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Applying TDWG Standards to assess the Ecosystem Value of UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserves in Africa.

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The UNESCO Man and Biosphere program was established in 1971 to provide a scientific basis for improving relationships between people and their environments. Their recently published strategy for 2015–2025 includes the Lima strategic plan, which lists various desired outcomes to achieve and performance indicators to assess progress. Among those indicators are the Aichi Targets (<https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/>) for the outcome on the added value of biodiversity in the biosphere reserves. In the framework of the European Union (EU) project EU BON, in collaboration with GBIF and GEO BON, a sample-based extension to Darwin Core was developed and the GBIF IPT adapted to accommodate data coming from monitoring sites such as those of the I-LTER network, so to have Essential Biodiversity Variables (EBVs) needed to meet the expectations set out by the Aichi Targets.

Meanwhile, GBIF *via* its BID has financed 23 African projects of various size, including data coming from the African Man and Biosphere (AfriMAB) UNESCO Network. The Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO) has an agreement with UNESCO, to fund a national project aimed at improving research and management in the African MAB reserves. The Royal Museum for Central Africa and Botanic Garden Meise have long term experience in the MAB reserves of Luki and Yangambi in Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Within these projects it is asked to develop a method to estimate the economic value of the Afri MAB reserves following the Lima performance indicators. In this context, with the experience from the above mentioned networks and activities, the authors will address how the sample base extensions to Darwin Core and other TDWG standards can be applied to the data coming from selected African MAB reserves. Namely it is planned to analyze in more detail, the data from the reserves of Luki and Yangambi in D.R. Congo, the Volcanoes reserve in Rwanda and the Island of Principe in São Tomé.

A movie illustrating the collecting of eaten mushrooms in the Mountains of Rwanda has been produced and can also be shown in the frame work of the TDWG conference.

UNESCO = United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization  
EU BON = European Biodiversity Observation Network  
GEO BON = Group on Earth Observations Bidiversity Observation Network  
IPT = Integrated Publishing Toolkit  
I-LTER = International Long Term Ecological Research  
BID = Biodiversity Information for Development