

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2023

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Sitia UNESCO Global Geopark, CREECE European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2015 / 2023

Representative photo with caption : The organization of the 4th International Conference of UNESCO Global Geoparks of Greece and Cyprus

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 4 staffs including 1 geoscientist

Number of visitors: 35.000

Number of Geopark events: 14 events held by management body and 5 cooperative organization

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: 9 primary and secondary schools visited the geopark carrying out educational programs on geology, paleontology, climate change and caves. They also became a seminar for the teachers.

Number of Geopark press release: More than 26 press releases were published and published announcements about the events of the Geopark, the educational actions, presentation and promotion of the Sitia UGGp, etc

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2023

- The organization of the, 3st Summer School of Environmental Education for Geo-places and Sustainability entitled: "Geo-routes in the footsteps of the Dinosaur of Sitia!" on 5-10 July 2023 for primary and secondary school teachers, with the participation of 50 educators from all over Greece, with the theme "Preservation of the intangible cultural heritage in the Sitia Geopark. The example of weaving and dancing".
- The organization of the 4th International Conference of UNESCO Global Geoparks of Greece and Cyprus. "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN THE UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS OF GREECE - CYPRUS", held in Sitia from 25 to 27 May 2023.
- The revalidation, with the extension of the boundaries of the Geopark on July 23 to 26, 2023

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- 47th Coordination Committee Meeting 27 - 31 of March, Hateg Country UNESCO Global Geopark, in Romania.
- 10th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks September 7 to 11 2023

M'Goun UNESCO Global Geopark, in Marrakesh.

- EGN CC Digital Meeting Online - November 8th and 9th 2023
- 4th International Conference of UNESCO Global Geoparks of Greece and Cyprus. "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN THE UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS OF GREECE - CYPRUS", Sitia 25 to 27 May 2023.
- International conference on the UNESCO Areas of Crete and the presentation of the Branding project of UNESCO Areas of Crete November 22, 2023 Chania

Management and Financial Status

- the administrative organization of the Geopark remains stable with the local community having active participation through the Geopark management committee
- The management of the information center and an important visited georoute, have brought about the financial improvement and the financial situation was in line with the budget of the year without any problem

Geoconservation

- Maintenance and renewal of signage and interpretation signs in geo sites
- Recording and mapping of new geological points of interest geotrails at the new boundaries of the Geopark expansion
- Geodiversity information and protection actions
- INTERNATIONAL GEODIVERSITY DAY 6th October 2023 information actions in schools and visits to geosites
- INTERNATIONAL EARTH DAY 2023 information actions in schools and visits to geosites
- World Mountain Day December 11, 2023 «We plant Trees in our Mountains and not Wind Turbines» Action for the protection of mountainous geo sites , in cooperation with local bodies and organizations.
- Album edition about caves and their protection

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Participation of the Sitia UGGp in the 1st festival of Alternative Tourism and Experiences in Chania. May 2023
- Organization of the 5nd UNESCO World Championship Sitia Geopark Trail 24, September 2023 for highlighting the geo-structures and the history of the Geopark.
- Organization the "Sitia Geopark Road Race ", 10 December 2023
- Continuous information between the partners of the Geopark involved in alternative tourism

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

- In the Sitia UGGp there are special educational programs on climate change, geology, paleontology and environmental protection. These programs are implemented in schools, in

the information center and at student and citizen events.

- In collaboration with the University of Crete, the Mediterranean University and other scientific bodies, we enrich our educational material.
- The 3rd Summer School of Environmental Education for Geo-places and Sustainability entitled: "Geo-routes in the footsteps of the Dinosaur of Sitia!", for primary and secondary school teachers, with the participation of 50 educators from all over Greece.
- We collaborate on the National Thematic Network of the Center for Environmental Education of Anogeia entitled: Unravelling Earth's Memory through Geo-diversity, Geoparks and Anthropogenic Activities "
- Educational activities and training program in collaboration with primary and secondary schools.

Strategic partnership

- Cooperation protocol with the University of Patras and the Department of Paleontology, for the recording, excavation, preservation and highlighting of the fossils of the Sitia UGGp
- Cooperation protocol with the Hellenic Mediterranean University (HMU) for the provision of new technological applications
- Cooperation protocol with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the School of Positive Sciences Department of Geology Section of Masonry, History & Applied Geology.
- Collaboration with the Natural History Museum of Crete - University of Crete
- Local outdoor travel agencies, Regional Travel office
- Hosting volunteers in collaboration with Deutsche UNESCO-Kommission e.V. / German Commission for UNESCO and the Greek Forum Geoparks
- Cooperation with Sitia Archaeological Museum, Natural History Museum of Crete ,Historical and Religious Museum of Monastery Toplou.
- Participation in the program LIFE – AgrOassis: Regenerative approaches for building climate change resilience in EU agricultural regions prone to desertification. The primary objective of Agroassis is to assist climate change adaptation in the agricultural sector of the EU's two most south easterly countries, Cyprus and Greece, and beyond.
- Participation in the program Interreg V-A Cooperation Program Greece - Cyprus “Waterways and Stories on the E4 path and the Geoparks in the East Mediterranean”

Promotional activities

- The SitiaUGGp, together with the other 3 UNESCO Areas of Crete, Psiloritis, Samaria and Asterousia, participated in the ITB 2023 tourism exhibition in Berlin 7 to 9 March 2023
- Participation of the Sitia UGGp in the 1st festival of Alternative Tourism and Experiences in Chania. May 2023
- The National Geographic magazine recommends the SitiaUGGp, as part of the tribute for

destinations that travelers can visit this August 2023 « Where to travel in August»

- Publication on one of the largest tourism websites in Poland «Globalny Geopark UNESCO Sitia wyznacza przykład zrównoważonej turystyki»
- Articles in Greek and international tourist publications and newspapers about the Sitia UGGp (Ethnos, Exploring Greece TV, EVDEMONIA, Travel.gr, Greek Travel Pages, Telegraph, etc)
- Publications in local media and promotion of the Geopark through social media.
- Organization of informative events in the context of the European Geoparks Week, initially digitally and in August 2023 with the participation of visitors and residents of the Geopark

4. CONTACTS

Manager: Evangelos Perakis / perakisv@sitia.gr

Geologist: Christoforos Kontogiorgakis / chrkontogiorgakis@gmail.com