



RÉSERVE DE BIOSPHERE DE

Fundy

BIOSPHERE RESERVE

TM

A UNESCO Designation / Une désignation de l'UNESCO

Strategic Plan

2012-
2015

Contents

- Overview of Current Position..... 2
 - UNESCO Program..... 2
 - Fundy Biosphere Reserve..... 2
 - Mission..... 3
 - Vision..... 3
 - Functions..... 3
 - Past and Current Activities..... 4
- Future Areas of Focus 4
 - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats..... 4
- Moving Forward..... 5
 - Identifying the Strategic Focus 5
 - Strategic Objectives 5
- Workplan..... 7
- Appendix 12

Adopted by the Board of Directors at the May 4, 2012 meeting.

Overview of Current Position

On the eve of its 5th year of operation since designation, the Board of Directors for the UNESCO Fundy Biosphere Reserve (FBR) initiated a Strategic Planning exercise that will craft the operational vision for the next three years (2012 – 2015). This exercise began with an overview of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program and the goals and activities to date that have guided the Fundy Biosphere Reserve to align with the MAB Program.

UNESCO Program

The primary objective of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Program is to improve the relationship between people and their environment worldwide; it fills this mandate by designating unique areas of land as Biosphere Reserves. These Biosphere Reserves are typical of one of the world's major terrestrial or coastal ecosystems, demonstrate innovative approaches to living and working in harmony with nature, and demonstrate how to achieve a sustainable balance between conserving natural ecosystems and biodiversity and fostering sound economic development. The Biosphere Reserves, in turn, deliver programs and facilitate research by contributing to the **conservation** of countryside, ecosystems, species and genetic diversity; fostering **sustainable development**, i.e. development that is socially, culturally, economically and ecologically sustainable; and building **local capacity** by creating a support network of scientists, resource managers and policy makers to assist communities and resource sectors address sustainability issues and concerns.

Fundy Biosphere Reserve

The FBR was designated in 2007 by UNESCO as a World Biosphere Reserve (Fig. 1), where it joined a network of 15 Biosphere Reserves across Canada (now 16) and over 500 worldwide. The FBR is the only UNESCO designation in the province of New Brunswick. The general objectives of the FBR are to provide a forum for dialogue and information sharing between communities, resource sectors, government agencies and researchers and create a cooperative network of partners who will work to assist communities to achieve greater sustainable development.

The UNESCO Fundy Biosphere Reserve is a 440,000 ha area of land that stretches from the Tantramar Marshes near Sackville, around the cities of Moncton, Riverview, and Dieppe, to the coastal village of St. Martins and all the way to the Bay of Fundy. The Fundy Biosphere Reserve follows the watersheds for the Petitcodiac River (the major source of freshwater draining into the upper Bay of Fundy), as well as several other smaller rivers and creeks. The Biosphere Reserve includes many communities and cities, different land uses (from agriculture to forests to urban), a variety of ecosystems and natural habitats, and a coastal marine environment. This area has a rich cultural heritage, given that there is a long history of First Peoples (principally Mi'kmaq) inhabiting the area, followed by French settlers from Europe beginning in the early 17th century and English settlers beginning in the mid-18th century. The area is also very rich ecologically, with a number of natural ecosystems found in a relatively small area. It is this rich cultural and natural heritage, as well as the presence of the world's highest tides that contributed to the designation of the area in 2007 by UNESCO as a World Biosphere Reserve.

Mission

The UNESCO Fundy Biosphere Reserve is dedicated to conserving biodiversity and promoting sustainable economic development.

Vision

To create a diverse network of partners and stakeholders who will work to assist communities and resource sectors on the upper Bay of Fundy to achieve a greater level of sustainability, while preserving the area's cultural and natural heritage.

Functions

In keeping with the goals of the MAB Program and its own mission statement, the FBR acts as a site of conservation and sustainable cultural and economic development, a living research laboratory for collaborating organizations and researchers, and as a hub for networking, information exchange, and capacity building.

