

1. BIOSPHERE RESERVE COORDINATING COUNCIL

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- i. The Biosphere Reserve Council is the body responsible for coordinating the management of the Biosphere Reserve on behalf of the constituent government agencies, municipalities and other stakeholders.
- ii. The main purpose of the Council is to enable the relevant national and local bodies, 'acting jointly', to fulfil their commitments to the Biosphere Reserve.
- iii. As required by the 1995 UNESCO Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework for Biosphere Reserves, the Council will develop a vision and strategy for the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve and will prepare and implement policies to support its functions of conservation, sustainable development, research, monitoring and education.
- iv. The Council will seek to champion the interests of the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve and its communities, promoting the identity and profile of the area.
- v. The Council will facilitate and coordinate the implementation of the Biosphere Reserve Strategy, monitor progress in achieving its objectives, policies and work programmes and periodically review and update the Strategy.
- vi. The Council, through a host body (Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province), will provide policy guidance to a core team of staff (protected area management authorities: Vojvodinašume Public Enterprise, Tikvara Sport and Recreation Centre and Morović Military Institution) to provide administrative and professional support to its work.
- vii. The Council will co-operate with the owners and managers of the core area of the Biosphere Reserve to ensure that management policies and activities are, so far as possible, complimentary and mutually supportive whilst respecting their rights as owners.
- viii. The Council will establish and maintain effective working relationships with relevant bodies at the national, regional and local levels where these can contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve.
- ix. The Council will seek to ensure that the Biosphere Reserve is managed in accordance with national and international policy and guidelines.
- x. The Council will seek to influence and support the activities of communities and agencies beyond the borders of the Biosphere Reserve so that these contribute to the achievement of Biosphere Reserve objectives.
- xi. The Council will advise local authorities and other relevant agencies on the financial and staffing resources required for effective Biosphere Reserve management and will seek additional funds, including external financing, to assist in delivering projects and initiatives identified within the Biosphere Reserve Strategy.

- xii. The Council will have the ability to manage budgets for which it has been granted funds.
- xiii. The Council will advise on an annual work programme for the Biosphere Reserve management authorities, which have overall responsibility for the management of core and buffer zones.
- xiv. The Council will establish (and agree Terms of Reference for) a Stakeholder Forum in each of the five municipalities and other management and governance structures that it deems necessary for the effective performance of its functions, including Working Groups.
- xv. The Council will be guided by the deliberations and views of these Stakeholder Forums in the five municipalities when determining policies, strategies and plans for the Biosphere Reserve. In the event of making a decision that is contrary to the consensus or majority view of the Stakeholder Forums, the Council will provide the Forum (via its Chairperson) with a written explanation of the rationale behind its decision.
- xvi. The Council will prepare and publish an annual report of its activities for distribution among all interested parties.

1.2 Membership

- i. The Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Council will comprise representatives from the following sectors and respective organisations/bodies:

Sector	Organization
Municipality administration	Municipality administration Hunting grounds manager Guard service for agriculture Fish farm owners
Local communities	Local communities in all settlements
Agriculture	Farmers' Associations Agricultural companies Agricultural fields guarding service Fish farm owners

Recreation	Organizations of dwellers in weekend settlements and owners of cottages Angling clubs
Business clusters	Private entrepreneur associations Tourist agencies
Civil sector	Environmental NGOs Bee-keeper NGOs Community development NGOs Rural development NGOs Women NGOs
Hunting	Hunting grounds managers

- ii. The Chairperson (Biosphere Reserve Coordinator) will be selected from the staff of the Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province. The term of office for the Chairperson will be three years, serving for a maximum of two terms.
- iii. Experts may be co-opted by the Council to inform and advise members regarding specific topics on the agenda of meetings. They may not vote.
- iv. The Council will seek to reach decisions entirely through consensus. A vote will be taken only when absolutely necessary. The Chairperson will have a casting vote.
- v. The Council should meet regularly three times per year. Dates for these meetings should be identified several months ahead. Additional Council meetings may be held at the discretion of the Chairperson, as required.
- vi. All members of the Council should be asked to sign a 'Membership Accord' which sets out the role of individual members and the way in which they will be expected to contribute to the work of the Partnership. A copy of the 'Membership Accord' is attached at the end of this Annex at the end of this section.
- vii. All new Council members should be offered, and would be expected to attend, an induction course covering the governance and management of the Biosphere Reserve. All Council members should be offered the opportunity to attend training events (held

at least annually) on issues that are relevant to the future management of the Biosphere Reserve.

