

GGN – National Fora/Committees Annual Report 2021

1. IDENTITY

National Fora/Committee: Österreichisches Geoparkforum, AUSTRIA,

Year of inscription: 2002

2. MEMBERS

Chair: Oliver Gulas-Wöhri, Styrian Eisenwurzen UGGp, o.gulas@eisenwurzen.com

Members: Horst Ibetsberger, Ore of the Alps UGGp, horst.ibetsberger@geoglobe.at

Gerald Hartmann, Karawanken/Karavanke UGGp, gerald.hartmann@geopark-karawanken.at

3. ACTIVE APPLICATIONS

Active application in your country: No active applications

Territories that you are advising: no territories at the moment

4. ACTIVITIES

The year 2021 brought again the opportunity to have more (digital) and regular exchange with the Austrian UNESCO commission and Austrian Academy of Science. Several exchanges led to the following funded projects in the field of sustainable tourism, science and/or regional development starting with 2021 and 2022:

- Support funding from the ministry of education because of Covid19
- Scientific small scale research project for each Geopark on Geosites
- Application for funding of a research project within the Austrian academy of sciences' research program Earth System Sciences (ESS): Moving mountains - landslides as geosystem services in Austrian geoparks

It also added regular exchange with responsible regional departments and politicians and strengthened the visibility on a nationwide scale. A good networking ground source which the Austrian UGGps can build on. The chair Oliver Gulas-Wöhri had the opportunity to present the Geopark concept in the following countries: Armenia, Georgia and Sweden.

Styrian Eisenwurzen: The Geopark established at two major sites new information panels about geoscience and heritage. A new Geopark library in the GeoVillage Gams was finalized as well. All schools within the Geopark (5 primary and 1 secondary school) are Geopark partner schools since October 2021.

Ore of the Alps: The existing copper trail as a long distance trail is under renovation. In the visitor centre in Bischofshofen the Geopark had a special exhibition about the Himalaya. Climate development in the history of the earth and climate change in the present are focal topics. The British research group Basecamp Research collected soil Geopark to study the biodiversity. Results are expected soon and will be presented to the public.

Karawanken/Karavanke: The Geopark has one bigger Interreg Slovenia-Austria funded project addressing Geotourism including a Geopark visitor center, Geoplayground and Geogame. A second project is establishing a long-distance hiking trail around the Geopark (approx.. 260 km, 12 daily stages for different groups) including training of guides and establishing infrastructure.