

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2018-2019

[biospherecanada.ca](http://biospherecanada.ca)



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Canadian  
Biosphere  
Reserves Association



*Inspiring a positive future by connecting people and nature in Canada's UNESCO biosphere reserves*

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

This has been an inspiring year for the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association (CBRA). I would like to start by thanking all 18 biosphere reserves for your dedication, commitment, and embodiment of the complementary values of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, climate action and reconciliation. Our UNESCO mandate sets extremely high standards which you continue to strive for and uphold, and for this I admire you.

Located within the traditional territories of over 50 Indigenous Nations, Canada's biosphere reserves have been continuing to build relationships and develop projects in partnership within Indigenous Peoples. CBRA's Reconciliation Stories project captures many of these initiatives and I invite you to read more about this in our annual report and on our website. Support from the Canadian Commission for UNESCO made this project possible and we are continuously grateful for their partnership and advocacy.

CBRA's 2017-2020 contribution agreement with Environment and Climate Change Canada has been another milestone. In 2018 our network ran a successful pilot project that demonstrated how Canada's biosphere reserves support national and international biodiversity goals and objectives. This is another great story highlighted in our annual report -- an example that demonstrates the strengths of our partnerships.

Biosphere reserves bring people, communities, organizations and sectors together, helping them identify and meet common objectives. CBRA's Amazing Places sustainable tourism program and our 2018 TREE project are examples of how biosphere reserves have catalyzed collaboration to achieve sustainable development objectives across the country. It is an honour to serve as CBRA's Chairperson and an inspiration to be a part of this incredible network -- a true Canadian treasure.

With tremendous gratitude,



Rebecca Hurwitz, Board Chair  
Canadian Biosphere Reserves Association  
Chair@biospherecanada.ca



“

**Canada's UNESCO biosphere reserves inspire a positive future. They bridge communities, organizations and sectors, building the relationships required to create a sustainable future for humans and nature.**

”

# CANADA'S 18 BIOSPHERE RESERVES

**235,000 Km<sup>2</sup>**

Their collective area  
(bigger than the UK)

**50+ Indigenous Nations**

Hosts of Canada's UNESCO  
biosphere reserves

**CLICK**

on the name  
of a biosphere  
reserve to  
visit their  
website



# 2018-19: A GLANCE AT CANADA'S BIOSPHERE RESERVES

**170**

MILLION



170 million people live in biosphere reserves worldwide

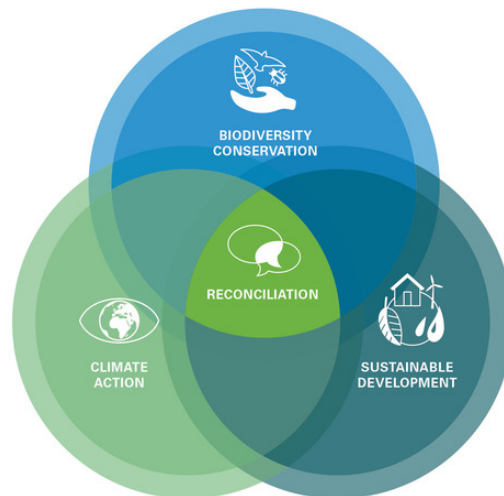
**2.3**

MILLION



2.3 million people live in biosphere reserves in Canada

**300+**



Canada's biosphere reserves supported over 300 collaborative projects involving 500 partners and 1500 volunteers under these four interconnected themes

**200+**



Canada's biosphere reserves hosted over 200 community outreach and educational events

**33**



33 people are employed in 7 of Canada's biosphere reserves. The 11 other sites are run by dedicated volunteers.

**300+**



Over 300 core volunteers support the daily work of Canada's biosphere reserves

# GOVERNANCE IN 2018-2019



CBRA Board of Directors and members of the Indigenous Circle for Biosphere Reserves in Canada at the CBRA Fall Gathering in November 2018 in the Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region, territories of the Kwalikum and Snaw-Naw-As First Nations.



