

# GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2021

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

**Geopark name, country, regional Network:** Rokua UNESCO Global Geopark, Finland, European Geoparks Network

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2010 / 2018

Representative photo with caption (from the most important event this year)



Picture: Opening ceremony of the new exhibition – Rokua Geopark Time Traveller – in the cultural Centre Koivu ja Tähti (“Birch and Star”) in the municipality of Muhos.

## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staffs:** 3 staffs including 1 geoscientist(s)

**Number of visitors:** Estimated total 200 000; Rokua National Park 62 600, Lake Oulujärvi Hiking Area 54 900 (two sites with exact data).

**Number of Geopark events:** 15

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:** 12

**Number of Geopark press release:** 10

### **3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES**

#### **Major achievements in 2021**

- Opening of the three new exhibitions and virtual models representing the historical landscapes of the region.
- Rokua Geopark Challenge adventure sport competition

#### **Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation**

- School exchange program with Sesia Val Grande Geopark and Chablais Geopark
- School exchange program with Katla Geopark and Trollfjell Geopark
- School exchange program with Swabian Alb Geopark
- Participation in EGN CC digital meeting in spring
- Participation in GGN conference in autumn

#### **Management and Financial Status**

- Rokua Geopark was managed by Humanpolis Ltd and financed by the founders of the Geopark: Municipalities of Muhos, Utajärvi and Vaala, Rokua Foundation and Metsähallitus. The annual funding is based on a four-years agreement. For the period 2019-2022, the amount of annual funding is 248 000 € for Humanpolis Ltd, of which 206 000 € is pointed for the operations of Rokua Geopark. The total funding realized in 2021 was ca. 280 000 €, of which ca. 220 000 € was pointed for the Geopark operations. The amount of one of the partners was reduced by 20 000 € because of the consequences of Covid19 for the partner's economic status. However, the lack was compensated by a case-funding for the Geopark Challenge competition (30 000 €) and by the joint marketing fees from the Geopark companies (ca. 4 000 €).

#### **Geoconservation**

- Trails in Rokua National Park were renovated and partially re-routed to areas with smaller erosion risk.
- New geosites were not opened.

#### **Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)**

- Rokua Geopark agreed with the principles of the national label for national tourism destinations and began the work with region's tourism companies ("Geopark companies"). Until the end of the year, seven companies were agreed with the principles and were studying and developing their businesses according to the criteria and in collaboration with the Geopark organization. Rokua Geopark nominated its marketing specialist as the coordinator of the Sustainable Travel Finland label for the region.
- Sustainable tourism work shops were organized for the entrepreneurs.

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

- The new exhibitions offered possibilities for new educational activities.
- Rokua Geopark created a new cultural education plan for Muhos municipality together with local teachers. The cultural education plan determines topics and visiting sites for each school stage (from early childhood education to upper secondary school) for studying the home region.
- Within the international school projects, water studies were further developed.

## **Strategic partnership**

- Rokua Geopark collaborated with following Geoparks in the field of education: Sesia Val Grande UGGp, Chablais UGGp, Trollfjell UGGp and Katla UGGp. Furthermore, partnership with Swabian Alb UGGp was maintained in communication level, but because of the Covid, none exchange was carried out between Rokua and Swabian Alb.
- Rokua Geopark also collaborated with Magma Geopark in the field of Geofood.

## **Promotional activities**

- Rokua Geopark participated in several webinars and virtual sales tours for tour operators. The events were organized together with Visit Oulu (joint-marketing organisation of Oulu region/province) and Visit Finland.
- For the new exhibitions, virtual opening ceremonies were organized to promote the exhibitions and the Geopark region.
- Geopark Challenge adventure sport race reached a wide media coverage in a regional newspaper of Northern Finland. The media coverage included several pre-information videos and articles, live stream during the competition and publishing of results in the website / digital platform of the newspaper. It was the most important regional promotion event reaching hundreds of thousands of readers.

## **4. CONTACTS**

### **Manager:**

- Vesa Krökki, vesa.krokki@humanpolis.fi
- Substitute manager (21.1.-21.8.2022): Mikko Kiuttu, mikko.kiuttu@humanpolis.fi

### **Geologist:**

- Jari Nenonen, jari.nenonen@gtk.fi (representative in the EGN CC).
- Mikko Kiuttu, mikko.kiuttu@humanpolis.fi (daily geoscientist)