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Ishwaran is a Sri Lankan trained in Zoology and Wildlife Management. Since 1986 he has been working in UNESCO and has experience with the World Heritage Convention, Biosphere Reserves, Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program and other UNESCO environmental initiatives. Currently he is Director of the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, Secretary of the MAB Program and UNESCO focal point for biodiversity. He is emphasizing the use of UNESCO designated sites such as World Heritage areas, biosphere reserves and geoparks as globally significant areas for learning sustainable development practices that are targeted to reducing biodiversity loss, adapting to climate change and attaining Millenium Development Goals.