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Organización  
de las Naciones Unidas  
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Организация  
Объединенных Наций по  
вопросам образования,  
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、  
科学及文化组织



**Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences**  
Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

Mr Mats Djurberg  
Secretary-General  
Swedish National Commission for UNESCO  
Ministry of Education and Research  
SE 103 33 Stockholm  
Sweden

10 April 2019

Ref.: SC/EES/NBC/19/SW

Dear Mr Djurberg,

I am pleased to inform you of the results of the deliberations of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves (IACBR), which met at UNESCO Headquarters from 25 to 28 February 2019 to consider proposals for new biosphere reserves and extensions to biosphere reserves, that are already part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR), as well as periodic review reports.

The IACBR requested the MAB Secretariat to circulate the enclosed recommendations to concerned Member States. Please note that these recommendations are to be examined and endorsed by the MAB ICC which will meet for its 31<sup>st</sup> session scheduled at UNESCO in Paris, France, from 17 to 21 June 2019. This meeting will decide on the complete list of new sites that will be included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves in 2019 and extensions, renaming or changes in zonation to biosphere reserves that are already part of the WNBR.

With regards to the proposals from your country, the Advisory Committee recommended that the **Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka** and the **Voxnadalen** Biosphere Reserves *be approved* as per the attached recommendations.

I would appreciate if you could send to the Secretariat, by 15 May 2019, some promotional material regarding the proposed sites of Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka and Voxnadalen, notably high quality photos, and/or short videos on the site so as to allow the Secretariat to prepare appropriate files for press events that will take place during the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the MAB ICC. To this end, we would need a selection of photographs in high resolution (300 dpi), with photo credits and captions and video footage (rushes), without any comments or sub-titles, of professional quality – DV CAM or BETA only.

Cc: Permanent Delegation of Sweden to UNESCO

I would appreciate if you could send to the Secretariat, by 15 May 2019, some promotional material regarding the proposed sites of Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka and Voxnadalen, notably high quality photos, and/or short videos on the site so as to allow the Secretariat to prepare appropriate files for press events that will take place during the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the MAB ICC. To this end, we would need a selection of photographs in high resolution (300 dpi), with photo credits and captions and video footage (rushes), without any comments or sub-titles, of professional quality – DV CAM or BETA only.

In addition, I would be grateful if you could return to us a signed copy of the attached Agreement on Non-Exclusive Rights to allow the audio-visual section of UNESCO to produce a maximum of ten (10) minutes film on each biosphere which will be sent to the press.

Thank you for your continued support of the MAB Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Yours sincerely,



Miguel Clüsener-Godt  
Director, Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences  
Secretary, Man and the Biosphere Programme

**Extract of the Report of the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves, 25-28 February 2019, UNESCO Headquarters, Paris**

**Vindelälven-Juhtatdahka (Sweden).**

The Advisory Committee welcomed the well-prepared nomination for this arctic area (the Arctic Circle crosses the northernmost part of the proposed site). It recognized that the area has a rich culture with many cultural and customs. It is characterized above all by two cultures – the Sami and the Swedish. Spirituality in different forms has influenced culture as well as tradition. There are also strong customs related to spending in nature which have strong links to the identity of many people in the area.

Of the total area, 34% (1.3 million ha) consists of protected natural environment and includes 3 Ramsar sites, 1 national park and 90 nature reserves. The core area of the proposed biosphere reserve constitutes only 1.6% of the total area. The buffer area notably includes large parts of the Vindelfjällen nature reserve, the largest in northern Europe covering 550,000 ha. Activities in the transition area include forestry, reindeer herding and mining.

The Sami Parliament is officially responsible for ensuring that Sami interests are defended in spatial planning, while Samernas Riksförbund (SSR), the National Federation of Swedish Sami people, works more directly to support 'samebys' on planning issues. At the regional level, county administrative boards monitor reindeer husbandry as a public interest. In order to deal with climate change, the Sami Parliament has drawn up an action plan for Sami livelihoods and culture. Knowledge transmission can be used to safeguard Sami knowledge and the Sami view of the environment. Special disaster protection allocations have been proposed for crisis preparedness, as well as a climate fund and increased cooperation and research on reindeer diseases.

The Advisory Committee noted that the proposed biosphere reserve would contribute to an understanding of and a pride in the unique activity that is modern reindeer herding. Such a development would have a major positive effect on the everyday lives of reindeer herders, but must be allowed to take its time. Sami culture has its own perception of time and progress when it comes to trust and friendship.

The northern part of the proposed biosphere reserve is a mountainous area and includes the majority of the buffer area. The central part of the site is the forest area, while the southern part is the coastal area and the only one with a large proportion of young inhabitants. The marine area is rather small (7,700 ha) compared to the terrestrial area. The Advisory Committee noted with satisfaction that an interim board for the proposed biosphere reserve already exists and includes representatives of 17 identified 'interest areas'.

The Advisory Committee recommended this site **be approved**.

**Voxnadalen (Sweden)**

The Advisory Committee welcomed this proposal by Sweden. The proposed site is located in central Sweden and encompasses the catchment of the River Voxnan. It involves two provinces: Hälsingland and Dalarna. Extensive boreal woodlands dominate the north-western and less populated parts, while open farmland is more common in the south-easterly more densely populated areas.

The whole area is used for forestry, timber processing and farming. In addition, there are many companies and businesses involved in engineering and the development of modern technology. Parts of the area are also used for generating hydro energy.

Within the site, 274 nationally red-listed species and 16 internationally red-listed species have been observed. Several species including wolf (*Canis lupus*) and wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), as well as their habitats (e.g. aapa mires, bog woodland and siliceous grassland), have been prioritized. The site also hosts the Decorated Farmhouses of Hälsingland, which were designated a World Heritage Site in 2009.

Although no university is located directly on the site, intensive cooperation with the neighbouring universities of Gävle, Mid Sweden and Dalarna is underway.

The total area of the proposed biosphere reserve is 342,000 ha of which 22,000 ha consist of lakes and watercourses. There are 27 proposed core areas that coincide with existing protective structures (a national park, nature preserves, World Heritage Sites, etc.) established under Swedish environmental laws, covering approximately 2% of the total area. Another 32% of the area has been designated as buffer zones. The transition area covers approximately 66% of the total area of the proposed site and hosts the population of about 13,300 inhabitants.

The Advisory Committee noted that the proposed area provides an opportunity to explore and demonstrate collaborative approaches to sustainable development on a regional scale. There are opportunities for model projects that test and demonstrate models for sustainable resource use in a range of contexts (e.g. new local forest products and continued development of a bio-based economy, log driving as a reinstatement of ecological values in watercourses and the maintenance of cultural heritage, new types of summer farming activities and local sustainable food production, etc.).

The Advisory Committee also noted that the overall coordination structure for the proposed site has been designed in an inclusive and participatory manner with the significant involvement of local communities, stakeholder groups and various work groups.

The Advisory Committee commended the Swedish authorities for the quality of the proposal and recommended that the site **be approved**.

The Advisory Committee also requests an update on plans related to the expansion of wind or hydro power plants.