



GLOBAL GEOPARKS NETWORK

International Association on Geoparks

CELEBRATING EARTH HERITAGE – SUSTAINING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

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3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly (Digital) **Wednesday 15 December 2021, at 11:00GMT** **Jeju Island UNESCO Global Geopark**

Agenda

1. Welcome and adoption of the Agenda
2. Status Report on the GGN Association 2018 - 2021
3. Liberation of the GGN Executive Board for the GGN 2018, 2019 and 2020 Accounts
4. Anti-harassment and bullying policy
5. 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan
6. GGN 2022 Membership fees (Article 5, Section 1)
7. Approval of GGN Honorary Members (Article 4, Section 2)
8. GGN Executive Board candidatures presentation
9. GGN Elections
 - 9.1. Election of the GGN Executive Board
 - 9.2. Election of the GGN Advisory Committee Chair
 - 9.3. Election of the GGN Advisory Committee Vice Chair

MINUTES

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly was held in digital format due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. It was held in parallel to the 9th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geopark which was organized by Jeju Island UNESCO Global Geoparks (Republic of Korea).

All necessary documents on the Agenda items were uploaded at the GGN website at the link: <https://globalgeoparksnetwork.org/?p=5991>

The 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly started at 11.00 GMT with 153 nominated Representatives of the GGN Institutional Members and 13 GGN Individual Members.

Observers were present from UNESCO Secretariat, Youth Forum and members of the Geopark teams. In total participated 77 observers.

ELECTRONIC VOTING

Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions the elections for the GGN Executive Board members and the GGN Advisory Committee Chair and Vice-Chair were conducted by e-voting. The <https://electionrunner.com> voting platform was used.

Before the 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly started, the GGN Election Committee and the GGN Secretariat informed all the nominated representatives of the GGN Institutional Members and the GGN Individual Members about the election procedure and they explained the technical issues on how the electronic voting will be done.

1. Welcome and adoption of the Agenda

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) welcomed all members of the GGN and observers participating in the digital 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly. He informed that the newly elected representatives of the Youth Forum were invited to participate in the General Assembly. The representatives are: Deo Silalahi Immanuel from Indonesia (Chair), Ms Thu-Trang Le from Vietnam (Vice Chair) and Mr Fa-is Jindewha from Thailand (Rapporteur).

Thanked the actual members of the GGN Executive Board for their work the last four years. Thanked Mr Kristof Vandenberghe, Chief of Earth Science and Geo-hazards Risk Reduction Section of UNESCO and the chair of the GGN Advisory Committee Prof. Setsuja Nakada for their participation in the GGN Executive Board as observers.

Kristof Vandenberghe (Chief of Earth Science and Geo-hazards Risk Reduction Section of UNESCO) greeted the delegates and informed that UNESCO's priority is not only the expansion of the sites and the growing of the network but also to support the sites in establishing and in maintaining the high standards that are required to be a UNESCO Global Geopark. UNESCO is very much interested in expanding the Network especially in Africa, the Arab states and in the SIDS and is very happy to work with the GGN towards that direction.

Deo Silalahi Immanuel (Chair of the Youth Forum) addressed to the 3rd General Assembly. Promised to promote youth as one of the most important actors of the Geopark, locally and globally. The Youth Forum will be collaborator and innovator for the Global Geoparks sustainability. Informed about the meeting of the Youth Forum which was held on the 14th of December 2021. Invited the members of the General Assembly to participate in the G20 Summit which will be held in 2022 in Bali, Indonesia.

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) informed that it will be created a sector in the Global Geoparks Network website dedicated to the Youth Forum.

DECISION: The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed to the agenda of the 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly.

“Zero” votes against the adaptation of the agenda of the 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly.

“Zero” abstentions for the adaptation of the agenda of the 3rd GGN Ordinary General Assembly

2. Status Report on the GGN Association 2018 - 2021

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) presented the Status Report of the GGN for the activities made during the last 3 years (September 2018 to December 2021).

Informed about the changes the GGN had to make in order to adjust its operation and activities to the new circumstances imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Reminded about the initiatives the GGN took in order to encourage its members to continue their operation during the pandemic such as the new website for the promotion of the GGN, the film festival, the Youth Forum, the GGN digital forum and the Regional Networks’ digital meetings. He referred to the initiatives on the Africa and the Arab States Grant as well as on the Grant for the SIDS developed in collaboration with UNESCO.

Reminded about the strategy that was prepared and distributed to all members of the GGN on the “UNESCO Global Geoparks in the “World after”: a multiple goals roadmap proposal for future discussion”, which outlines the future priorities, such as the climate change, the natural disasters and the sustainable development of the local communities.

