



Issue 4 2008
Office of the Global Geoparks Network

GGN Newsletter



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The TaiAn's leg of the Olympic torch relay was initiated officially at about 11:30am, July 22 as the first torchbearer of this leg, Xing Aowei who was the gymnastic group champion in Sydney Olympic Games 2000, set out. The Olympic torch was relayed through 120 torchbearers to the last torchbearer, Bi Wenjing who won the second place of Uneven Bars Competition in Atlanta Olympic Games 1996 and the world champion of "Word Cup" Gymnastic Final 1998. This leg was concluded successfully with Bi Wenjing kindling the cauldron in the Tiandi Square, Tianwai Village under the foot of Mt. Taishan at 12:43am.

At 14:00 or so, the Olympic torch "climbed up" the top of Mt. Taishan to show Olympic spirit that set off the natural scenery and cultural features of Mt. Taishan. The nationally excellent female judge, Fan Hongyan, was the first to light her torch; next, she showed off the Olympic flame to tourists on the summit of Mt. Taishan, with a smile on her face. Tourists' enthusiasm ran high along with the Olympic flame. Afterwards, Xing Aowei waved to spectators with his torch lit while he was trotting. At that moment, the cheers "Go Olympics, Go Mt. Taishan" resounded through the mountain to make majesty and generosity of Mt. Taishan more prominent. Finally, these two torchbearers raised up their "Xiangyun" torches simultaneously. Strong fog disappeared here at Nantianmen (meaning Southern Heaven Gate), so the green vegetation on Mt. Taishan served as a foil to the red Olympic flame transmitting warm blessings. The Olympic flame concluded its short show on the summit of Mt. Taishan in tourists' rising cheers.

Olympic torch lit on top of Mt. Taishan

The scholar who study the culture of Mt. Taishan, Zhou Ying, told the reporter that the geologic physiognomy of Mt. Taishan was unique but quite similar to that of Greece's Mt. Olympus, hence many Chinese and foreign scholars called Mt. Taishan "China's Mt. Olympus". Both had profound natural culture origins and more importantly, both are associated with sport, he said. In ancient China, Mt. Taishan was a sports mountain, for example around which such sports as CuJu and WuShu were popular long ago and where a nationwide WuShu competition, "Dongyuemiao Arena", was held on March 28 a year in Chinese lunar calendar from Song Dynasty to Ming Dynasty. The Olympic flame reaching the top of Mt. Taishan announced the alliance for the first time between sports mountains of these two ancient civilizations.

The Olympic flame atop Everest two-plus months ago honored Chinese solemn promise made to the world in the bid for the 29th Olympic Games and the Olympic flame atop Mt. Taishan now offered the most genuine blessing of this



China's famous mountain to Beijing Olympic Games.



Mount Tai, a Witness of Marriage——Wedding Ceremony, Celebrating Olympic Games

Mount Tai, a Witness of Marriage. New Couples, Hand in Hand with Olympic Games

On August 8, the opening day of the 29th Beijing Olympic Games, 25 new couples took part in a collective wedding ceremony entitled "Mount Tai, a Witness of Marriage; Wedding Ceremony, Celebrating Olympic Games." Jointly sponsored by Mount Tai Scenery Area, Tai'an Daily and Tai'an City Youth League Committee, the collective wedding ceremony was held at the Tianwai Village Square at the foot of Mount Tai with a theme of "Waiting for a thousand years – Hand in hand with 2008." The wedding ceremony aims at setting up new code of conduct, changing old point of view on marriage, transmitting Olympic Spirit and publicizing culture of Mount Tai.

With the background of Mount Tai, 25 new couples walked down the red carpet. Firecrackers



and colored banners made the square full of a happy atmosphere. The 25 lucky couples walked into the palace of wedding. With the 29th Beijing Olympic Games held in Beijing and wedding ceremony at the foot of Mount Tai, the new couples were feeling their life as stable as Mount Tai.



Olympic torch starts run at Fangshan Geopark

The Olympic torch was lit at the Zhoukoudian site of "Peking Man" in Fangshan Global Geopark at 7am, August 8 when was the final day of the Olympic torch relay lasting 130 days through over 100,000km.

On that day, the torch relay started from the Zhoukoudian Museum where the whole course of discovery of Peking Man sites was exhibited, the origin of modern man was learned about and there were some important Peking Man sites nearby. Not running directly to the next torchbearer, the first torchbearer Feng Gong, one of the best Chinese comedians, bowed towards the statue of Zhoukoudian Peking Man at the starting point instead to express his worship to ancient ancestors. Afterwards, he waved towards the cheering crowd while running down.

In the current afternoon, the Olympic torch ended its relay in five districts of Beijing to enter the main stadium of Games of the XXIX Olympiad, Bird's Nest. In the evening, the main Olympic torch burned with a bright flame on the grand opening ceremony.

Guests from IOC visit Zhoukoudian Site in Fangshan Geopark

4 distinguished guests from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to attend the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games - Games of the XXIX Olympiad visited the Zhoukoudian site in Fangshan Geopark in the morning of August 1. After looking around such scenic spots as Museum, Peking Man Cave and Upper Cave in high spirits, these guests received the CD of the Site introduction in English, the Peking Man commemorative badge, the gatefold in Chinese, English and French as well as the card of 7 foreign scientists' profiles stamped with the signature of the director of this museum from the Zhoukoudian Site Museum. The cultural implications of the Site held strong interest of these guests.



The Activity Sites of the Ancient Human Being at Zhoukoudian



The site of the famous "Peking Man" (*Homo erectus pekinensis*) is situated at 40km southwest of the Beijing City. It is one of the birthplaces of the ancient human being and was approved by the UNESCO as "world cultural heritage" on Dec. 11, 1987. The site is located at Longgushan (dragon bone) Hill, Zhoukoudian. In the past more than 80 years 27 excavation spots within an area of 4 km² had been completed successively. To date it is the largest pre-history remains thesaurus in Asia and plays an important role in the study of the human being evolution in the world.

The Zhoukoudian remains were initially excavated by Swede, J.G. Anderson, in 1918. After 11 years, that is, on Dec. 2, 1929, a Chinese palaeo-anthropologist, discovered the first complete skull of *Sinanthropus pekinensis* (Peking Man). It was an epoch-making discovery which established the evolution stage of "Homo erectus", solved the

question of the adscription of *Homo erectus* man in Indonesian, and demonstrated the reasoning of the "polygenism" of the human being's nascence and "continuous evolution plus hybridization" theory. The discovery is also the main evidence for studying the origin and evolution of the humankind of both the east and the west types, which are represented by the Mongolian human being species. The stoneware and ash layers unearthed proved that the Peking Man at that time had developed the skills for work, using fire and how to control it. The disputable truth that "work creates both the human being and the world" is validated once again in the Zhoukoudian remains scenic district.

The Zhoukoudian ancient human being site is a thesaurus full of scientific information and resources on the evolution of humankind. It is not only the Chinese research base for the study of paleo-anthropology, old and new stoneware archeology and Quaternary geology, but also the important base for the study of the origin and evolution of the mankind in the world.

Reconstruction of lighting in Shihuadong Scenic Spot of Fangshan Geopark for Olympiad

In order to welcome the Beijing Olympic Games, exhibit the natural uncanny workmanship to all athletes and tourists and conserve well the valuable natural resource, i.e. Rock Flower Cave (Shihuadong in Chinese), the Beijing Municipal Institute of Geology and the Guilin Electrical Equipment Scientific Research Institute were invited to redesign the interior lighting in Shihuadong Scenic Spot. The Interior Lighting Design for Shihuadong has been approved by relevant experts who



were organized by the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Land and Resources, which will be put into practice as fast as possible in the

Shihuadong Scenic Spot.

