UNESCO Global Geoparks

UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development. Their bottom-up approach of combining conservation with sustainable development while involving local communities is becoming increasingly popular. At present, there are 127 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 35 countries.

Global Geoparks Network

The Global Geoparks Network (GGN) is a non-profit and a non-governmental organisation. It was initially founded in 2004 as an international partnership developed under the umbrella of UNESCO, and was officially registered as an association in 2014 subjecting to French law. The Global Geoparks Network is the official partner of UNESCO for the operation of the UNESCO Global Geoparks.
Networking and collaboration among Global Geoparks is an important component of the Global Geoparks Network.
The Global Geoparks Network also promotes networking on a regional basis.
The three regional Geoparks networks are in Asia - Pacific, Europe and Latin America and Caribbean.

The objectives of the Global Geoparks Network are:

- to promote the equitable geographical establishment, development and professional management of Global Geoparks,
- to advance knowledge and understanding of the nature, function and role of Global Geoparks;
- to assist local communities to value their natural and cultural heritage;
- to preserve Earth heritage for present and future generations;
- to educate and teach the broad public about issues in geo-sciences and their relation with environmental matters and natural hazards.
- to ensure sustainable socio-economic and cultural development based on the natural (or earth system
- to foster multi-cultural links between heritage and conservation and the maintenance of geological and cultural diversity, using participatory schemes of partnership and management;
- to stimulate research when appropriate;
- to promote joint initiatives between Global Geoparks (e.g. communication, publications, exchange of information, twinning).

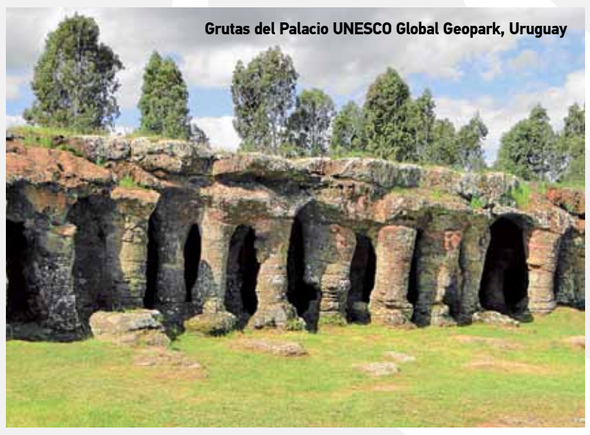
The Global Geoparks Network establishes ethical standards which must be adopted and respected by Global Geoparks and Global Geopark professionals.
The Global Geoparks Network organises co-operation and mutual assistance between Global Geoparks and between Global Geopark professionals.
The Global Geoparks Network initiates and co-ordinates thematic Working Groups which will foster international co-operation is a variety of issues related with Geopark operation and activities.
The Global Geoparks Network represents, advances, and disseminates knowledge in Geodiversity management and other disciplines related to studies in Geo-conservation, Geo-tourism, Geo-education and/or the management and activities of Global Geoparks.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF THE LESVOS PETRIFIED FOREST

Poster produced by the Lesvos Island UNESCO Global Geopark / Christos Paraskevaidis based on brochure designed by Geological Survey of Northern Ireland. © Lesvos Island UNESCO Global Geopark. Globes prepared by the Applied Geomorphology Laboratory, University of the Aegean, Greece.


Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark, Ireland & UK


Shilin Stone Forest UNESCO Global Geopark, China


Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Global Geopark, Uruguay


Lesvos Island UNESCO Global Geopark, Greece

UNESCO Global Geoparks

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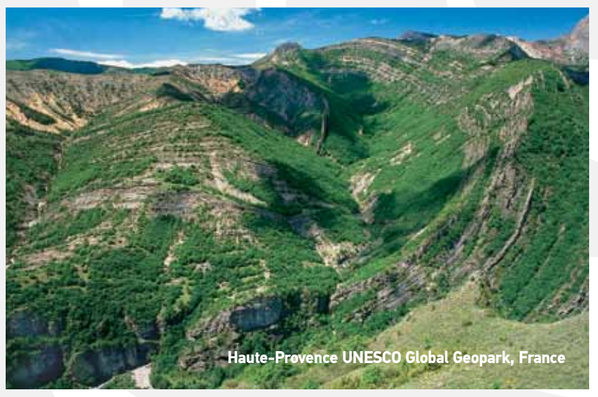

