Newsletter



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European Geoparks Network

"UNESCO Global Geoparks:

Peace and understanding between the nations by networking, cooperation and partnership – examples from Europe"



Arouca UNESCO Global Geopark (Portugal) supports the Ukrainian people

The authorities and the community of the Arouca UNESCO Global Geopark developed initiatives and shows support and solidarity with the Ukrainian people. Several public buildings have been lit up with the colors of the Ukrainian flag, and local institutions and commercial units launched campaigns to collect diverse goods to be sent to Ukraine. Furthermore, the local schools have taken an active role in educating their students about the conflict, through various initiatives. So far, the Arouca UGGp has welcomed dozens of Ukrainian refugees. The local authorities and the community have joined forces to provide adequate shelter and accommodate them in such difficult times.

Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark (Spain): Presentation of The First 100 IUGS Global Geosites

Asier Hilario, Scientific Director of the Basque Coast Geopark and president of the International Commission on Geoheritage IUGS-ICG, attended the Opening of the 77th IUGS Executive Committee Meeting held at the Société Géologique de France, Paris with leaders of the most relevant geological organizations in the world. The aim of this meeting was to organize the presentation of *The First 100 IUGS Global Geosites* which will take place in October in the Basque Coast Geopark. We have been committed to protecting our heritage for several years, and therefore it is an honour that our Geopark has been chosen as the venue for the presentation of the project.





Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark (Italy): Geology can be a funny game

Young explorers who want to discover the wonders of Beigua's geosites will find new products in the Geopark Visitor Centres. "Discover the Geopark" is a colourful notebook, with many drawings and games. With a simple but scientifically accurate language it describes the geosites so that children can fully experience the Beigua Geopark and find suggestions for planning future adventures with the whole family. They can also take home a nice souvenir to remember the visit: an ornamental magnet with a dugong (a plant eating mammal closely related to manatees, sometimes called sea cows)) who thirty million years ago swam through the Beigua coral reef.



Joint Photo Exhibition of UNESCO Global Geoparks Bergstrasse-Odenwald (Germany) & Lesvos Island (Greece) in the frame of RURITAGE: "Exploring new home with my eyes"

The photo exhibition, which will be opened in Lichtenberg Castle (Bergstrasse-Odenwald UGG) in May 2022, takes place in the frame of the EU RURITAGE-Project. Two photographers – Amir Ali (Afghanistan/Lesvos) and Samira Jamali (Iran/Bergstrasse-Odenwald) express their very individual perceptions of their new home countries after fleeing from their own countries. After a long, dangerous, often lonely route to freedom and safety and with different starting points, they share with us 15 photo artworks from each territory respectively. The exhibition highlights the complex circumstances arising from migration in our times. This has been made possible by the partnership and commitment of the two UNESCO Global Geoparks (Lesvos, Greece and Bergstrasse-Odenwald, Germany). Their mission is to enhance tolerance and openness in our societies through experiences with nature, the arts, and education.

Bohemian Paradise UNESCO Global Geopark (Czech Republic): Popularization of geological phenomena

Bohemian Paradise UNESCO Global Geopark has, since 2021, implemented a joint project ,'Popularization of Geological Phenomena of the Nisa Euroregion' together with the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark Landscape of Extinct Volcanoes (Poland) . The project introduces visitors and locals to the exceptional geological richness of both geoparks, which are located in one Euroregion. In Turnov near the Museum of the Bohemian Paradise, a geological exposition was opened on Earth Day on April 22, 2022, where the rocks and interactive information panel about Bohemian Paradise UNESCO Global Geopark are represented. Educational boards with text on geology were installed in Złotoryja (Poland). A joint workshop on the popularization of geological phenomena and the promotion of ecotourism took place in each geopark this spring. The project is cofinanced by the European Union from the INTERREG VA crossborder cooperation programme.



International scientific collaboration in the Chablais UNESCO Global Geopark (France)

The Chablais UNESCO Global Geopark lies on the shores of Lake Geneva, western Europe's largest freshwater lake which is shared by two nations: France and Switzerland. Today over 30% of the active Geopark population cross the border daily to work in neighbouring Switzerland. Many actions within the Chablais involve regular cooperation on topics such as tourism and transport. The Chablais UGGp is overseen by a Scientific Steering Committee composed of about twenty scientists drawn from both countries. Collaboration is strong and effective; the group is currently working together on a new Geopark Guide to the Massif du Chablais for publication in 2023.

Chelmos Vouraikos UNESCO Global Geopark (Greece): Softening the wounds of the past!

