

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2023

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Orígens UNESCO Global Geopark, Spain, European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2018 / 2021

Representative photo with caption (from the most important event this year): Presentation of the Orígens Geopark virtual reality project at the UNESCO General Conference in Paris.



2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 12 staff (which 6 are women) including, 6 geoscientist(s), of which 2 are women.

Number of visitors: 285,005

Number of Geopark events: 61 total events. 36 events held by management body and 25 by cooperative organization.

Number of school classes that realize Geopark educational programs: 173 school classes.

Number of Geopark press releases: 17 press releases.

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2023

- Participation as exhibitor at the UNESCO General Conference in Paris from the 7th to 18th November. Presentation of the Orígens Geopark virtual reality project. Also, the Orígens Geopark acted as an ambassador for the rest of the Global Geoparks and had the opportunity to increase the visibility of the figure of UNESCO Global Geoparks and their working areas. A total of 331 delegates from 68 countries visited the stand.
- Organization of the first Course of discovery of the Geopark from the 17th to the 19th of October aimed at the Geopark's stakeholders. The course included: classroom and outdoor presentations; guided tours in two museums and a workshop. It was attended by 13 participants.

- A tourist demand study of the Orígens Geopark was implemented with surveys carried out with visitors to the Geopark to know about activities they take on, degree of satisfaction, or how they organize their visit, among other subjects. The percentage of recommendation intention was very high, and almost a quarter of the sample surveyed rated their visit as better than expected.
- Exchange trip to the geoparks of Villuercas-Ibores-Jara, Naturtejo and Arouca attended by 17 Geopark political representatives and staff. The participants were learnt about the strategies and good practices of the hosts in the areas of geological, natural and cultural heritage, education, and sustainable development, as well as about the Geoparks management structure. The trip served to discuss the strategy of the Orígens Geopark, detect needs and strengthen links between the representatives of the Geopark territory.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Participation at the 47th EGN CC meeting held in Hateg County UGGp (2 delegates).
- Participation at the virtual meeting to welcome the new UGGp. April.
- Participation at the 10th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks in M'Goun UNESCO Global Geopark, Morocco, with (3 delegates). 3 abstracts submitted. Due to the earthquake during the meeting, only one of the presentations was given.
- Participation at the EGN Working groups of geohazards, European Universities, Education and Tourism.
- Participation as editor-in-chief, in the edition of the book "Geohazards in European Geoparks" and contribution to the writing of the introductory chapter "Geohazards in Europe, a brief introduction" and one of the articles of the book entitled "Mass movements, flooding and education in Orígens UNESCO Global Geopark".
- Participation with one article for the EGN magazine: "Virtual Reality experiences to make a difference, the VIGEOCULT project example".
- Two virtual advisory meetings for the Zaquenzipa Geopark project, Colombia.
- Active participation in several meetings of the Spanish Geoparks Forum, different working groups and virtual meetings of the *Comité Nacional Español de Geoparques*, including "the Jornadas Abiertas del Foro Español de Geoparques" held in Courel UGGp in November.
- Virtual exchange of good practices with Mixteca Alta UGGp, Mexico, related to the creation of the colour palette of the soils and landscapes of the Geopark.

Management and Financial Status

- The management body is an Association formed by 19 municipalities and 2 county councils. The local elections took place in May and 52.4% of our Geopark's members are represented by women.
- We obtain funding throughout Association memberships, the Catalan Government, the Lleida regional Government and from European projects. Moreover, greater funding stability has been achieved because the support we receive is part of the Catalan Government's budget law.

Geoconservation

- A large old private fossil collection has been loaned to Orígens Geopark and is now deposited in the Conca Dellà Museum. The collection includes fossils from "La Pedrera de Meià" geosite and other locations. A total of 1937 pieces have been inventoried.
- Following up the catalog of threatened biodiversity of the Orígens Geopark carried out in 2022, a new strategy on the management of the Geopark biodiversity has been drafted. The strategy synthesizes the current state of the ecosystems of the Geopark and proposes an

action plan to improve biodiversity conservation and dissemination. The strategy involved the creation of a working/advisory group composed of key agents in the territory.

- The "Seeds of opportunities", a project started in 2020 committed to the recovery of varieties of orchards and traditional fruit trees, has been continued during 2023. The Geopark has contributed with the transcription of interviews that resulted in 65 new entries added to the seed bank in 2023.
- Collaboration with rural agents of official security forces to watch the geopark most susceptible sites, especially those where paleontological excavations were carried out.
- The Geopark kept promoting the social volunteer program "Godfather a Rock" lead by the Spanish Geological Survey (IGME) throughout social networks and public presentations. The collaboration drives public participation in the conservation and monitoring of geosites via the production of a short annual report describing the state of conservation of the geosite. So far, there are 51 participants that are godfathers of 37 geosites.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Cooperation with the on-line reservation system for tourism services and events at Geopark, Pallars Click, run by Pirineu Emoció (local travel agency, stakeholder).
- Several actions have been taken to improve the joint promotion of collaborating entities, these include: (1) distribution of desktop supports, stickers with the Geopark logo for agri-food products, lanyards with badge for collaborating entities and visitor center staff, and Geopark plates for stakeholders with a physical customer service space where they can place it; (2) providing visibility by including new stakeholders in the section of collaborating entities of the Orígens Geopark website and the interactive tourism map; (3) the presentation of a virtual catalogue to promote the entities main activities and products and; (4) offering the aforementioned Geopark introductory training course; (5) promotion campaign through 36 promotional videos published on the Geopark's social networks.
- The Geopark has collaborated with sports events that promote the landscape, natural and cultural values of the territory. These include running and cycling competitions organized by local associations aligned with the Geopark values and trekking activities lead by two Geopark municipalities. In addition, the Geopark has collaborated with cultural events.
- A tourist demand study of the Orígens Geopark was implemented as mentioned in the previous section.

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

- The Geopark collaborated with the Noguera Learning Camp and the Education Resource Center of La Noguera County in the design and conception of game about the Geoparc prehistory heritage. The educational tool was presented on November 28 and will be made available to schools in 2024.
- A new educational dossier has been prepared for children (3-8 years old) named "The powers of the river" adapted to the school playground facilities to teach about fluvial dynamics. This product has been developed in collaboration with the "Valldeflors" Tremp primary public school and is tested during the 2023-2024 school year.

Strategic partnership

- A partnership campaign ended up with 36 new collaborating enterprises that joined the geopark partnership program that now add up to 55 small local businesses that have become Geopark stakeholders.

Promotional activities

- Promotion of the Geopark through adds on metropolitan railways of the Barcelona region.
- Social Networks Followers: 2,700 (FB), 2,400 (X) and 3,863 (IG), 385 (Youtube), 325 (Geopark's e-newsletter)
- Local publications, monthly articles in a local magazine, 12 e-newsletter with activities.

4. CONTACTS

Manager: Guillem Puras – gpuras@geoparcorigens.cat

Geologist: Xavi Mir – xmir@geoparcorigens.cat