- viii. Council members representing an organisation or interest group(s) will be required to provide an annual statement of the steps they have taken to consult with the members of that organisation or interest group(s) and the opportunities that they have provided for those organisations or interest groups to feed in to the work of the Council.
- ix. Council members should be required to attend a minimum number of meetings within a set period. If they fail to attend for three consecutive meetings, the organisation that they represent should be asked to nominate an alternative person to sit on the Council.
- x. Any Council member may submit items to the Biosphere Reserve Co-ordinator or Council Chairperson for consideration by the Council. The Chairman, in consultation with the Biosphere Reserve Co-ordinator, will decide whether such items are appropriate for inclusion in the agenda of a Council meeting or may be considered in other ways.
- xi. Where possible, Council papers (preferably including a summary) for Council meetings should be circulated electronically to enable members to forward/circulate the full papers or the summary to colleagues within their organisation. This should all take place at least three weeks prior to the Council meeting to give others an opportunity to provide feedback to their representative.

1.3 Financial Procedures

- i. The Council is not a legal entity and, therefore, will have no executive financial function.
- ii. The funding requirements of the Council will form part of a Business Plan for the Biosphere Reserve management authorities, updated annually on a three year rolling programme. The Business Plan will distinguish between: 'core costs' (i.e. costs associated with the establishment and running of the management authorities, which will be resourced by protected area management and the Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province as coordinator of the Council); and 'project costs' (i.e. costs associated with the implementation of projects and initiatives which contribute to the delivery of the Biosphere Reserve Management Plan).
- iii. It is anticipated that 'project costs' will largely be funded through the partner organisations represented on the Biosphere Reserve Council.

1.4 General Terms of Reference for Working Groups

- i. Working Groups are temporary, embryonic groups that should be considered task and finish groups unless they can demonstrate a need for their continuance. Continuation of a Working Group beyond three years must be with the consensus of the Biosphere Reserve Council for a specific duration.
- ii. The first task of any Working Group should be to establish its work load, priority tasks and determine a time-limited programme.
- iii. Each Working Group shall elect a Chairperson from within the group who shall report back to the Council.

- iv. Each Working Group may, on a long- or short-term basis, co-opt people who are not part of the regular Council, but who have experience or resources to contribute to the objectives of the Group.
- v. Each Working Group will meet as often as necessary, but must present a report at each of the Council meetings.
- vi. Any resource requirements should be agreed with the Council.
- vii. The Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province will provide a secretariat for the Working Groups and assist in convening meetings.

Annex

Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Council Membership Accord

As a member of the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Biosphere Reserve Council, I undertake:

- to promote the three functions of the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve: conservation, sustainable development and education;
- to champion the Council's vision for the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve and its communities, as set out in the Mura-Drava-Danube Strategy;
- to contribute knowledge, expertise and experience to the work of the Council;
- to promote, support and play a full and active part in the work of the Council in fulfilling its 'Roles and Responsibilities' as set out in the Council's 'Terms of Reference';
- to assist the Council in achieving an independent and apolitical profile in the performance of its functions; and
- to attend Council meetings whenever possible and, if I am no longer able to attend meetings on a regular basis, to step down from the Council or, with the agreement of the Council Chairperson, to seek another representative from within my organization to take my seat on the Council.

Signed

Date

2. BAČKO PODUNAVLJE BIOSPHERE RESERVE STAKEHOLDER FORUMS TO BE ESTABLISHED IN EACH OF THE FIVE MUNICIPALITIES

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

- i. To act as a reference group to advise the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Council on the development and implementation of strategic aims and objectives of policies, strategies and plans, including the management plan, regarding the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve.
- ii. To provide a consultative forum to facilitate two-way communication between the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Council and other bodies and organisations which have an interest in the proposed Biosphere Reserve.
- iii. To provide a forum for discussion on landscape and biodiversity conservation, cultural and historic heritage conservation, research and education, and the sustainable development of agriculture, forestry, non-timber forest products, recreation and tourism, particularly as these relate to the social and economic interests of those who live and/or work in the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve.
- iv. To promote a closer liaison and understanding between the various interest bodies and organisations which have an interest in the proposed Biosphere Reserve.
- v. In their role as advisor, the Forums shall have regard to the general duty of protected area managers to manage Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve in accordance with (a) the provisions of the Decrees on the Conservation and (b) the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, particularly with respect to Article 3 (Functions) and Article 4 (Criteria).

2.2 Principles

- i. The Forums will consider strategic/significant issues only and will not be asked to consider detailed operational or management matters, except where they may have significant strategic or policy importance.
- ii. Members of the Forums may propose items for discussion at future meetings.
- iii. The Forums will be a truly consultative body and its advice and views will be sought in advance of matters being considered by the Biosphere Reserve Council. It will not be used merely as a rubber stamping exercise or to endorse decisions already taken.
- iv. Each Forum will be chaired by an independent person who is able to command the respect of the many groups having an interest in the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve. The Chairperson will be invited as an observer to meetings of the Biosphere Reserve Council in order to represent the interests of and to present the views of the Forums.