In the shadow of the Ukraine War, the people of our Geopark recall in their memory the horror of the 2nd World War. Several battles against the Nazis took place, culminating in the terrible Kalavryta massacre! Chelmos Vouraikos UNESCO Global Geopark is trying to soften the wounds of the past by intensifying its efforts for communication and mutual understanding. To that end several cooperation activities between Greek and German colleagues are taking place, such as the hosting in our Geopark of young German volunteers and the twinning of our Geopark with the German UNESCO Global Geopark Thüringen Inselsberg - Drei Gleichen. Stay informed at www.fdchelmos.gr





Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark (Ireland):

To reignite cooperation for sustainable tourism development following the COVID-19 pandemic, the Copper Coast Geopark has developed a new rural tourism network within the Geopark's territory. Bringing together small tourism businesses with a shared goal of sustainable development in the ethos of the Geopark, the network has, so far, facilitated numerous meetings. The aim of the network is to give tourism micro businesses a voice in wider regional tourism promotion programmes and to encourage the development of sustainable practices within the Geopark. The Copper Coast Geopark is also interested in making contact with similar networks in geoparks elsewhere to learn more about best practice.

The Djerdap UNESCO Global Geopark travelling exibition (Serbia)

The first exhibition outside the Djerdap Geopark was opened at the Institute for Nature Conservation of Vojvodina Province in Novi Sad -European Capital of Culture, on March 8th. Exhibition "Djerdap Geopark" - *Journey through the first and for now the only geopark in Serbia*, consists of 30 photos of various motifs, showing geosites, cultural monuments and ethno motifs. A tasting of wine, brandy, and boiled cheese, a specialty of the Djerdap region, was also organized as the first promotion of geofood in Serbia. As a souvenir, all visitors received a cookie and an ammonite (magnet), a trademark of the Geopark.





Estrela UNESCO Global Geopark (Portugal): Building bridges

The Estrela UGGp, in a partnership with the Gea Norvegica UGGp, and Katla UGGp, promoted the project "Building Bridges - Sharing of good practices among UNESCO Global Geoparks". Financed by the EEA Grants Bilateral Relations Fund, this project was based on the UN's 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, with the aim of promoting closer cooperation between European UGGps. Through seminars, workshops and exhibitions, it fostered the development and sharing of innovative tools and approaches in some key areas of UNESCO Global Geoparks, namely Geoconservation, Education, Climate Change and Community Development, which, in turn, helped to strengthen the sustainable development strategies of these territories.

Famenne-Ardenne UNESCO Global Geopark (Belgium) Multidisciplinary cooperation

On Tuesday 1 March, the Famenne-Ardenne UNESCO Global Geopark co-organized an information and cooperation meeting for the "Grotte de Lorette-Rochefort Project". It brought together the rectors of the Universities of Namur and Mons and members of the Royal Observatory of Belgium. It also involved politicians, including the presence of a regional minister, members of parliament and local representatives of the commune of Rochefort. The meeting resulted in multidisciplinary cooperation at scientific and political levels for a common project, the valorisation and revitalisation of a major geological site in our Geopark.





Forum of UNESCO Global Geoparks in Germany: Geoparks as part of the political contract

Combined efforts by the German Forum of UNESCO Global Geoparks achieved a great success. The New German Government, formed by a new three party coalition (Social Democrats, Greens and Liberals) mentioned explicitely the role of UGGps in promoting sustainable tourism in their political contract. We had direct access to the talks, because the president of TERRA.vita Mrs Anna Kebschull was chosen by the Green party to join the coalition talks. It was interesting to see, that she was assigned to the working group "Economy". The role of sustainable tourism was also listed under this heading and, as it turned out, UNESCO Global Geoparks were highlighted to play a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism strategies. Asked how it was possible to reach this remarkable goal, she focussed on the broad support, which was organized by the Forum, informing other working group participants and members of parliament from the Geopark regions. This recognition will raise the profile of UGGps in German politics. But it is expected that German tourism will profit from the Geoparks UNESCO status.

UNESCO Global Geopark Harz . Braunschweig Land . Ostfalen (Germany) and the European Green Belt

The Geopark is located in the three federal states Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia, and the Green Belt runs through it. Geopoints such as the 235-meter-long Eckertalsperre, which was completed by prisoners of war in 1942, are reminders of the inner-German border. Further north, the Hötensleben border monument, another historically significant geopoint, commemorates the division of Germany. The still preserved protective strip of walls and fences, signal wires and watchtowers are protected monuments. The site is considered the best preserved testimony to the GDR border fortifications on the "State border west". The Geopark is a mediator of historical events and a good example of successful cooperation across national borders!



