

Newsletter



WORLD NETWORK OF
ISLAND AND COASTAL
BIOSPHERE RESERVES

Joint Secretariats of the WNICBR

8th UNESCO Training Course for Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserve Managers

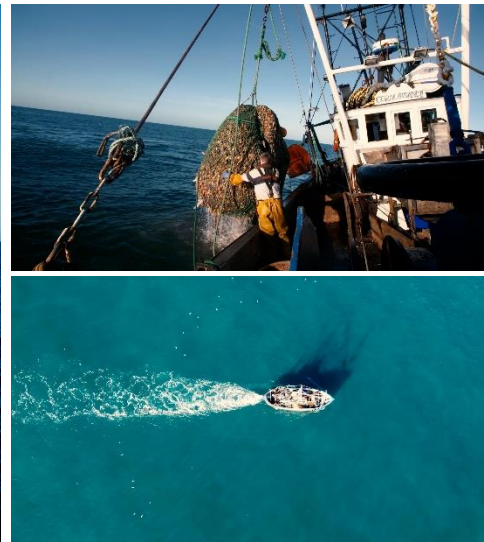


Harye-ri Ecotourism Village
trekking activity guided by
the local community

WNICBR has implemented a training program for biosphere reserve managers in island and coastal areas since 2013. The purpose of this training course is to share experiences and build the capacities for adapting to climate change and achieving sustainable development. The 8th training course under the theme of Ecological Restoration took place on Jeju Island from June 27 to 29, 2023. Dr. Hans Denker Thulstrup, Chief of Section, Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, and a representative of UNESCO MAB graced the event with his presence and delivered the keynote address followed by presentations of 9 managers on their respective BR. A group of delegates from Korea National Park service attended the meeting on the second day to share and exchange ideas on their restoration projects, which set the tone for the round-table discussion on Ecological Restoration.

The session enabled the participants to share good practices and lessons learned with one another in a dynamic and interactive way. Each participant briefly introduced the activities or projects on the topic which enabled in-depth knowledge exchange. On the third day, they went on a field trip around the island while enjoying the wonders of nature. Seongsan Ilchulbong (Sunrise Peak) and Manjanggul Lava Tube, UNESCO World Natural Heritage sites, were some of the destinations. The participants gained a greater understanding of their formation processes and heritage values through this experience program. The training course provided all the participants with a great opportunity to share information on their BRs and establish better network system.

Film celebrates town's traditional connection with the sea



A new film explores and celebrates the relationship of the harbour town Peel in the Isle of Man with the fishing industry.

‘Spuds and Herring’ by Neil Corlett is a 21-minute-long film which combines astonishing archive footage of Peel in the 1960s, harbourside interviews with older people involved in the industry, and beautiful footage shot on a number of fishing boats over the past year.

The film begins with memories of the heydays of the fishing industry in Peel, when you could walk from one side of the harbour to the other across the fishing boats.

After telling how the fishing connected to other parts of the industry, it goes on to chart the changes into the industry culminating in an exploration of the experiences of those at sea today.

The film was conceived, shot and edited by Neil, who went out on fishing boats over the course of a year, capturing footage by hand and by drone.

Subtitled, ‘A celebration of the Peel fishing industry,’ the film was premiered as part of a sold-out event in the Centenary Centre in Peel in May 2023.

The film was supported by a grant awarded in 2022 as part of the Culture Vannin 40th anniversary celebrations. Culture Vannin has now released the film on its website and YouTube channels.

Becky McSevney, Operations Officer for Culture Vannin, says: ‘We were delighted to see the beautiful film footage of fishing boats out at sea in Neil’s film. This is a story important not only to Peel, but also to the Isle of Man more widely.’

The sea makes up 87% of the Isle of Man Biosphere. Fishing is important both economically and culturally and the Isle of Man Government and the industry work closely to ensure there’s a sustainable fishery.