These activities are clearly expressed in the functions of the FBR:

Conservation: To contribute to the knowledge and practices concerning the conservation of ecosystems, species and the natural biodiversity of the region.

Sustainable Development: To foster and promote sustainable development, i.e. development that is socially, culturally, economically and ecologically sustainable across human generations.

Capacity Building: Provide a forum for dialogue and information-sharing between communities, resource sectors, governments and researchers.

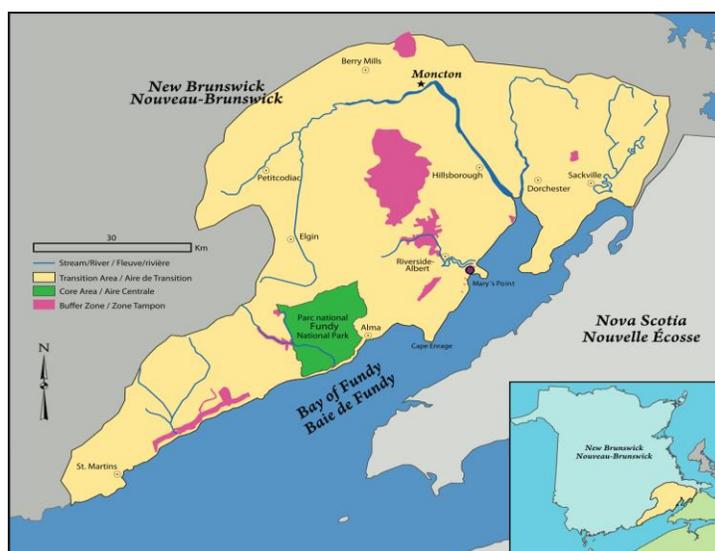


Figure 1. The UNESCO Fundy Biosphere Reserve is located along the upper Bay of Fundy in New Brunswick.

Past and Current Activities

The general projects and activities of the FBR fall into the following areas: economic development, knowledge development, education and awareness, research, appreciation of local heritage and culture, sharing of information, contributing to advancing solutions to conservation and resource utilization issues, sustainable management plans, monitoring tools, and reporting process.

The past and current activities of the FBR intersect at least one of the above areas of interest, namely:

- Charter Membership Program
- Climate Change Project
- Communication (material and media)
- Environmental and Cultural Atlas
- Environmental Monitoring
- Environmental Non-Government Organizations' Forum
- Environmental Research
- Explorer Education Program
- Fundy Biosphere Trails
- Local Food Initiatives
- Networking
- State of the Fundy Biosphere Reserve
- Sustainable Tourism
- Trail Amazing Places

Future Areas of Focus

The FBR is committed to three functions (conservation, sustainable development, and capacity building) that guide all of its activities. These functions also frame the relationships that the FBR forms with its peers, partners, collaborators, members, and supporters. The Vision of the organization was created from the focus on these three functions, and analysing our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats allows us to more clearly identify the objectives that we wish to meet as an organization.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

The strengths of the FBR include being a member of a large, international programme and part of a strong national and international network of Biosphere Reserves. There is a certain amount of respectability that is attached to the UNESCO brand, which lends credence to the FBR's activities. The FBR has a committed and relatively active Board of Directors, many of whom have been involved in the initiative since the very beginning.

The weaknesses of the FBR lie chiefly in the instability of funding that is available for its operations, and in having spread its focus a little too thin in the early years. This lack of focus was likely necessary for accessing scarce funds, especially as a new organization, but it has resulted in a disproportionate amount of staff time and resources being spent on various projects, and less time spent on communicating the FBR's identity and activities to peers and the public. At present, most people living

inside the FBR are mostly unaware of its existence and have even less knowledge of the UNESCO MAB program.

The FBR has the opportunity to make use of an increasingly strong network of a) other Canadian Biosphere Reserves and b) local and regional non-profit organizations, community groups, Fundy National Park, and educational institutions to increase collaboration and partnerships on projects (and therefore exposure to the public and peers). The FBR also has the opportunity to develop the Charter Membership Program into a strong and benchmark-setting program that could in turn make the FBR a regional hub of sustainable development.

