Forum of UNESCO Global Geoparks, Germany

Progress Report, March 2018 – September 2018

Speaker:
Hartmut Escher
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Members:
- UNESCO Global Geopark Vulkaneifel
- UNESCO Global Geopark TERRA.vita
- UNESCO Global Geopark Bergstraße-Odenwald
- UNESCO Global Geopark Harz-Braunschweiger Land-Ostfalen
- UNESCO Global Geopark Schwäbische Alb
- UNESCO Global Geopark Muskau Arch
- Inselberg-Drei Gleichen (aspiring UNESCO Geoaprk and actually deferred for two years by UNESCO)
- Dr. Marie Luise Frey, (expert)
- Prof. Dr. Leonhard (Chair and expert)
- Ries (aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark to be invited to the next Forum meeting)

Active Applications in Germany:
- Inselberg-Drei Gleichen, 2017
- Ries Impact Crater

Interested territories:
- Ruhrgebiet
- Porphyrland

Forum Activities:
- The forum is the lobbyist for all German Global UNESCO Geoparks. The speaker is a member of the German NatCom for UNESCO Global Geoparks (managed by the ministry of foreign affairs). The speaker serves as contact person between Forum and Committee and has a seat in the NatCom.
- 2 Forum meetings in Fulda and Selb, discussing progress on SDG’s, environmental education and developments in Germany
- The UNESCO Commission issued brochures about each German UNESCO Geopark. The Forum members participated by adding texts and expertise.
- Forum members participated in 2 workshops. The workshop on renewable energies in Geoparks worked on a paper concerning the compatibility of renewables and the preservation of cultural and natural landscapes. The workshop on fossils was held in the Senckenberg Museum in Frankfurt and dealt with the question how to use fossils for research and education without interfering with international Geopark statues. The workshops were organized by the NatCom.
- Deliberations with German Nature Park Association (VDN) and Europarc Germany to restructure the national representation of nature protected areas in Germany including Geoparks. The speaker (also board member of Europarc) worked together with a board member of the VDN on a discussion paper.
- The three German UGG revalidation candidates for 2019 Muskau Arch, Vulkaneifel and TERRA.vita were visited by the NatCom in summer to discuss the actual status of each park and the ongoing revalidation process. All candidates delivered their revalidation report including DOC A and DOC B to the NatCom until the end of August.
- The process to secure a federal funding program for German UGG`ps is supported by regular contacts with important members of Parliament and especially addressing the new federal Minister for Research Anja Karliczek, who has her constituency in TERRA.vita.
- Henning Zellmer of UGG Harz-Braunschweiger Land-Ostfalen and Hartmut Escher of TERRA.vita actively lobbied for an annual budget for the Geoparks in the state of Lower Saxony, which might – if successful - serve as a model for the other UGG`ps in Germany.