

# GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2023

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

**Geopark name, country, regional Network:** TERRA.vita UNESCO Global Geopark, Germany;  
European Geoparks Network

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2001 / 2019 / 2023



*The new Eocene primordial North Sea diorama at the HaiTec center at the Kuhlhoff environmental education center in Bippen.*

## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staffs:** 10 (minijobs not included)

**Number of visitors:** about 3 Mio.

**Number of Geopark events:** 584 (including Geopark partners)

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programs:** 5 (events by TERRA.guides)  
+ 30 (HaiTec Center)

**Number of Geopark press releases:** 31

## 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

### Major achievements in 2023

- 6<sup>th</sup> successful revalidation as UNESCO Global Geopark.
- Following the first masterplan of 2015, a new masterplan has been conducted. It focused on the topics (1) Internal Nature and Geopark Management, (2) Education for Sustainable

Development & Environmental Education, (3) Nature and Geoheritage Protection & Landscape and Geosite Management, (4) (Geo-)Tourism, and (5) Sustainable Regional Development. The presentation of the masterplan to the public is scheduled for May 2024. Softcover booklets in German and English language will be produced.

- Smooth transition of TERRA.vita's executive board. Dr. Detlef Wilcke fills in the Nature and Geopark's direction since the beginning of January 2024.
- A second ESD coordinator with a 70% position has been employed to develop Nature and Geopark Schools and KitAs (type of kindergartens).
- The exhibition and the TERRA.vita Information Center in the Museum am Schölerberg natural history museum in Osnabrück have been completely renewed for 6 million €.
- Awarded with the "National Award – Education for Sustainable Development" by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research and the German UNESCO Commission
- The DBU (Federal Foundation for Environment) financed project "ESD for 2030: Implementation of education for sustainable development (ESD) in educational offerings in German geoparks", carried out together with the national UNESCO Global Geoparks, has been successfully completed.
- The regional management cooperation was successfully completed with smooth transition to an ecologic station since January 2024.
- New geologic and ecologic graffiti art including oversized TERRA.vita and UNECSO logos at the 21 Meter large Hermannsturm viewing tower on Dörenberg, the highest mountain in the TERRA.vita area.

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

- TERRA.vita participated in the EGN Springmeeting in Hateg UGGp as well as in the GGN Conference in M'Goun UGGp with an oral presentation. Contributions were made to the EGN Magazine and the EGN newsletter.
- The second official EGN CC representative, Tobias Fischer, has become catalyst for the Fossil Record & Evolution working group.

### **Management and Financial Status**

- The membership fees have been increased; the increase accounts for 90,000 €/a. Funding by the Economical and Environmental Ministries of Lower Saxony as well as by the Osnabrück County have remained equal to the years before.
- We hired a second ESD coordinator with a 70% position as well as a student in the field of landscape ecology for nature and environment publicity for a one year minijob.
- Two new TERRA.ranger, employed by Osnabrück County on minijob basis, to inform mountain bikers and hikers at Hügge mountain.

### **Geoconservation**

- Cleaning of geosites from vegetation, protection against rock falls and visitor guidance at the geosites on the “Secrets of the Great Mountain” nature and geopath in Halle-Künsebeck

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

- New Culture and Stone educational track Gattberg in Belm
- New nature and geopath “Secrets of the Great Mountain” in Halle-Künsebeck
- New Eocene primordial North Sea diorama at the HaiTec center at the Kuhlhoff environmental education center in Bippen
- New dinosaur wood art the Dinosaur Tracksite Bad Essen-Barkhausen
- New information panel at a new cable car monument at Borgberg installed by Hagen a.t.W. home association to commemorate to the historical mining cable car existing until 1972 on the Hüggel
- Re-modelling of the long-distance hiking tracks DiVa Walk (connecting the Dinosaur Tracksite Barkhausen with the Varusbattle Museum) and the Ahornweg (Maple Track) including route guidance, hiking panels and hiking map leaflets.
- The Hünenweg (Hunen Trail) long-distance hiking track, connecting the historical town hall in Osnabrück, TERRA.vita UGGp, with the town hall in Borger, De Hondsrug UGGp, has been nominated as Germany’s most beautiful hiking trail.
- Three new TERRA.track hiking tracks (in total 86): TT Engethere (Engter), TT GenussKulTour (Bad Laer), TT Wellinger Land (Melle-Welling).
- Installation of a solar panel at the Silbersee mining tunnel’s visitor cabin to charge the domestic luminaires with green energy.
- Publication of the 4<sup>th</sup> volume of the hiking brochure “Schön hier” – Osnabrücker Wanderland”.

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

- In the course of a DBU financed project conducted together with the national UNESCO Global Geoparks an ESD module for 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade school classes has been developed together with an outdoor school in Bad Essen-Barkhausen and the TERRA.guides have been educated to use ESD methods
- TERRA.vita contributed a chapter on its environmental education and education for sustainable developments projects and program in the German textbook “Didaktik der Geowissenschaften” (“Didactics of Geosciences”) by Hlawatsch & Felzmann (2023)
- Meeting of the Youth Forum of the German UNESCO Commission
- Excursions for the UNESCO Dialogue Day of the UNESCO Associated School and TERRA.vita educational partner Gesamtschule Schinkel from Osnabrück together with the UNESCO Associated School Johannes-Althusius-Gymnasium from Emden and for the students exchange of the Gesamtschule Schinkel from Osnabrück together with students

from Costa Rica.

- The Ev.-luth. Paulus-Kita Melle (“kita” is a type of kindergarten) signed a contract to become the first TERRA.kita.
- New geological-pedological fieldtrip for forestry trainee teachers
- The interactive digital element “GeoUhr” (“Geo Clock”) was placed in the Experiential Pedagogical Outdoor School of Barkhausen, a long-term partner in education.
- Funding of working horses to maintain landscapes and geosites including the education of TERRA.vita’s working horse Ella
- Workshops on habitat trees and invasive neophytes
- Protection measures for neophyte overgrown landscapes as well as open lands; species conservation measures for greater mouse-eared bats, stag beetles, and crested newts

#### **Strategic partnership**

- The projects implemented during the INTERREG VIa program together with the De Hondsrug UGGp were continued and projects such as the geogame app further improved.
- We participated in a movie project of the Belgish, Dutch, Luxemburgish and partly German Geoparks initiated by Mellerdall UGGp.

#### **Promotional activities**

- New social media campaign to raise awareness of EU habitat directive areas in the TERRA.vita Geopark
- The Family Day at the Dinosaur Tracks, that offers actions for children on dinosaurs and is organized by TERRA.vita and co-organized by partners from Barkhausen, has been visited by more than 300 visitors

## **4. CONTACTS**

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