

# **The Danube-Drava-Mura river corridor**

Proposal for a UNESCO Trans-Boundary Biosphere  
Reserve

## ***Case Study***

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# Biosphere Reserves

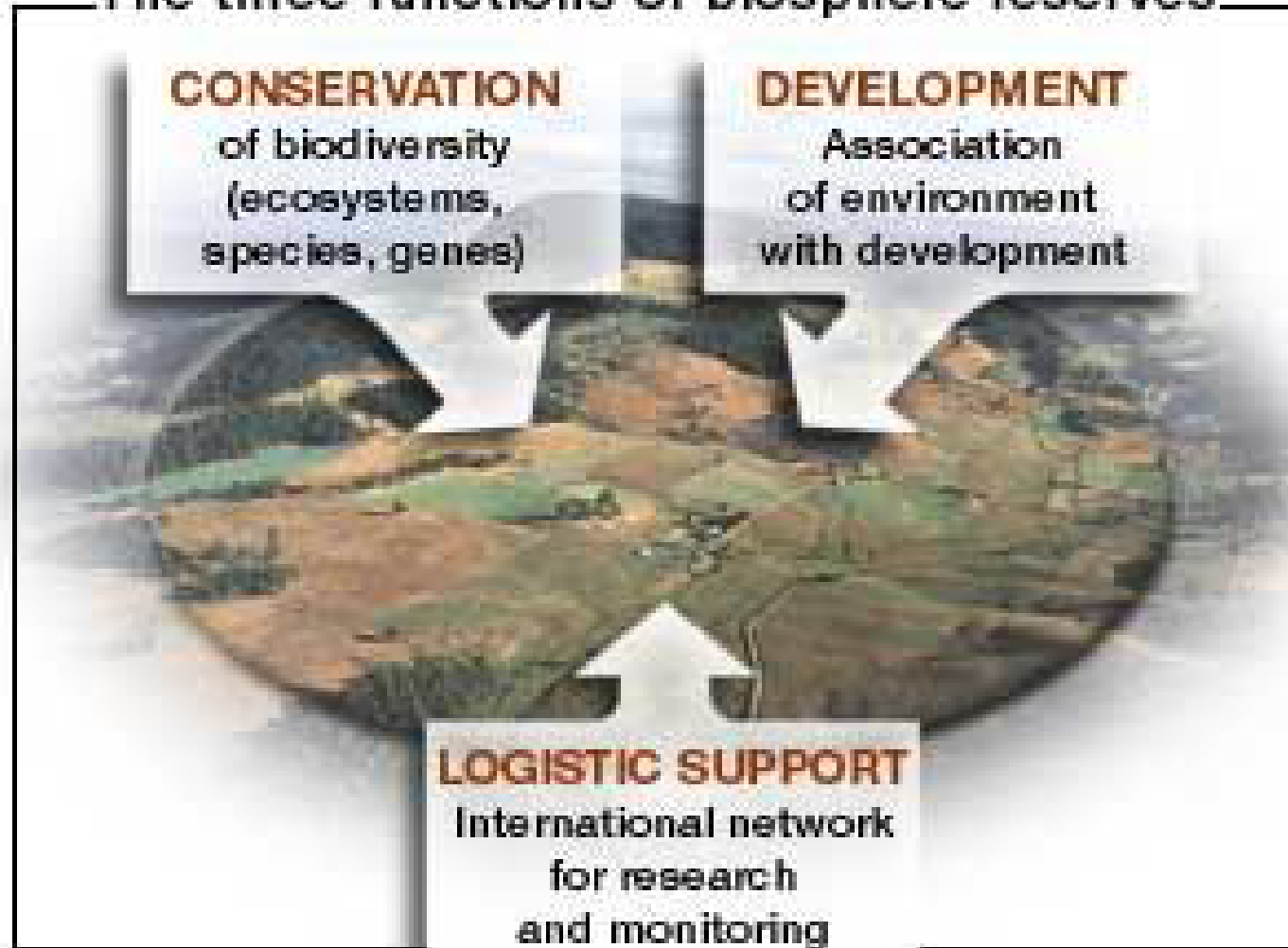
are defined as “areas of terrestrial and coastal/marine ecosystems or a combination thereof, which are internationally recognized within the framework of UNESCO’s Programme on Man and Biosphere (MAB)” (Statutory Framework)

as places which seek to reconcile **conservation, development** and **logistic support**, through a specific zoning, consisting of **core**, **buffer** and **transition** areas.