Workshop: Water as an important geoheritage

Online Workshop on water as an important geoheritage for UNESCO Global Geoparks in Karawanken/Karavanke UNESCO Global Geopark (Austria/Slowenia)

On the 17th of February, 30 participants of the EGN and GGN network took part in the international online workshop on valorization and protection of water resources in UNESCO Global Geoparks. It was organized by the Karawanken-Karavanke UGGp and the Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, partners in the INTERREG SI-AT project "KaraWAT". After keynote speeches from GGN President Professor Nickolas Zouros and EGN Coordinator Mrs. Kristin Rangnes, the organizers presented planned activities and first results of the project "KaraWAT". In a world café format

participants discussed topics of climate change, education, regional economy and valorization, policy and decision-making, and future cooperation. All participants stressed the importance of international networking, exchange of experience and awareness raising. If you would like to share your experience with water resources within the GGN and EGN network, feel free to add your thoughts on the discussion tables in our virtual world café, which is still open:

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVOZ4LBMM=/?invite link id=727809101641

Katla UNESCO Global Geopark (Iceland): Geoheritage in rural communities

At the end of March, we welcomed students and teachers from secondary schools in Höfn, Iceland, Brönnoysund, Norway and Vaala, Finland, along with educators from Rokua Geopark and Trollfjell Geopark. The visit is part of the Geoheritage in rural communities project, funded by Nordplus. The theme of the trip was SDG 8, decent work and economic growth, with emphasis on tourism. Numerous companies were visited where sustainable tourism was introduced, groups of students investigated the seaside community of Vík and interviewed company managers on environmental goals and methods. The students then followed this up with group work that is presented on the project's website: https://geoheritage.fas.is/





The Lanzarote and Chinijo Islands UNESCO Global Geopark (Spain) invites visitors to discover its treasures under the sea

More than 50% of the Geopark's 2500 km² surface area lies, due to its geological heritage, under the waters of the Atlantic Ocean with 29 geosites detected by the Geological Service of Spain in its inventory of Geopark geosites. The Geopark, due to its awareness of the significance of this geological heritage, will carry out a follow up study to determine the current state of conservation and the necessary interventions required. An exhibition will be held to bring the general public closer to the wonders hidden in this underwater geology.

Maestrazgo UNESCO Global Geopark (Spain): Cooperation and exchange across the Geoparks. All together!

The Maestrazgo Cultural Park UGGp (Spain) is aware that, from its beginning, networking plays an essential role in the success of the Geopark concept. Following successive attempts, frustrated by the pandemic, to celebrate, it was finally possible to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the EGN in a hybrid virtual and in person event within the framework of the 6th Spanish Geopark's Forum. Surrounded by friends of the Spanish Geoparks and representatives of UNESCO and the founding members Haute Provence, Lesvos Island Vulkaneifel and Maestrazgo Geoparks, paid homage in memory of Mr. Mateo Andrés, precursor of the Maestrazgo Cultural Park project and part of the founding team of the EGN in 2000.



Magma UNESCO Global Geopark (Norway): Geopark Guide Course

From 19-20 March, Magma Geopark, Eigersund Næring og Havn KF, Smaabyen Flekkefjord organized the third edition of the Geopark Guide Course.

The course took place in the wonderful surroundings of the Sogndastrand wooden village in Sokndal municipality and 16 people attended from different target groups. The course includes several themes such as geology, culture, local history, nature, sustainable development, tourism, mining, guide technique, storytelling and first aid. Participants had a tour in the Blåfjell mines learning about mining history and landscape interpretation. It was a success, and we are happy to disseminate the values of Magma Geopark through local inhabitants, increasing the awareness about geological, cultural, natural heritage.

New supporting organization for the German-Polish transnational UNESCO Global Geopark Muskauer Faltenbogen (Germany)/ Łuk Mużakowa (Poland)

In November 2021, the new German-Polish supporting organization for the Muskau Arch UNESCO Global Geopark, the European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) Geopark Muskau Arch, was founded. The EGTC comprises 14 municipal members from Germany and Poland. The main body is the General Assembly, which has elected the Vice-Marshal of the Lubuskie Voivodship, Mr. Tadeusz Jędrzejczak, as its chairperson. With this association, the UGGp Muskau Arch now has a consolidated institutionally and financially independent basis under the direct decision-making power of the Geopark municipal administrations — a firmly rooted bottom-up organization. This concludes a success story of around 18 years of the German and Polish Associations, which, up to now, have been the sponsors.