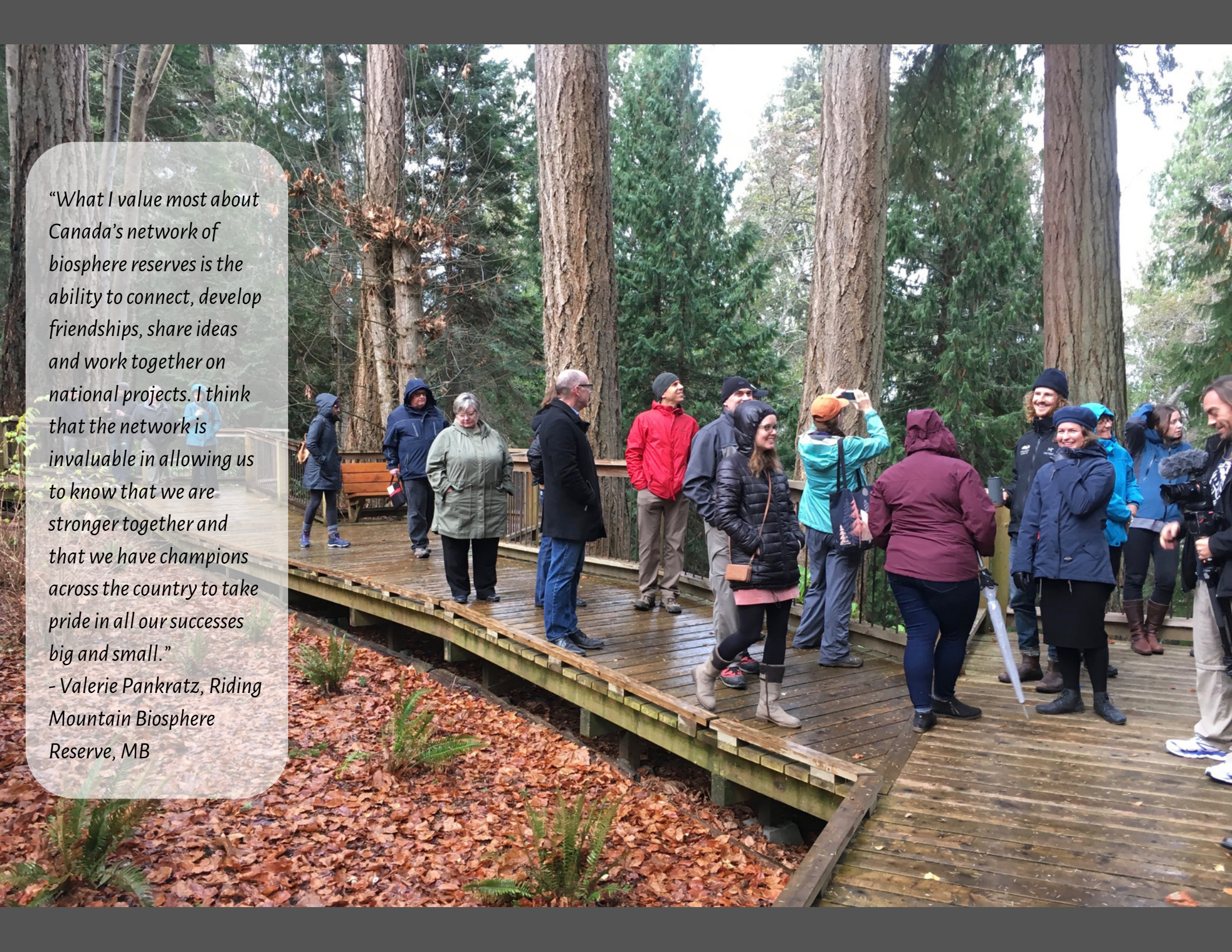
At the 2018 Fall Gathering, we sat together in circle, learning about each other and setting a collective vision for 2019 and beyond.

## Executive Committee

Chair: Rebecca Hurwitz, Clayoquot Sound, BC  
1st Vice-Chair: Gary Clarke, Frontenac Arch, ON  
2nd Vice-Chair: Pam Shaw, Mount Arrowsmith, BC  
Treasurer: Greg Mason, Georgian Bay, ON  
Secretary: Lisa Grbinicek, Niagara Escarpment, ON

## Directors

Antoine Suzor, Charlevoix, QC  
Brian Ilnicki, Beaver Hills, AB  
Bruce Hatcher, Bras d'Or Lake, NS  
Christian Bouchard, Lac Saint-Pierre, QC  
Dolphus Tutcho, Tsá Tué, NWT  
Éric Malka, Mont Saint-Hilaire, QC  
Guillaume Proulx, Manicouagan-Uapishka, QC  
Jennifer Dingman, Fundy, NB  
Larry Hawrysh, Redberry Lake, SK  
Linda Gregory, Southwest Nova, NS  
Rick Levick, Long Point, ON  
Valerie Pankratz, Riding Mountain, MB  
Wonnita Andrus, Waterton, AB

A group of people, including men, women, and children, are standing on a wooden boardwalk in a forest. They are dressed in winter clothing like jackets, hats, and scarves. Some are looking at the trees, while others are taking photos or talking. The forest has tall, thin trees and a ground covered in fallen brown leaves. The scene is outdoors and appears to be a nature trail or park.