The former dominant metal halide lights were characterized by inability to make some landscape details clear, high heat output, no function of instantaneous switch-on and unfavorability to the conservation of such internal heritage resources as stalactite in the event of long lighting. They, therefore, were replaced by the lights with high efficiency, energy saving and low heat output, e.g. LED lights and high-frequency non-electrode lights, in this reconstruction. Moreover, low-power energy-saving lights were applied to lighting in the streetlight system. Altogether RMB 36,570,000 were invested in this reconstruction to substitute wires and cables of 18400 meters, karst cave-dedicated LED display magnetic control boxes and switches of 60 sets, 49 protective light boxes for scenic spot names

and education, 31 light boxes for publicity, and LED spotlights and dampproof streetlights of over 1,400 sets.



The implementation of Interior Lighting Design for Shihuadong will contribute to a reduction in the problems caused by lighting, for instance interior temperature increase and humidity drop and plant pollution, a further improvement in the interior microenvironment, acceleration in the growth and development of interior landscapes and better conservation of the interior rare geoheritage while being developed.



Lushan launches "Hot Olympics, Cool Lushan" thematic activities

In order to welcome the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games and take an active part in the Olympic Games, Lushan ceremoniously launched the tourism activities of which theme was "Hot Olympics, Cool Lushan" while it was concentrating on a boost in the quality and level of service. It also presented many Lushan-specific tourism programs opportunely.

At the same time, Lushan held the tourism promoting conference with the slogan "Hot Olympics, Cool Lushan" in Shanghai, arranging the special tourism train from Shanghai to Lushan. Besides, it assigned its teams to main tourist generating regions around it as well as Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Nanjing, Beijing and other tourist generating regions for promotion. It implemented the policy of preferential ticket mostly among students, teachers and elders. In Xiamen, it fixed its target population at Taiwanese in consideration of initiation of cross strait weekend charter flights. A "TV wall" was set in the street crossing center garden in Lushan so that tourists could watch the grand Olympic games whenever. All scenic spots, hotels and restaurants had gotten ready by repairing and maintaining TV sets and circuits in order to enable tourists to enjoy the Olympic games even during their trips.

Lushan promised it would resort to creditable and civilized service to make more tourists appreciate its beautiful scenery, experience its cool air and feel the happiness arising from watching the Olympic games.

Zhang Jiajie Geopark — a travel destination to express concern for Olympiad



After Games of the XXIX Olympiad was initiated duly in Beijing, tourists was still in an endless stream in the core scenic spots of Zhang Jiajie that is the world natural heritage and the global geopark. Its elite attractions, e.g. Forest Geopark, Jinbian (Gold Whip) Brook, Huanglong Cave and Tianzi Mountain, became a wonderful destination of Chinese and foreign tourists where they can express their love for landscapes and concern for this Olympiad. The statistics showed that its core scenic spot, i.e. Wulingyuan Scenic Spot, received Chinese and foreign tourists of over 20,000 person-times average per day from Aug 8 to 11, just below the daily average person-time before this Olympiad was initiated.

Zhangjiajie, which is located in the region of subtropical zone mountain monsoon humid climate, is an ideal holiday resort that has a high forest coverage and well-protected vegetation. The Zhang Jiajie tourism management sector and the management committees of all scenic areas in Zhang Jiajie launched a chain of events related to civilized attraction creation; moreover, they actively organized the promotional activities of which theme was "watching Olympic games in Beijing and viewing scenery in Zhang Jiajie" in June and July. These events and activities had raised the recognition and reputation further and so attracted volumes of tourists to visit Zhang Jiajie during this Olympiad.

All tourist enterprises stressed their service quality and tourist security, with the purpose of ensuring all tourists have a good time in Zhang Jiajie during this Olympiad. In addition, such tourist enterprises as Tianzi Mountain Rope Way and Wulingyuan International Holiday Village installed high-resolution plasma LCD TV sets in tourist convergence sections. The medal tally of daily games was displayed in the hall of Jingrui Hotel in the urban area in order to enable tourists from everywhere to know the timely progress of this Olympiad and cheer for Olympic games and Olympic athletes.

It is said that the colorful opening ceremony of China Hunan International Tourism Festival 2008 will be held in Zhang Jiajie on Sep. 12. An experienced person of tourism analyzed that the tourism would continue to grow in Zhang Jiajie.





Wudalianchi Geopark welcomes the Olympic Games with a new appearance

---3 scenic spots are reconstructed in Wudalianchi Geopark for welcoming the 2008 Olympic Games

3 scenic spots, i.e. Longmen Rock Village Scenic Spot, Wenbo Scenic Spot and Mount Heilong Scenic Spot, were reconstructed in Wudalianchi Geopark for welcoming the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games. Concretely, the tourist trails connecting to these three spots were lengthened.

Although these trails enabled tourists to see the beautiful scenery in Wudalianchi in the past, their reception amount was limited. In order to satisfy tourists' travel and sightseeing during the Olympic Games, the sightseeing plank roads in Longmen Rock Village Scenic Spot and Wenbo Scenic Spot and the tourist trail around the volcanic vent in Mount Heilong Scenic Spot were extended specially. As a result, more sights can fall into the visual field of more tourists; the objective of more comprehensive and deeper visit in Wudalianchi comes true; and the curiosity and desire for exploration of more tourists are met.



Linking with Olympic Games, abandoning to the nature - a special offer of Yuntaishan Global Geopark

Yuntaishan Global Geopark, Henan Province, prepared for tourists a platform watching Olympic Games during the 29th Beijing Olympic Games with a theme of "Scenery-Olympic Games." Yuntaishan geopark invested more than three million yuan and set up five LED super-large screens at the tourist gathering areas as the main gate, Hongshixia Valley, Xiaozhaigou Valley. These screens will live telecast Olympic Games and the medal list.

At this time, it is the best season to watch waterfalls of Yuntaishan geopark. The geopark has been advertising at CCTV, Beijing Subway Line 5 and Booklet of Olympic Games Fine Tourist Lines. The sign boards at the scenic spots have been improved with multi-languages offering human-based services.

Wonderful games in Beijing and beautiful scenery in Yuntaishan Global Geopark.

Walk in Yuntaishan geopark, going along with Beijing Olympic Games.

Enjoy Olympic Games Enjoy beautiful Jingpo Lake scenery

A harmonious and festival atmosphere welcoming the 29th Beijing Olympic Games is on Jingpo Lake Geopark since the beginning of July. With promotion activities, room bookings increased obviously and there is a 22.7% increasing rate than last July.

More and more tourist teams and groups have enthusiastically booked the hotels and sanatoria rooms for the period of the Olympic Games from August 8 to 24. To satisfy the need of the guests for watching Olympic Games live telecast during their sightseeing, the Jingpo Lake Geopark arranged satellite live telecasting at the Jingpo Mountain Villa Plaza, Baoyue Bay Scenery Area and bathing beaches. Through 100 sqm super-large and superior definition screen, tourists can watch live Olympic Games as well as enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Jingpo Lake.

The Osnabrück Declaration



The
delegates at the 3rd
International Conference on Geoparks,
held from June 22 –26 2008 during the United
Nations International Year of Planet Earth and held
in the city of Osnabrück, Germany hereby affirm that:

1. Geoparks are experimental territories for the 21st century with the joint aims of preserving the rich geological heritage of our planet and using that heritage for the sustainable development of our local communities.
2. Geoparks provide excellent tools for communicating the memories of the Earth not only to local communities but to the wider public both through the provision of educational and sustainable geotourism activities.
3. The amended guidelines and operational procedures for the Global Geoparks Network, adopted at this meeting, provide an excellent framework for the further development of high quality, active geoparks and the basis from which a strong network will continue to develop.
4. We commit to continue to work together to achieve our common goals of the protection and appreciation of the geodiversity of the planet through cooperation and networking between the members of the Global Geoparks Network and to assist aspiring geopark projects in attaining geopark status.
5. While continuing to work in close cooperation with the World Heritage and the Man and the Biosphere programmes, the geopark community will continue to explore ways of further building and strengthening the profile of the Global Geoparks Network within UNESCO and across the world generally.
6. Recognising that communication is the key to our success, the global geological community should continue to work together in communicating the importance of geological issues, such as geohazards and climate change, to society and recognise that geoparks are a valuable tool in doing this.
7. In order to achieve these aims, geoparks need to continually work with local communities and stakeholders to ensure that geoheritage issues are fully recognised, understood and enjoyed by all.

