

GGN/EGN - Geopark Annual Report 2019

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: BEIGUA UNESCO Global Geopark (Italy, European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2005 / 2016



Poster for the promotion of the #InstaBeigua event

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 14 staffs (5 permanent + 11 by contract) including 2 geoscientists (by contract); to be added 1 scientific coordinator + 5 researchers (geoscientists from University of Genoa through an official partnership/agreement)

Number of visitors: about 300.000 (estimation of the visitors to the major geosites, trails, museums, visitor centers and information points).

Number of Geopark events: 75 events organized by Beigua UGG management body and 10 events organized by partners

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: 111 classes (2013 students)

Number of Geopark press release: 14 press release, Facebook: 10.360* (+20%), Twitter: 4.010* (+4%), Instagram: 3.969* (+47%)

* like at 31/12/19

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2019

- **New Administrative headquarters** of the Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark at Palazzo Beato Jacopo, Varazze (summer 2019)

- **New Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark Information Center** at Palazzo Beato Jacopo in Varazze (summer 2019) with a **new Geopark Corner**. Thanks to the collaboration between the Geopark, the Municipality of Varazze and the Varazze Hoteliers Association, a Unified Tourist Center has been created.
- **New huts: “Case Vaccà”** for tourist activities near the Centro Ornitologico di Case Vacca, Arenzano (GE); **“Case Ressa e Giumenta”** in the Deiva Forest, Sassello (SV);
- **Beigua Baby Corner**: some of the Visitor Centers and Information Points of the Park have been equipped with corners dedicated to mothers and babies. During the opening hours, they provide a comfortable changing table, a corner for breastfeeding and a facility for heating baby food

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Attendance at the 43rd EGN CC Meeting in Swabian Alb UNESCO Global Geopark on March 2019
- Attendance at the 44th EGN CC Meeting in Sierra Norte de Sivilla UNESCO Global Geopark on September 2019
- Attendance at the 15th European Geoparks Conference in Sierra Norte de Sivilla UNESCO Global Geopark on September 2019
- Contribute with a text about Beigua UGG in EGN Newsletter: 14/2019 and 15/2019

Management and Financial Status

The Beigua Geopark is managed by the Beigua regional nature Park Authority, that is a public equivalent body supervised by the Regional Administration of Liguria, founded in 1996 (Regional Law n. 12/1995). The Beigua Park Authority has the responsibility for all necessary actions towards the benefit of the area in combination with the protection of the nature park and the four Sites of the European NATURA 2000 Network (Birds Directive and Habitats Directive). The Beigua Geopark financial status especially depends on Regional Administration and on EU projects. During 2019 the financial status was about 660.000,00 €.

Geoconservation and Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Regular programmes of walks and guided tours have been realized in all the seasons (winter, spring, summer, autumn); For tourists, every weekend, the Geopark Guides offer a rich and varied **calendar of excursions, photographic treks and cultural-educational activities**. The activities are promoted through the website, press releases, social channels and posters and are aimed at different segments of the public: expert hikers, families with children, photography lovers.

- **#Instameet and Wikigita:** to promote the territory of the Geopark, excursions have been organized that actively involve communication on social media: Instameet (winter 2019) and Wikigita (summer 2019). In the first case the activity involved young hikers who love shooting on Instagram, in the second one, a fruitful collaboration with Wikipedia to enrich the information on the Geopark on the platform has been developed. Both excursions had a significant involvement of hikers as well as wide resonance on social media.
- **Photo competitions:** the second edition of the #ScattailBeigua competition which was attended by hundreds of shots of the Geopark. The second edition, dedicated to winter, started in late 2019 and will end in February 2020.
- **Photographic exhibitions:** Geological and naturalistic itinerant photographic exhibitions, periodically exhibited at Visitor Centers, Refuges and other public places in the District
- The **ViviMED project**, about sustainable tourism involving local operators, in the framework of the Interreg Maritime IT-FR funds programme, has been carried out throughout the year.
- Joining the **European Geoparks Week 2019** with several activities
- Joining "**Week of the Planet Earth**" with several activities

