Biosphere for Baltic is a joint commitment initiated in June 2017 during the UN Ocean Conference. The Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) in Sweden, the Swedish National Commission of UNESCO, and the Swedish Agency for Marine and Water Management joined forces to increase dissemination of good practices from UNESCO biosphere reserves in the Baltic Sea Region, both within and beyond the network of biosphere reserves. This joint commitment intends to contribute to raising awareness of sustainability challenges linked to the Baltic Sea, enhance the knowledge of interconnectedness between land and sea, and facilitate learning from biosphere reserves as arenas for implementing the SDGs with a multi-stakeholder approach.

Biosphere for Baltic provides a unique opportunity for UNESCO biosphere reserves around the Baltic Sea to network, to share experiences and results, and to find new opportunities for collaboration. The aim of Biosphere for Baltic is to facilitate learning and disseminate good practices from the Baltic Sea region, within and beyond the network of biosphere reserves. Also, Biosphere for Baltic highlights the contribution of biosphere reserves to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, with particular emphasis on SDG 14 – Life Below Water.

Case study from River Landscape Nedre Dalälven:

In the River Landscape Nedre Dalälven Biosphere Reserve in Sweden, two projects are running that in different ways are targeting fishing conservation, namely the Sustainable hydroelectrical power Dalälven Project, and Migrating fish in the lower part of Dalälven. To strengthen dialogue and local engagement in relation to these two projects, Nedre Dalälvens Association initiated a project involving the entire biosphere reserve, called Fishery conservation for sustainable recreational fishing in River Landscape Nedre Dalälven.

This project works to increase the attractiveness of the area and is inspiring hydroelectric companies active in the biosphere reserve to invest more in migration and dam passages. The strategy rests on networking, capacity building, and branding to build a strong coalition among stakeholders.

Activities:

1. Participation in the national and the regional projects.
2. Initiating restorations of the river’s habitat for different fish species by active networking, increasing dialogue and bringing different stakeholders together.
3. Strengthening the network between fishery conservation associations (FVOF),

municipalities, tourism companies and county administrations.
4. Branding efforts emphasizing the attractiveness and competitiveness of the area.
5. Initiating the process for a fishing management plan in close cooperation with the concerned FVOF organisations.

Conclusions:

Biosphere reserves fill several important functions in the work towards SDG 14. In many of the cases, they become local-regional centres for transformation, bringing together key stakeholders and actors, and catalysing change. Biopshere for Baltic has identified three main ways in which SDG14 is
implemented by UNESCO biosphere reserves.
• Biosphere reserves inspire with good examples and empower people to contribute to change.

• Biosphere reserves have the possibility to inspire others and to strengthen cooperation between different stakeholders by including people, their thoughts and ideas. Biosphere reserves create a
neutral, inclusive and uniting arena where important sustainability challenges are highlighted and where solutions to those challenges are developed and tested in a practical context.

• Biosphere reserves have an important role to generate learning processes by communicating with stakeholders and the public WHY it is important to address certain sustainability challenges, they are science translators and link new knowledge to local place based knowledge.

https://biosfarprogrammet.se/projekt/biosphere-for-baltic/