Osnabrück, Deutschland
26 June 2008

UNESCO releases the latest Guidelines and Criteria for GGN

UNESCO revised the Guidelines and Criteria for National Geoparks seeking UNESCO's assistance to join the Global Geoparks Network newly in the 3rd International Geoparks Conference, releasing the new revision on its website. In the newly-revised articles, application materials can be submitted at any time instead of by the end of June a year and then UNESCO will schedule the field expedition to applicants as a whole.

Find the Guide to Application for Inclusion in GGN in PDF format.

<http://www.unesco.org/science/earth/geoparks/2008guidelinesJuneendorsed.pdf>



Let pupils know more Geo-activities in Naturtejo Geopark

June was a month for pupils. Several geo-activities were held for them to learn more about Waters, Rocks, Forest, and so on in Naturtejo Geopark.



Searching for Waters with such enthusiasm is worthy! 43 brilliant pupils with 8/9 years old from the Primary School from Oleiros found the importance of water for building landscapes and life in a full day of activities guided by Carlos Neto de Carvalho and Joana Rodrigues. This was the final test for a new educational program of Naturtejo Geopark specially prepared for Primary schools. Kids from Oleiros visited the geomonuments around their school and found many examples for concepts they really knew! In fact, it was very easy to explain geological processes like weathering, fluvial erosion, water cycle and the importance of groundwater.

Exhibition of School projects "Geological Heritage of Oleiros". The Oleiros School Association presented in Oleiros Tourism Office the best of Oleiros landscape through the eyes of their young pupils. By the enthusiasm, with so many drawings resulted from the fieldtrips and reconstitutions with local rock pebbles, this was a very interesting exhibition also with work from kindergarten pupils.

Pupils from Castelo Branco District visit the Past and the Present of their Forest. The annual Meeting of PROSEPE Forest School Clubs was organized this year in the World's Day of Environment. 60 pupils coming from Oleiros, Castelo Branco, Vila Velha de Ródão and Sobreira Formosa, all schools in the Geopark's territory participated in a full day of activities. The morning was reserved to explore the Living Science Centre from Proença-a-Nova dedicated to Forest. This institution offered an explorer kit to all the groups to help their research in the forest. After the picnic there was time to visit fossil Annona-trees in the House of Arts and Culture of Tejo, Vila Velha de Ródão.

Searching for Rocks with pupils from Estreito and Orvalho. 32 pupils and teachers from the 1st to 4th grade of the Primary schools from the Estreito and Orvalho villages visited their Moradal quartzite mountains to learn more about rocks. The visit started in the old Zebro Quarry where Joana Rodrigues and Carlos Neto de Carvalho show the differences between minerals and rocks, rock types and the usefulness of rock by Man. Then the visit moved to Cabeço Mosqueiro viewpoint to see landform, learn how to use a compass and see the important of geodiversity for human settlement and agriculture.

Youngsters raise geopark profile

THREE Sutherland pupils and one from Wester Ross represented young people from the North West Highlands Geopark at the World Geopark Conference in Osnabrück, Germany, from June 20-29.

Emma Adam (Achfary) and Niamh O'Driscoll (Kinlochbervie) of Kinlochbervie High School, and Ullapool High School pupils Darren Gordon (Lochinver) and Matthew Edwards (Achiltibuie), accompanied by Kinlochbervie teacher Murdo MacPherson, participated in an international youth camp, "Meet your Geopark", organised by Germany's Terra Vita Geopark as a special section of the conference.

Along with students from ten European geoparks in Germany, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Romania, Portugal and the United Kingdom, they engaged in a range of activities and made presentations about their own geopark to their fellow students and the main conference delegates.

The north-west pupils proved to be excellent and confident representatives of our geopark and the Highlands of Scotland in general, reports Mr MacPherson. The four received high praise from conference delegates for their ability to portray effectively the physical landscape and what it means to live in Scotland's first geopark through their presentation, "North West Highlands Geopark – not just a pile of rocks!" Matthew and Emma were both resplendent in kilts for the occasion. In addition the four were asked to make a further presentation, representing all the participants, outlining what had been learned and achieved throughout the youth camp experience.

"Through a range of activities Emma, Matthew, Darren and Niamh readily engaged with the young people from other countries and a number of international friendships and links were made which will no doubt be developed further" said Mr MacPherson. "The activities were related to features of the Terra Vita Geopark and were designed to foster co-operation among the young people and give them an enjoyable experience. Included were: learning to identify and release fossils from rock, experimental archaeology involving forging, tool making and pottery, producing mineral-based natural paint colours, nature photography and land

art involving creating patterns from quarry profiles. There were also active pursuits including climbing, archery, cycling, bonfires, barbecues and football. With Germany making it through to the Euro 2008 final there was an intense atmosphere, although the Croatian pupils were saddened to see their team being knocked out, a feeling the Scots knew too well!

"Our pupils were also expected to produce a representative dish from their area as part of an international dinner. They chose to make Cullen skink (thanks to Niamh's mother for the recipe) and, along with a wide range of dishes made by the other pupils, this didn't last long once the eating started.

"All four pupils had a good immersion in German life, and amongst the features they particularly noticed were: the high level of recycling, the lack of taps (sensors are used to turn water on and off for conservation), the neatness of streets and buildings including perfect reconstructions after war damage, efficient public transport, graffiti which is more artistic than disfiguring, obedience to traffic rules (don't walk against the "red man" at all costs), the need to watch out for bikes, you can't escape McDonalds, cold meat and cheese for breakfast, the continental summer heat, and getting completely soaked in seconds by sudden intense thunderstorms.

"Their time in Germany not only helped raise the profile of the North West Highlands Geopark, but more importantly it has helped them develop a confidence in an international setting and expanded their horizons."

Emma Adam said of their trip: "Going to Germany for the conference was a great experience. As well as coming away with knowledge of other parts of Europe, we also left with new friendships."

Matthew Edwards commented: "For me the trip was one which will not easily be forgotten. I learned a lot about different European cultures, found out about geoparks from around the world, and have also made friendships with people which will hopefully never be broken."

Said Darren Gordon: "It was an unforgettable experience, to be appreciated in the future. The trip allowed us to be educated about other geoparks as well as appreciating our own, and at the same time having fun and meeting many new people."

Niamh O'Driscoll added: "It was a fantastic experience meeting people from other countries, learning about their cultures and having a great time whilst doing so."

The pupils are now considering forming a geopark youth group to carry the momentum forward, by further developing the international links which have been made and encouraging activities within their own geopark.



School Programs in Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest

Each year the Museum invites all students and teachers to get to know and to participate in educational programs...

...to travel 20 million years into the geological past of the Aegean and to encounter phenomena and processes which can not be directly observed.

...to get to know the petrified forest and the plants that lived in the region of the Aegean millions of years ago, and to compare them with those of the modern ecosystems of Lesvos.

...to try to uncover step by step all the activities and changes that have contributed to the creation of the current landscapes of Lesvos.

...to learn about the geological history of the Aegean and the most important volcanoes of Lesvos, and also to experiment with the creation of a volcanic explosion.

Besides, who would not want the unique experience of getting to know a 20 million year old fossilized tropical forest or walking into the heart of a volcanic crater!!

The educational programs for school teams are geared towards particular age groups:

- A. children 4 - 7 years old** (Kindergarten to year 1)
- B. children 8 - 12 years old** (3rd – 6th year)
- C. children 13 - 17 years old** (High school – Lyceum)

The educational programs of the Museum aim at bringing children into contact with the subjects of natural history, the permanent and temporary exhibits, to tweak their imagination and their interest in the planet, the history of the development of life, the importance of geotopes, the natural processes, the protection of ecosystems, and the modern environmental problems, by allowing them to express themselves creatively in the space of the Museum.