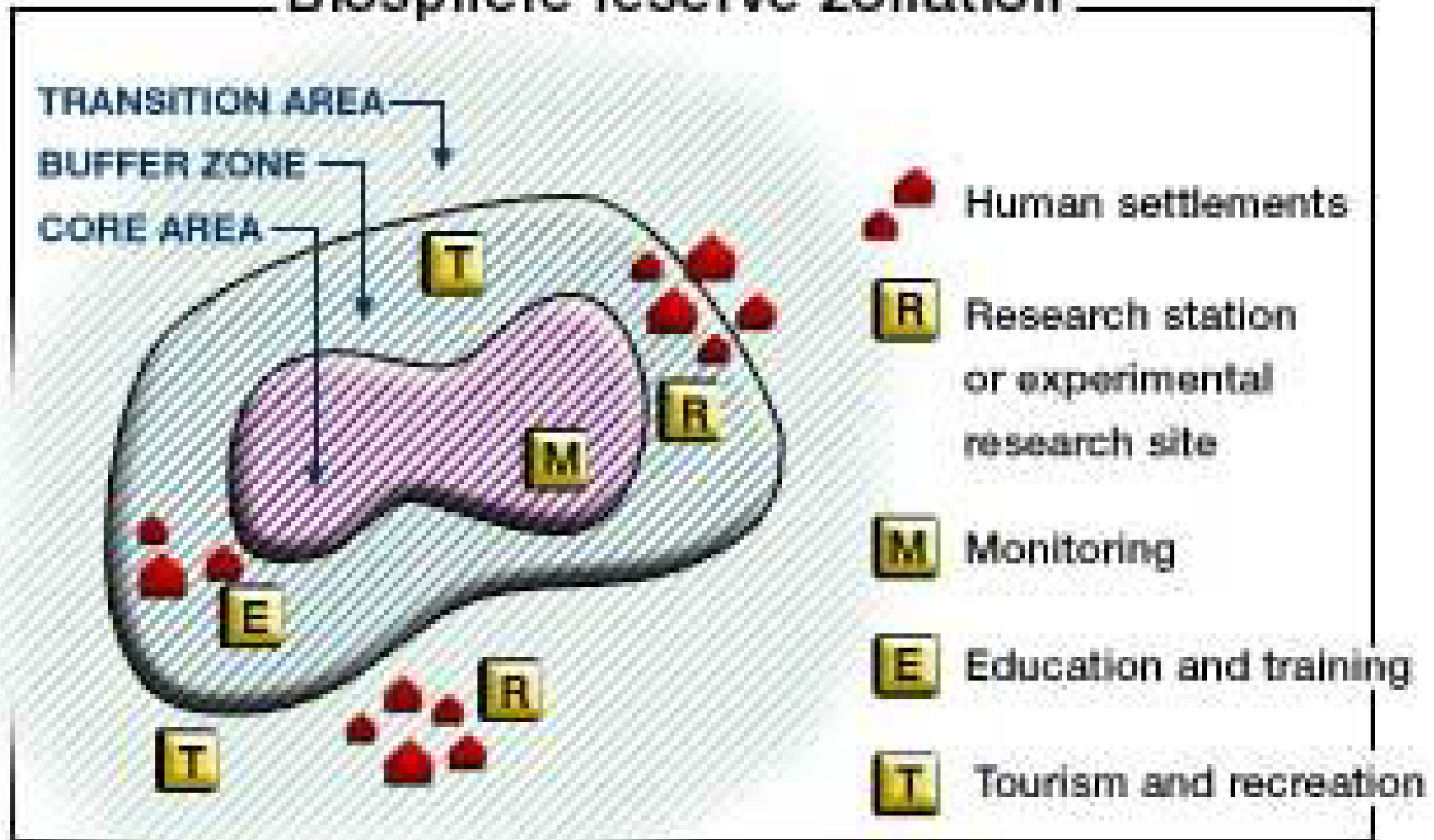
are to be considered as ‘**learning sites**’ or ‘**territorial laboratories**’ where to test innovative governance approaches.

[www.unesco.org/ma](http://www.unesco.org/ma)

