

UNESCO MAB Youth Forum lands in Veneto

Posted on May 9, 2026 by Robin Gale

ROME — Italy hosts the third Unesco Man and Biosphere Youth Forum from May 18, 2026 to May 22, 2026, drawing more than 150 delegates aged 18 to 35 from 142 countries to two Veneto biosphere reserves of strikingly different character.

The Man and Biosphere programme, known as MAB, is Unesco’s global network of protected areas that combine conservation with sustainable use by local communities. Italy holds 20 of the 784 MAB reserves worldwide, the highest count of any single country.

“This forum places our territory on a global stage,” said Moreno Gasperini, president of the Po Delta Veneto Regional Park Authority. “Delegates from 142 countries will debate climate change and water management, the questions that define our ecosystem.”

Source: https://italynow.co.uk/unesco-mab-youth-forum-lands-in-veneto-next-week/



PR Delta del Po Veneto, Giardino Botanico Porto Caleri (*G. Dissette*)

Five days

The Rome launch of the project on May 7 also unveiled Generazione MAB, a national network to embed young people in the governance of Italian biosphere reserves. The Veneto already holds four MAB reserves, with the Berici Hills currently under Unesco candidature.

The programme opens in Adria, Veneto, and moves through the delta's rice paddies, eel fisheries, and reed beds before closing in the Euganean Hills with the adoption of a youth declaration and a decade-long roadmap. Sessions cover citizen science, regenerative economics, and protected-area governance. Field visits include the Orto Botanico (Padova Botanical Garden), founded in 1545 and the oldest in the world.

Outputs will feed into Unesco's Hangzhou Action Plan, the body's framework for biosphere reserves, and align with the 2022 Kunming-Montreal biodiversity targets agreed under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

The forum is supported by Italy's foreign and environment ministries, the Veneto and Emilia-Romagna regional governments, and the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Padova e Rovigo, a backer since the first forum in 2017.

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