

Country	United Kingdom
Region/Province/ or State	Scotland
Web Address	<a href="http://www.gsabiosphere.org.uk">http://www.gsabiosphere.org.uk</a>
Date Founded	2012
Size (hectares)	526,888
Distinguishing Features	upland massif centered on the Merrick and the rivers that flow from this upland down through forests and farmland to the sea
Main Industries (in terms of employment)	agriculture, fishery, silviculture, hunting, mining, industry, tourism

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Reserve provides a significant new opportunity for our area and for Scotland. A Biosphere Partnership represents a wide range of interests and has developed a vision to make life in our Biosphere better while caring for the natural environment.

The Biosphere Team is now working to ensure the Biosphere designation is used to make a difference by stimulating interest and understanding to unlock initiative and creativity.

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is a new UNESCO Biosphere because of its combination of special wildlife areas, rich cultural heritage and communities that care about their environment. Biosphere designation will help people understand, define, sustain and enhance those special qualities. As an internationally recognised label for superb natural environments the Biosphere designation will offer new opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities to demonstrate how to live and work in a way that benefits people and nature.

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is the first 'new style' Biosphere in Scotland and one of only four in the UK. Biospheres have three main functions; conservation, learning /research, and sustainable development. Biospheres are managed by a framework which divides the area into three complementary management zones; Core Area, Buffer Zone and Transition Area. The Transition Area is where people live and where sustainable economic and community development is being actively promoted. Biosphere designation brings no new regulation of activities within the area.

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is a special place to live, work and to visit -

special for its people, its culture and its outstanding environment. It hosts some of the finest examples of wildlife areas in Europe as well as a community that cares about, and for, their special place.

Cairnmore, Silver Flowe and Merriick Kells were first designated as Biosphere Reserves in 1976. UNESCO rule changes in the 1990s meant that the concept has been broadened to become one aimed at peoples relationship with their environment. Existing Biospheres had to either re-apply under the new criteria or withdraw. Following local consultation the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Partnership submitted a formal application to UNESCO to re-register a much larger area.

Biosphere designation provides Galloway and Southern Ayrshire with an opportunity to take a lead in developing more sustainable ways of living that will benefit the environment, economy and community of the area and ultimately act as an example of good practice within UNESCO's worldwide network of Biosphere Reserves. If this exciting vision is to be achieved then everyone will need to play their part, whether as communities, organisations, businesses or individuals.