Underlined the support of UNESCO and of the GGN Advisory Committee in the effort of enlarging the membership, supporting the regional networks, establish new initiatives and build a framework for the years to come.

Thanked all the members of the GGN General Assembly for their efforts and work during the last three years.

Emphasized that a lot of work has been done on the communication and promotion of the Geoparks as quality destinations of the 21st century, using also the social media and by participating in the celebrations of the international days.

Opened the floor for comments and questions on the report of the Executive Board from September 2018 to December 2021.

Martina Paskova (Bohemian Paradise UNESCO Global Geopark/Czechia) thanked for the perfectly elaborated report and for encouraging the Geoparks to continue the efforts and activities. Mentioned that it was very important to keep the Global Geoparks Network alive during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jutta Weber (Bergstraße-Odenwald UNESCO Global Geopark/Germany) thanked for the tremendous amount of work that is presented in the report.

Don Hoang Xuan (Dong Van Karst Plateau UNESCO Global Geopark/Vietnam) expressed his worries as due to the pandemic there have not been organized face to face meetings during the last two years.

DECISION: The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed to the presented Status Report on the GGN Association 2018 - 2021.

“Zero” votes against the adaptation of the Status Report on the GGN Association 2018 – 2021.

“Zero” abstentions for the adaptation of the Status Report on the GGN Association 2018 – 2021.

3. Liberation of the GGN Executive Board from the 2018, 2019 and 2020 Accounts

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) informed that the liberation of the Executive Board members for the accounts of the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 accounts is requested by the GGN General Assembly. The agreement of the GGN members for the accounts of the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 was given by written statements during the Ordinary General Assemblies for accounts.

He asked the GGN members of the General Assembly on the liberation of the Executive Board on the accounts for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

DECISION: The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed on the liberation of the GGN Executive Board for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 accounts.

“Zero” votes against the liberation of the GGN Executive Board for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 accounts.

“Zero” abstentions for the liberation of the GGN Executive Board for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 accounts.

4. Anti-harassment and bullying policy

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) informed that the ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document has been distributed to all members and it is compiled according to the international standards of all similar international organizations. Asked the Chair of the GGN Advisory Committee Setsuja Nakada to inform the General Assembly if the Advisory Committee has adopted the document.

Setsuja Nakada (Chair of the GGN Advisory Committee) informed that the majority of the Advisory Committee members agreed with the ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document.

Miguel Angel Cruz Perez (Comarca Minera, Hidalgo UNESCO Global Geopark/Mexico) commented on behalf of the Working Group on Gender Equality, which was established in 2020 among the Latin America Geoparks. The Working Group welcomes this new initiative of ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document which is of key importance to the

development of the UNESCO Global Geoparks working philosophy. In the Working Group participates members from the UNESCO Global Geoparks Rio Coco, Grutas del Palacio, Araripe, Kütralkura, Colca y Volcanes de Andagua and Comarca Minera, Hidalgo. The Working Group established a master plan which is available in Spanish for the moment. Aim of the Working Group is to expand and include also members from the other GGN Regional Networks.

Monica Bueno (Rio Coco UNESCO Global Geopark/Nicaragua) (CHAT): “I am sending the email of the Working Group on Gender Equality: generogeolac@gmail.com”.

Beth Peterkin (Cliffs of Fundy UNESCO Global Geopark/Canada) (CHAT): “Is it possible for the GGN or UNESCO to translate Miguel's document from Spanish and circulate it to all of us?”

Miguel Angel Cruz Perez (Comarca Minera, Hidalgo UNESCO Global Geopark/Mexico) (CHAT): “I will ask the coordination committee of the Working Group on Gender Equality to produce a translation to English to circulate to the GGN members”.

Artur Sá (Arouca UNESCO Global Geopark/Portugal) expressed his support to the ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document as it is an important tool for the management of the territories in order to avoid any kind of harassment or bullying in the network.

Sarah Gatley (GGN Individual member) (CHAT): “Point 23. The end of the sentence is missing - “...either personally.”, such as, “or through a third party”.

Melanie Border (English Riviera/UK) mentioned that she is extremely pleased that the ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document has been brought to the General Assembly for consideration. Mentioned that the unfinished sentence in point 23, that commented by Sarah Gatley in the chat, is a simple typographical error.

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) informed that this small typographical error will be corrected before the voting.

DECISION: The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed to the adoption of the presented ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document. “Zero” votes against the adoption of the ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document. “Zero” abstentions for the ‘Anti-harassment and bullying policy’ document.