<https://www.biosphere.im/news/peel-and-sea>

United by the Atlantic Ocean

Under this concept, the Biosphere Reserve of El Hierro and the Biosphere Reserve of Fogo, have taken a twinning thanks to a previous work done to develop some panels to show the similarities between both islands.

Representatives from the Fogo Biosphere Reserve travelled to El Hierro to attend an institutional event, presided over by Alpidio Armas, the president of Cabildo de El Hierro, and in attendance were the Tourism Councillor, Lucía Fuentes and the Manager of the Biosphere Reserve of El Hierro. The event was held at Parque de Sostenibilidad Las Cancelitas where both Biosphere Reserves in La Macaronesia region shared their experiences with the public and presented their main challenges as island territories with a high cultural and environmental heritage.

The president pointed out the importance of this twinning as an initial point for future works to be done between both Biosphere Reserves.

During their stay, the representatives of the Fogo Biosphere Reserve had the chance to learn in depth about the management, activities and future projects being carried out in El Hierro Biosphere Reserve. They also visited the Interpretation Centres of the island and held meetings with the Participation Council and the Environmental Department Officers of El Cabildo to share their experiences from both reserves.

<https://www.facebook.com/ElHierroReservaBiosfera/>



#We Choose Reserve of the Biosphere

The El Hierro Biosphere Reserve and its Participation Committee presented, after months of intense work, on March 24th, an audiovisual series that will show cultural and landscape values of the "Isla con alma" to be known.

The president of its governing council and the Cabildo of El Hierro, Alpidio Armas, was in charge of introducing this proposal created and executed by the members of the Participation Committee of the El Hierro Biosphere Reserve, represented on this occasion by Armando Rodríguez and the Reserve Biosphere Manager, Yurena Pérez.

Alpidio Armas highlighted the work carried out by the Participation Committee, 13 members representing the social fabric of El Hierro. He emphasized their extraordinary work, recognized by UNESCO for its high level of participation and commitment.

As part of a global project, the members of the Participation Committee, representing associations, volunteers and productive sectors of El Hierro agreed a year ago to develop a series of videos to show different aspects of the "idiosyncrasy and popular feeling of the island". They have received financial support from the Ministry of Ecological Transition of the Government of the Canary Islands.

The themes chosen by the representatives of the Participation Committee for these audiovisual series, which will be available throughout 2023, include fishing, livestock, traditional sports, ethnobotany, water, hiking, traditions and local products.



Fish replenishment zone in Kiunga Marine National Reserve

We are excited to share with you the news about the Fish Replenishment Zones (FRZ) project currently underway in Kiunga Marine National Reserve, Lamu, Kenya. This initiative seeks to restore the declining fish stocks in the reserve by creating safe spaces where fish can breed and regenerate.

Kiunga Marine National Reserve was established in 1979, by Kenyan Government as a fisheries reserve, covering an area space of 25,000 Ha on the ocean. It became a biosphere reserve in 1980 covering 600km2 located south of the Kenya/Somalia border.

However, the increasing population has increased fishing pressure on the biosphere. The fishing pressure has resulted in a significant decline in fish populations, which threatens the ecosystem's stability.

To address this issue, Kenya Wildlife Service partnered with Kiunga Community Wildlife Association (KICOWA) supported by North Rangeland Trust (NRT), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Fauna and Flora International (FFI) and The County Government of Lamu to designate specific areas within the reserve as FRZs where is set aside for temporary closures, gear restricted or prohibited entirely. This allows fish populations in this area to regenerate and provide a new source of potential catch for fishermen.

The FRZs are monitored through regular patrols and surveillance by specially trained community scouts known as reef rangers, who ensure that no unauthorized fishing activities take place in these designated areas. The rangers also monitor fish populations in and around the FRZs to track the program's progress and assess the impact on the ecosystem. The community scouts works closely with Kenya Wildlife Service to ensure the by-laws are strict followed.

The activity initial results have been promising, with fishermen reporting increased catch rates outside the FRZs as fish populations continue to regenerate. Kiunga octopus closure reported a catch of 1400 tons of octopus after being closed for a period three months. This has helped to improve their livelihoods while creating a sustainable fishing industry for future generations.

