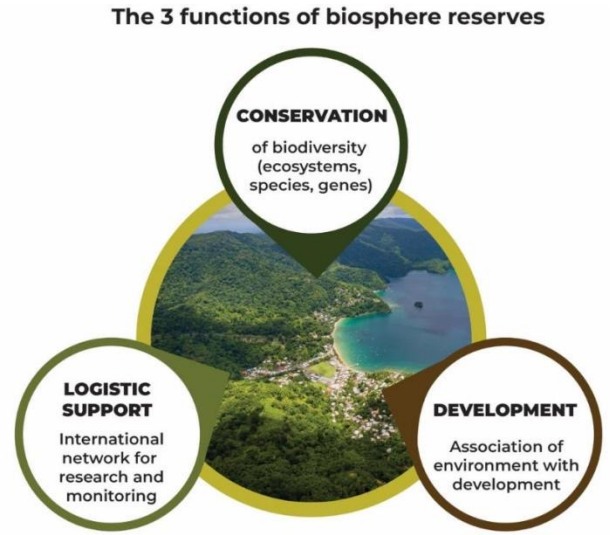
UNESCO MAB IN TOBAGO

What is it and what does it mean for us?

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialised agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences, and culture.

In October 2020 (UNESCO) designated North-east Tobago as a **Man and the Biosphere Reserve.** We got this highly regarded designation based on North-east Tobago's outstanding natural and cultural heritage and our potential to be a regional role model for achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals while improving our livelihoods.



Schematic overview of 3 functions of biosphere reserves.

The global Man and the Biosphere programme promotes solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. They are learning areas for sustainable development under diverse ecological, social, and economic contexts. There are currently 738 biosphere reserves in 134 countries, that belong to the **World Network of Biosphere Reserves.**

As all global Biosphere Reserves, our NE Tobago UNESCO Biosphere Reserve has the goal to harmonise:

- conservation of biological and cultural diversity

with

- green economic development

and

- social improvements,

and share our experiences through research and networking with our global partners.

Our Biosphere Reserve consists of three areas or zones:
In the **core zone** are our legally protected areas: the Main Ridge Forest Reserve, Little Tobago, and St Giles in which human activity is strictly limited and where monitoring of conservation priorities take place.

In the **buffer zone,** which is between the protected areas and the villages, "soft" activities such as, ecotourism, sustainable agriculture and fishing, education and training are strongly encouraged.

The **transition zone** contains all villages, roads and infrastructure from Belle Garden to Charlotteville to Moriah. Here, agricultural, tourism, cultural performances, and commercial activities synonymous with human settlement take place.

It is important to note that the designation as a Biosphere Reserve is not a legal process; being a Biosphere reserve did not change any laws applicable to the people living in Tobago.

However, it is a promise to Tobago's current and future generations as well as our partners and friends all over the world that we treat our cultural and natural heritage with respect, nurture it and develop in a way that beneficial to people and ecosystems.

The designation as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve is a tool that we can use to find out how we can make all our lives better, enjoy our culture, are surrounded by our beautiful nature, eat healthy food, get good education and fair jobs and teach and learn from other people.