5. 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) presented the 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan document. Outlined that the action plan has 10 strategic actions:

1. GGN Functioning and Communication with GGN members
2. Global Geoparks Network and UNESCO Global Geoparks
3. GGN Regional Networks
4. GGN Members
5. GGN Working Groups, Task Forces and Committees, GGN Initiatives
6. Geoparks Marketing and Communication Strategy

7. Financial stability
8. Capacity building activities
9. Promotion of the Geopark Brand
10. GGN and International Networking

Additional to the action Plan there is the document “UNESCO Global Geoparks in the “World after”: a multiple goals roadmap proposal for future discussion”.

Asked the Chair of the GGN Advisory Committee Setsuja Nakada to inform the General Assembly if the GGN Advisory Committee has agreed with the 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan.

Setsuja Nakada (Chair of the GGN Advisory Committee) informed that in the Advisory Committee meeting participated 34 representatives out of 44 countries and 6 Executive Board members. One of the results of the Advisory Committee meeting was that more frequent discussions and meetings are needed among the Advisory Committee members. Concerning the 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan most of the Advisory Committee members agreed with it in general. The Advisory Committee requested to make some improvements by including its suggestions which will be presented through the debating period of the strategic plan. The Advisory Committee believes that the endorsement of the strategic plan is essential. One of the points outlined in the Advisory Committee meeting about the strategic plan is that the SDGs approach should be clearly marked. The Advisory Committee believes that the strategic plan is very useful for the national Geoparks fora and the national committees to monitor and evaluate their activities in the national level. Then the evaluated results can be included in the annual reports of the national Geoparks fora and the national committees of the member countries.

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) opened the floor for discussion about the 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan.

Jutta Weber (Bergstraße-Odenwald UNESCO Global Geopark/Germany) strongly supported the comments from Setsuja Nakada regarding the SDGs, because the UGGps are considered as model territories for the implementation and communication of the Global Agenda 2030 and a lot of the goals are partly already mentioned, but not in detail in the different actions of the Action Plan.

Martina Paskova (Bohemian Paradise UNESCO Global Geopark/Czechia) mentioned that the reference on the indigenous people is missing in the Action Plan. Suggested also to have representation of the Youth Forum in the GGN Regional Networks.

Theodore Brown (Itoigawa UNESCO Global Geopark/Japan) offered his support to the suggestions of Setsuja Nakada on having more information on the SDGs in the GGN Action Plan. Supported also Martina Paskova’s suggestion on including actions on indigenous peoples in the action plan. He mentioned that it is overall an excellent strategy for the coming years, but there is place for enhancing communication not only within the Geoparks, but also outside the Geoparks with related organizations, with UNESCO, with the general public through marketing strategies and also enhancing the collaboration within and between the regional networks. Agreed strongly with the promotion of the Geoparks’ brand proposed in the action plan.

Andreas Schüller (Vulkaneifel UNESCO Global Geopark/Japan) (CHAT): “It is a very comprehensive Action plan, it is challenging. Think that we all can contribute the fulfillment within our respective capacities so that the GGN as a common entity will be successful in implementing the work load of this Action plan”.

Elizabeth Silva (GGN Individual member) informed that there was a very good discussion in the AC meeting about the importance of the SDGs and the communication among the members of the GGN. The document is very good and with some minor adjustments it will become even better. Commented that it is necessary to connect the working groups with the relevant SDGs. The GGN should be able to send a report with the achievements connected with the SDGs not only to UNESCO, but also to the UN, because the SDGs belong to the agenda proclaimed by the United Nations and UNESCO supports it. It is very important that the GGN has a strong strategic regarding the SDGs like the WHS and the MAB have so that we can demonstrate how much the GGN has worked contributing to the achievement of the goals of the SDGs. For UNESCO it would be very important to have a good feedback on the work that has been done regarding this.

Kazuhiro Nobe (Oki Islands UNESCO Global Geopark/Japan) (CHAT): “We wanted to comment, that we think it is very important to have indicators to measure whether the strategic actions are achieved, and setting specific targets would be a good idea too”.

Chris Woodley-Stewart (North Pennines AONB UNESCO Global Geopark/UK) mentioned that the strategic plan document, with the addition of some indicators and the written links to the SDGs, will be a very strong document. Proposed to adopt the strategy subject to the relatively minor changes being made.

Jose Maria Barrera (Villuercas Ibores Jara UNESCO Global Geopark/Spain) informed that the strategic plan document has been discussed among the colleagues in Spain. They support the document as it is clear and strong and it will be very helpful for the activities in the Spanish Forum. The annual reports of the fora could be a good tool in order to follow the progress of the strategy.

DECISION: The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed to the adaptation of the presented 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan including the suggestions made on the SDGs, the indigenous people, the strengthening of the GGN Regional Networks collaboration and the indicators.

“Zero” votes against the adaptation of the 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan including the suggestions made on the SDGs, the indigenous people, the strengthening of the GGN Regional Networks collaboration and the indicators.

