

Annual report 2023 for the GGN (Global Geopark Network)

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional network: Thuringia Inselsberg - Drei Gleichen
UNESCO Global Geopark, Germany, European Geopark Network

Year of registration / year of last revalidation: 2021 / ----

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



ESD project in Ruhla - ESD Award 2023

Photos left: Impressions of the 2023 newly developed ESD project "Forest and Water Week" in Ruhla together with the local AWO youth club "Freetime": On three project days from 10-12 July 2023, the young people dedicated themselves to the topic of water and forests with their diverse interrelationships (focus on SDG 6 and SDG 7). The nature discovery trail "Am Breitenberg" (the Geopark's GeoRoute 10) with the Green Classroom took centre stage. Through experiments with water, wood and forest soil, the children learnt what simple things everyone can do every day to use

the valuable resources of water and wood carefully and wisely so that we can preserve them in the future.

Image right: Award certificate for the Geopark: National award "Education for Sustainable Development" from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the German Commission for UNESCO. It was awarded to the Geopark on 9 November 2023 for two years for exemplary commitment to anchoring ESD in Germany.

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of geopark employees: 12 employees, including 9 geoscientists (11 of the 12 employees work in the geopark management office, the geopark geologist is employed directly by the geopark); since 2022, an additional geoscientist has been employed by the member municipality of Ruhla; also one employee for financial management employed by the town of Friedrichroda and four mayors (members of the steering committee); also 10 self-employed geopark guides

Number of visitors: 135,056 (total number of visitors to all five GeoInfocentres, the GeoMuseum Ohrdruf and major events)

Number of Geopark events: 101

Number of school classes implementing Geopark education programmes: 26

Number of Geopark press releases: 25

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Important achievements in 2023

- Development of a three-day ESD project with the AWO youth club "Freetime": Forest and water week in Ruhla with a focus on SDG 6 and SDG 7 (see section 1) as part of the project "Implementation of education for sustainable development in educational programmes of German UNESCO Global Geoparks - as part of the DBU call for proposals "The great transformation - sustainability dilemmas and dealing with uncertainties"
- Continuation of the research project funded by DAAD-IKYDA 2022/2023: "Aquatic faunas from caves in Greece and Germany: a pilot study on historical (ecological) and biogeographical relationships" together with the partner geopark UGGp Chelmos Vouraikos (Greece), the University of Jena and the University of Patras
- Third scientific excavation at the Bromacker international tetrapod fossil site (Thuringian Forest, Georgenthal/Tambach-Dietharz) as part of the international BROMACKER research project in August (excavation period: four weeks, excavation participants: approx. 50 scientists with an international team) with a supporting programme for visitors (science communication project)
- Drilling of the second research borehole (around 200 metres) on the Gallberg in Tambach-Dietharz as part of the international BROMACKER research project with a supporting programme for visitors (science communication project)
- Construction of a new GeoRoute (GeoRoute 18 "Mühlsteinroute" in the municipality of Geratal, OT Frankenhain), opening in 2024
- Further development of the GEOfood programme in the Geopark (three current partners: TZG Ernstroda GmbH farm, Anno 1700 restaurant in Bad Tabarz, Rosenhof Holzhausen)

- Completion of the Geopark image film in German (English version of the film will be produced in 2024)
- Further expansion of the Geopark's website, Facebook account and Instagram account
- Creation of a YouTube channel for the Geopark with an image film and other short films (including on the BROMACKER project)
- Digital visitor survey on the BROMACKER project via the Geopark website

Contribution to the Global Geoparks Network GGN - networking and participation

- Co-operation meeting with the partner geopark UGGp Chelmos Vouraikos, Greece on site: meetings in Greece and in Germany as part of the joint research project (see above)
- Participation in the 10th International Geopark Conference from 5-10 September 2023 in Marakesh, Morocco
- Participation in the EGN week with six events

Management and financial status

- Management structure unchanged, as described in the last progress report (progress report on the 1st re-evaluation dated 31 January 2024)
- Financial situation stable, annual Geopark budget slightly increased compared to 2020

