

Country	Canada
Region/Province/ or State	New Brunswick
Web Address	http://www.fundy-biosphere.ca
Date designated	2007
Size (hectares)	432,310
Distinguishing Features	Acadian mixed wood forests, rugged coast line, extreme tidal ranges, salt marshes, tidal mudflats
Main Industries (in terms of employment)	tourism, fishery

The **Bay of Fundy** and its adjacent landscapes form a **unique region** in its geological formations, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and cultural heritage, as well as its variety of rural communities and urban areas. It compares with more than **600 unique landscapes in over 100 countries in the world** that have been recognized as [World UNESCO biosphere](#) sites.

The Fundy Biosphere Reserve **designation by UNESCO** provides not only international recognition for the uniqueness of the Bay of Fundy, its culture and history, but also emphasizes the importance of conservation and sustainability in the region.

The Fundy Biosphere Reserve includes [an area of over 430,000 hectares](#) of the upper Bay of Fundy coast, stretching from St. Martins to the Tantramar Marsh near Sackville and inland to Moncton.

As a **non-profit organization**, the Fundy Biosphere Reserve is a **community-based initiative** comprised of individuals and representatives of various stakeholder groups, organizations and local communities working to promote the **sustainable development** of the region by **enhancing the research and innovation capacity** and by creating a **forum** for various groups to share information, knowledge and best practices.

Reference: <http://www.fundy-biosphere.ca/en/about-us/about-us.html>

The total area of the Fundy Biosphere Reserve is **442,250 hectares in the upper Bay of Fundy coast**, stretching from St. Martins to the Tantramar Marsh near Sackville and inland to Moncton.

- **Core Area: 20,600 hectares**
- **Buffer Zone: 26,124 hectares**

- **Transition Area: 395,552 hectares**

Contents

- [1 Core Area](#)
- [2 Buffer Zone](#)
- [3 Transition Area](#)
- [4 Obtaining UNESCO Designation](#)

Core Area

The **Core Area** is a **long-term protected area** and it acts as a reference point. This area is indicative of the Biosphere Reserve. Core Areas in biosphere reserves usually include securely protected sites for conserving biological diversity, monitoring minimally disturbed ecosystems, as well as undertaking non-destructive research and other low-impact activities (such as education).

[Fundy National Park](#) has been selected as the Core Area of the Fundy Biosphere Reserve for several reasons. It is a large contiguous area with a low level of natural or man made disturbance over the past 60 years, it has long-term legal protection under federal legislation and it is dedicated to preserving the ecological integrity of its lands. In addition, there is an open dialogue with adjacent land managers intended to reach reasonable decisions related to mitigating the potential effects of operational projects. It also has an active habitat restoration program that is promoted outside, as well as inside the park.

Buffer Zone

Buffer Zones typically **surround or are adjacent to the Core Area in Biosphere Reserves**. They are managed in ways that support the conservation objectives of the Core Area. Buffer Zones may be used for cooperative activities compatible with sound ecological practices, including environmental education, recreation, ecotourism and applied and basic research. These areas also represent a transition in the intensity of land use ranging from legally protected areas to lands that are being intensively managed for resource extraction.

In the Fundy Biosphere Reserve, the Buffer Zone includes **all the other protected areas, conservation areas and special management areas that exist in the region**. Rationale

for inclusion of all protected areas in the Buffer Zone is that most have been in existence for a relatively short time period compared to Fundy National Park. Management strategies for some of these protected Buffer Zones are evolving and there is subjectivity involved in the degree of protection and utilization permitted in the various Buffer Zones.

Transition Area

The outer **Transition Areas** in Biosphere Reserves usually consists of **communities that support sustainable development**. Transition Areas act as areas of cooperation.

The Transition Area in the Fundy Biosphere Reserve is made up of **provincial Crown lands, federal Crown lands, large industrial freehold forest lands, small private woodlots, agricultural and dyked marshlands, municipalities, roads, highways and energy corridors**.