The greatest threat at present is the possible loss of funding for the remaining year (2012-2013) of the Contribution Agreement with Environment Canada, and the possibility that those funds would not be again renewed in 2013. This would force the FBR to rely almost entirely on grants received for individual projects, which would curtail the ability to act as a strong partner for other organizations.

Moving Forward

Identifying the Strategic Focus

Finding the niche of an organization in a rapidly changing environment and complex business community can be challenging, but it is nonetheless a critical part of developing that organization's strategic focus. The Board of Directors determined that the role of the FBR is ultimately that of a catalyst for other conservation and sustainable development organizations in the area, by providing those organizations with the support and networking opportunities they require to maintain and improve the relationship between people and their environment in the FBR, as always without engaging in public advocacy.

Strategic Objectives

The Board identified four Strategic Objectives which frame to goals of the FBR over the next three years:

1. **Communication and Information Dissemination:** Create awareness and relevance by providing educational and informational opportunities to others based on the mission of the FBR.
2. **Projects and Programs:** Promote participation and engagement in activities that further the mission of the FBR.
3. **Monitoring:** Engage in assessing, documenting, and reporting on progress toward the achievement of the mission of the FBR.
4. **Research:** Collaboration aimed at the creation of knowledge that is relevant to the mission of the FBR.

Figure 2 presents a conceptual representation of the current and future allocations of FBR resources, namely that the allocation of FBR resources (staff and volunteer time, funds) is currently being disproportionately allocated to projects and programs, and in the future more resources will be spent on communication and outreach to partners and the public.

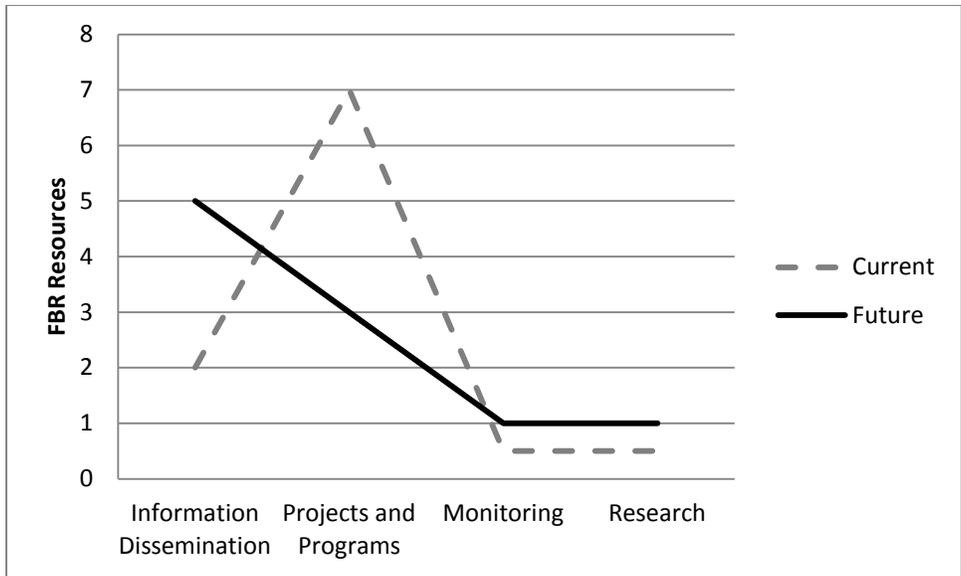


Figure 2. Conceptual current and future allocations of FBR resources to the four Strategic Objectives.

The FBR is committed to operating in a fiscally responsible manner. Given the insecurity of long-term funding, FBR actions and activities will be constrained by the availability of funds. Every attempt will be made to secure long-term funding and funding that permits a wider scope of activities (e.g. administrative costs) than just individual projects.

Potential activities that could be undertaken by the FBR for each of the four strategic objectives were prioritized based on the visibility they could deliver to the FBR, and the resource needs associated with each one. Only those activities that were judged to provide real and tangible benefits to the organization of the FBR were kept as priority actions. All of these priority actions meet at least one (and in many cases all three) of the overall functions of the FBR: conservation, sustainable development, and capacity building.

