

## What are the benefits?

Biosphere reserve status brings world-wide recognition to places that are distinct ecosystems which showcase how people can work **with** their environment. The Bras d'Or Lake and its watershed, and Cape Breton generally, will now be recognized as a good place to live, work and visit - both nationally and internationally. This recognition will also:

- promote eco-tourism — including visiting scientists
- encourage funding for research into sustainable rural and economic development
- foster economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable
- help leverage economic development money
- advance additional biological and ecological studies to support existing conservation priorities
- through the national and global network of biosphere reserves, apply what has worked elsewhere to promote "best practices" for cultural, social and ecological sustainability within the Bras d'Or Lake watershed



## Who is involved?

The Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association is a voluntary organization, incorporated under the Societies Act of Nova Scotia. Its twenty-member Board of Directors includes representation from various geographic locations around the Lake, municipal and First Nations governments, and some voluntary organizations already involved in Lake-related projects. Board meetings held in various locations around the Lake provide opportunity for local attention. **Any interested person may become a member.**

A significant characteristic of this Biosphere Reserve is the extent to which collaboration already exists among the groups and agencies that are addressing issues related to health of the Lake and its watershed. Among them are the:

- Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative (CEPI) with offices in Eskasoni
- Bras d'Or Preservation Nature Trust, with offices in Baddeck
- Bras d'Or Stewardship Society
- Bras d'Or Institute (Cape Breton University)
- Pitu'Paq Partnership
- Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources.

As well, numerous voluntary groups pay active attention to issues affecting local environmental concerns.

Contact us:

**Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association**

Web site: [www.blbra.ca](http://www.blbra.ca)

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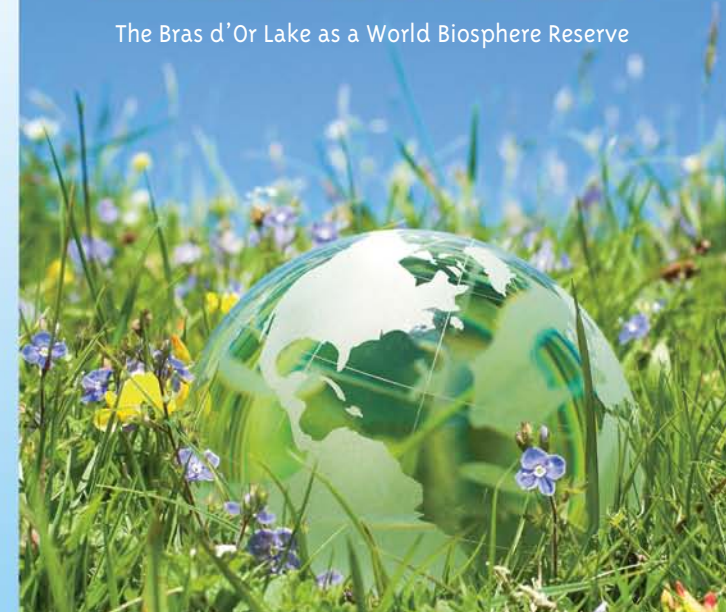


# The Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve

Securing the Future...  
of the Bras d'Or Lake



The Bras d'Or Lake as a World Biosphere Reserve





# The Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve

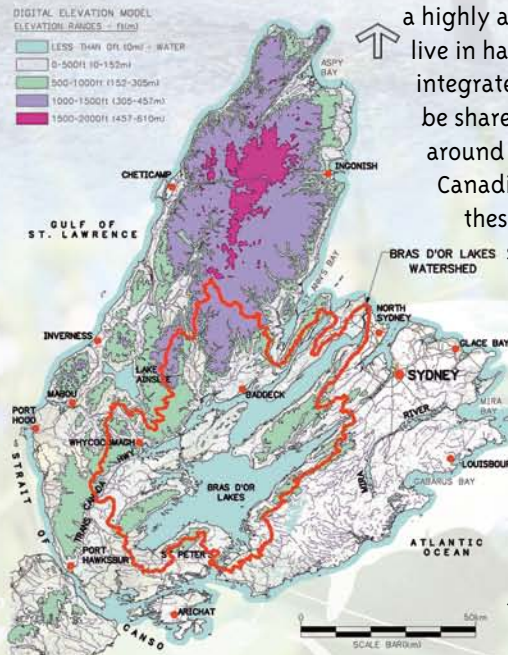
The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) declared the Bras d'Or Lake Canada's 16th Biosphere Reserve in June, 2011.

The announcement marks the successful conclusion of a lengthy application process involving volunteers from communities around the Bras d'Or, support from municipal and First Nations' leaders, contributors of information from the community, various departments of government, and endorsement by the governments of Nova Scotia and Canada. The informative application document is posted on the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association's website at [www.blbra.ca](http://www.blbra.ca).

The Bras d'Or Lake and its watershed comprise some 3,566 km<sup>2</sup> in the centre of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia. The Biosphere Reserve designation bestows international recognition to this area as it joins a world network of Biosphere Reserves numbering

580 sites in 114 countries. It calls attention to a highly attractive place where people live in harmony with nature. It enables integrated research and monitoring to be shared among network members around the world. As described by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO, these are "living laboratories of sustainable development, where local communities choose to take the challenge to protect biodiversity while fostering economic and social development."

A Biosphere Reserve has no regulatory authority or power. Existing laws are regulated by federal, provincial and municipal agencies.



## What is a Biosphere Reserve?

They are special places around the world that have been recognized by UNESCO as examples of where people are trying to live in harmony with their environment. They are places where people may learn how to live more sustainably.

Biosphere Reserves **promote** a healthy:

- Environment
- Economy
- Society
- Culture

Through three Functions of:

- Conservation
- Sustainable Economic Development
- Logistic Support for teaching and research

A Biosphere Reserve...

- Is NOT a World Heritage Site
- Is NOT a new level of bureaucracy
- Does NOT create new regulations
- Does NOT create new protected areas
- Does NOT limit the rights of anyone

## What is the Biosphere Reserve planning?

As a new Biosphere Reserve, we are pursuing the following activities:

- Identify **what, where, how, and by whom** the 3 Functions are already being pursued by others to benefit the Lake and watershed.
- Develop a **Classification/Catalogue of various initiatives**.
- **Facilitate co-operation** between government, industry, scientific and civic/voluntary organizations in the development of a strategy of '**shoreline health**' in the face of climate change.
- **Identify** the economic, social and cultural value (goods and services) of the Bras d'Or Lake ecosystem to the people of Cape Breton Island.
- **Promote marketing** of sustained economic growth of ecologically sustainable tourism in the Bras d'Or Lake BR.
- Support the process of developing an **Atlas of the Bras d'Or Lake BR ecosystem**.