Haute-Provence UNESCO Global Geopark, France


Jeju UNESCO Global Geopark, Republic of Korea


M'Goun UNESCO Global Geopark, Morocco


Dong Van Karst Plateau UNESCO Global Geopark, Viet Nam

Celebrating Earth Heritage
Sustaining Local Communities

2017/2018

Global Geoparks Network

GLOBAL GEOPARKS NETWORK

2017 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM FOR DEVELOPMENT

UNESCO Global Geoparks


TERRA.vita UNESCO Global Geopark, Germany

Geological Heritage Conservation

UNESCO Global Geoparks are areas that use the concept of sustainability, value the heritage of Mother Earth and recognize the need to protect it.
The defining geological sites in UNESCO Global Geoparks are protected by indigenous, local, regional and/or national law and management authorities, which allow for the necessary monitoring and maintenance of these sites.
A UNESCO Global Geopark develops, experiments and enhances methods for preserving the geological heritage.
The Global Geoparks Network is developing partnerships among UNESCO Global Geoparks for sharing best practice and know-how on the protection, conservation and rational management of the geological heritage sites.

Climate Change

UNESCO Global Geoparks hold records of past climate change and are educators on current climate change as well as adopting a best practice approach to utilising renewable energy and employing the best standards of "green tourism."
UNESCO Global Geoparks serve as outdoor museums on the effects of past and current climate change thus giving the opportunity to show visitors how climate change can affect our environment, and raise awareness on the potential impact of climate change on the region, and provide the local communities with the knowledge to mitigate and adapt to the potential effects of climate change.


San'in Kaigan UNESCO Global Geopark, Japan

Local and indigenous Knowledge

UNESCO Global Geoparks actively involve local and indigenous peoples, preserving and celebrating their culture. By involving local and indigenous communities, UNESCO Global Geoparks recognize the importance of these communities, their culture and the link between these communities and their land. It is one of the criteria of UNESCO Global Geoparks that local and indigenous knowledge, practice and management systems, alongside science, are included in the planning and management of the area.

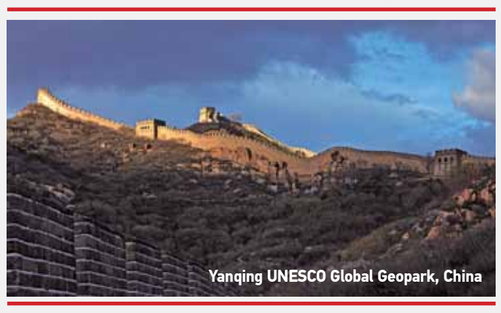

Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark, Spain

Sustainable Tourism

UNESCO Global Geoparks create infrastructure and activities to support visitor's access and interpretation of the Geological heritage as well as the development of sustainable tourism activities in the Geopark territory.
UNESCO Global Geoparks promote themselves as sustainable tourism destinations offering a diversity of guided field walks and nature tourism activities, authentic experience and local gastronomy.
The Global Geoparks Network became a gold partner of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 2017 to support the celebration of the International Year of sustainable Tourism for development.

Biodiversity

UNESCO Global Geoparks are areas where the analysis of specific interactions between the lithosphere and biosphere provides an integrated concept of the role of the geological environment in the evolution of the biosphere. Geopark activities and projects are important in order to raise awareness on the relationship between the geological environment and modern ecosystems and their rational management under a holistic concept.


Yanqing UNESCO Global Geopark, China

Culture

In many countries emblematic geosites are considered as sacred places. Since ancient times, sacred sites have had a mysterious allure for billions of people around the world. Legends and contemporary reports tell of extraordinary experiences people have had while visiting these places. Different sacred sites have the power to heal the body, enlighten the mind and inspire the heart. People built in such places temples and monasteries. UNESCO Global Geoparks host some important sacred places emphasizing the connection between specific landscapes and land-forms with mythology, archaeology and history. UNESCO Global Geoparks are fundamentally about people and about exploring and celebrating the links between our communities and the Earth. The Earth has shaped who we are: it has shaped our farming practices, the building materials and methods we have used for our homes, even our mythology, folklore and folk traditions.