New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction

- Regular educational programs for primary and secondary schools have been realized in Beigua Geopark according to specific agreement with local School Authorities (111 classes, 2013 students involved during 2019).
- **Junior Geoparker:** each season a new calendar of meetings is proposed for children aged 5 to 12, to spend an afternoon with the Park Guides between educational workshops and explorations in nature. At each meeting, the kids get a passport stamp and can become Junior Geoparker, little ambassadors of the Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark in the world!
- **International Day for Disaster Reduction:** on the International Day for the Reduction of Natural Risks, the 13th October 2019, the Geopark organizes initiatives with schools or with the population to promote "best practices" and self-protection rules in the event of natural risks, with particular attention flood and forest fire risks, the most likely in our region.
- In collaboration with the volunteers of the local Civil Protection groups, the operators of the Geopark carry out numerous environmental education activities in schools of all levels and degrees throughout the district. Hydrogeological instability is also one of the themes proposed in the Junior Geoparker educational workshops.
- The theme of climate change is instead developed in the project "**Regional strategy for**

sustainable development - 2030 AGENDA" where the Beigua Geopark is the regional leader for the management and communication of the results obtained. The project that the Beigua Park Experience Center, in collaboration with the Environmental Education Center coastal Park Piani di Invrea (Varazze), has created to contribute to the construction of the Regional Strategy for sustainable development of 2030 Agenda, provides for a participatory path that involves all stakeholders and will end in mid 2020.

- In 2019, new information and scientific communication projects were developed through social media:
 - ❖ **"Pills of Geology"** scientific-geological-related posts related to the planned excursions
 - ❖ **"Pills of Nature"** scientific-informative posts on aspects of the biodiversity of the Geopark, connected to the scheduled activities (excursions or projects)
 - ❖ **"Monitoring of daytime birdlife"** (especially cranes) with data, photos and videos made by users of social networks
- In December 2019, an agreement was signed with the Regione Liguria for collaboration in the Interreg **CambioVia** project for the enhancement of local biodiversity with actions that promote accessibility, innovation, enhancement of natural and cultural resources in order to ensure territorial cohesion and promote employment and Sustainable Development
- In collaboration with the University of Genoa (DISTAV): **Curiosity Driven Project 2019-2022**: a project dedicated to Ligurian paleoenvironments, funded by the University, for the measurement of geological sections and paleoambiental reconstruction in its geography and ecology in the fossil sites of la Maddalena (Sassello)
- Organization of **refresher course for teachers** on the topics of the Geopark and its activities and peculiarities and **refresher course for tour operators**
- Annual collaboration with the Municipality of Arenzano for the organization of the **Mare & Monti trail**, a non-competitive international march that takes place on the paths of the Geopark and attracts thousands of enthusiastic participants

Strategic partnership

The Beigua Geopark is strongly supported by local communities and stakeholders which are substantial part of the management body (Regione Liguria, Provincia di Savona, Città Metropolitana di Genova, n. 10 Local Municipalities, University of Genoa, Tourism Operators Associations, Agricultural Associations, Breeding Associations, Forestry Associations, Handicraft Associations, Environmentalist Associations, Hunters Associations, Sports & outdoor Associations, University of Genoa, Regional and Local School Districts. Many others national and local bodies collaborate with the Beigua Geopark (Museum of Natural History of Genoa, Italian Alpin Club, Italian Federation for Hiking, Italian Union for Sports, Italian Federation for Parks and Nature Reserves, ISPRA National

Institute for Environment Protection and Research). For years Beigua Geopark has been collaborating with teachers from the geology department of the University of Bremen.

Promotional activities

- **New Geopark Corner:** with the move of the Geopark offices to Varazze, a new Geopark Corner has been set up with information panels on the geodiversity and biodiversity that distinguish the area. The panel, created by embedding the most representative rocks of the Geopark, aims to show the incredible variety of geodiversity by suggesting a journey to discover the places that shield these rocks.
- **Social media:** Beigua Geopark is present on Facebook (with two pages: Parco Beigua – UNESCO Global Geopark dedicated to activities strictly connected to the protected area and ViviBeigua to promote the touristic area in collaboration with Local Authorities) and on Twitter and Instagram. The social accounts are monitored on a daily basis and contents to post are planned in advance. Our followers are growing steadily, without any form of paid marketing.
- **Press releases and newsletters:** 14 press releases were produced to describe the activities of the Geopark, the progress of the ongoing projects and new initiatives in the area involving the interested parties. To these is added an average of 40 releases sent for the promotion of excursions and educational workshops organized by the Geopark.
- **Posters:** Realization of monthly posters to promote the activities proposed in the Geopark. The posters are posted at the Visitor Centers and Information Points of the Geopark as well as being sent via email to the tour operators belonging to the Park circuit and to all the tourist offices in the area, in Genova and in the most important tourist areas of the Region.
- **Website:** Daily updating of Beigua Geopark website (www.parcobeigua.it) and creation of pages to describe new projects.
- **Periodical publications:** "Parco del Beigua - Beigua Geopark" newsletter published quarterly (8.000 - 12.000 paper copies; downloadable also by the web site) published and distributed in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. It contains articles and information about tourism, activities and events; special features are dedicated to the Geopark territory and its highlights, EGN, GGN and UGG, etc. In summer and spring a special issue of ViviBeigua is also printed, 12,000 copies distributed throughout the area.

4. CONTACTS

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