.3. champion the MAB Programme within the domain as described in article 1;

7.2.4. represent the UK on the MAB International Coordinating Council (ICC), the chair will be the representative in agreement with the UK Permanent Delegation to UNESCO, such representation may be delegated to another member of the Committee.

7.3. Vice Chair: The position does not benefit from an honorarium or salary. This role will principally to:

7.3.1. deputise for the Chair in all of the functions where necessary.

8. Secretariat

8.1. The role of secretariat will be provided by Defra. The roles are to:

8.1.1. provide a national point of contact for enquiries regarding the MAB Programme;

8.1.2. coordinate and service Committee meetings;

8.1.3. facilitate communication between the Committee and its working groups;

8.1.4. maintain records relating to the Committee and the MAB Programme in the UK, including ensuring that the website and other communications are accurate.

9. Working Groups

9.1. To further the work of the MAB Programme in the UK and abroad, the Committee may establish Working Groups. The Working Groups' function will be reviewed on a two yearly basis;

9.2. The terms of reference for each Working Group will be agreed by the Committee;

9.3. Working Group membership may include members from outside of the Committee who are co-opted for their particular expertise;

9.4. A Chair will be appointed for each Working Group. Working Group Chairs will be members of the Committee and will be responsible for reporting at regular intervals to the Committee;

9.5. The Working Groups may raise and develop their own operational budgets in agreement with the Chair of the Committee to ensure no conflicting or competing efforts within the MAB Programme. Such funding should be hosted within an appropriate accountable body.

9.6. The Working Groups will cooperate with one another and will be encouraged to work with other MAB topic groups and national committees.

10. Review of Terms of Reference

10.1. These terms will be reviewed every two years after the appointment/reappointment of a Chair.

Final Approved: 19 November 2009/Revised after meeting on 23 June 2014