

JEJU DECLARATION

JEJU ISLAND, REPUBLIC OF KOREA

06-12-08

With reference to:

- The Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves 2008-2013
- The Jeju Initiative, Asia-Pacific Inter-linkage of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves for Environmental Governance and Socio-economic Development , 2005-2011
- The Menorca Declaration on the Network of Island Biosphere Reserves, 2008
- The work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, in particular MDG 1 and MDG-7, as well as the Mauritius Strategy.

Recognizing:

- That island and coastal biosphere reserves are highly specific as they share many similarities in vulnerabilities and challenges despite their ecological, geographical and cultural diversity. Islands and coastal biosphere reserves are often typified by their ecological uniqueness, geographical remoteness, limited availability of resources, rapidly growing population, vulnerability to natural disasters and global changes.
- That island and coastal ecosystems and their biodiversity have faced increasing pressure during the last decades from anthropogenic and climate change threats. This has accelerated the loss of biological and cultural diversity with regime shifts and unexpected consequences that impact the ability of ecosystems to provide services critical for human well-being.
- That under current climate change scenarios, island and coastal ecosystems will be heavily impacted. Coral reefs will be significantly reduced by bleaching caused by increased sea surface temperatures and acidification of the oceans; freshwater reliant ecosystems will

change due to variations in precipitation patterns and saltwater intrusion, coastal ecotones will disappear because of sea-level rise. The pace of which these changes are taking place does not allow for natural adaptation.

- That the current trend of degradation in island and coastal ecosystems is expected to impact heavily on the economic, social and cultural spheres of society, and increase the risk for conflicts.
- That aside from rising conflicts over marine and terrestrial resources, additional resource depletion will push resource users to apply more destructive practices, with as result the increased loss of biodiversity, adding further to the vicious circle of climate change.
- The strong testimony of linkages between biological and cultural diversity in island and coastal ecosystems, and the unmistakable fragile interrelation between environmental and human components in island and coastal biosphere reserves.
- The unique role island and coastal biosphere reserves play as key-indicators or learning sites for global problems, such as energy consumption, waste management, water availability/accessibility, population pressure and climate change impacts, as well as in spearheading innovative solutions supporting sustainable development
- That the MAB Programme, with at its core the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, provides a positive framework for the sustainable management of island and coastal ecosystems.
- The strong commitment made by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province and Menorca Government in promoting sustainable development in island and coastal biosphere reserves and enhance international cooperation between the MAB island and coastal community.

Notifying:

- That key issues related to island and coastal biosphere reserves are often not given appropriate attention in the regional MAB networks, and resultantly there is a strong need for thematic MAB technical focus and exchange on island and coastal biosphere reserves.
- That many barriers to overcome challenges in island and coastal biosphere reserves still exist, including limited capacity and monitoring systems

- That there is a strong need for upscaling of and policy integration within island and coastal biosphere reserves, and for the development of stronger linkages between knowledge-base and decision-making.
- The need to enhance resilience of island and coastal ecosystems through appropriate rapid and swift actions.

Agreeing:

- That experiences, expertise and the knowledge base accumulated in coastal and island biosphere reserves should be shared.
- That further capacity for the MAB community in island and coastal biosphere reserves should be built.
- That exchanges provide the foundation for sound networking and improved implementation of the sustainable development agenda in island and coastal biosphere reserves
- That networking consists of a variety of approaches, including but not limited to establishing discussion forums (e.g. website, blog), topical training (e.g. restoration, rehabilitation, ex-situ conservation), knowledge and technology sharing (e.g. clean energy), topical meetings (e.g. climate change, quality economy etc.), support of small-scale innovative projects (e.g. development and availability of a funding mechanism), joint research and monitoring (e.g. development of publications and best management practices), and site exchanges (e.g. between scientists, policy makers, decision-makers, practitioners and local communities).
- That networking can play a pivotal role in translating information from research and local communities into policy and decision-making.
- To the importance of the contribution of the Jeju Self-Governing Province for the island and coastal biosphere reserve agenda

Expressing:

- Hope for the establishment of a Pan-Pacific Network on Island and Coastal Biosphere reserves, as well as continued support from the Jeju Self-Governing Province to this significant initiative and recommendations made herein

Jeju Island, 6 December 2008