



SYNTHESIS OF MEETING AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE NET-BIOME ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON “Motivated” science on biodiversity management and use in support of Overseas sustainable development HELD IN PARIS, 16TH FEBRUARY 2012.

The brief report below summarizes the deliberations of the Round-Table presentations and discussion held during the Net-Biome Final Meeting (Paris, 15 & 16 February, 2012).

The participants identified relevant key issues to support of Biodiversity management and underpinning science in ORs and OCTs. Two major themes emerged:

- a) *Policy context and engagement with stakeholders*
- b) *Major scientific opportunities for research in the ORs+OCTs.*

Policy context and Stakeholder engagement:

Net-Biome **enables science of international significance with regional relevance** because:

- 1) Net-Biome has **global reach** encompassing areas of high biodiversity at the interface of sensitive and vulnerable tropical and subtropical regions. These areas are widespread, with unique distribution, along the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans.
- 2) The central theme is the scientific and socio-economic underpinning of Sustainable Development in those regions. The context is one of Global Environmental Change interacting with regional and local pressures.
- 3) Although research in these ORs and OCTs has a long tradition, Net-Biome must ensure greater visibility due to both scientific excellence and societal relevance.
- 4) A pressing priority is maintenance of a durable network between regions and collectivities that have to struggle due to their usually small size and isolation. This will provide a platform via information exchange and capacity building for major programmes and project based research. Such a platform will promote integration of knowledge, greater exchange with stakeholders at both regional, European and international levels.

Major scientific opportunities for research in the ORs+OCTs

- 1) The ORs and OCTs provide manageable and tractable test systems for comparative and experimental studies on biodiversity, ecosystem

processes and services - especially testing the efficacy of policy innovations and interventions, such as Protected Areas and Natural Parks, and sustainable use of “productive” ecosystems

- 2) The emerging scientific framework for the study of Ecosystem Services can be developed in ORs and OCTs because of the ability to strongly link the natural and social sciences to both understand generic global issues and solve real regional/local problems. This is because of territorial size, ease of socio-economic characterization and sharp gradients of human occupation and pressure from coasts to inland and among islands within and between archipelagos.
- 3) The ORs and OCTs provide a superb setting of fundamental studies of evolution generating biodiversity and conversely the extinctions reducing it. Basic genetic work is essential to understanding both phylogeography and in identifying special genes or strains of economic importance.
- 4) Intrinsically high biodiversity, coupled with genetic research, increases the likelihood of successful prospecting for novel bioproducts and biotechnological applications. Similarly, the role of ecoservices in sustainable developments such as catchment and water quality management, responsible tourism, renewable energy generation, can be piloted and demonstrated at the scale of the ORs and OCTs. Thus new tools and approaches for adaptive management can be tested.

Net-Biome will enable maintenance and development of a cadre of early and mid-career scientists, thereby building up capability for the future with home grown talent nurtured by international networking.

Next steps:

- 1) Catalogue of research capabilities and gap analysis.
- 2) Increasing visibility with stakeholders and funders
- 3) Ensure current research projects maintains contact for cohesion of Net-Biome.
- 4) An operational network should be maintained by setting-up a supported coordination action (new ERA-NET?) including a second research Joint-Call as already proposed.

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