

## Transcript of the Video

### Mchich Derrak and Águeda Villa Díaz

#### Part 1

The Mediterranean Intercontinental Biosphere Reserve (RBIM) is established on a double basis: first, on the recognition that there was a very much valuable socio-ecosystem that was shared between Andalusia (Spain) and Northern Morocco, that is between Europe and Africa and on the other side, the conviction that to establish a transboundary Reserve would have been a key instrument for the development of a cooperation.

How to do it? From one side, through two Memoranda. One that the Andalusian Regional Government (JA) holds since the year 2000 with the Reign of Morocco to do environmental cooperation; the other, more specific, ratified in 2003 between the Andalusian Environmental Office (CMA) and the Water and Forestry Office of the Moroccan Ministry of Environment (HCEF). Those are the two instruments that facilitate the establishment of the Reserve with a certain Institutional guarantee

From another side, an Interreg program that mobilized the funding for the drafting of the needed documents. This Reserve is presented, and it was approved in 2006. At that moment, the International Co-ordinating Council (of MAB) congratulated the initiative, finding it pretty ambitious. What stands out is that the initiative has many possibilities, despite its complexity, it has a very elaborated documentation already drafted, which achieved two very important things as to establish the main work strategies, the common values that have been worked together between Spain and Morocco; and to pave the way for future work when the proposal was accepted, the three bodies (JA, CMA, HCEF) started working together.

We can speak about the results of the 10-year evaluation (by UNESCO). They have been quite acceptable, and we received a particular remark on the level of maturity that the Reserve gained. Maturity that comes from the fact that the three institutions (JA, CMA, HCEF) have been willing to continue working together , not only voluntarily, but also generating an institutional instrument that allows it to be: the Memoranda. Since 2006 two more Memorandum has been ratified. One in 2011, and another in 2016. Those documents contemplate those instruments that are basic for the functioning of a Reserve: a mixed Committee, that is the transboundary management organism; the participatory organism, that is yet to be formed; and the Action Plan. An Action Plan that was conceived in a flexible way , so to make it adaptable and modifiable according to the circumstances and evaluations (from UNESCO), like projects or even the work strategies.

#### Part 2

The territory of the RBIM, both in its Moroccan and Spanish parts, is subject to soil erosion, forest fires, forest cover degradation, the advance of desertification or other effects related to climate change. In order to face these problems, several actions have been implemented within the framework of cooperation projects between the Moroccan and Spanish partners of the RBIM.

These actions focus on three main areas: conservation actions, development actions and logistical support actions. In terms of conservation actions and particularly the exchange of knowledge and experience in the field of forest fire prevention and control. The restoration of forests and some emblematic species such as

cork oak, cedar and fir in Morocco or nif and fir in Spain. The strengthening of the urban waste sanitation network and the study of bird migration through Gibraltar.

As far as development actions are concerned, they have mainly focused on the promotion of sustainable tourism, revaluation of the products of the territory, such as meat, cheese, aromatic and medicinal plants.

The implementation of an integrated management in the rural environment and the strengthening of signage and supports in the protected area

Finally, in terms of logistical support actions, and particularly the carrying out of scientific studies developed in cooperation between the Spanish partners, the organisation of workshops on various topics such as integrated management of the RBIM, the fight against forest fires, ecotourism, management of the RBIM protected areas, etc.

Training for the benefit of academics, members, cooperatives, administrative technicians and engineers, nature guides.

The development of environmental education activities.

Other actions, such as the elaboration of information and communication media on the RBIM, such as leaflets, books, brochures, catalogues and finally the elaboration and strengthening of signage. Therefore, these actions have been implemented. But other projects are still open and deserve more work in order to progress in economic, environmental and social sustainability.

In this sense, a sustainable development strategy specific to the City is being drawn up. Another project is planned for the year 2021, which is the concretisation of governance within the RBIM. Concretely, through the operationalisation of a Participation Body that brings together different social actors involved and interested in the future, and finally the strengthening of shared management through institutional collaboration ensured and supervised by the RBIM Joint Committee.