

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2023

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Las Loras UNESCO Global Geopark, Spain, (European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2017 / 2021

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

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

Number of visitors: Petroleum Museum 4.493. Cave of French 15.967. Villadiego visitors Center: 2.204. Cueva del Agua: 28.136

Number of Geopark events: EGN Week 21 activities: fieldtrips, exhibitions, activities, videos, photos, lectures. Educational program. Visiting programs: Discovering the Geopark (every month at least one activity). Geoloday. 4th research grant and other research activities (biology and paleontology). 3rd year of the Test Field of organic potatoes seeds. 2nd Tasting of organic potatoes in 11 collaborating entities. 3 Photo Exhibitions. 3 local products markets and exhibitions. Training courses for local tourism companies. New panel and signs in a new route, new caravaning places. Agroecological project (Participatory diagnosis of rural development possibilities for the primary sector of the Las Loras Geopark. Possibilities of added value to the local product- several meetings with the sector). New collaborating entities- celebration and accreditation. Activities related with the National Ecotourism club (seminars and workshop). One a month Radio Program. Las Loras Magazine (every 4 months). Talks for other entities (6). Support and dissemination of cultural and sporting initiatives and projects- bike races, archaeological and cultural activities, field trips and workshops organized by the municipalities and other local organizations.

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: school year 2022-2023 and 23-24 we had 40 solicitudes each year but only place for 23 centers each year, some of them with not only one class (2 or 3)- 3 activities in each one, talks at the school, scape-room and fieldtrip. Also work with students in vocational training and interchange with schools of other Spanish and European geoparks. Several workshops with students in other events. International internship students. First US-Spanish Summer School on climate change and ecosystem management. One student draw contest.

Number of Geopark press release: 5 on paper and more than 50 in online platforms (and many others through articles related to the territory where the Geopark is mentioned), 2 TV programs, 11

Radio programs. 300 posts in FB and Instagram. Publication of articles in specialized magazines and research ones

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2023

Drafting of 2 participatory projects to obtain funds, a Tourism sustainability plan and a project to recover biodiversity through extensive livestock farming in the Geopark, which have been successful. The first to develop until March 2026 with 1.8 million euros and the second until December 2025 with 1.5 million. Some of the actions included in these projects are designed to also comply with the recommendations of the 2021 evaluators visit.

Works on the new Aguilar Visitor Center, Stable educational program, monthly Radio program and edition of Las Loras Magazine.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

EGN Newsletter 23, GGN newsletter 22. Article for Geoparks going green, EGN magazine and Geohazards book, Cave and Karst one. Participation in IGCP programs: 726,730, 746. Participation in the EGN meetings and conferences of 2023. Participation in the WG Youth forum and Tourism and Education. Received the visit of Namibia-Erasmus + project. Vice coordination of the National Fora. Participation in the activities and projects of the National Fora (meetings, Open days, etc.). Helping new national and international candidacies. Fam trip together with Vasque country geopark people to visit Villuercas-Ibores-Jara Geopark. Participation in 726 and 730 IGCP. Celebration of the GGN Common days (video and exhibition included).

Management and Financial Status

Executive Committee: 2023 action plan, meetings of 3 working groups. Two collaboration agreement with the two-provincial government (102.000€). Collaboration agreement with other foundations (44.600€). Other investments of local and regional administrations: council of Burgos and Palencia in their municipalities. Natural Protected Areas-Regional government (forestry work and signaling maintenance), Potatoes test field (9.700), Gullon research grant (4.000), local development groups (12.400), research agreement Salamanca University (6000€, Palencia and Burgos councils).

Geoconservation

Continue working with Universities (Salamanca, León, Burgos, Basque Country, Vigo and CENIEH and Salas de los Infantes research centers) on heritage conservation issues, especially everything related to the Geopark's fossil flora and fauna. Preparation of the good practices guide for researchers, university teachers and students (English translation). We have obtained funds for the

study of the tuff buildings and the recovery and enhancement of one of them that was deteriorated. This work will be developed in 2024-2025.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

We belong to the National and Regional Ecotourism Club to develop sustainable tourism products. Also, to the European Chard of Sustainable tourism. Participation in the National Ecotourism seminar. Working with local travel agencies, signposting routes, Geosites and roads.

During 2022-2023 we have developed, in collaboration with the local action groups and the council, the Sustainable development Plan and the subsidy for its development have been approved, this means that during the next 2 years we have to develop many new routes, signals, touristic products...

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

Participation in the First US-Spanish Summer School on climate change and ecosystem management.

New Scape-room for primary students with these concepts.

In the Sustainable development Plan, we are going to develop a new action: Scientific tourism: Launch of a pilot project related to the development of a paleontological/archaeological work field.

In the agroecological project there are several training and actions related with sustainable development.

Strategic partnership

Collaboration agreements with foundations and associations, local (specially with Local Development Groups) and regional, for developing environmental and participation projects and also projects for the protection of the cultural heritage. Collaboration agreements with local tourism companies for their promotion, artis and artisan. Collaboration agreement with Gullon biscuit company for an annual research grant.

Promotional activities

Naturcyl national Fair of Ecotourism, FITUR, Program Discovering the Geopark, monthly Radio program, Las Loras magazine, social media.

4. CONTACTS

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