Zigong UNESCO Global Geopark, China

Education

UNESCO Global Geoparks develop and operate educational activities for all ages to spread awareness of our geological heritage and its links to other aspects of our natural, cultural and intangible heritages.
UNESCO Global Geoparks offer educational programmes for schools or offer special activities for children through "Summer camps", "Kids Clubs" or special "Fossil Fun Activities".
They also offer education, both formal and informal, for adults and retired people.


English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, UK & Northern Ireland

Capacity Building

UNESCO Global Geoparks offer training courses and capacity building activities for local stakeholders and young unemployed people who can then, in turn, support Geopark activities and operation.
The Global Geoparks Network in collaboration with UNESCO organizes International Training Courses on Geoparks supporting the development of Geoparks in many countries especially in Regions with less UNESCO Global Geoparks.


Gunung Sewu UNESCO Global Geopark, Indonesia

Women

UNESCO Global Geoparks have a strong emphasis on empowering women whether through focused education programmes or through the development of women's cooperatives. In some UNESCO Global Geoparks women's cooperatives also provide an opportunity for women to obtain additional income in their own area and on their own terms.

Global Geoparks Network


Katla UNESCO Global Geopark, Iceland

Geological Hazards

UNESCO Global Geoparks promote awareness of geological hazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes and tsunamis. Through educational activities for the local people and visitors many UNESCO Global Geoparks give information on the source of geological hazards and ways to reduce their impact including disaster response strategies. These efforts build important capacity and contribute to building more resilient communities that have the knowledge and skills to effectively respond to potential geological hazards.
The Global Geoparks Network working group on Geohazards coordinates common activities and helps prepare disaster mitigation strategies among Geoparks.

Employment

UNESCO Global Geoparks are a platform for the development, nurturing and promotion of local cottage industry and craft products.
UNESCO Global Geoparks are contributing for the sustainable development of areas hosting significant geological heritage sites through the creation of new enterprises and the employment of young people in their territories.

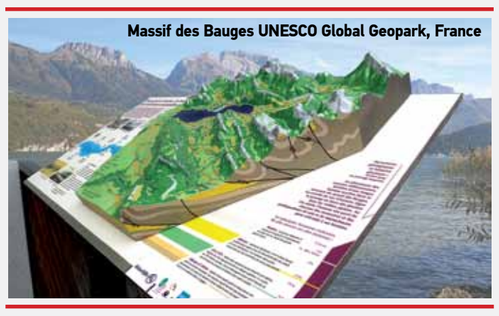
Networking

Networking is one of the core principles of Geoparks. Networking strongly contributes to the success of the Geoparks movement and plays a valuable role in facilitating the sharing of experience, quality management, formation of joint initiatives and projects and capacity-building.
The Global Geopark Network and its Regional Geopark Networks offer a global platform of cooperation and exchange of best practice between UNESCO Global Geoparks.


Lanzarote and Chinijo Islands UNESCO Global Geopark, Spain

Sustainable Development

UNESCO Global Geoparks are engaging with local people and respecting their traditional way of life in a way that empowers them and respects their human rights and dignity.
A UNESCO Global Geopark should have an active role in the economic development of its territory through enhancement of a general image linked to the geological heritage and the development of sustainable tourism. A Geopark has direct impact on the territory by influencing its inhabitants' living conditions and environment. The objective is to enable the inhabitants to re-appropriate the values of the territory's heritage and actively participate in the territory's cultural revitalization as a whole.


Massif des Bauges UNESCO Global Geopark, France

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to ensure the continuing high quality of UNESCO Global Geoparks, including the quality of the management of each UNESCO Global Geopark, the status of each UNESCO Global Geopark is subject to a thorough revalidation every 4 years.
The Global Geoparks Network is supporting the Geopark evaluation and revalidation process by providing the experts for the evaluation missions and maintaing the roster of evaluators.