Ore of the Alps UNESCO Global Geopark (Austria): Iranian Gardens as the beginning of cooperation & partnership

The Ore of the Alps UGGp works together with Mr. Ramin Sabouri from Iran. Mr. Sabouri has studied sustainable landscape development in Iran and is now PhD at the University of Salzburg / Department Geology and Physical Geography. He is experienced in planning "Iranian Gardens", which are famous for their unique landscape architecture all over the world. He supports us in the Geopark, brings interesting new ideas and holds lectures about "Iranian Gardens". He will support us in the Geopark as a volunteer throughout the year 2022, and will take along some experiences gained from our Geopark to Iran ... this is the basis for a possible long-term partnership.

Papuk UNESCO Global Geopark (Croatia): Outdoor activities for Ukrainian children

Ukrainian refugees in Croatia are being assisted in various ways. Thus, our Geopark provides all the camping equipment for thirty-five children from Ukraine in order to host them on a three day visit to Papuk UGGp. We have prepared a rich programme, all in order to divert the thoughts of little Ukrainians from the horrors of war in their homeland. The campsite is equipped with an adventure/fun park where children really enjoyed and had so much fun. Every night after a day outdoors, the ritual of lighting the campfire took place - the best part of camping and an ideal way to finish a day wrapped in sleeping bags, watching sparks and glowing ash floating up into the starry sky.



Styrian Eisenwurzen UNESCO Global Geopark (Austria): Erasmus + for cooperation accross the borders

The Erasmus+ project GeoExplorer aims to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools through an innovative approach to learning, science and language education and the method of language-integrated learning. Besides school partners, Naturepark and UNESCO Global Geopark Styrian Eisenwurzen (Austria), UNESCO Global Geopark Odsherred (Denmark), Magma UNESCO Global Geopark (Norway), and Idrija UNESCO Global Geopark (Slovenia), are part of this cooperation. An important objective of this project is the development of new teaching methods and tools for secondary school teachers and language teachers. This will involve the use of practical workshops, free "toolboxes" and training for teachers, students as well as nature educators.

Terras de Cavaleiros UNESCO Global Geopark (Portugal): Joint presentation at Lisbon Tourism Fair

The Terras de Cavaleiros UNESCO Global Geopark participated in the biggest and best tourism promotion event in Portugal, the Lisbon Tourism Fair, which took place from March 16th to 20th. This was a joint participation with the five Portuguese UNESCO Global Geoparks (Naturtejo, Arouca, Azores, Terras de Cavaleiros and Estrela) and the two aspiring geoparks (Algarvensis and Oeste) that presented the best that these territories have to offer. Nature and cultural tourism, gastronomy and traditions were the main touristic products presented. The objective of the presence of the Terras de Cavaleiros UNESCO Global Geopark in BTL was to promote the territory within the route of national and international destinations.



Trollfjell UNESCO Global Geopark (Norway): Building bridges between countries and continents.

In April 2022, the geoparks Rokua (Finland), Katla (Iceland) and Trollfjell (Norway), one national park and three upper secondary schools were finally able to meet face to face in Iceland, after two years of digital collaboration. By solving tasks and comparing sustainable practices of local tourism in the three countries together, the students discovered ways to strengthen their own local community in accordance with SDG 8. Most importantly they developed strong bonds across nationalities while discovering similarities between their lifestyles. One week of exchange in Iceland has been a reminder of what we gain from personal meetings and that we are building bridges between three Nordic countries.





Troodos UNESCO Global Geopark (Cyprus): Peace and understanding between the nations

Peace and understanding between nations have always been a fundamental pillar of humanity and UNESCO Global Geoparks have a role to play in this effort, especially today now that global conflicts and populism are on the rise. At the heart of the UNESCO Global Geoparks' mission is the promotion of respect for the environment and the geological and cultural heritage of different places and communities. As a result, UNESCO Global Geoparks can promote respect, peace and understanding between nations through activities designed to get people closer, not only to the environment but also to each other. Troodos UNESCO Global Geopark aims to promote peace and understanding between nations through various activities. For example, Troodos Geopark Visitors' Centre closely cooperates with NGOs, schools and universities from around the world, and people of various nationalities have the opportunity to cooperate, perform various activities together, share their experiences and create a mutual appreciation of the environment.

Vulkaneifel UNESCO Global Geopark (Germany): Exchange on sustainable forest management between Carisolo, Italy and Daun, Germany

It all started with a helium-filled balloon and attached postcard in 1983: The balloon which started in Daun, now in Vulkaneifel UGGp, was blown over the Alps and finally found near Carisolo now in Adamello-Brenta UGGp. This was the beginning of an exchange between the respective fire brigades and then developed into an official town twinning. Lately, teenagers carried out exchange visits and will start a common media project with aerial drones and interviewing residents about their home region. Sustainable forest management provides a new focal point for exchanging expertise. A delegation of members of the forest department will travel to Carisolo in spring 2022 and invite the Italian colleagues to Daun.







EGN - European Geoparks Network