



UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man
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FACTSHEET FOR PARTNERS

Among the Isle of Man's many special attributes is that it is the only 'entire nation' UNESCO Biosphere in the world.

Below is some information about UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man and we would be delighted to answer any queries you have.

UNESCO AND ITS MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE (MAB) PROGRAMME

UNESCO is the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. Biospheres exist under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

The programme began in 1971, initially concentrating on experimenting to find solutions to care for land, sea and species. It was expanded in the mid-1990s to take into consideration areas' economy, culture, heritage and community and to become more about connecting people with sustainability of what is special to their area.

WHAT IS A BIOSPHERE?

In order to become a Biosphere, a location must have two key features: **people and a special environment.**

The three central platforms of the Biosphere programme, globally, are **sustainable development, conservation and education.**

The programme encourages Biospheres to work towards the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals, or Global Goals, a blueprint for people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership.

UNESCO BIOSPHERE ISLE OF MAN

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The Isle of Man was admitted to the world network of Biosphere reserves in 2016 and is one of 738 Biospheres in 134 countries and one of nine UK and Ireland Biospheres (the Island reports to UNESCO via the UK).

All Biospheres are different in terms of their economies, geography, culture, ecosystems, etc, and all face different challenges. Biospheres are encouraged to develop their own local set of aims and ambitions that complement and help deliver the global aims.

The Isle of Man's aims and ambitions are set down in its vision and strategy 'Working Together for a Sustainable Future', under the five Es of economy, education, engagement, enjoyment and environment.

UNESCO BIOSPHERE ISLE OF MAN GOVERNANCE

UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man sits in, and is funded from within, the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture but belongs to the entire community.

It is governed by a Stakeholder Partnership Group, chaired by the Isle of Man's Chief Minister and with membership from; tourism, farming, conservation, education, commerce, culture, heritage, NGOs and the charitable sector.

UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man is not enshrined in legislation and has no 'powers'. Instead, it is a platform for change, an influencer and a mechanism to prompt interest, care and action.

UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man will undergo a periodic review (reaccreditation) by UNESCO in 2026 and is already working towards that.

WHAT DOES BEING A BIOSPHERE MEAN FOR THE ISLE OF MAN?

The Isle of Man's Biosphere status encourages its population to learn about and cherish the Isle of Man's special attributes and safeguard them for the future by making good decisions, as individuals, as organisations and as an Island.

It encourages us to think about the way we live our lives and the impact that has on sustainability and tells potential new residents and visitors that we are a special place for people and nature and are committed to remaining so.

HOW IS OUR SPECIAL ENVIRONMENT MEASURED?

Central to our designation was UNESCO evaluating whether we have the special environment warranted to be a Biosphere.

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UNESCO MAB evaluates this by breaking Biospheres down into core, care and transition areas (in some Biospheres these have different names but mean the same).

This map, depicting core, care and transition areas, can be viewed in more detail on our website.



ON LAND

Core areas (red) are considered worthy of the highest level of protection, eg, Ayres National Nature Reserve, Calf of Man bird sanctuary, Ballaugh Curragh Ramsar site, Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

Care areas (green) are areas such as Manx Wildlife Trust nature reserves, Manx National Heritage land, ancient monuments, uplands, glens, public footpaths, plantations, registered trees and water catchment areas.

Sustainable development zones (yellow) are our town and villages, roads and pavements etc.

AT SEA (87% of our Biosphere area)

Core areas (dark blue) (including IoM's 10 marine nature reserves*) are considered worthy of the highest level of protection and contain important species/habitats or provide ecosystem functions for surrounding areas. They include high biodiversity sites, such as horse mussel reefs, act as nursery areas for species or contain stocks of adults which produce young which spill over into the adjacent sea. Extractive or commercial operations are strictly controlled and/or limited to low impact activities, such as recreation or ecotourism.

(*although only the Isle of Man's first marine nature reserve, Ramsey Bay, was demarked a core area during the Isle of Man's formal designation as a Biosphere in 2016, nine more reserves, designated since the Island became a Biosphere in

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2018, are considered 'core areas' and may be formally incorporated as such by UNESCO in years to come).

Care areas (light blue) are buffer zones between highest protection and normal activity. These zones manage potentially damaging activities at a moderate level, in order to reduce impacts on core areas, and ensure sustainable practices. For example, for fisheries management, tighter controls on the number of boats, time spent or amount of fishing, or catch quotas may be applied. Management may be via licence conditions, agreements, or by legislation.

Sustainable development zones (beige) accommodate normal sustainable fishing, leisure activity etc (within the law). Enhanced management may occur in these zones as necessary to protect features or resources, e.g. annual fishery closed areas.

PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

Organisations can become Partners of UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man in one of five categories: Government, business, environment/culture, education and community.



Applicants take the 'Biosphere Pledge' to:

- Protect our natural resources
- Develop our economy in a sustainable way
- Support and promote our cultural heritage

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- Make a positive environmental impact where possible
- Engage with the local community
- Promote our outstanding land and seascape through active involvement with UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man.

It is not essential to be contributing in all areas. It is, for some partners, the start of a journey. Partnership is free and does not need to be renewed, although we will contact you from time to time to see if you are undertaking additional positive actions that can be included in your listing on our website.

Partners are permitted to use our logo on letter-headings, email sign-offs, websites, products and promotional material provided they follow our brand guidelines.

There are **327** Biosphere Partners (January 2023).

Individuals can sign up as Biosphere Buddies.

Both Partners and Buddies receive regular monthly mailings from us and we collaborate with them over projects.

CURRENT PROJECTS:

UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man collaborates with all key sectors of the Isle of Man on projects and initiatives complementary to our global and local aims. Just a few current examples are:

Sustainable Mann: Annual six-part pilot training scheme to assist businesses to become more sustainable.

Biosphere Bee: Annual community picnic initiative promoting wellbeing and connectivity, encouraging people to enjoy the outdoors and promoting local produce.

Young Nature Writer: Annual competition connecting young people with nature and wildlife and encouraging creativity.

Biosphere awards: Annual event rewarding and inspiring sustainable practice and initiatives in the areas of economy, education, energy, engagement/enjoyment and environment.

Refill Isle of Man: Discouraging the purchase of single-use plastic bottles and other disposable items, and reducing plastic pollution by signing up Refill

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Stations Island-wide, who can provide free tap water refills and/or offer other products as refills.

[Girlguiding and Scouting Biosphere Badges](#): Awarded to boys and girls of all ages who carry out tasks relating to two or more of the Sustainable Development Goals.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Breeshey Kermode, UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man Project Assistant – call 01624 695738/07624 256576 or email biosphere@gov.im

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Please follow and tag us on:

Facebook and LinkedIn: UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man

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USEFUL LINKS

www.biosphere.im

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/>

<https://www.globalgoals.org>

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