Research

UNESCO Global Geoparks are special areas where the geological heritage, or geodiversity, is of international importance. Thus Geoparks are interesting to implement results of scientific research in the field of geo-conservation, tourism and sustainable local development.
UNESCO Global Geoparks are encouraged to work with academic and research institutions to engage in active scientific research in the Earth Sciences, and other disciplines as appropriate, to advance our knowledge about the Earth and its processes.
A UNESCO Global Geopark is an active laboratory where people can become engaged in science from the highest academic research level to the level of the curious visitor.

* Photos: Global Geoparks Network archive unless otherwise indicated

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

UNESCO
Global
Geoparks

UNESCO Global Geoparks

Açores, UNESCO Global Geopark, Portugal

What is a UNESCO Global Geopark?

UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development. A UNESCO Global Geopark uses its geological heritage, in connection with all other aspects of the area's natural and cultural heritage, to enhance awareness and understanding of key issues facing society, such as using our earth's resources sustainably, mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing natural disasters-related risks. By raising awareness of the importance of the area's geological heritage in history and society today, UNESCO Global Geoparks give local people a sense of pride in their region and strengthen their identification with the area. The creation of innovative local enterprises, new jobs and high quality training courses is stimulated as new sources of revenue are generated through geotourism, while the geological resources of the area are protected.

List of UNESCO Global Geoparks

Austria*
1 Styrian Eisenwurzen UNESCO Global Geopark
2 Carnic Alps UNESCO Global Geopark
3 Ore of the Alps UNESCO Global Geopark

Brazil
4 Araripe UNESCO Global Geopark

Canada
5 Stonehammer UNESCO Global Geopark
6 Tumbler Ridge UNESCO Global Geopark

China
7 Danxiashan UNESCO Global Geopark
8 Zhangjiajie UNESCO Global Geopark
9 Yuntaishan UNESCO Global Geopark
10 Wudalianchi UNESCO Global Geopark
11 Songshan UNESCO Global Geopark
12 Shilin UNESCO Global Geopark
13 Huangshan UNESCO Global Geopark
14 Lushan UNESCO Global Geopark
15 Hexigten UNESCO Global Geopark
16 Taining UNESCO Global Geopark
17 Xingwen UNESCO Global Geopark
18 Yandangshan UNESCO Global Geopark
19 Jingpohu UNESCO Global Geopark
20 Leiqiong UNESCO Global Geopark
21 Taishan UNESCO Global Geopark
22 Wangwushan-Daimeishan UNESCO Global Geopark
23 Fangshan UNESCO Global Geopark
24 Funiushan UNESCO Global Geopark
25 Zigong UNESCO Global Geopark
26 Longhushan UNESCO Global Geopark
27 Alxa Desert UNESCO Global Geopark
28 Qinling Zhongnanshan UNESCO Global Geopark
29 Ningde UNESCO Global Geopark
30 Leye Fengshan UNESCO Global Geopark
31 Tianzhushan UNESCO Global Geopark
32 Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark
33 Sanqingshan UNESCO Global Geopark
34 Shennongjia UNESCO Global Geopark
35 Yanqing UNESCO Global Geopark
36 Mount Kunlun UNESCO Global Geopark
37 Dali-Cangshan UNESCO Global Geopark
38 Dunhuang UNESCO Global Geopark
39 Zhijindong Cave UNESCO Global Geopark
40 Arxan UNESCO Global Geopark
41 Keketuohai UNESCO Global Geopark

Croatia
42 Papuk UNESCO Global Geopark

Cyprus
43 Troodos UNESCO Global Geopark

Czechia
44 Bohemian Paradise UNESCO Global Geopark

Denmark
45 Odsherred UNESCO Global Geopark

Finland
46 Rokua UNESCO Global Geopark

France
47 Haute-Provence UNESCO Global Geopark
48 Luberon UNESCO Global Geopark
49 Massif des Bauges UNESCO Global Geopark
50 Chablais UNESCO Global Geopark
51 Monts d'Ardèche UNESCO Global Geopark
52 Causses du Quercy UNESCO Global Geopark

Germany*
53 Vulkaneifel UNESCO Global Geopark
54 TERRA.vita UNESCO Global Geopark
55 Bergstraße-Odenwald UNESCO Global Geopark
56 Swabian Alb UNESCO Global Geopark
57 Harz, Braunschweiger Land UNESCO Global Geopark