Depending on the theme, the educational programs include a tour through the exhibitions halls, the laboratories and in the parks. The tour encourages the active participation of the children in their observations and discussions on the exhibits. The visual and aesthetic stimuli that engage the children at the briefing carry over into educational activities such as their own pictures and crafts through games with different materials.

With the completion of each program, each student takes home a specifically designed booklet, which he/she can process alone or with the remainder of the team at school.

The form includes small explanatory texts, photographs, maps, representations, questions for discussion and space for drawing or writing.



Alston school pupils benefit from UNESCO European Geopark Youth Camp

Four children and two members of staff from Samuel King's School in Alston have just come back from a European Geopark Youth Camp in Germany, thanks to a project organised through the North Pennines AONB Partnership.



Year 9 and 10 pupils Clare Dodd, Stefany Heslop and Chelsea Shepherd from Alston and Joe Beadle from St John's Chapel, Weardale, and their teachers Alan Fields and Kate Dodd took part in fossil cast making, art activities, rock climbing and a whole range of geologically based activities with young people from nine other UNESCO European Geoparks from countries including Croatia, Germany, Scotland and the Czech Republic. The Youth Camp was fully funded by the German Environmental Foundation through the Terra Vita European Geopark centred on Osnabruck.

In order to go on the Youth Camp the pupils had to undertake a project on their Geopark. With the help of the AONB Partnership's geologist Elizabeth Pickett and Weardale media artist Rachel Clarke, 15 pupils from the school made a brilliant short film about the North Pennines AONB's geology, landscape and mining heritage and its European Geopark status. As part of the Youth Camp, the pupils attended the UNESCO Global Geoparks

Conference, which ran parallel to the Youth Camp, and presented their film to delegates from over 50 countries; they also helped out at a Geoparks Fair where all the European Geoparks promoted their area to the people of Osnabruck.

North Pennines AONB Geodiversity Officer Elizabeth Pickett said: "The pupils learned all about the North Pennines' geology, how to use a camera and how to write and edit a script, as well as aspects of animation, music and set design. They had a great time meeting young people from all across Europe and it was a great opportunity for them".



Fifteen year old Chelsea Shepherd said of the Youth Camp, "Words cannot describe how ace it was!" a sentiment echoed by Geography teacher Alan Fields who added that "I had great time and have some unforgettable memories of the visit". Year 9 pupil Clare Dodd, who presented the pupils work to the Global Geoparks Conference, summed up a feeling shared by all the participants from all the different Geoparks in saying, "I had an amazing time, and



made a lot of new friends."

The North Pennines AONB became Britain's first European Geopark in 2003 and was one of the founding members of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network in 2004. The European and Global Geopark status for the area is managed by the North Pennines AONB Partnership Staff Unit based in Stanhope, Weardale.

AN environmental awareness study tour of Langkawi gave secondary students insights into its geological treasure trove, writes AHMAD FAIRUZ OTHMAN.

Geology may be a subject which is touched sparingly in a secondary schooler's syllabus. A student may need to refer to books or depend on programmes on the Discovery or National Geographic channels to get more information on the subject.

However 60 secondary students from all over Malaysia recently had first-hand experience learning about geology in a place researchers refer to as "the birthplace of the region".

Many of the students knew Langkawi as a vacation paradise which is famous for sun, sea and shopping. But thanks to the recent Matang Mangrove Forest and Langkawi Geopark study tour under the

finally got a taste of what she had previously seen on Discovery Channel.

"It was a great experience! Through the facilitators' explanations, I learned in detail about the history and science of the landscape in Langkawi.

"Before, I could only see it on Discovery Channel. Now I know how fossils were formed hundreds of years ago," said Sarah, who is from SMK Lutong in Miri, Sarawak.

For decades, researchers have known about Langkawi's status as a geological treasure trove. But it was only recently that Langkawi's developers started promoting this aspect of the island.

For two days, the students discovered Langkawi's geopark trail, including the 550 million-year-old Mat Chinchang mountain range, which is accessible by a breathtaking cable car ride.

A Walk in the 'Birthplace of the Region'

Environmental Awareness Programme 2008, the students discovered a whole new side to this tourist destination.

SMK Bandar Tun Hussein Onn, Cheras, Kuala Lumpur student Mohd Fahmi Maslan had vacationed in Langkawi before, but was unaware of its significance in the world's natural history.

"I was shocked to learn that Langkawi has such unique natural spots. I had visited Langkawi with my family two years ago. I never knew all this existed.

"I got to see mangrove forests and learn about the flora and fauna here. I learned a lot about the Earth's surface of Langkawi," said the Form Four student whose only exposure to geology was through books and television.

Another Fourth Former Sarah Renduan Kagawa

The group stepped on centuries-old rocks, rode on boats and trekked into Gua Kelawar at Kilim Geoforest Park, which is located on Langkawi's northeastern shore.

Lecturers from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's (UKM) Institute For Environment and Development (Lestari) acted as facilitators and guided students throughout their learning experience.

Lestari UKM fellow Tanot Unjah was amazed at the students' enthusiasm for geology.

"They were a curious and lively bunch. They were eager to know about the geology on their doorstep, and were actively involved in the excursion."

Many students displayed their strong grasp of current issues by asking Tanot about the region's Earth movements.

Summer Exploration in Longhushan Geopark

---First ten undergraduates' successful entry into a thousand-year-old cave of cliff grave is vitally significant to understanding of how an overhanging coffin is moved into a cave in Longhushan, in an expert's view

The first 10 undergraduate participants in exploring the cliff grave in Longhushan from Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, East China Jiaotong University and Jiangxi Normal University succeeded in entering the No.8 cave of cliff grave in Xianshuiyan (meaning Celestial Water Rock), which had been unknown for one thousand years, by means of a wooden winch on July 15. Following that, these 10 students had an in-situ archaeological study and exploration on this grave under the instruction of Prof. Liu Shizhong who was an archaeologist and the deputy director of Jiangxi Provincial Museum.

In order to uncover various puzzles of cliff graves in Longhushan and

provide young students with an arena of showing their own knowledge and courage, an undergraduate exploration activity was organized in Longhushan during this summer holiday. It was planned that 100 undergraduates would be sent to cliff graves in Longhushan by batches for the in-situ archaeological study. This activity had found a strong echo in nationwide students' hearts since its was launched. Up to now, more than 3000 students from over 100 colleges/universities throughout the country were enthusiastic about application. In the morning of July 15, 10 students were selected for a trial of cave entry after all were ready. In the exploration scene, the correspondent noticed that this cave of cliff grave was

in the precipice, Zhexiufeng (meaning Shame Hiding Peak), Xianshuiyan, 107 meters below the top of the Peak, 32 meters above the water surface, difficult of access. 4 large wooden boats and 1 double-layer raft made up of 80 pieces of Mao bamboo were used while over 20 staff members executed different tasks and closely cooperated each other. 10 undergraduates entered the No.8 cave through hoisting with a wooden winch after watching four brothers surnamed "Li" demonstrated how to lift a coffin in person under the command of Prof. Liu Shizhong, a famous archeologist of Jiangxi Province who participated in scientific exploration on cliff graves in Longhushan twice. The whole entry process proceeded

orderly and smoothly. Three sets of camcorders from the channel of CCTV, Travel around China, recorded this process synchronously.

The archeologist, Prof. Liu Shizhong, told the correspondent that nonprofessionals' successful entry into the cliff cave by means of an antique wooden winch was vitally significant to understanding of how an overhanging coffin was moved into a cave in Longhushan.



"Approaching World Heritage, Exploring Geopark" knowledge competition hosted in Huangshan Geopark



The Huangshan Municipal Commission and the Management Committee of Huangshan Geopark co-organized the "Approaching World Heritage, Exploring Geopark" knowledge team competition on July 8. Altogether ten teenager teams from Huangshan City entered this competition.

