

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network:

Aras UNESCO Global Geopark, Islamic Republic of Iran, Asia Pacific Geopark Network

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



Aras UNESCO Global Geopark Designation Ceremony held with the presence of ambassadors and counselors of 13 countries

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staff:

13

Number of visitors:

10 million

Number of Geopark events:

- Geopark workshops on the topics UNESCO global geoparks, geopark partners network, geoproducts and local community engagement
- Geopark discussion panel on the Aras Expo 2023, Tabriz
- Students of Tabriz University's Faculty of Earth sciences visited Aras Geopark
- Aras UNESCO Global Geopark attended welcome digital event for the new UNESCO global geoparks, June 7th, 2023
- Aras UNESCO Global Geopark Designation Ceremony held with the presence of ambassadors and counselors of 13 countries, 28 foreign news agencies, many high-ranking officials and participants, June 23rd, 2023

- Public celebration event for Aras UNESCO Global Geopark Designation, June 24th , 2023
- Cooperation in International Geodiversity Day event hosted by Tabas UNESCO Global Geopark, October 6th , 2023
- Fig Annual Festival in Aras UNESCO Global Geopark, Kajeh Nazar Geosite and Kordasht Geosite, 3-6 October, 2023
- 7th Annual Pomegranate Festival in Aras UNESCO Global Geopark, Kajeh Nazar Geosite and Kordasht Geosite, 31 October-3 November, 2023
- Co-hosting The 16th conference of the Iranian Paleontological Society at Tabriz University with the field visit to Aras UGGp, October 25th , 2023
- Presence in the Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, February 12th , 2023
- First birdwatching tour and workshop in Aras UNESCO Global Geopark 23-24 November, 2023
- A two-day workshop on geopark instructor training

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programs:

21

Number of Geopark press releases:

Most of geopark news, programs, and activities have been reported in the local, regional and national media according to their importance and impact level.

The geopark news are released on Aras UGGp official website (www.arasgeopark.com) , official Instagram page (@aras.geopark) and also the official website and Instagram page of Aras Free Zone Organization.

Sahar Azari TV channel report on the international celebration of the global registration of Aras UGGp, July 9th, 2023

News (Khabar) TV report on the registration of Khaje Nazar Caravanserai as UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Publishing the Atlas of Aras UGGp Animals, author and photographer Saber Salimi Alamdari (Aras UGGp partner)

Besides, more than ten documentaries on the geopark issues have aired from national TV channels. Also, many local geopark partners acting in media shares clips and photos of the geopark.

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2023

- Registration of Khajeh Nazar Caravanserai (one of the Aras UGGp Geosites) together with some other caravanserais in Iran as a UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Aras UNESCO Global Geopark Designation Ceremony with the presence of ambassadors and counselors of 13 countries, 28 foreign news agencies, many high-ranking officials and participants, June 23rd, 2023

Management and Financial Status

The total annual budget was 120,000 US dollars for infrastructure development, maintenance, and current expenses.

Geoconservation

- Renovation and restoration of the walking trail paths inside the geosites.
- Installation of the new interpretive, warning, and signboards in geosites.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Improving the prospect of Gechi Qalasi geosite
- Extension of Tohlum geosite trail
- Completion of Choopan geosite walkway and Correction of the walkway slope
- Planting of flower in the geosite area of Khaje Nazar and Choopan Geosites
- Refurbishing furniture and trash cans in geosites

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

- On the Aras Expo 2023, a specialized geopark panel titled "The role of Aras Geopark in the development of tourism in northwest Iran" was held. The topic of lectures include:
 - Tourism development and Protection of cultural heritage
 - Geotourism and geotourism capacities of Aras Geopark

- Environmental challenges and advantages of geoparks - cooperation capacities with Aras Geopark
- The structure and requirements of UNESCO global geoparks
- Geoparks - local community education and sustainable employment
- A field visit from of Tabriz University's Faculty of Earth Sciences Students to the Aras UGGp Geosites, May 19th, 2023
- On the occasion of World Tourism Day:
 - Handicraft marketing and sales training workshop, September 22rd, 2023
 - Handicraft product commercialization training workshop, September 23rd, 2023
 - Training workshop on Entrepreneurship in handicrafts, September 26th, 2023
 - Training workshop on product branding, September 30th, 2023
 - Training workshop on handicrafts marketing and sales through social media, September 30th, 2023
 - Innovation in handicraft designs inspired by ancient handworks training workshop, September 30th, 2023
- Workshop on trainers training, November 29th, 2023
- Workshop on The geopark, geopark partners network and geoproducts for local community engagement, January 11th, 2024
- UNESCO global geoparks, geopark partners network, Geoproducts and local community engagement workshop, January 18th, 2024
- geopark and environment for council members of villages located in geopark territory.

Strategic partnership

- Improving the Aras UGGp Partners Network (including local homestays, hotels, travel agencies, local tour guides and ...) as a strong community-based entity to support geotourism in the geopark.
- Cooperation with the different departments of Aras Free Zone Organization such as tourism, cultural, environment, education, social, health, sports, urban design, engineering and budget departments.

Promotional activities

- Installation of two high-quality and impressive geopark urban elements (ammonite fossil)
- Production of 5 documentaries introducing Aras UGGp with English narration
- Production of a short video clip introducing Aras UGGp Geosites

- Construct a new square in city and dedicated it to geopark as “Geopark Square”

4. CONTACTS

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