

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2021

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Rokua UNESCO Global Geopark, Finland, European Geoparks Network

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2010 / 2018



Rokua Geopark Challenge Adventure Race, August 2021

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 3 staff including 2 geoscientist(s)

Number of visitors: Approximately 200 000 visitors a year to all the area

Number of Geopark events: Most events were canceled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Rokua Geopark Challenge adventure race was organized in August 2021

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: Rokua Geopark has seven Geopark schools (over 1000 pupils). In addition, many other schools have used the Geopark area and it's educational programs during the year (around 10 classes -> over 250 students).

Number of Geopark press release: Several, approximately 4

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2021

- Visitor numbers in the Geopark sites rose significantly during 2021 as people continued to look for safe outdoor locations to spend their free time. The Rokua National Park recorded a rise of 200% in the amount of visitors from January to July compared to previous year. The Oulujärvi Hiking Area recorded a 30% increase in the visitor numbers compared to the previous year
- Rokua Geopark Challenge Adventure race was started again after many years break. The

Race got a lot of media coverage before and during the event.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Participation of 2 persons to the JEJU Digital Conference. Rokua Geoparks environmental educator, Mikko Kiuttu gave an oral presentation in the event.

Management and Financial Status

- The third (beginning from 2010) Financial and management agreement is in place for the four-year period 2019-2022.

Geoconservation

- The surface area of Rokua National Park was enlarged over 50% in the beginning of 2021. Rokua National Park is the most important protection site in Finland for the vulnerable esker and dune environment.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- National tourism continued to grow during 2021 as many Finnish people wanted to travel and experience the home country instead of going abroad. The records in the number of visitors were beaten in many geosites.
- Rokua Geopark started the operations to repair and renew the Outdoors trails with a granted financing. This EU and state-financed project helps us to maintain our infrastructure and prevent erosion.

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

- In 2020 started a new Nordplus-funded education project: Geoheritage, culture and sustainable communities in rural areas in Finland, Iceland and Norway. The project brings together students and teachers from Katla, Trollfjell and Rokua UGGp's. The project focuses on selected sustainable development goals.

Strategic partnership

- 44 local companies are operating together under the Rokua UNESCO Global Geopark. The main operations are the regional promotion of tourism products.

Promotional activities

- Several promotional activities took place during the year within the limits of covid restrictions. For example, three new exhibitions were opened and the marketing specialist participated in a half dozen online workshops to promote the region and its services for international tour operators.

4. CONTACTS

Manager: Vesa Krökki, vesa.krokki@humanpolis.fi

Geologist: Jari Nenonen, jari.nenonen@gtk.fi

Educator: Mikko Kiuttu, mikko.kiuttu@humanpolis.fi