This competition was an important part of the "Eco-Huangshan Teenager Activity Month" series thematic activities of environmental protection, which were organized by the Huangshan Municipal Commission this year, and the third "Cultural Heritage Day" series activities of Huangshan Scenic Area. It was intended to construct Huangshan into the "China's tourism brand and world's tourism resort" and also into the "fertile soil for scientific development, pure land for ecological civilization and pleasant territory for residential living". Furthermore, it was expected that teenagers could be directed further to know, love and protect Huangshan through such competition.

Beyond the knowledge team competition proceeding on that day, netizens inside and outside Anhui Province could log on relevant websites to answer questions before September 30. Participant netizens had a chance to be gifted a ticket of Huangshan Scenic Area.



Driving on the volcano road paved with asphalt concrete, the reporter can enjoy the handsome road with black and soft surface and the comfortable travel with little bump. Plank paths giving way to trees occur here and there on new protective plant paths on both sides of the volcano road in Wudalianchi Geopark. The reporter learned from the Wudalianchi Scenic Area Environmental Protection Bureau that the concept of environmental protection had penetrated key engineering in Wudalianchi Geopark. The Bureau introduced that environment-friendly toilets had been built in the scenic area for a reduction in pollution; and that the primitive ecology and all plants had been protected to the utmost extent in the newly-developed Wenbo Scenic Area. The Bureau continued that the sector of environmental protection had reinforced the law enforcement, for instance the environmental evaluation before engineering start and the environmental supervision during construction, so as to control the destruction to environment effectively; in the meantime, all construction institutions had performed their own responsibilities positively and regarded the environmental protection as their obligation consciously.

You will certainly indulge yourself in beautiful slope greening and natural ecology on both sides of a highway when you drive to Wudalianchi Geopark.

What you see is just an epitome of environment protection's being stressed in key engineering constructions in Wudalianchi Geopark in recent two years.

The reporter interviewed the superintendent of the engineering when the Wudalianchi Geopark Landscape Highway had been open to traffic for one year. The superintendent said, "The goal of constructing an example, ecological and environment-friendly road had been fixed at the stage of survey and design. The concept of environmental protection was reflected in the entire process from design to construction. Firstly, we paid attention to the protection of natural landscapes when we chose a route from the former highway to be broadened. We transplanted the former landscape trees and were careful not to destroy the greenbelts on both sides during broadening. We also attached importance to the environmental protection during construction. We, for example, removed soil from and dumped soil into the given section in the process of excavation; furthermore, we leveled up the excavated land and converted it into a farmland after the engineering was completed. In this way, we not only reduced the damage to environment but also saved the engineering expense. Secondly, we thought much of the engineering greening. The greenbelts on both sides had been transformed into a garden-style sightseeing botanic belts by planting drought-resisting, adaptable and long-blooming flowers and grass.

Concept of environmental protection penetrates key engineering constructions in Wudalianchi Scenic Area



Call to protect stony land



SCIENTISTS have called on the State Government to protect landmark volcanic features in the Stony Rises as rock crushers continue their sweep of the district.

Thousands of hectares of rock-strewn land between Camperdown and Colac has been transformed into prime grazing land in the last three years by a private contractor using a heavy bulldozer, vibrating compactor and roller.

UNESCO's recognition of the area as part of Australia's first Global Geopark has prompted calls for a review of the practice in areas that have significant landscape or geological value.

Kanawinka Geopark chairwoman Joane McKnight said the crushing of rock in the Stony Rises had been a great concern.

"It frightens me because there's a whole area there that could be lost," Ms McKnight said yesterday.

"That is a very unique habitat right through there - not just geologically but also for its vegetation."

While it was a farmer's right to improve their land for agricultural production, Ms McKnight said some consideration should be

given to setting an area of Stony Rises land aside for conservation and educational purposes as a "compromise".

University of Melbourne geologist Professor Bernie Joyce said further research was needed to identify lava flows in the Western District that could be "adversely affected" by crushing, rolling and raking with heavy machinery.

Professor Joyce, who is a member of the Geological Society of Australia and on the National Trust's state landscape committee, said rock crushing was only a recent threat to Victoria's volcanic heritage.

He said the focus in past years had been on protecting the district's eruption points from inappropriate development such as quarrying, building of houses and overplanting.

"The other one (crushing) has sneaked up on us a bit," Professor Joyce admitted.

The National Trust has listed the Stony Rises area as being of national significance, containing important remnant vegetation and fauna.

"The difficulty in farming the rocky terrain has allowed the survival of vegetation communities which

have been cleared from the more easily cultivated soils found elsewhere in the Western District," the trust states.

Professor Joyce said the trust had also conducted a more recent study of the Hawks Nest Road area that showed it was of state significance. The state's heritage body, Heritage Victoria, is considering both reports.

Professor Joyce said under existing legislation Heritage Victoria could not protect features of geological significance, only cultural features or landforms.

This was different to South Australia where important landscapes and geology could be recognised and protected.

Premier John Brumby said although protection of the rises was a local government issue he was prepared to act on community concern.

"We need to protect these areas while allowing the reasonable use of surrounding areas for agriculture," Mr Brumby said.

"If there was a feeling that some action was warranted, the Government would encourage a report (be) made to the council so that action warranted could be taken."

Naturtejo Geopark in the National Fair of Natural Parks and Environment

Naturtejo Geopark participated in the 3rd National Fair of Natural Parks and Environments, where the theme Geotourism and Geoparks was in discussion during the seminar "Ecotourism for Nature Conservation". The event occurred in the Algarvian city of Olhão and this edition presented several innovations, as the Tourism Fair, where 3 tourist operators from Germany – Eco Reisen, Moderns Reisen, CulTourea Gruppenreisen – an operator from Spain – Hacienda Huella – two representatives of tourism portals about Portugal for the German market – Portugal Mania and Wandern in Portugal – and Lisbon sucursal of an English company for event celebrations – TLC, Events in Portugal were present. In this fair Naturtejo – Intermunicipal Company for Tourism presented its main tourist products and services through Cristina Preguiça. It was a good opportunity for the 40 companies registered in the event to establish motivating contacts for future partnerships with the outside companies. It is worth to mention that Naturtejo Geopark is already a destiny commercialized by one of the operators there, Hacienda Huella.



"Ecotourism for Nature Conservation" was the main subject of the seminar held in the 25th July signaling the celebrations of the World's Day for Nature Conservation and the International Year of Planet Earth with the support of National Commission for UNESCO, with the presence of Tito Rosa, president of the Institute for Nature and Biodiversity Conservation. In this seminar, Diamantino Pereira, professor of Minho University, participated as invited

speaker in the panel "Nature Management and Conservation", with a talk about "Geotourism and Geoparks: strategies for a sustainable development". During his talk, professor emphasized his recent visit to Naturtejo Geopark, the only Portuguese Geopark in the European and Global networks of UNESCO. He said also that "a Geopark look for an increasing number of tourists ambitioning the direct contact with nature, local population, life modes and rural products and, at the same time, to know more about how landscape evolved, about landforms, rocks, soils or minerals. During his talk, that was very important for Naturtejo Geopark, as one of the case studies for the success of geotourism development, there were also defined the main features and aims of the Geopark concept.



The program of the Fair of Natural Parks and Environment included also outdoor activities for all ages and tastes. More than 30 initiatives of nature discovering and observation, environmental education and nature sport, targeted for adults, teenagers and kids were open for public. Besides the presence of several institutions and companies related with nature conservation and tourism sector, like Naturtejo, the Fair also had a market of traditional and biological products, a book showcase about environment and photo, design and handcraft exhibitions. The diversity of activities attracted thousands of visitors to Olhão, among them foreigner tourists, enabling promotion among a much diversified public. Naturtejo participates in this event for the second consecutive time.



Torbay get Government grant to develop projects in its English Riviera Geopark

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has announced details of its Sea Change initiative aimed at promoting Britain's coastal resorts. The first stage of the £45m programme will see £10m invested in Blackpool, Dover and Torbay.

