

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNESCO Regional Sciences Bureau for Asia and the Pacific event “Fostering Collaboration between UNESCO in the Field and Networks towards the Agenda 2030”, organized in Bali, Indonesia, from 21 to 24 July 2016, was attended by 80 participants from 25 countries, 14 UNESCO Field Offices and nine Sciences Category 2 Centres. Key partners such as Japan Funds-in-Trust (JFIT), Indonesia Funds-in-Trust (IFIT) and Malaysia Funds-in-Trust (MFIT) representatives and National Commissions also attended.

The first day included the 3rd Asia Pacific Biosphere Reserves Network (APBRN) Strategic Meeting, and the second day focused on International Hydrological Programme (IHP) and interdisciplinary perspectives. The first two days hosted more than 50 presentations, while more than 30 posters were presented. The meeting offered a venue for networking, best practices exchanges and the elaboration of joint intersectoral (interdisciplinary) and interregional project proposals in Natural Sciences, with the aim to promote South-South Cooperation towards the delivery of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. The objectives were to:

- Discuss and elaborate strategies for fostering dialogue, cooperation, networking and sharing of knowledge as well as resources among the UNESCO Field Offices and its Networks to support the delivering of the Agenda 2030 through the UNESCO mandate on Natural Sciences.
- Discuss on a joint strategy for the implementation of the Lima Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves (BR) in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Support interdisciplinary initiatives and develop proposals for joint projects on Sciences.

The output of these four days of debate, exchanges and brainstorming are summarized in a two-folded set of general recommendations.

1. COLLABORATION BETWEEN PROGRAMS
 - a) Link Man and Biosphere (MAB) and IHP: e.g. Water issues should be addressed in the implementation of the Lima Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves, as very related to BR principles
 - b) How to use UNESCO sites such as BRs for interdisciplinary projects, such as Sustainability Sciences
 - c) Link MAB/IHP with other UNESCO programmes/sites, e.g. natural World Heritage, Geoparks
 - d) Both IHP and MAB secretariats acknowledge the need to collaborate more as there are clear links which can be established in solving issues related to both programmes (e.g. ecosystem services and water issues)
2. UNDERSTAND THE MECHANISM OF UNESCO AND HOW TO MAKE IT EFFICIENT

- a) Collaborating closely with National Commissions which have the MAB National Committee, the IHP committee and the WH committee and where decision are taken at national level for contribution to the respective programmes à send outcomes of this meeting to all NatCom in the region.
- b) Linking even more with chairs and category 2 centres which are commitment of universities to UNESCO and commitment of national government to UNESCO respectively in order to bring findings and outcomes to relevant stakeholders and practitioners, academia in the region.
- c) Need to work at sub-regional level (South East Asia, South Asia, Pacific Island, etc.) to focus on their specific and relevant issues.
- d) Strengthening collaboration with other UN agencies directly and with their category 2 centres (e.g. WMO, GRDC, ESCAP)
- e) Establishing new Category 2 Centres and UNESCO Chairs in Natural Sciences through facilitation of the NATCOM and Permanent Delegation of respective Member States and UNESCO Field Offices.

The participants also designed a set of key recommendations in the following sectors: Science to Policy, Water Science, Inter-regional and Interdisciplinary projects, Ecological and Earth Science. The detailed set of recommendations was shared with the relevant stakeholders (see Session 7, page 31). The working groups developed proposals for joint actions, resources and best practices sharing, better synergies, efficient inclusion of local communities in the design and implementation UNESCO projects, better inclusion of the gender aspect in projects, and the organization of sub-regional meetings with key stakeholders for a more inclusive and efficient delivery at the local level.

UNESCO Field Offices are encouraged to propose joint proposals as a follow-up action for a concrete implementation of the new synergies between programs, partners and offices identified during the workshop.