Geoconservation/geotope protection

- The Bromacker was named "Geosite of the Month" for April 2023 by the DGGV (German Geological Society - Geological Association) as part of the "Digital Geology - Germany's most beautiful geotopes in 3D" project
- Planning for the renovation of the historic gypsum kiln in Floh-Seligenthal (preliminary planning: initial surveying and securing work, further planning and realisation in several annual phases)
- New signposting of various geosites in the Geopark area (e.g. in Ohrdruf and along GeoRoute 18)
- Exposure of some geological outcrops in the Geopark area (e.g. Erbstrom gneiss Ruhla)
- Foundation of the Freundeskreis der Tropfsteinhöhle Kittelsthal e.V. on 14 July 2023 (show cave, visitor mine in the Geopark: underground geosite with stalactites and sinter structures (Zechstein reef limestone)) - some Geopark employees are members of the association)
- Regular mining safety work in the Marienglashöhle Friedrichroda (geosite with visitor mine/show cave at the GeoInfocentre)
- Regular mining safety work and mine maintenance in the Hühn Trusetal visitor mine (visitor mine with GeoInfocentre)
- New recording of geosites (e.g. springs around Ruhla, in Waltershausen and Frankenhain)

Sustainable tourism (geotourism)

- "Bromacker family days": planning and organisation of special trips by bus from Gotha (*BROMACKERlab*) to the Bromacker with guided tours and activities on site (bookable directly via the Geopark website by integrating the Regiondo online booking system); a special trip on the Thuringian Forest Railway was not possible in

- 2023 due to construction work in Gotha
- GeoRoute 8: Tabarz Volcano Trail honoured as a discovery tour by the German Hiking Association (discovery tour is a category of the "Wanderbares Deutschland" quality trail seal)
- Start of construction work to modernise the Marienglashöhle Friedrichroda GeoInfocentre - completion of the exhibition area on the ground floor (next construction phase planned for the upper floor)
- Construction work to modernise the Mühlberg GeoInfocentre - Mühlburg branch - completion of the exhibition area on the ground floor (next construction phase 2024/2025; construction of the exhibition in the basement)
- Continuation of planning for the modernisation of the Trusetal GeoInfocentre (at the Hühn visitor mine)
- Purchase of two saurian models for the planned GeoInfocentre "Saurian Discovery World" in Tambach-Dietharz
- Completion of the structural realisation of the conversion of the Günthersleben GeoInfopoint (two construction phases)
- Start of concept development for the Braunsteinmühle GeoInfopoint (co-operation project with the UNESCO Thuringian Forest Biosphere Reserve)
- Start of construction of the GeoRoute Waltershausen (in several annual phases)
- Start planning a new GeoRoute in Ruhla "From the Born to the Erbstrom - sources around Ruhla"
- Continuation of the planning of a new GeoRoute in Tambach-Dietharz
- Continuation of planning for a visitor platform for the Bromacker international tetrapod fossil site as part of the BROMACKER research project (construction planned for 2024)

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

- Development and first-time implementation of a three-day ESD project with the AWO youth club "Freetime": Forest and Water Week in Ruhla with a focus on SDG 6 and SDG 7 (see section 1) as part of the project "Implementation of education for sustainable development in educational programmes at German UNESCO Global Geoparks - as part of the DBU call for proposals "The great transformation - sustainability dilemmas and dealing with uncertainties"
- ESD profile of the Geopark on the ESD stakeholder page of the German UNESCO Commission
- National award "Education for Sustainable Development" from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the German UNESCO Commission - awarded to the Geopark on 9 November 2023 for two years for exemplary commitment to anchoring ESD in Germany
- Further work on an app for the Kleinschmalkalden Volcano Trail in Floh-Seligenthal (GeoRoute 14) with elements of augmented reality and virtual reality
- Organisation of a one-day teacher training course with the ThILLM (Thuringian Institute for Teacher Training, Curriculum Development and Media)
- Contract signed with the Thuringian Institute for Teacher Training, Curriculum Development and Media (ThILLM) for the integration of the Geopark as an extracurricular learning centre in the Thuringian school portal
- Development and first-time realisation of two project weeks with two selected schools: Salzmannschule Schnepfenthal (UNESCO school, state special grammar school for languages) and Gymnasium Ernestinum Gotha in cooperation with all partners of the BROMACKER research project
- Participation of the Geopark in the Gotha Children's University organised by the association "Museumslöwen - Gemeinschaft zur Förderung des Museums der Natur"