Torbay in Devon has been awarded £2.25m to develop two projects in its English Riviera Geopark. The plans involve artistic regeneration and will create 10 new studios and a gallery as well as a refurbished visitor centre.

Culture and Tourism Minister Margaret Hodge says she hopes the grants will inspire other coastal resorts to draw up plans of their own.

Eco-environment vigorously protected at Lushan Geopark

Recently, The Lushan Mountain Administrative Bureau achieved great results on eco-environment protection.

With an investment of 40 million yuan(RMB), water disposal plants and assorted pipe network have been built. A 13200-meter long blow-off pipeline has been laid which can separate rainwater and sewage from local residents and hotels of the Ruqin Lake area. The quality of the Ruqin Lake water has been turning much better and reached the standard of Grade IV.

In recent years, the Lushan Mountain Administrative Bureau strengthened protection of ornamental and street trees.

More than 100 trees at the scenery spots of Datianchi, Huajing and Three-treasure Tree have been pruned, filled with soil, covered and supported. A scaffold was set up for the 1000-year "Three-treasure Tree".

Umbrella pine, Metasequoia trees and silver fir, the most precious trees of the Lushan Botanic Garden, have been protected by specially appointed workers.

To reduce cutting down of firewood, the government encourages residents to use liquefied gas and a subsidy of



800 thousand yuan has been offered each year. The forest coverage of Lushan area reaches 91.54% and has been listed key State-level public-welfare forests. Live trees reserves have reached 790 thousand cubic meters and occupies the first place in Jiangxi Province.

In Lushan area, auto exhausts are strictly restricted. A day-to-day test is conducted. Auto vehicles will be eliminated forcefully if there is no hope to be qualified in auto exhausts emission.

Green Tourism Promotion in the North Pennines AONB & European Geopark

The AONB Partnership Staff Unit is organising a 'Joining the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) Seminar' for tourism businesses in the North Pennines AONB & European Geopark - 11 September 2008 at Nenthead Mines Heritage Centre

A green approach

More and more visitors are booking with businesses that take a green approach to their products and services. To help businesses to tap into this market whilst making cost savings, the Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS) provides an environmental accreditation that can be used to increase the marketing potential of tourism businesses.

Reduce energy bills

The GTBS equips members with the knowledge and expertise to help make their businesses more sustainable by reducing energy usage and bills as well as providing a marketing edge.

Greening Your Tourism Business Grants

For tourism businesses in the North Pennines AONB there is an added incentive for joining the GTBS - the Greening Your Tourism Business Grant Scheme. This innovative grant scheme is only available to tourism businesses in the North Pennines who are existing members of the GTBS or who are intending to join.

Grants of up to £500 are available at a rate of 50% for any work associated with gaining credit under ANY Measure in the GTBS. Examples of work include: micro-renewables; energy efficiency projects eg. additional insulation or energy efficient light fixtures; recycling facilities; installation of self-closing taps in public wash rooms; provision of secure cycle storage options etc. etc. etc.

The GTBS is a proven tool which...

- Reduces environmental impact
- Identifies cost savings through efficiencies
- Improves public image
- Offers a credible sustainable for consumers
- Clearly links Quality with the Environment
- To see detailed information in the North Pennines AONB Website.



More than 300 kilometers from the Sino-Russian frontier, the Wudalianchi Scenic Area has become a new resort of Russians bit by bit because of its increasingly increased reputation among Russians plus the advertisement and the Sino-Russian cooperation in tourism. It is said that considerable Russian tourists come from the Far Eastern Federal District of Russia where most states are only three or four hours' drive to Wudalianchi and furthermore climate is similar to that in Wudalanchi. The foregoing short drive and similar climate have prompted Russian tourists to stream in Wudalianchi.

many female tourists from Russia are particularly fond of the spring here. A mass of Russians can be noticed to have a tour and recuperation in Wudalianchi. When we saw numerous Russians drinking cold spring water, steeping their feet in cold spring and having an expression of matchless enjoyment on the Medicinal Spring Mountain in the early morning of Dragon Boat Festival, we could not help envying them for their knowing how to enjoy their life.

Russians enjoying cold mineral spring in Wudalianchi

The Wudalianchi Mineral Spring is one of three world-known cold springs, having the fame of "medicinal spring". Its ferrosiliceous magnesium-calcium bicarbonate cold mineral water is natural with sparkling, drinkable, bathable, healthy and therapeutic. It is reported that a majority of female Russians are rheumatics. Since the combination of crenotherapy and traditional Chinese medicine is a terrifically effectual thereby for rheumatism,



CCTV approaches Wudalianchi Global Geopark



The four-person producing group of the column "World Travel" of CCTV International Channel had a special trip to Wudalianchi Global Geopark for investigating and shooting there.

This producing group planned to produce a program titled Supernatural Wudalianchi. In this context, they would shoot this place from the perspective of unprecedentedly astonishing wonder, stimulating primitive ecology and inspiring volcano mecca, telling the story of Wudalianchi to people throughout the world. Producing this program would give rise to an increase in both influence and reputation of Wudalianchi Global Geopark at home and abroad.





Taining Geopark awarded with "Top Ten Beautiful Homes in Fujian Province"

"The Dajin Lake (meaning Great Golden Lake) in Taining Geopark looks like a bright mirror reflecting the ancient temple, fantastic rocks, dangerous stockaded villages, clean spring, precipices and galloping waterfall around it when it is viewed in the air. Too beautiful! Taining Geopark can be compared to a classical craft resulting from uncanny workmanship

Province. Jiang Qiurong, who was the director of Publicity Department of Taining County Commission, attended it upon invitation, receiving the prize cup and certificate and also addressing it. He introduced that Taining was a global geopark and one of top ten attractive towns in China, known as a brilliant pearl on the western bank of Taiwan Strait and famed for its Daxia Landform on water and delicate scenery.



He added that viewing Taining in the air enabled more viewers to overlook Taining's landscapes and appreciate its nice natural scenery, ample history and culture and unique ethnic customs from a particular angle, i.e. the sky. Finally, he expressed his sincere wish that everyone could travel to and invest in Taining.

of the nature as well as an ideal example of human aesthetics," the jury of "Top Ten Beautiful Homes in the Air in Fujian Province" spoke highly of Taining Geopark.

The awards evening took place on July 26 in Fujian



Taining Global Geopark had so far developed the "Geographic Information System (GIS) of Taining Global Geopark" that established the spatial information, statistics and multimedia database related to Taining Global Geopark, integrated the themes including remote sense, map and tourism and realized such functions as spatial inquiry, statistic analysis, mapping output, three-dimensional roaming.

Taining Global Geopark develops GIS

This system, co-developed by the Management Committee of Taining Global Geopark and the Tourism School of Shanghai Normal University, could reflect geo-tourism resources of the Danxia topography in Taining better and provide tourists with needed comprehensive information because it employed the advanced technologies, e.g. GIS, RS (Remote Sense) and GPS (Global Positioning System). This system would be applied to the informationalized routine management of the Management Committee of Taining Global Geopark. Its application would not only help the Management Committee in changing its traditionally static management form into visually dynamic one but also raise the scientific connotation and level of protection, development and management of this geopark, offer better information service to decision-making departments and the public and play an excellent demonstration role.



“The myth of Earth through human hand”

A geopark art exhibition for celebrating the International Year of Planet Earth 2008 under the aegis of the Hellenic National Committee for UNESCO

Among the most interesting events that were implemented within the framework of the celebration of the International Year of Planet Earth 2008 was the art exhibition organised by “Psiloritis Natural Park” European and Global Geopark, in the city of Heraklion on Crete in Greece. Under the aegis of the Hellenic National Committee for UNESCO, the exhibition was materialised at the first days of June 2008, in the imposing venue of Basilica of Saint Marcus and had the inspiring title: “the myth of Earth through human hand”.

Local artists from all around the area of Psiloritis Natural Park participated with their work that included sculpture in stone and wood, painting, ceramics art, loom art, blowing glass art and many more. All the exhibits resembled the natural environment of Psiloritis Natural Park through the material from which they had been constructed and their subjects which in most cases were inspired from tradition and mythology.

