

Wakatobi Recommendations to MAB-ICC
For Strengthening the Roles of Local Governments
in Implementing the Lima Action Plan

4 June 2016, Wakatobi Biosphere Reserve, Indonesia

As a follow up to the 4th World Congress of Biosphere Reserves, sixty participants from nine countries (Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, United Kingdom, Vietnam) met in Wakatobi, Indonesia from June 2-4, 2016, to discuss the roles of local governments in implementing the Lima Action Plan (LAP) for Biosphere Reserves (BR). The participants express their special gratitude to Japan Funds-in-Trust, the local government of Wakatobi biosphere reserve for this important initiative in collaboration with UNESCO and the Indonesian Government.

The participants shared and discussed best practices in the following areas:

- Governance and local governments' platform
- Natural resources management and sustainability
- Green economies and green jobs creation

The participants make the following observations and recommendations.

Taking note that the 669 BRs in 120 countries, including 1,045 million ha of terrestrial and coastal marine areas represent all the major ecosystem types and over 170 million people of local and indigenous communities, and the fact that the institutional arrangements of these BRs represent a great variety of governments as well as civil society working together for the achievement of the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the implementation of the Lima Action Plan.

Realizing the needs to mainstream SDGs through an intersectoral approach for local development agendas to promote sound and green growth and local economies, ensure well-being of local people, create decent jobs and ensure continuing employment, reduce biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems and the related services.

Having realized also the range of issues being faced at the action levels, it is recommended of the following to the MAB ICC and through MAB ICC to the whole community of World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Governance and Platform for Local Governments:

1. For MAB ICC to advise National Governments to empower local governments in managing BRs through appropriate regulations and policies, for greater involvement of local governments in National MAB and international MAB meetings/networks on the basis of consensus, consultation and transparency.
2. To encourage member states to institute a regular mechanism to bring local governments together at the national, regional and international levels to share best practices and encourage co-learning.

Natural Resources Management and Sustainability:

To manage the biosphere reserve sustainably concerning natural resources, communities and programs, the following actions recommended:

1. Benefit from local wisdom in biosphere reserves natural resources management.
2. Promote branding schemes to further engage private sector and small and medium enterprises in sustainable management of natural resources and ecological restoration.
3. Ensure resource utilization full alignment with national, traditional and customary laws in biosphere reserves natural resources.
4. Encourage capacity building through specific training on post-harvest technology, and public awareness to give additional values of the local products and increase community's income.

Green Economies and Green Jobs Creation:

1. Recognise the critical roles of local governments in creating and managing economic development opportunities and the green jobs in buffer and transitional zones.
2. Emphasize the valuation and beneficial use of intangible resources linked with local culture, local expertise, traditional knowledge and practises as well as collective wisdom.
3. Promote the sharing of knowledge between local governments for enabling the global green economy.
4. Encourage active participation of youth, women's groups and other vulnerable and disadvantages groups should be prioritised.
5. Facilitate removal of institutionalised and regulatory barriers to provide an enabling environment for the introduction of local products and expertise into more sustainable supply chains.
6. Recognise the local communities contributions through their time, knowledge, facilities in promoting green job opportunities.