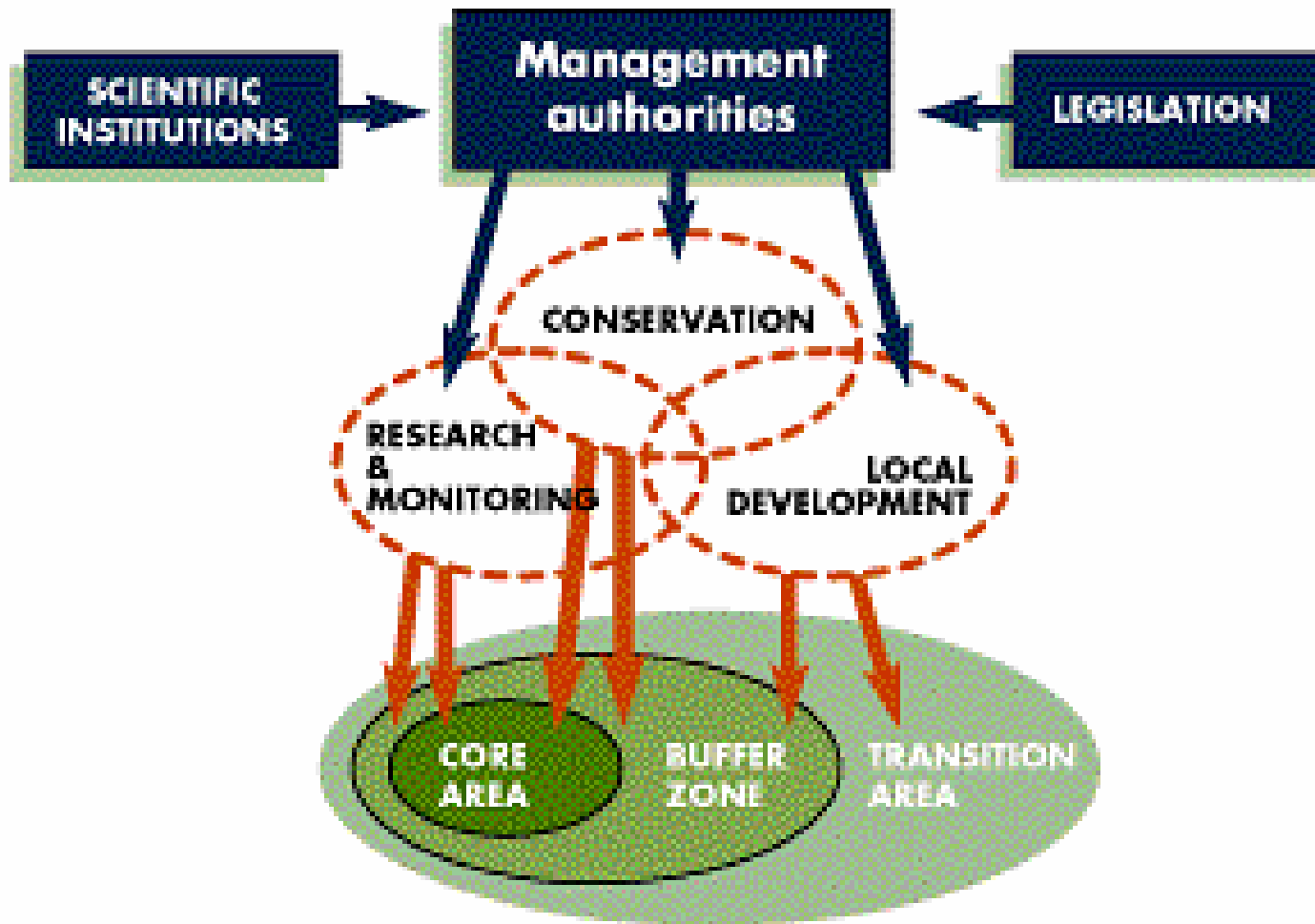
# The three functions of biosphere reserves



# Biosphere reserve zonation



# NATURE OF BIOSPHERE RESERVE MANAGEMENT



# Political boundaries

Biosphere Reserves are under **national sovereign jurisdiction** but they intend to serve as '**model territories**' at regional, national and international levels;

There are **507** BRs worldwide, located in **102 countries** and constituting the World Network of Biosphere Reserves;