- Gotha e.V."
- Various activities during the BROMACKER research excavation (with around 1,800 visitors in four weeks) on the topic of knowledge transfer: BROMACKER_Chronicles on Instagram, guided tours for visitors during the excavation, interviews with the researchers, special trips on public transport (see above)
- Development and realisation of a writing workshop for pupils of the Ernestinum Gotha grammar school as part of the BROMACKER research project (public exhibition of the works in a special exhibition at Friedenstein Gotha Castle in 2024)
- Dual project with UGGp Ore of the Alps (Austria) regarding a joint educational project on SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals/Agenda 2030), project start planned for 2025

Strategic partnerships

- Ongoing cooperation agreement between the BROMACKER research project of the Geopark and the Museum für Naturkunde - Leibniz Institute for Evolution and Biodiversity Research Berlin, the Friedrich Schiller University Jena and the Friedenstein Castle Gotha Foundation
- Cooperation agreement with Friedenstein Foundation Gotha (formerly Friedenstein Castle Gotha Foundation) is in preparation: signing planned for 2024
- Transnational LEADER cooperation with the UGGp Erz der Alpen (Austria) and the National GeoPark Porphyryland.Steinreich in Saxony (Germany) since 2011: anniversary cooperation meeting in Bischofshofen in summer 2023 (10-year partnership was celebrated due to Corona); the third multi-year cooperation agreement with various individual projects will be signed in 2024 with the new LEADER funding period

Advertising activities

- Completion of the Geopark image film in German (English version of the film will be produced in 2024)
- Establishment of a Youtube channel of the Geopark
- Presentation of the Geopark with GEOfood partner Rosenhof Holzhausen on the ZDF programme "Volle Kanne"
- Presentation of the Geopark in the new German Geopark brochure published by the AdG (Working Group of German Geoparks): "See, experience and understand geological history - National and UNESCO Global Geoparks in Germany"
- Further work on the new edition of the Geopark image brochure in German and English
- Work continues on the new edition of an overview leaflet on the Geopark in German and English
- Start of the relaunch of the Geopark logo
- Geopark information stand for the Oberhof Double World Championships (luge and biathlon) in the tent of Thüringer Tourismus GmbH and Geopark information stand for German World Heritage Day/World Heritage Market in Weimar in the tent of the Wartburg-Hainich World Heritage Region and for Thuringia Day Schmalkalden as well as numerous other Geopark information stands throughout the Geopark
- 120th anniversary of the Marienglashöhle Friedrichroda with a comprehensive public visitor programme, including guided tours of the Marienglashöhle GeoInfocentre
- Three-day open-air festival "DREI(N)SCHLAG @", which is regularly organised every three years by the member municipality Drei Gleichen with the participation of the Geopark
- Saurian festival in Tambach-Dietharz and Georgenthal with a comprehensive family programme around the Saurian Discovery Trail (GeoRoute 6) and the Bromacker

tetrapod fossil site

- Articles in various tourist publications (e.g. in the host directory and magazine of the Wartburg Hainich World Heritage Region and in the host catalogue of the Thuringian Forest Gothaer Land e.V. tourism association)
- Contributions to other various publications (e.g. in the customer magazine of the energy supplier Ohra-Energie and for an online travel guide of Thüringer Tourismus GmbH for the theme year Castles in Thuringia)
- Creation of individual display boards along various GeoRoutes

4. CONTACTS

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