The FRZ project is an excellent example of a collaborative effort between the government, local communities, and Conservation NGOs working together to restore balance to the marine ecosystem. It demonstrates the value of responsible and sustainable practices in ensuring the longevity of marine resources while supporting the local economy.



Rangers rescuing a sea turtle by catch caught by monofilament net



Kiwayu communities members preparing buoys to demarcate the fish replenishment sites

Nectivorous marsupials in the South West of Australia

Compiled by Annie Leitch, Communications and Extensions Coordinator for the Fitzgerald Biosphere Community Collective, a position made possible by Major Contributor Lotterywest.



Early in March 2023, I was fortunate enough to find myself captivated by Honey Possums (*Tarsipes rostratus*) crawling over *Banksia speciosa* in flower from within the Fitzgerald River National Park, most of which is within the Core zone of the Fitzgerald Biosphere.

This UNESCO recognition is based on the area's national and international significance for great biological richness, species endemism and high level of threats, which combined also make it part of the internationally recognised Southwest Australian Biodiversity Hotspot. The Fitzgerald River National Park has an area that accounts for 0.13% of the state of Western Australia and around 20% of its known flora (Wooller and Wooller n.d.). Sandy, infertile soils combined with a lengthy geological and climatically stable environment have allowed for vast amounts of evolution. These evolutionary processes have resulted in plants and animals adapting to cope in an environment with limited nutrients and water.

Also known by its Noongar (local indigenous) name, Ngool-boon-gor, is not taxonomically a 'possum'. Occurring in the South western corner of Australia, captures have been most frequent in areas that are richest in plants from the Proteaceae family (genera *Banksia*, *Grevillea*, *Hakea*), whose members happen to produce great volumes of nectar.

This nectar (not honey) in combination with pollen makes up the diet of a Ngoolboongor and it needs to rely on this all year round - the heathlands of South West Australia making it the only habitat that could sustain populations of the world's only truly nectivorous (nectar-eating) marsupial.

Although not an endangered species, the honey possum's habitat has been drastically reduced since European occupation of Australia and populations of this critter have become locally extinct in places close by. Additional threats to habitat loss through incorrect fire regimes and Phytophthora Dieback, an introduced plant disease caused by the microscopic water-mould *Phytophthora cinnamomic*, also add pressure to isolated populations.

So as I was admiring this adorable unique marsupial within old, resilient Kwongan heath, the thought crossed my mind as to how long it took to create this picture in front of me, how special this part of the world is and what is at stake if we don't take the steps to care for it.



History Hidden in Bones

Every Spring team of the Commander Islands Biosphere Reserve starts to watch closely the shores. Why? In search of bones!

After a snowy winter season beaches of the Commander Islands start to clear and show some surprises such as bones of marine mammals. Science Department has long been aware of this tendency and it has become a tradition to search for bones after the snow melts. This year the BR osteological collection has acquired a nearly full skeleton of a long extinct Steller's sea cow.

Sea cows lived around the Commander Islands long before the discovery of the archipelago and were peaceful and herbivorous animals. However, it is not easy to study them today, as there are none in the wild. That is why we collect bones and store them in special conditions. Today the collection of the BR consists of nearly 200 articles. These are bones of sea cows, arctic foxes, northern fur seals and of cause different species of whales.

The osteological collection was started for two reasons: to become a source of museum exhibits for our visitor center and also to safely store bones for further scientific research. Such research may include general studies of animal sizes or specific analysis of their body functions and organs. We do not know who will need these samples but we will continue to collect and carefully store them for future generations of scientists.

Our biosphere reserve delves into a new sphere of activity – keeping a museum. We work to create a unique exhibition telling the story of the Commander Islands natural heritage. Experience shows that adjacent data is nearly the half of an exhibit research value. So today our team members learn how to store and handle delicate exhibits and take courses to study collection management, data bases and cataloging. We hope to share more successes in this field in the future.