*“What I value most about Canada’s network of biosphere reserves is the ability to connect, develop friendships, share ideas and work together on national projects. I think that the network is invaluable in allowing us to know that we are stronger together and that we have champions across the country to take pride in all our successes big and small.”*

*- Valerie Pankratz, Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve, MB*

# BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION: CANADA TARGET 1

Biosphere reserves use their skills in creating safe spaces for dialogue to advance the types of discussions needed for conserving biodiversity in ways that respect cultural and organizational diversity.

Highlight of the Year: Since 2018, we've been contributing to the achievement of Canada Biodiversity Target 1 (Aichi Target 11) by supporting the establishment of Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) and Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCAs) in Canada's biosphere reserves.

Watch our video about Canada's biosphere reserves and the Pathway to Canada Target 1 below.



*"It's been an incredible experience for us to help Canada meet its international biodiversity targets. Building relationships is at the core of our mandate, and it is in working together that we will find the most appropriate and respectful ways to safeguard our planet for future generations. I am grateful for Fort Folly First Nation and other Indigenous Nations for their leadership and support on this locally rooted national project."*

*- Jennifer Dingman, Fundy Biosphere Reserve, NB*

[Click here to find out more](#)

# RECONCILIATION STORIES

In 2018, CBRA witnessed and supported the establishment of a national Indigenous Circle for Biosphere Reserves, whose members provide guidance to Canadian biosphere reserves on how to build strong and lasting relationships with Indigenous Peoples. We are grateful to Marilyn Capreol, Larry McDermott, Anthony Johnston, Arlene Paul, Julie Servant, Kyrrah Mitchell, Laura Buck, Raven Nixon, Taylor Judge, Kyla Judge (Zhowshkawabunokwe), Tammy Dorward, Patrice Bellefleur, Michelle Watson, Gina Bayha, Nihtta Bezha, Hugo Mailhot Couture, Tom Johnson, Tsumkwatun Mitchell, Thomas Johnson, Chief Michael Recalma, and Tim Johnson (Waha:tsa) for sharing their teachings with us.

Highlight of the Year: CBRA's Reconciliation Stories Project is a series of reflection papers and short films that share moving examples of reconciliation in Canada's biosphere reserves. Stories speak to the development of a relationship or initiative that has created reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in each region, told by those who live and work in the biosphere reserve. In each case, a small gesture and some humility go a long way.



*"The Reconciliation Stories Project demonstrates CBRA's commitment to reconciliation and our alignment with the UNESCO values of peace and equity. We are grateful to the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, the Communities Conservation Research Network, Striking Balance, and the authors of each paper for their support."*

*- Rebecca Hurwitz, Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Region, BC*

[Click here to find out more](#)





*“Over the past year, we saw the emergence of a new discourse across our network related to Indigenous Peoples and the recognition and valuing of the hard work required to reconcile with each other and the land/air/water. This has made me proud.”*

*- Greg Mason, Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve, ON*

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 2015, the United Nations launched 17 Sustainable Development Goals with an ambitious aim to solve the world's most critical sustainability issues by 2030. Canada's biosphere reserves are making every effort to address these goals both locally and nationally. They invest in community projects that address the UN Sustainable Development Goals and are recognized for this work in Canada's Federal Sustainable Development Strategy.

Highlight of the Year: In 2018, Canada's biosphere reserves expressed a desire to expand the Amazing Places sustainable tourism brand, designed by and for Canada's UNESCO biosphere reserves. Currently thriving in 5 of the 18 sites, the Amazing Places program brings local stakeholders together in a collective effort to enhance ecological and cultural education through sustainable tourism. Discussions with Parks Canada and other national organizations are inspiring new partnerships and collaborations.

[Click here to find out more](#)



*"The Amazing Places program has been an incredible outreach initiative for our biosphere reserve. It has been highlighted by other organizations and has significantly raised the profile of our region."*

*- Pam Shaw, Mount Arrowsmith Biosphere Region, BC*

# CLIMATE ACTION

Canada's biosphere reserves empower people to mitigate and adapt to climate change and carry out climate action projects in partnership with all sectors of society. Biosphere reserves take into account the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its protocols.

Highlight of the Year: The TREE Project began in 2018 as part of a contract with the Government of Canada to make the G7 Summit an environmentally responsible event. As part of this agreement, Canada's biosphere reserves planted 100,000 trees with local partners to help offset some of the greenhouse gases caused by the summit.



*"The TREE Project was a the first of its kind for Canada's biosphere reserves. It created a legacy for the youth and partners that were involved and mobilized incredible local participation across the country. I'm proud to have coordinated this national initiative."  
- Antoine Suzor-Fortier, Charlevoix Biosphere Reserve, QC*

[Click here to find out more](#)

# CONTACT US



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# LEARN MORE

**Watch TVO's Striking Balance  
Documentary Series!**



Each episode features  
one Canadian  
biosphere reserve

[tvo.org/programs/striking-balance](http://tvo.org/programs/striking-balance)

**Visit our website:  
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