

## Continental Aquatic Ecosystems MAB Network Workshop

Chair:

- Olivier GUERRI and Raphaël MICHAU (France – Dordogne basin BR - EPIDOR)
- and Giuseppe CASTALDELLI (Italy – Delta Po BR - Professor at the University of Ferrara)

Contact (for the coordination of the working group): r.michau@eptb-dordogne.fr

14 representatives of 10 Biosphere Reserves attended the CAE MAB working group: Po Delta, Mura-Drava-Danube (AUT, SLO, HUN), Terres de l'Ebre, Nedre Dalälven River Landscape, Fangu Valley, Monte Peglie, Lower Morava and Dordogne Basin.

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### Workshop content

- A. Context reminder and report on the main 2017-2018 events of the CAE-MAB working group  
(see slideshow attached)
- B. Experiences and best practices from CAE MAB members
- C. Network functioning and priorities (first tools developed and implemented to strengthen the CAE-MAB working group)
- D. Results/Conclusion (next steps to be taken)

B/ Experiences and best practices from CAE MAB members (see slideshows attached)

- **Giuseppe CASTALDELLI (Italy – Delta Po BR - Professor at the University of Ferrara)**

Main results of the Comacchio meeting about "traditional fishing activities and eel conservation in the European biosphere reserves " organised by the Po Delta Biosphere Reserve in October 2018. The meeting has highlighted a common conviction among all participating BRs, the need to make eel fishery evolve into a new, shared perspective, for the conservation of the species.

- **Magdalena WAGNER (Austria - TBR Mura-Drava-Danube – Project Manager at WWF Austria)**

Introduction of the "Transboundary cooperation along the rivers Mura, Drava and Danube" also called the "coop MDD project" which gathers 5 biosphere reserves from 5 countries (Serbia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia and Austria). Within a challenging political framework, the coop MDD project has resulted in the settlement of a transboundary cooperation programme that sets a common action plan, guidelines for a dynamic river corridor and a transboundary learning network.

- **Urška DOLINAR (Slovenia - TBR Mura-Drava-Danube – Founder and director ISKRIVA)**

Introduction of the "Amazon of Europe Bike Trail" which is a cycling trail's project connecting the five countries of the future transboundary UNESCO Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube. The project

aims at boosting regional economy, improving the skills and knowledge of local populations about sustainable development and ensuring the promotion of protected areas through sustainable tourism.

- **Mercè MARIANO (Spain - Terres de l'Ebre BR – Biosphere coordinator)**

Introduction of the LIFE project called CLINOMICS and carried out with other territories of Catalonia since 2016. It aims at improving the resilience of local economies, particularly in the primary sector (forestry, vineyards and fishing). Two pilot actions have been implemented: a drought observatory and an autochthonous oyster hatchery.

- **Olivier GUERRI (France – Dordogne Basin BR– Deputy Director and scientific coordinator)**

Introduction of the Dordogne Basin BR application to the LIFE Project “Dordogne Valley”. The project targets three species habitats (Atlantic Salmon, Sea Lamprey and Allis Shad). Planned actions focus on land purchase to guarantee the long-term conservation of natural areas, coordination of owners and administrators of the natural areas and restoration works.

C/ Network functioning and priorities (first tools developed and implemented to strengthen the CAE-MAB network)

• **Edition of the CAE-MAB booklet**

With the participation of 9 Biosphere reserves we have worked and edited a booklet about the CAE MAB network project to be distributed to the participants at the EuroMAB meeting 2019 hosted by the Dublin Bay BR. It presents the network, its members and their main actions. We plan to edit an updated version of the booklet completed with new BRs for the next EuroMAB, which will take place in Austria in 2021.

• **CAE MAB website**

The Dordogne Basin Biosphere Reserve has worked on a beta version of the CAE-MAB network website. This website aims at:

- making the working group known to get the attention of other potential interested Biosphere reserves around the world,
- presenting the working group's actuality and the members' activities (to share achievements, solutions, know-how, exemplary and innovative experiences led by Biosphere reserves
- Announcing and sharing upcoming or past events and news of the members (events, publications, calls for proposal...)

All Biosphere Reserves which wish to become a member of the network are invited to

- send a “descriptive record” of their Biosphere Reserve (see the template attached)) to appear on the website (this will also be useful for the updated version of the booklet)
- contribute to the CAE-MAB working group website by proposing articles in three predefined layouts (view templates attached) to present the activities of the biosphere Reserves (Projects, innovative experiences and actions, Know how, events...).

We propose to edit an automatically generated newsletter system summarizing the latest articles published on the website. It could be sent on a three-month basis.

- Study tours

Study tours with training activities have been identified as a good way to share information and to collaborate within the network. It would be useful to implement a cycle of meetings hosted by the biosphere reserves who belong to the network.

#### D/ Results/Conclusions

Concerning the operating of the working group:

- 1) the existence of the CAE-MAB working group is considered as a very interesting opportunity to reinforce acknowledgement of BR actions and to make experience sharing easier on specific issues concerning aquatic environment,
- 2) the actions undertaken by the CAE-MAB coordinating group, such as the thematic workshops recently hold, the publication of the booklet and the ongoing construction of the website, have been very positively appreciated,
- 3) an active participation of BRs and their partners is required into some priority actions: contributions to the website (descriptive records; contacts; blogposts...), mobilisation of other BR to enlarge the working group, development of connections with other existing networks (other thematic MAB groups, International Hydrologic Program, European Centre for River Restoration, LIFE network...), making available on each BR internet sites a short presentation of the working group and a link to the website,

Among several issues rised, the following have resulted fully shared:

- 4) interest for the transborder model under development in the Mura-Drava- Danube BRs, where a connected system of bike trails has been developed, for promoting green tourism and the sustainable development of little towns along the rivers' side,
- 5) the conservation of endangered fish species and especially migratory fish by promoting actions for restoration of rivers' longitudinal connectivity and spawning habitats.
- 6) the need to save the cultural inheritance of traditional fisheries, by integrating them within the Community framework for biodiversity protection and Community Regulations for the conservation of the target species (i.e. the case of eel),
- 7) the importance to take climate change into account,

Several ideas were shared during the workshop. The following idea , which keeps the previous points, could a guideline for further common actions: “within a climate change context, enhancing connectivity along the rivers for local people (soft mobility : bike trails for example) and for endangered fish species (ecological corridor and habitat restoration)”.