

30 October 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to affirm our support for the continued designation of the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region, established in 2000.

Our region has worked together for the past decade to advance the objectives of the UNESCO Biosphere Reserve program. We are working together to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and reconciliation, through education, research and collaboration.

Field research teams from University of Washington (UW) have been collecting oceanographic data from the inlets and fjords in Clayoquot Sound along the west coast of Vancouver Island in British Columbia, Canada since 2001. These estuaries are where the outflow from mountainous watersheds meet oceanic waters, providing critical habitat for a wide variety of biological organisms that are the life blood of this region. Our data collection of water properties and phytoplankton supports a variety of initiatives in the region including biodiversity conservation projects, stewardship of ecosystems, their health and services and management of these shared natural resources. Our annual estuarine monitoring over a twenty-year period establishes a foundation for further climate change research. We have shared our scientific research with the community in Tofino and Ahousaht through public presentations, hands on educational programs in the local schools and participated in open houses as part of a Promoscience grant with Royal Rhodes University. Over the past couple of years, we have been the recipient of funding from the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) that has allowed us to keep this monitoring going using local boats and personnel when we lost access to our research vessel. Our data is shared with CBT, contributing to the Vital Signs report they compile for the region. In addition, we regularly involve undergraduates in this research and have brought students from University of Washington Tacoma in the United States to Tofino to participate in an oceanographic field class that integrated Traditional Ecological Knowledge from the region into the curriculum through readings and guest lectures from First Nations Elders.

Clayoquot Sound is a special place that is home to many different species and natural resources that are essential to residents and appreciated and enjoyed by many visitors. We are proud to support the continued Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere designation through future collaborations, and look forward to participating in the next ten years of activities in our region.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Greengrove, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Geoscience