“Zero” abstentions for the adaptation of the 2022-2023 GGN Action Plan including the suggestions made on the SDGs, the indigenous people, the strengthening of the GGN Regional Networks collaboration and the indicators.

6. GGN 2022 Membership fees (Article 5, Section 1)

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) presented the GGN Executive Board proposal on the GGN Annual Membership Fee 2022. Informed that the GGN Executive Board members taking into account the current situation unanimously proposed to have no changes on the membership fee policy of the Network which is as follows:

CATEGORY OF INCOME	ANNUAL FEE	ESTIMATION	INCOME
Institutional members	1.500 €	177 * 1.500 €	265.500 €
Individual members	100 €	33 * 100 €	3.300 €
Conference participant fee	50 €	800 * 50 €	40.000 €
Supporting members	2.000 €	1 * 2.000 €	2.000 €
Supporting members (non profit)	3.000 €	1 * 3.000 €	3.000 €
TOTAL			313.800 €

*Annual Membership Fee 2022 (agreed GGN Budgeted 2022)
Annual Membership Fee equal for all Institutional Members 1.500€*

DECISION: *The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed to the proposed Annual Membership Fee 2022.*

“Zero” votes against the proposed Annual Membership Fee 2022.

“Zero” abstentions for the proposed Annual Membership Fee 2022.

7. Approval of the GGN Honorary Members (Article 4, Section 2)

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) presented the GGN Executive Board proposal for the Honorary Members:

- (a) Professor Patrick McKeever,
- (b) Professor Kazo Oike.

The CVs of the proposed GGN Honorary Members were uploaded at the GGN website at the following link:

<https://globalgeoparksnetwork.org/?p=5991>

DECISION: *The GGN Institutional and Individual members who were present unanimously agreed on the proposal for the GGN Honorary Members: Professor Patrick McKeever and Professor Kazo Oike.*

“Zero” votes against the proposed GGN Honorary Members.

“Zero” abstentions for the proposed GGN Honorary Members.

8. GGN Executive Board candidatures presentation

Jin Xiaochi (P.R. China) candidate for Vice president of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Ibrahim Komoo (Malaysia) candidate for Vice president of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Guy Martini (France) candidate for General Secretary of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Kristin Rangnes (Norway) candidate for Treasurer of the GGN Executive Board presented her candidature

Driss Achbal (Morocco) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Melanie Boarder (UK) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented her candidature

John Calder (Canada) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Marie-Luise Frey (Germany) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented her candidature

Kana Furusawa (Japan) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented her candidature

Artur Sá (Portugal) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Jianping Zhang (P.R. China) candidate for member of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

Nickolas Zouros (Greece) candidate for president of the GGN Executive Board presented his candidature

9. GGN Elections

9.1. Election of the GGN Executive Board

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) announced that the voting for the elections of the GGN Executive Board members will open at 14:00 GMT on the 15th of December and will close at 02:00 GMT on the 16th of December 2021.

9.2. Election of the GGN Advisory Committee Chair (ROUND I)

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) announced the results of the elections for the GGN Advisory Committee Chair:

- 18 votes (44%) for Professor Setsuja Nakada,
- 16 votes (39%) for Dr Elizabeth Silva,
- 7 votes (17%) for Professor Francisco do O' de Lima Junior.

According to the GGN Statutes as no candidate has more than 50% of the votes, a second round of voting needs to be done between the two first candidates.

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) announced that the voting for the elections of the GGN Advisory Committee Chair between Setsuja Nakada and Elizabeth Silva will take place in parallel to the elections for the GGN Executive Board members.

9.3. Election of the GGN Advisory Committee Chair (ROUND II)

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) provided technical information on the voting procedure. Announced that the voting platform will open at 14:00 GMT on the 15th of December and will close at 02:00 GMT on the 16th of December 2021. The results will be announced during the closing ceremony of the 10th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks and they will be published at the GGN website.

10. Any other business

10.1. Proposal for 8 new UNESCO Global Geoparks

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) informed that at the UNESCO website (<https://en.unesco.org/news/unesco-global-geoparks-council-proposes-8-new-unesco-global-geoparks>) was published the list of the territories that have been positively evaluated to become UNESCO Global Geoparks. These territories are:

- Ries (Germany)
- Platåbergen (Sweden)
- Mëllerdall (Luxembourg)
- Buzău Land (Romania)
- Salpausselkä (Finland)
- Kefalonia-Ithaca (Greece)
- Caminhos dos Cânions do Sul (Brazil)
- Sérido (Brazil)

Nickolas Zouros (GGN President) thanked everybody for the work that has been done and the achievements accomplished up to now. Thanked also the organizers for the support and for organizing the 9th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks.

The meeting closed at 14.00 GMT.