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Social Enterprise & Biosphere Reserves Development Framework



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About the Author

Colin Campbell is the founder and Executive Director of Assist Social Capital, which uses social capital as a critical resource for social innovation and community resilience. He has worked in the field of social enterprise since 2001. In 2003, he began using a social capital approach for the design and facilitation of a series of peer-to-peer clusters, the Social Enterprise Networks (SENs; www.se-networks.net). There are now 21 SENs with over 450 active social enterprises meeting on a regular basis to learn from each other and exchange knowledge and ideas and a combined economic impact of £300+ million per annum. He was also responsible for the design and development of the www.ReadyforBusiness.org database, a government funded pilot to promote opportunities for social enterprise in public procurement, which works principally due to the existence of a strong social connectivity within the network of SEN's.

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Acknowledgements

Colin Campbell and Assist Social Capital CIC would like to thank the following, for their support and input to this work:

Stan Boychuk (Chair of CanadaMAB), Andy Bell (North Devon BR Coordinator), Johanna MacTaggart (Co-ordinator Vastra Gotaland BR, and SwedenMAB), Christian Hart (President, Lac-St-Pierre BR), Chantal Tardif (Director, CRES in Quebec), Jean-Pillipe L Messier (Coordinator Manicouagan-Uapishka BR), Nuria Alonso Leal (Manager of Ancares Leoneses BR), Pedro M. Herrera Calvo (Environmental Consultant GAMA SL), Hemanthi Goonasekera (Dinraj Foundation), Graeme Cook (Scottish Government Procurement Division), Juan Jose Ibarretxe (Agirre Lehendakaria Center for Social and Political Studies) and a special thanks to the Scottish Government for supporting this initiative.

Social Enterprise and Biosphere Reserve

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Ministerial Foreword



Scotland is playing a leading role in developing the social enterprise model. In recognition of this in March 2012 Scotland's First Minister, Alex Salmond MSP launched the International Social Enterprise Programme to support social enterprises based in Scotland with a genuine global reach. This fund is supporting Assist Social Capital CIC (ASC) to develop a social enterprise approach in and around Biosphere Reserves in Europe, Canada and Asia.

UNESCO's 621 Biosphere Reserves in 117 countries, provide our communities, our children and young people with an opportunity to actively safeguard our natural capital for the future. Social enterprises empower communities to engage with the challenges of our 21st Century such as climate change, health, food and water security. By linking with UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme, the Social Enterprise in Biosphere Reserves Development Framework will help strengthen environmental and economic progress. This will be achieved by supporting social enterprises in and around Biosphere Reserves to thrive, providing a platform to generate new socially and environmentally responsible employment.

I am therefore very pleased to support Assist Social Capital's work to stimulate ambition in this matter and wish the project every success.

John Swinney

Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment and Sustainable Growth

The need for Sustainable Development

Sustainable development, one of the key pillars for Biosphere Reserves (BR), has been an overarching goal of the international community for decades now. However, we are in serious danger of transgressing a number of ecological limits. In 1972 the Club of Rome commissioned a report to look at the progress and likely consequences of human development scenarios from 1900-2100. Authored by Donella Meadows, Jorgen Randers and Dennis Meadows, '**Limits to Growth**' depicted 12 possible scenarios for our future prospects. As a result of their work, the authors concluded that:

- If the present growth trends in world population, industrialisation, pollution, food production and resource depletion continue unchanged, the limits to growth on this planet will be reached sometime within the next one hundred years. The most probable result will be a rather sudden and uncontrollable decline in both population and industrial capacity.
- It is possible to alter these growth trends and to establish a condition of ecological and economic stability that is sustainable far into the future. The state of global equilibrium could be designed so that the basic material needs of each person on earth are satisfied and each person has an equal opportunity to realise their individual human potential.

To respond effectively to such challenges, collective action will be vital. Francis G, (Biosphere Reserves in Canada: Ideals and some experience) points out a multidimensional approach to sustainable development: *"implies the existence of the appropriate knowledge and governance capacity to maintain economic vitality*



with social inclusiveness in opportunities and benefits, provide for ecological sustainability and the protection of biodiversity to guide the use of resources, and promote social equity within and across groups and generations. All three are necessary and no one of them alone is sufficient. These requirements must also hold across a range of spatial and temporal scales".

It is within this context, that we offer the **Social Enterprise and Biosphere Reserve Development Framework**, as a multidimensional and multi-stakeholder approach to enhance sustainable development in Biosphere Reserves. The Framework sets out a process to encourage and cultivate values based enterprises that reinvest profits in social and/or environmental benefits, to thrive on a regional level and help deliver sustainable economic development in and around BRs.

ASC is grateful to all those who have collaborated in this process. We look forward to working with them and others interested in taking on the approach outlined in this document.

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