<http://komandorsky.ru/en/photo-show-2022.html>



Coast of Bering Island. Bones waiting to be found.



Steller's sea cow skeleton found in the Commander Islands Biosphere Reserve. Head of Science Department Evgeny Mamaev inspects the find.



It is important to register the order and position of bones to properly assemble the skeleton in the visitor center.

40 years of Biosphere Reserve in La Palma



La Palma has been a biosphere reserve since 30 June 1983. On this date, UNESCO recognized only 511 hectares of the municipality of San Andrés y Sauces. Even being a small piece of land located on the farm 'El Canal y Los Tiles', it meant the first Spanish island to have this international recognition.

The declared land was expanded 15 years later, covering over 16% of the island’s surface. In 1998 the municipalities of Barlovento, Puntallana and part of Santa Cruz de La Palma were included in the Biosphere Reserve.

It was finally in 2002 when UNESCO recognized the entire island as La Palma World Biosphere Reserve.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary, commemorative events have been organized throughout the year, but it has been in this last week of June in which the activities that have taken place have been concentrated in the Municipality of Breña Baja.

Many different acts have been carried out: scientific and informative conferences, exhibitions, astronomical observations, talks on good practices in soil management, and a Great Fair of the Biosphere Community that represents producers, artisans, tourist services and friendly firms that use the Brand "La Palma World Biosphere Reserve". And, of course, a special mention to the Institutional Act as the center of all festive and entertainment events that included local artists in different areas: folklore, theater, comedy, music and entertainment in general. All this to celebrate, with the locals and visitors, these 40 years of responsibility and ethical commitment in favor of our territory, its culture, tradition, customs and innovation for sustainability.

El 40 Aniversario de la [Reserva Mundial de la Biosfera La Palma](#) en la prensa:

<http://bitly.ws/KoAQ>

<https://cutt.ly/AwuOc4xy>

<http://bitly.ws/KozC>

<http://bitly.ws/KozX>

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<http://bitly.ws/KoBH>

Zero Plastic Forum #9: The challenges we face as protected areas

On July 11th we gathered for the ninth Zero Plastic in Biosphere Reserves Forum, with the intention of preparing next steps & discussing the aims and content of a "*Zero Plastic in Biosphere Reserves white paper*". The white paper will be an edited compilation piece to summarize previous and ongoing efforts in our respective Biosphere Reserves, and the challenges we face individually and collectively as protected areas for the years to come.

The Biosphere Reserves of Cinturao Verde de Sao Paulo (Brazil), Fundy (Canada), Karst and Reka River (Slovenia), Lanzarote (Spain), and Menorca (Spain) provided examples and contributions to our discussion of key challenges we face for the 2024-2029 period. From a variety of sociogeographical contexts and diverse capacities for political influence, here are some highlights informing our next steps and priorities for Biosphere Reserves.

- Promoting awareness-raising and social commitment to achieving zero plastic in Biosphere Reserves through changing values and practices;
- Finding and promoting alternatives to plastics and bioplastics;
- Establishing plastic reduction plans to advance toward zero plastic Biosphere Reserves;
- Collecting data and monitoring plastic production, use, waste, and impacts;
- Influencing waste policies from local to national levels in order to introduce sound reduction targets, deposit and return schemes, and extended producer responsibility;
- Identifying the possibilities for reinforcing accountability and enforcing existing legislation and regulation related to plastic production, use, waste, and impacts.

