



CANADIAN COMMISSION FOR UNESCO
COMMISSION CANADIENNE POUR L'UNESCO

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PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

Bras d'Or Lake is designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO

Ottawa, June 30, 2011. Canada welcomes its 16th Biosphere Reserve, as Bras d'Or Lake, Nova Scotia, is designated a Biosphere Reserve by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). Biosphere Reserves are living laboratories of sustainable development, where local communities choose to take the challenge to protect biodiversity while fostering economic and social development. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves now numbers 580 sites in 114 countries.

This new Biosphere Reserve includes the complete watershed of Bras d'Or Lake, a salt-water estuary that constitutes a true inland sea. This estuary has unique oceanographic and biological characteristics as it contains both species typical of Arctic waters and of warm subtropical oceans, living within a few hundred meters of one another. UNESCO's designation of this site is the result of a highly collaborative process that started in 2005, involving First Nation representatives, provincial and federal government agencies, academics, and the nearly 14 000 citizens of the region. This process led to the development of a comprehensive management plan for the lake, to the creation of new jobs and encouraging business opportunities, while respecting the principles of sustainable development.

To learn more about Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve, please consult: <http://www.blbra.ca/>

The Canadian Commission for UNESCO operates under the aegis of the Canada Council for the Arts. Its role is to act as a forum for governments and civil society, and to mobilize the participation of Canadian organizations and committed individuals in UNESCO's mandated areas: education, natural and social sciences, culture and communication and information. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is the only member of the United Nations System to have National Commissions performing this role in its Member States.

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