Workplan

Strategic Objective	Action	Function(s)	Measurable	Calendar	Partners
Communication and Information Dissemination	Social media	Capacity building	Social media are regularly updated to promote the FBR.	Weekly	None
	Periodic news flashes to Charter Members and the general mailing list of the FBR	Capacity building	News flashes are communicated to Charter Members and the general mailing list of the FBR; at least 3 times a year.	2012-2015	None
	Wikipedia page	Capacity building	A FBR Wikipedia page is completed, edited, and maintained.	Summer 2012	None
	Meetings for small groups of Charter Members	Capacity building	Facilitated network opportunities for Charter Members are held yearly.	2012-2015	Charter Members
	Information sessions targeted to different audiences: Charter Members, general public, municipalities, schools, day camps, various community organizations	Capacity building	At least 4 presentations per year are given to community stakeholder groups in the FBR.	2012-2015	Charter Members, Public, Municipalities, Schools, Day camps, community Organizations
	Formal presentations to Municipal Councils, Chambers of Commerce, and the Enterprise network	Capacity building	At least 4 presentations per year are given to municipal councils and business organizations in the FBR.	2012-2015	Municipal Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Enterprise network
	Presence at Green Shows and Earth Day environmental events	Capacity building, Conservation	FBR participates in at least one Green Show or Earth Day event (as exhibitor or speaker) per year.	2012-2015	None
	Enhanced AGM	Capacity building	The AGM is extended to include seminars and networking opportunities for members.	2012-2015	None

Communication and Information Dissemination (cont.)	Distribution plan for brochures, Amazing Places materials	Capacity building	All tourism information centres and Charter Members in the FBR have information materials for sharing.	As soon as possible	TICs, Municipalities, Charter Members
	Map of local food	Sustainable Development, Capacity Building	A complete map of local food producers, distributors, restaurants, markets, etc. is created for the FBR.	2013	Various
	Free teachers' workshop	Capacity building	A workshop is delivered for free to teachers on the environment and work of the FBR.	2013	NB Teachers Association, GNB
	Insert in newspaper	Capacity building	A 2-page insert in the Saturday Times & Transcript.	2013	None
	Accomplishment document	Capacity building	A five-year retrospective that describes in detail the accomplishments of the FBR, which is then used for promotion.	2012	None
	Signage: roads, airport, train station, bus stations, FBR Drive (like the Acadian Coastal Drive or River Valley Drive), Hopewell Rocks & other TIC Centres	Capacity building	The FBR has highly visible signs erected in several locations around the region.	FNP signs erected by end of 2012; others by mid-2014	FNP, Hopewell Rocks, Cape Enrage, Municipalities, GNB

Strategic Objective	Action	Function(s)	Measurable	Calendar	Partners
Projects and Programs	Climate Change Indicators	Conservation, Capacity Building	A documentary of interviews has been created in collaboration with Dr. Ian Mauro, and a database of climate data has been compiled.	2012-2013	Mt. Allison University, Environment Canada
	Trail Amazing Places	Sustainable Development, Capacity Building, conservation	TAPs web pages experience high traffic due to public interest in the project and brochures are regularly printed due to high demand.	2012	Various
	Status of Moose in the FBR	Capacity Building, Conservation	Presentations on moose populations are made to numerous naturalist and hunting groups in southern NB, with positive reviews.	2012	Maritime College of Forest Technology, FNP
	Shorebird Conservation in the FBR	Capacity Building, Conservation	Extensive on-line materials are prepared with partners, as well as an informative brochure for use in shorebird interpretive centres, to educate the public and minimize threats to shorebirds.	2012	Various
	Partnership on projects with sister organizations	Capacity Building	At least one project per year is delivered in partnership with another organization.	2012-2015	Various
	Workshop/meeting for Charter Members	Capacity Building	At least 80% of Charter Members participated and provided positive feedback.	2012-15	Vision Alma, Various organisations
	Environmental and Cultural Atlas	Capacity Building, Conservation	A completed Atlas is freely accessible via the FBR website and printed copies are available for sale.	2014	Various
	NGO Forum	Capacity	At least 80% of relevant NGOs	2012	Various NGOs

