

Information sheet UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man

Basic information:

UNESCO is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Biosphere reserves exist under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme.

The Biosphere programme began in 1971, initially concentrating on care for land, sea and species. It was expanded in the mid-1990s to also reflect areas' economy, culture, heritage, community, spirituality.

The Isle of Man was admitted to the world network of Biosphere reserves in 2016 after its lengthy submission to UNESCO was accepted.

The Island is one of 686 Biosphere reserves globally in 122 countries.

It is one of six 'UK' biosphere reserves (the Island reports to UNESCO via UK MAB). There are also two in Ireland. Isle of Wight is a candidate reserve.

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

The Isle of Man's Biosphere status reflects the fact we are a special place for people and nature and recognises our vibrant community, valued environment and resilient economy.

At the heart of Biosphere is sustainability in all areas.

It's often stated that our Biosphere status means things can't happen. However, it is about balance. On planning applications, DEFA ecosystem policy team contributes views on planning applications where applicable, including from a Biosphere perspective.

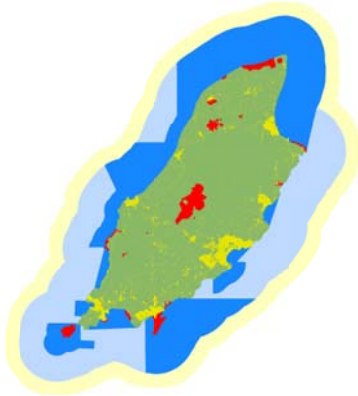
It is hoped that as well as encouraging sustainability, our Biosphere status will help us to grow our economically active population to fill skills gaps; boost visitor numbers; grow trade (eg food) and increase national knowledge about, and pride in, the Isle of Man's biodiversity, nature and wildlife and how can can interact with it.

Although Biosphere sits in, and is funded from within, the Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture, it belongs to the whole community.

UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man is governed by a Stakeholder Partnership Group, chaired by the Isle of Man's Chief Minister and with membership from Government, education, commerce, NGOs, charities and other bodies.

The map:

Central to our show display is a map depicting core, care and transition zones.



On land

Core areas are given the highest level of protection, eg, Ayres National Nature Reserve, Calf of Man bird sanctuary, Ballaugh Curragh Ramsar site, ASSIs.

Care areas 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 are our town and villages, roads and pavements etc.

At sea

(87% of our Biosphere area)

Core areas (including IoM's 10 marine nature reserves) have 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.

Care areas 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 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:

We invite organisations to be partners of UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man and have partners in five categories: Government, business, environment/culture, education and community.

We have 142 partners (October 2018).

Applicants 'take the Biosphere Pledge' and state how they are contributing to:

The
BIOSPHERE ISLE OF MAN
Pledge

THIS SIGNIFIES THAT

PLEDGES TO HELP:

- protect our natural resources
- develop our economy in a sustainable way
- support and promote our cultural heritage
- make our environmental impact positive wherever possible
- engage with the local community
- promote our outstanding living landscape and seascape through active involvement with UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man

f  biosphere.im

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.

Individuals can sign up as Biosphere Buddies.

Both partners and buddies receive regular mailings from us and we collaborate with them over projects.

Food and drink

The Island's unique Biosphere status sets Isle of Man food and drink apart from others.

Generations of farming and care for the land have, and continue to, shape our landscape and have contributed greatly to the Island achieving this global recognition.

Farmers and food and drink producers have really got behind the Isle of Man's Biosphere status and many are official Partners to the project.

The Isle of Man's Biosphere status tells those buying and consuming Isle of Man food and drink that it is grown in a location with a landscape, and in an environment, that is so valued and cherished that it has been recognised by such an august body as UNESCO.

Our healthy marine environment is protected by a network of 10 marine nature reserves and the production of delicious, sustainable seafood is underpinned by good marine science.

Further information:

Jo Overy, Biosphere Project Officer – 01624 686080 or jo.overy@gov.im

www.biosphere.im or www.gov.im/biosphere or email biosphere@gov.im

We are on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.