Two artists from two European geoparks, the Lesvos Petrified Forest Geopark and the Abberley and

Marvin Hills Geopark, were also invited to participate with their fabulous work.

The exhibition was completed with abundant photographic material in large printings that illustrated the beautiful landscape of the Park and its natural monuments.

Due to its great success and after the request of the local authorities it was transferred to another venue in the city of Rethimnon where it lasted ten more days.

This exhibition fulfilled its targets, far beyond our ambitions, which were to remind the public all the forgotten traditional arts and to motivate people flow towards the Park.



A corporate TV Platform to promote the European Geoparks Network



Communication tools are an important issue in all Geoparks. This work will present Corporate TV, a low-cost technology that allows the creation of one or more internal television channels. The system can be managed directly and/or remotely and can be used to spread information and educational contents. This project appears as an answer to the existing difficulty in promoting effectively all Geoparks of the European Geoparks Network dispersed by a wide geographical area. The prototype is being developed for the Arouca Geopark (Portugal), an aspiring member of the network. The creation of a private television network, with TV spots placed on each Geopark, will allow the increasing of visibility and the recognition of the European Geopark Network, presenting to visitors of each Geopark the geoheritage of other members of the network. The information can be displayed and explained using images, films and multimedia animation. This live advertisement of all Geoparks is expected to foster geotourism and local sustainable development.



Spectacular geomorphological landscapes and regions with special geological features or mining sites, notably promoted through “Geoparks”, have been proven as excellent tools to educate the public at large in “Earth Sciences”, as well as areas for recreation and significant sustainable economic development through geotourism. More and more national and international stakeholders are engaged in projects related to “Geoconservation”, “Geoparks” and “Geotourism” and changed thereby the general perception of modern Earth sciences, remarkably.

Within the frame of the “International Year of Planet Earth” (IYPE, 2008) and under the professional supervision of “Springer Publishing Company”, (Springer Verlag, Heidelberg, Germany) it is planned to start of a new “Coffee table” book series, entitled “Geoparks of the World”.

A New Springer Book Series “Geoparks of the World”

Complementary to similar outreach activities of World Heritage Sites or UNESCO’s “Biosphere Reserves”, Geoparks might be given a platform to present themselves on the international market. Each volume of the new book series shall be produced in two languages (English plus the respective national language) and aims to attract scientists and planners, as well as interested, educated laymen. Based on scientific sound findings the individual background of a Geopark shall be elucidated with the help of numerous illustrations and color pictures.

More Countries pay attention to GGN

According to incomplete statistics, nearly 500 delegates from more than 40 countries and regions across five continents attended the 3rd UNESCO International Geoparks Conference that was held in Osnabrück, Germany in the period June 21-26, 2008. Many countries in Asia, Europe, Africa and America directed their geoparks at the GGN (Global Geoparks Network), with a hope of being listed in this network. The Kanawinka Geopark - Australia had succeeded in joining the GGN recently.

Asia: The established Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network covered four member countries, i.e. China, Malaysia, Iran and Australia, where the global geopark had existed. Other Asian countries

took a faster pace in entering the GGN. Japan, for example, set up the Japanese Geoparks Network in December, 2007, planning to hand in application materials of its four geoparks for the designation as a global geopark to UNESCO; furthermore, delegates from Korea, Vietnam, India, Oman and other countries were also present in the 3rd International Geoparks Conference. It was said that these countries were preparing related application materials in order to make a zero breakthrough true as early as possible.

Europe: Current members of the European Geoparks Network were mostly distributed in the western and southern Europe. Participants from the northern Europe (including Denmark and Norway) and the eastern Europe (including Serbia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Slovenia and Estonia,

etc.) also expressed their wish of becoming a member of the GGN. An array of regions were preparing for this wish.

America: There was no member of the GGN in American countries other than Brazil where the first global geopark in America lay. In this conference, America, Canada and other countries gave voice to their desire of entry into the GGN. Besides.

Africa: All African countries, typically South Africa, had been being committed to enter the GGN. They had taken an active part in diverse activities organized by UNESCO. Beyond South Africa, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and other countries also appointed their own representative to this conference, which indicated their concern about the GGN.

NORTON - Fossils are very much on the mind of Norton Mayor Wendy Alcorn and village council these days.

For more than three years, council has worked on making the Norton fossil forest a productive attraction. Alcorn was pleased last week to hear Joggins, across the Bay of Fundy in Nova Scotia, was successful in its bid to make its fossil cliffs a UNESCO world heritage site.

The Norton fossil forest, in a series of highway rock cuts between Norton and Sussex, was among the geological sites Dr. Randy Miller includes in his efforts to have the Greater Saint John area considered for North America's first UNESCO geopark.

Since 2004, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), has overseen a global network of important geological sites imparted with geopark status. A geopark is a geological heritage area with a system of protection, education and sustainable development, incorporating not only the site's geological attractions but ecological, cultural and historical features as well. There are about five-dozen geoparks world-wide, mostly in Europe, China and Australia.

The Village of Norton submitted a funding request last month for \$25,000 to the Regional Development Corporation to conduct a feasibility study. The study would examine post-opening operating expenses and projected income to determine whether a proposed fossil interpretive centre in the village could have long-term sustainability.

"It's been four years. We thought at first it would be a lot quicker," Alcorn said of the village's plan to build on the fossils' potential. Alcorn had just begun her first term as Norton mayor when the fossil story broke in 2004.

Three years ago, she visited Joggins with a Norton fossil committee to learn how that community made its fossil cliffs a significant attraction. Not long afterward, the Joggins Fossil Institute began its UNESCO application process.

possibly the world's oldest forest. The fossil remains are 45 million years older than the fossil cliffs of Joggins, where the world's oldest reptile fossil was found.

If the proposed feasibility study gets a government thumbs up, Joggins institute director Jenna Boon may be on board as an advisor for the Norton project. In his proposal, Saint John consultant George Quigley named Boone as a potential resource team member. As senior project manager of the Joggins fossil cliffs project, she was involved in bringing both the new interpretive centre and the UNESCO designation to fruition.

Other resource team members named were Tom Sharpe, a National Museum of Wales curator studying a fossil forest unearthed in that country, and Randy Miller, curator of geology and paleontology at the New Brunswick Museum.

Last month, Miller gave a presentation in Germany on the first proposed UNESCO Geopark in North America. The proposed Greater Saint John geopark would extend from Lepreau Falls to Norton, including the Kingston Peninsula and the Fundy Trail. The region's rock formations have been the source of important geological discoveries since the 1830s and record up to a billion years of earth history, according to Miller.

"There are some really interesting fossil sites in Norton, Saint John and Lepreau," he said.

While waiting for the wheels of government project funding to slowly turn, the village developed walking trails and purchased land adjacent to Route 1 with plans to build a new municipal building, which could include a fossil interpretive centre.

"We're in a good area for bringing tourists through," Alcorn said.

"There could be cruise ship tours, school tours it's amazing how many avenues you can go."

The Village has also been working with Enterprise Fundy to investigate funding options and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency to examine the site's tourism potential.

Meanwhile, Miller has brought the tourism sector into his efforts to make the Saint John geopark a reality. In February a community group led by Gail Bremner, vice-president of Aquila Tours in Saint John, announced its intent to work with Miller and the museum toward the UNESCO geopark designation.

Fossil forest could acquire status

The Norton committee is exploring options for promoting a 350 million-year-old fossil forest,



Public Meeting To Explore Designation Of Burren And Cliffs Of Moher As UNESCO Geopark

A public meeting will take place in Ennistymon this week to discuss the proposed designation of the Cliffs of Moher and the Burren's distinctive karst landscape as a UNESCO Geopark. Organised by the Burren Connect Project, the meeting will seek the public's opinions on the proposal, which supports the continued preservation of the area's geological heritage and the enhancement of a sustainable tourism base in the west of Ireland.