Strategic Objective	Action	Function(s)	Measurable	Calendar	Partners
Projects and Programs (cont.)		Building	(environment, sustainable development) in the FBR participated and provided positive feedback.		
	Meeting of municipalities: trading ideas on green planning (municipalities forum)	Capacity Building, Sustainable Development	At least 80% of municipalities in the FBR participated and provided positive feedback.	2013	District Planning Commissions, Municipalities, Universities
	Membership drive	Sustainable Development	Charter Membership is doubled.	2013	Current Charter Members
	Historic/Cultural Amazing Places	Conservation, Capacity Building	Historic/Cultural Amazing Places have been included in the Google Earth application, signs for each have been erected, web pages for each developed, and brochures distributed throughout the FBR.	2014	NB Museum, Albert County Museum, Heritage Societies, etc.
	Permanent displays at Hopewell Rocks, Cape Enrage, Delta Beausejour, City of Moncton	Capacity Building	High quality permanent displays erected to FBR and partner satisfaction at each site.	2012-2015	Hopewell rocks, Cape Enrage, City of Moncton, Delta Beausejour
	Annual prize for a Sustainable Development champion	Sustainable Development	Positive media coverage in at least 5 sources for event.	2012-2015	Various
	FBR Summit (big event, high profile)	Capacity Building	Positive media coverage in at least 5 sources (newspaper, television, radio), high participation by partners and community members, and positive feedback received.	2015	Various
	FBR Trail	Sustainable Development	The FBR Trail is completed from St. Martins to Sackville.	2012-2015	NB Trails, Trans Canada Trail, Sentier de l'Étoile

Strategic Objective	Action	Function(s)	Measurable	Calendar	Partners
Monitoring	Compile others' active monitoring projects	Capacity Building	A thorough compilation of relevant (conservation, sustainable development) monitoring projects taking place in the FBR is created and shared widely with partners.	2012	None
	Develop partnerships on monitoring: volunteers, universities/NBCC/schools, citizen science	Capacity Building	At least one project per year is delivered in partnership with another organization.	2012-2015	Various
	Continue and improve the <i>State of FBR</i> database: ecological, cultural, social, metrics	Conservation	State of the Fundy Biosphere Reserve is updated every 3 years with monitoring information.	2014	None
Research	Compile others' active research projects	Capacity Building, Conservation	A thorough compilation of relevant (conservation, sustainable development) research projects taking place in the FBR is created and shared widely with partners.	2012	None
	Provide visibility to current research projects occurring in the FBR	Capacity Building, Conservation	Various stakeholders are better informed of the various research projects relevant to the FBR and the region.	2013	None
	Annual conference of researchers active in the FBR	Capacity Building, Conservation	Positive media coverage in at least 5 sources for event.	2012-2015	Universities, NBCC

Appendix

Board of Directors	Term	Position
Dr. Yves Gagnon	2010 – 2013	Chair
Dr. Paul Bogaard	2010 – 2013	Vice-Chair
Heather Fraser	2010 – 2012	Secretary
Ken Kelly	2011 – 2014	Treasurer
Donald Alward	2010 – 2013	Director
Sandy Burnett	2010 – 2013	Director
Edouard Daigle	2010 – 2012	Director
Micha Fardy	2011 – 2014	Director
Richard Faulkner	2010 – 2012	Director
Nairn Hay	2010 – 2012	Director
Chief Joe Knockwood	2011 – 2014	Director
Isabelle LeBlanc	2011 – 2014	Director
Nancy Sears	2011 – 2014	Director

Staff	Function
Megan de Graaf	Executive Director
Ben Phillips	Conservation Program Manager
Denis Doucet	Outreach Coordinator
Interns are regularly hired on projects	