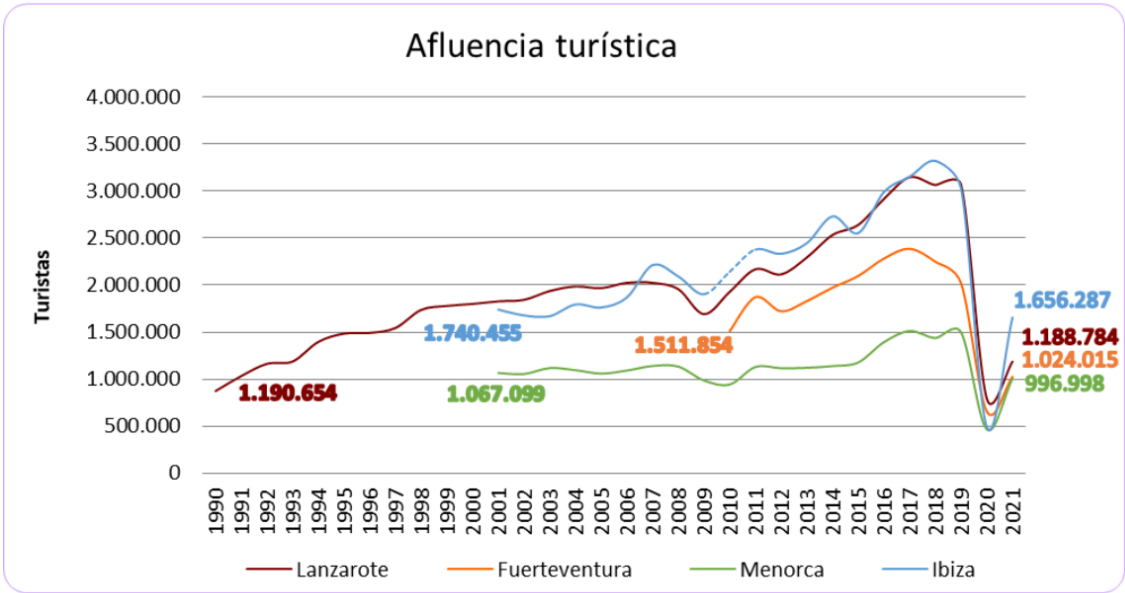
In September, we will reconvene to continue our collective effort on the "*Zero Plastic in Biosphere Reserves white paper*", aiming to leverage the momentum of the UN Plastics treaty to advance policies, knowledge and action in Biosphere Reserves as protected areas.

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**ZERO
PLASTIC**
WORLD NETWORK OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES

A study run through the pandemic reveals the fragility of island economies focused on tourism



Graph showing the evolution of tourist visitors in the four islands (1990-2021)

A comparative study of the islands of Eivissa, Menorca, Lanzarote and Fuerteventura (Spain) using indicators of human pressure, economy, transport, tourist activity and resource consumption shows the fragility of the islands' tourism-focused economies. This is shown in a report carried out jointly by the Foundation for the Conservation of Ibiza and Formentera, the Socio-environmental Observatory of Menorca (OBSAM), the Data Centre of the Cabildo of Lanzarote and the Fuerteventura Biosphere Reserve Office.

The Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands were, in 2020, two of the most affected regions in Spain due to their heavy dependence on tourism and the services sector, which were hard hit as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although the measures aimed at controlling the spread of the virus were still in force in 2021, a certain relaxation of the most restrictive policies allowed a timid recovery of economic activity in both archipelagos in 2021.

The system of indicators developed in the framework of collaboration among island BRs collects a large amount of data on sustainability allowing comparisons over time. This may serve as an analysis tool of performance of island socio-ecosystems in the context of global change.

<http://xarxabiosfera.cime.es/documents/documents/deefa466-bcee-4a78-90e4-7bf4f163a2ca.pdf>

A student internship focused on the WNICBR work plan is accomplished



Image of a workshop on the work plan during the last meeting in Germany

Frederike Newmann, a student of the international master's study programme Biosphere Reserves Management at the Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development (Germany) has been working with us at the headquarters of the Menorca Secretariat during the last semester. During her research semester, she has analyzed the objectives of the WNICBR work plan (2018-22) and has provided tools and guidelines for the elaboration of the new work plan and many interesting insights and recommendations throughout the whole process. Thank you Rike!

The new work plan (2023-27) has been drafted by a working group of network's members along four workshops between January and May 2023; both Secretariats are working on this document to get it ready to share among all the partners before our next annual meeting.