



## PRESS RELEASE



UNESCO approved funding for the St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve Management Plan

Basseterre, St. Kitts –June 18th, 2018. On Thursday June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the National Man and the Biosphere Committee met to discuss the deployment EC \$82,000 infunding for the development of the St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve Management Plan.

Several key aspects were discussed in detail for the June 2018 to June 2019 implementation period.

Within the framework of the UNESCO Programme and Budget for 2018-21 (39/5), Major Programme II: Natural sciences, MLA 2, advancing science for sustainable management of natural resources, disaster risk reduction and climate change action, the committee will embark on the oversight of a robust mechanism to further advance the SMBR. One of the key activities is the development of a cooperation plan for the management of the

St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve. The plan shall include stakeholder participatory consultation through interviews, questionnaires and townhall meetings, elaborate strategies for governance structures to tune the St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve regarding conservation efforts, social development projects and education tools.

The committee will also oversee the execution of three major technical and capacity building workshop, viz;

1. Implementation of management plan
2. Marketing and Branding
3. Entrepreneurship and Enterprise

The committee also approved a project expansion of the present SMBR education and awareness mandate over the next year, with the introduction of a national campaign to educate secondary and primary school students within St. Kitts and Nevis about the St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve.

MAB Coordinator, Markysa O'Loughlin stated "We have already achieved several goals over the past few years, and we expect to work towards achieving even more. The committee is extremely grateful for this funding that will be especially instrumental to improve the livelihoods of the residents of the St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve.

The UNESCO **SMBR** is the only Biosphere Reserve in the English-Speaking Caribbean. It encompasses the communities of Canada Estate, Keys, Cayon and Ottleys, representing a population of 4,000 residents. The **St. Mary's Biosphere Reserve** has three interrelated zones that aim to fulfil three complementary and mutually reinforcing functions:

1. The core area(s) comprises a strictly protected ecosystem that contributes to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation.
2. The buffer zone surrounds or adjoins the core areas and is used for activities compatible with sound ecological practices that can reinforce scientific research, monitoring, training and education.
3. The transition area is the part of the reserve where the greatest activity is allowed, fostering economic and human development that is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable.

For more information: [www.sknbiosphere.com](http://www.sknbiosphere.com) and Facebook/Instagram/Twitter - @sknbiosphere.

End