Greece
58 Lesvos Island UNESCO Global Geopark
59 Psiloritis UNESCO Global Geopark
60 Chelmos Vouraikos UNESCO Global Geopark
61 Vikos - Aoos UNESCO Global Geopark
62 Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark

Hungary*
63 Bakony-Balaton UNESCO Global Geopark

Iceland
64 Katla UNESCO Global Geopark
65 Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark

Indonesia
66 Batur UNESCO Global Geopark
67 Gunung Sewu UNESCO Global Geopark

Iran (Islamic Republic of)
68 Qeshm Island UNESCO Global Geopark

Ireland*
69 Copper Coast UNESCO Global Geopark
70 Burren & Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark

Italy
71 Madonie UNESCO Global Geopark
72 Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark
73 Parco Geominerario della Sardegna UNESCO Global Geopark
74 Rocca di Cerere UNESCO Global Geopark
75 Adamello-Brenta UNESCO Global Geopark
76 Cilento, Vallo di Diano e Alburni UNESCO Global Geopark
77 Tuscan Mining Park UNESCO Global Geopark
78 Alpi Apuani UNESCO Global Geopark
79 Sesia Val Grande UNESCO Global Geopark
80 Pollino UNESCO Global Geopark

Japan
81 Itoigawa UNESCO Global Geopark
82 Unzen Volcanic Area UNESCO Global Geopark
83 Toya - Usu UNESCO Global Geopark
84 San'in Kaigan UNESCO Global Geopark
85 Muroto UNESCO Global Geopark
86 Oki Islands UNESCO Global Geopark
87 Aso UNESCO Global Geopark
88 Mt. Apoi UNESCO Global Geopark

Malaysia
89 Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark

Mexico
90 Comarca Minera, Hidalgo UNESCO Global Geopark
91 Mixteca Alta, Oaxaca UNESCO Global Geopark

Morocco
92 M'Goun UNESCO Global Geopark

Netherlands
93 De Hondsrug UNESCO Global Geopark

Norway
94 Gea Norvegica UNESCO Global Geopark
95 Magma UNESCO Global Geopark

Poland*

Portugal
96 Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional UNESCO Global Geopark
97 Arouca UNESCO Global Geopark
98 Açores UNESCO Global Geopark
99 Terras de Cavaleiros UNESCO Global Geopark

Republic of Korea
100 Jeju UNESCO Global Geopark
101 Cheongsong UNESCO Global Geopark

Romania
102 Haţeg UNESCO Global Geopark

Slovakia*

Slovenia*
103 Idrija UNESCO Global Geopark

Spain
104 Cabo de Gata-Níjar UNESCO Global Geopark
105 Sierras Subbéticas UNESCO Global Geopark
106 Sobrarbe-Pirineos UNESCO Global Geopark
107 Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark
108 Sierra Norte de Sevilla UNESCO Global Geopark
109 Villuercas Ibores Jara UNESCO Global Geopark
110 Central Catalonia UNESCO Global Geopark
111 Molina & Alto Tajo UNESCO Global Geopark
112 El Hierro UNESCO Global Geopark
113 Lanzarote and Chinijo Islands UNESCO Global Geopark
114 Las Loras UNESCO Global Geopark

Turkey
115 Kula Volcanic UNESCO Global Geopark

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*
116 North Pennines AONB UNESCO Global Geopark
117 North-West Highlands UNESCO Global Geopark
118 Fforest Fawr UNESCO Global Geopark
119 English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark
120 GeoMôn UNESCO Global Geopark
121 Shetland UNESCO Global Geopark

Uruguay
122 Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Global Geopark

Viet Nam
123 Dong Van Karst Plateau UNESCO Global Geopark

*** List of transnational UNESCO Global Geoparks**

Austria & Slovenia
124 Karawanken / Karavanke UNESCO Global Geopark

Germany & Poland
125 Muskauer Faltenbogen / Łuk Mużakowa UNESCO Global Geopark

Hungary & Slovakia
126 Novohrad-Nógrád UNESCO Global Geopark

Ireland & United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
127 Marble Arch Caves UNESCO Global Geopark

Global Geoparks Network

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