- v. Meetings of the Forums will be open to the public. Members of the public may ask a question or make a statement about any matter on the agenda by prior agreement with the Chairperson.
- vi. The Forums will be directly accountable to the Biosphere Reserve Council and a record of its meetings will be received by the Council.
- vii. In addition, the advice or comments of the Forums will be reported by its Chairperson to the Biosphere Reserve Council and taken into account in the decision-making process.
- viii. The Forums will meet three times per year, as scheduled in advance, and as part of the Council's regular cycle of meetings, and on other occasions as required.
- ix. Each Forum, through the facilitation of its Chairperson, will aim to reach a consensus on matters for determination or endorsement by the Council. Any member dissenting from the consensus view may request that the views of the interest group they represent be recorded and reported to the Council for further consideration.
- x. In exceptional circumstances, where no clear consensus can be reached among Forum members, voting may take place. All members, including substitutes, may vote with the exception of the Chairperson who does not have a vote.
- xi. The role of the Forums will be exclusively advisory.
- xii. All members of the Stakeholder Forums, including the Chairperson, will undertake their role in a voluntary capacity (i.e. without payment).

2.3 Membership

- i. The Chairperson of each Forum will be an independent statesman who is appointed by the Biosphere Reserve Council through an open selection process, based on public advertisement of the position.
- ii. The Chairperson will be appointed for a term of three years and, at the discretion of the Council, may serve for a maximum of two terms.
- iii. The balance of the membership will fairly and equitably reflect the three main functions of the Biosphere Reserve, as specified in Article 3 of the Statutory Framework (conservation of biodiversity, learning and research, and sustainable development).
- iv. The membership will fairly and equitably reflect the various interest groups in the Bačko Podunavlje area which do not have direct representation on the Coordinating Council itself, and will give due weight to those interest groups with large membership.
- v. Persons who are already members of the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Council will not be eligible for Forum membership.
- vi. The membership will be of sufficient size to ensure that all the various interest groups are adequately represented and there is sufficient experience and knowledge of the various issues relating to the management of the Biosphere Reserve, but will not be so large as to become unwieldy.
- vii. The Forums will comprise representatives of the various categories of interest groups which have an interest in the Bačko Podunavlje area.

- viii. Members will be appointed to the Forums by the nominating groups themselves. Where groups are unable or unwilling to decide upon a person to represent them, the matter will be referred to the Chairperson of the respective Forum and the Chairperson of the Council for determination.
- ix. Groups/organisations will be entitled to appoint named substitutes to attend meetings in the event that their representative is unable to attend.
- x. The nominating organisations will be invited to review their membership every three years, and in so doing will be invited to consider the member's attendance record and the extent to which s/he has liaised with and reported back to the organisations which s/he represents.
- xi. The Chairpersons of the Forums may delete organisations from the lists of interest groups where they cease to exist, and add successor and new organisations where appropriate. However, any wide-ranging review of the membership or list of nominating organisations must be reported to and agreed by the Council.
- xii. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council may attend meetings of the Forums, but only in an observer capacity. They may provide factual information but not vote or express their views on any matters for determination.
- xiii. The Management authorities of protected areas within the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve will attend meetings of their respective Forum to present reports and answer questions.
- xiv. The Forums may, in respect of any particular matter, invite other persons or representatives of other organisations to attend particular meetings in order to contribute to discussions, but they may not vote on any matters for determination or contribute to any consensus view.

2.4 Secretariat

- i. The Stakeholder Forums will be serviced by the local authorities, i.e. City of Sombor, and the Municipalities of Apatin, Odžaci, Bač and Bačka Palanka, in cooperation with protected area management authorities and the Biosphere Reserve Coordinator (Council Chairperson) who will be responsible for the following arrangements:
 - agreeing the date and venue of Forum meetings in consultation with the Council and Forum Chairpersons;
 - agreeing the agenda of Forum meetings in consultation with the Forum Chairpersons and distributing it at least three weeks in advance; and
 - recording the minutes of Forum meetings and, once approved by the Forum Chairperson, distributing them to Forum members, and making them readily available via a website dedicated to the Biosphere Reserve.

2.5 Amendments

- i. Any amendments to the Terms of Reference, Principles and Membership of the Forums, (other than changes to individual changes to the lists of nominating groups as set out in paragraph 2.3.xi), must be agreed by the Bačko Podunavlje Biosphere Reserve Council following consultation with the Forum Chairperson and the Forum itself.