Geoparks have a UNESCO non-statutory designation and focus primarily on protecting geodiversity, promoting geological heritage to the general public as well as supporting sustainable economic development of geopark territories primarily through the development of geological tourism. A European network exists and has drawn together territories from across Europe that share these aims. This network has been able to access significant INTERREG funding to promote and develop its aims.

Ireland currently has two designated Geoparks: the Marble Arch Caves/Cuilcagh mountain park in Fermanagh and the Copper Coast in Waterford.

"Geopark designation does not bring with it any statutory requirements or limits. It is more an internationally recognised label that promotes geological landscapes and their communities, and encourages education, awareness and sustainable tourism", said Carol Gleeson, Project Leader, Burren Connect Project.

She continued, 'The idea of

designating the Burren and the Cliffs of Moher as a designated European Geopark has been around for a few years and it is definitely an idea worth investigating, that is why we have invited Dr. Patrick McKeever from the European Geopark Network and Dr. Pat O'Connor from the Geological Survey of Ireland to speak at a public meeting. This meeting will be an opportunity for everyone interested in the issue to get detailed information, to look at the pros and cons of such a designation, and to have an informed discussion on the matter".



'The Burren Connect Project is interested in this concept as it ties in very well with our aim to link environment, community and tourism to conserve the Burren. The aims of the Geopark network are environmental protection, raising awareness of and respect for landscapes and their communities, promoting education and sustainable tourism. Network members also have access to European funding programmes to help implement these aims", added Ms. Gleeson

In recent years, questions have been raised about the impact or need for more designations for the Burren, particularly since Minister John Gormley announced the proposed World Heritage Site Status, also a UNESCO designation, at the Burren Life Conference in April.

According to Ms. Gleeson, 'This is one of the issues that needs to be discussed; what is the difference between the various designations, what is meant by non-statutory designation and what are the

impacts of such a designation and also what time frames are we talking about. World Heritage Site status would take many years of planning and significant cost to achieve, and we have not even begun the discussion at local level yet, whereas Geopark status could happen within the next year or so.'

Commenting on the proposal, Katherine Webster, Director, Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience, stated, "We have an amazing array of geological heritage here in County Clare from the Burren to the Cliffs of Moher and the idea of seeking European Geopark status is definitely one that all of us who have an interest in the area should explore."

The upcoming public meeting will be held at the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon, on Thursday, 24 July at 8pm.

Dr. Patrick McKeever will present information on the UNESCO designation and the experience of the European Geoparks Network to date, while Dr. Pat O'Connor will outline the Geological Survey



of Ireland's involvement in and support for such a designation for the Burren and Cliffs of Moher. The organisers say that the event will provide an opportunity for information sharing, discussion and debate on this issue.

For further information on Geoparks please visit www.europeangeoparks.org



Geopark Status Being Determined

A FEASIBILITY study is now underway to determine whether there may be scope for the Stonehaven area to apply for UNESCO Geopark status in the future.

The study is a joint project funded by the East Grampian Coastal Partnership, Aberdeenshire Council and the Stonehaven Business Association Tourism Group.

Chairman Frank Budd said: "The Stonehaven Tourism Group has been working on a project to identify and mark the location of the Highland Boundary Fault in and around the town, and we realise just how much interest could be generated by the amazing geology we have in this area. There is a huge amount which could be done, not only in Stonehaven, but also along the coast and inland into the Mearns and Angus, to interpret and bring the geology of the area alive for our visitors and residents."

This view is echoed by Elma McMenemy, the locally-based tourism consultant who will lead the study.

She said: "Many people hear the word geology and assume it's something they won't understand, but it's all around us in landscapes, and also in the area's culture and history. For example, the area's geology provided an easily-defensible strategic site where many centuries ago Dunnottar Castle was built, and the special qualities of the cliffs at Fowlsheugh attract hundreds of thousands of nesting seabirds."

It is hoped that examples like these will fire enthusiasm in locals, including those already a part of the tourism industry, as their support will be vital to the success of any Geopark application. Although any application would be well in the future, one of UNESCO's main requirements is the support and interest of the local population, and in particular, tourism operators.

The study will be carried out by Elma McMenemy in partnership with Robert Needham, a recent Honours graduate in Marine and Coastal Resource Management, currently taking part in the Environmental Placement Programme offered by the British Environmental Partnership. Robert's placement is enabled by Ian Hay of the East Grampian Coastal Partnership and the Macaulay Institute.

“Geopark Rab Island, Croatia” aspires to become a member of the Geopark community

The Croatian new Geopark Rab Island is in the process of development. The area includes Rab Island of 93,6 KM², and two small islands – Grgur and Goli. Geographically, the Island of Rab is located in the Northern Adriatic Sea, as part of the inner belt of Kvarner islands, divided from the mainland by the Velebit Channel.

Besides the rich history and cultural heritage, as well as the long touristic tradition and developing economy, the geological diversity of the island makes the fundament of the geopark. Its geology is in many ways specific for the Mediterranean region. The quality of exposures and unique stratigraphy of Pelogene classics require protection and obtain high quality education for geologists of various specialties, as for example the Lopar peninsula, which allows almost 3-D insight into the architecture of tidal sandstone bodies within a paleoestuary and has already been the training area for study of classic sequence stratigraphy. The Kamenjak anticline built of Cretaceous limestones hosts the Fruga valley which is characterized by a thick sequence of Quaternary deposits.

Nearly a hundred freshwater springs are part of the very interesting hydrogeology of the island. Aiming to show and explain such an interesting geology, and protect the Rab's geoheritage, over one hundred geosites have been studied and selected for geostops along existing touristic trails. By September 2007, two geotrails were established with 25 geostops marked by explanation plates in four languages. The Lopar geogarden is in preparation for the summer of 2008.

The Island of Rab geopark, though still in development, is already being used as a natural laboratory for the education of students from the universities of Zagreb and Ljubljana (Slovenia). The students regularly attend field camps on Rab and take full advantage of its well developed infrastructure. The regular visits of generations of students resulted in the development of their appreciation of the Rab natural heritage and selection of the island for the summer holidays destination. Over the years, groups of foreign students also visited the Island of Rab, as did participants of several science workshops.

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The foundation of the Japanese Geoparks Network

The Japanese Geoparks Network, comprised of 13 zones, was established in December, 2007. The zones are candidates for the Global Geoparks Network. In case some of them are designated for the global network, they will be the first cases from the Island Arc area of the world. Most areas are related with volcanoes, hot-springs, and very good sceneries caused from the Island Arc.

The following zones will be part of the Japanese network:

- » Shirataki (the world-class obsidian ruins), eastern Hokkaido,
- » Mt. Apoi (serpentinite, olivinite, and mélange), central Hokkaido,
- » Lake Toya and Mt. Usu (Usu volcano and hot springs), southern Hokkaido,
- » Izura (weathered coast and cradle of Japanese-style painting), central Honshu,
- » Odawara/Hakone (Hakone volcano and hot springs), central Honshu,
- » Itoigawa (Itoigawa-Shizuoka tectonic line and jades), central Honshu,
- » "South Alps" (accretionary wedge with periglacier deposit), central Honshu,
- » SanIn (subsiding coast of Volcanic rocks), western Honshu,
- » Iwami (silver mine, World Heritage), western Honshu,
- » Shikoku (Paleozoic strata and fossils, and accretionary wedge), all Shikoku,
- » Shimabara Peninsula (active volcanoes and hot springs), northern Kyushu,
- » Goshoura (Mesozoic strata and dinosaur fossils), central Kyushu, and
- » Kirishima (volcanoes and hot springs), southern Kyushu.

Japanese approach toward establishment of Geoparks started late comparing with China and Malaysia. At first GUPI and GSJ selected 100 geosites from Japan. Japanese people knew there are many geological important localities in Japan and there are movements of founding Geoparks in the world. On these movements, the Council of Japanese Geoparks was set and tried to found Japanese Geoparks Network.



www.globalgeopark.org

Office of the Global Geoparks Network