The ecosystems of the Bay of Fundy were subject to a wide variety of human-influences that brought about significant change in the landscape, distribution of species, and supply of habitat for those species. The primary objective of the Fundy Biosphere Reserve, in terms of its Transition Area, is to create a multi-sector forum to facilitate the analyses of changes and potential environmental consequences. Developing and sharing knowledge across resource sectors helps to plan for the conservation and restoration of native biodiversity. Communities are also encouraged to use and manage resources in a sustainable manner.

Reference: <http://www.fundy-biosphere.ca/en/about-us/the-reserve.html>

The **Fundy Biosphere Reserve was designated by the United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on September 21, 2007**, after a conceptualization and development process, which occurred over a period of eight years and was initiated by a group of volunteers in 1999. It is thus part of a network of 16 biosphere reserves across Canada and more than 600 worldwide.

The core group that came together to pursue UNESCO designation was called the “Planning Committee” and the project was named the “**Fundy Biosphere Reserve Initiative (FBRI)**” The committee met at regular intervals to establish the basic concepts and to familiarize themselves with the [UNESCO Man and Biosphere program](#). Several biosphere sites were visited in eastern Canada. The group also became involved with the [Canadian Biosphere Reserve Association \(CBRA\)](#), which provided valuable information for the formative stages and access to resource materials to guide the development of the New Brunswick initiative. Following the development of an initial strategy, the planning committee began its

outreach to **potential stakeholders**: communities, conservation groups, resource sectors, academic institutions, senior government departments, research and monitoring agencies, policy makers and scientists.

The network of cooperating agencies and individuals that was structured is considered to be a major stepping-stone, which facilitated the eventual achievement of UNESCO Biosphere site designation.

Obtaining UNESCO Designation

The **land area** that the planning committee **proposed for designation** is the **watersheds and coastal areas that extend from St. Martins through to the Tantramar Marsh and drain into the upper Bay of Fundy**. The area is unique in its geological formations, terrestrial and marine ecosystems, cultural heritage, and its cross section of rural communities and urban areas. The area also has many protected, conservation and special management sites that facilitate the land categorization into **Core Area, Buffers Zones and Transitional Areas** as required of an [UNESCO Biosphere site](#).

Although intended to bring recognition to the world's special ecosystems, landscapes, heritage, and sustainable development initiatives, a **UNESCO designation had the potential to enhance the profile of the area nationally and internationally, as well as encourage sustainable economic development opportunities**. As such, the FBRI noted that the proposed biosphere reserve project would aim to encourage public and private sector investment, attract technical expertise, and enable scientists and resource managers to participate in the development of sustainability strategies.

The planning committee based its UNESCO proposal for the Fundy Biosphere Reserve on:

- Recognition of a special piece of the Atlantic Canada maritime landscape and the uniqueness of the Bay of Fundy;
- Recognition of the area's history and its cultural identity in the region and within Canada;
- Recognition of the past and continued commitment of residents, policy makers, resource sectors and scientists to seek continued improvement in intergenerational sustainability.

The [nomination document](#) developed by the FBRI planning committee went through **several drafts based on the comments of stakeholders, communities, resource**

groups, policy makers and scientists. The stakeholder group and planning committee struck an interim board of directors in the fall of 2006 and approval was given to proceed with the nomination process through to the UNESCO international level. The proposal review process included stakeholders, 16 individual communities within the proposed FBR area, five provincial government departments, the UNESCO Canada Commission and a multi-national review committee administered by the UNESCO head office in Paris, France.

The Board of directors submitted the proposal to UNESCO in the summer of 2007 and designation was achieved in the fall of that same year. A joint news conference was held by the FBR stakeholder network and the New Brunswick provincial government, represented by the Minister of the Department of Environment, to officially announce the UNESCO designation in November, 2007. The Board of Directors then proceeded to establish a governance model, identify staff and responsibilities and set a short-term work plan as well as a fundraising and communication strategy.

Reference: <http://www.fundy-biosphere.ca/en/about-us/brief-history.html>