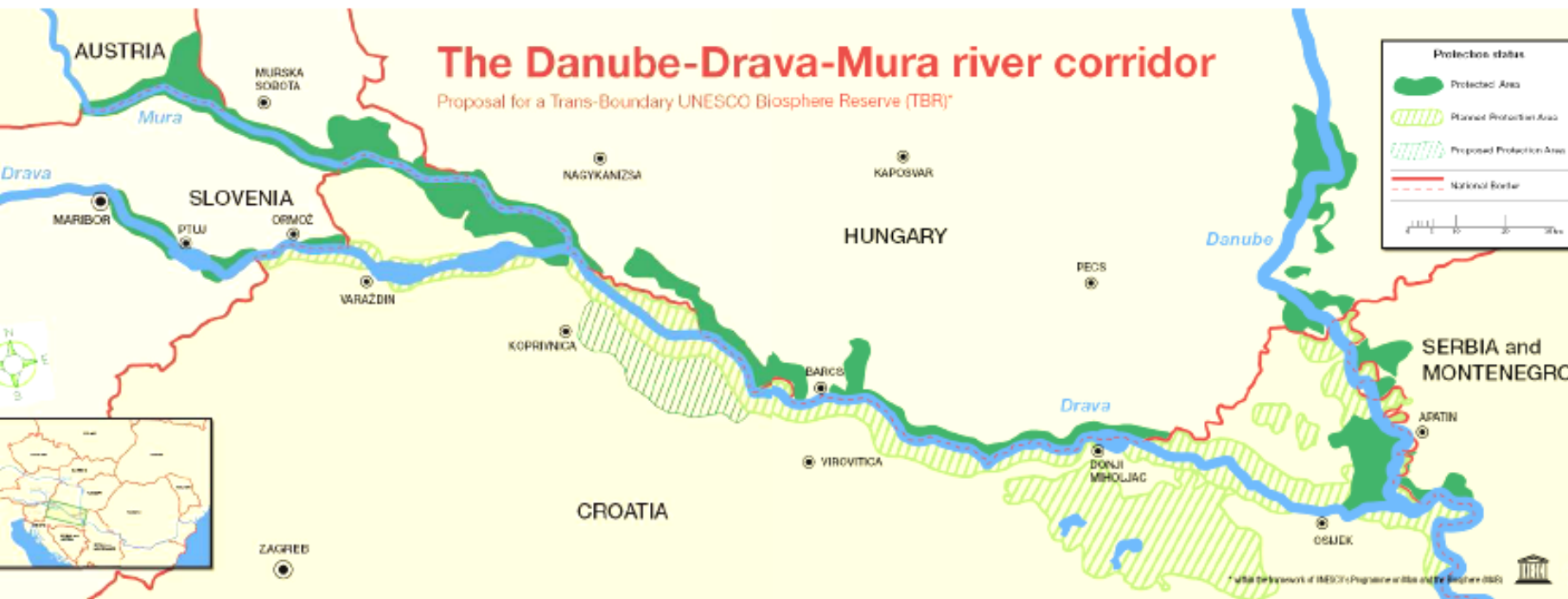
Sometimes ecological systems are crossing frontiers between countries, calling for trans-boundary cooperation.

There are **5 Trans-Boundary Biosphere Reserves in Europe**.

The UNESCO MAB Programme  
Five Transboundary Biosphere Reserves in Europe

# The initial idea

In the **Bio-geographical Panonian Region** there is one of the largest and best preserved **river ecosystems** consisted of the free-flowing lower reaches of the **Drava** and **Mura** rivers and stretches of the **Danube** river. It extends on about 600 km through the five countries.



Euronatur – the m  
WWF-Saving a picture of a beau  
The Danube-Drava-Mura river corrio

# The countries involved...

**Austria:** the lower Mura (2001) “Natura 2000” site in the province of Styria, 34 km along the Mura River shared with **Slovenia** (2.200 ha)...proposal for Mura and Drava riverine landscape to be included in Natura 2000 sites

## **Drava-Danube triangle (63.700 ha)**

**Croatia:** Nature Park “Kopacki rit” (24.000 ha), Ramsar site, proposed for National Park and Natural World Heritage site

**Serbia:** Special Nature Reserve “Gornje Podunavlje” in the province of Vojvodina (11.500 ha)

**Hungary:** National Park “Danube-Drava” (28.200 ha), two Ramsar sites

90% is already protected with the different national and/or international protection (EU Natura 2000 sites, national parks, nature reserves, nature parks and Ramsar sites)

proposal for size and terrestrial configuration: Core Area(s) – 22.635 ha, Buffer Zone(s) – 202.400 ha, Transition Area(s) – 500.000 ha



# Wetland functions

historically, stretches of the rivers served as border areas  
ex "Iron Curtain" between Western Europe and former Eastern bloc

100.000 ha of connected floodplain with intact river processes and river ecosystem  
functions which are shaping the lives and economies of the people living in the area

Flooding cause biodiversity, spawning ground, sustainable fishery, flood prevention,  
drought, erosion, sedimentation, water purification, water supply, irrigation, ecotourism,  
sustainable forestry, sustainable hunting, etc.

Threats: dikes/embankments, dams, drainage, over fishing, over hunting

Photos from the report: Drava and Mura - Natural Rivers or Hydropower Dams, WWF, Euronatur, Drava League and NGOs)



# Chronology

**1993** – 1<sup>st</sup> Drava Conference in Koposvar – the idea of Drava-Mura BR

**1996** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Drava Conference in Radenci – UNESCO involvement  
international cooperation and transnational protected area concept, zonation

**2005** – “Experience Green Belt” pilot study conducted by BUND – ecotourism  
based on nature conservation objectives

**2006** – INTERREG IIIB project – economic development in protected areas as  
well as cooperation btw old and new EU member states (in Central European  
Green Belt)