



Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura • Comarca Minera Geoparque mundial de la UNESCO

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Comarca Minera, Hidalgo UNESCO Global Geopark, Mexico
Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network (GeoLAC Network)

Year of inscription: 2017

Year of the last(next) revalidation: 2020

Representative Photo



International Meeting on Geoparks, Sustainable Tourism and Regional Development at Comarca Minera UNESCO Global Geopark, Mexico. Event organized by the UNESCO Representative Office for Mexico. November 2019.

2. GEOPARK FIGURES Geopark Team

Management: Eduardo Javier García Alonso

Finance: Adrian Cruz Serrano

Legal coordination: Enrique Serrano Salazar

Public Relations: Paula Lamas Larenas

Scientific Coordinator: Carles Canet Miquel

Institutional Image and Publications: José Luis Carrascos Bardales

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Fundraising: Miguel Angel Cruz Pérez

Education and Training: Juan Carlos Mora Chaparro

Social Entrepreneurship: Claudia Paulette Escalona Muñoz

Geotourism: Erika Salgado Martínez

Environmental Education: Daniel Acosta Ruiz

Number of Visitors

The emblematic geosite «Prismas Basálticos» receives 550 thousand visitors per year, according to statistics of the geosite management body (ejido Santa María Regla).

Number of Geopark events

Up to 30 events have been organized ranging from guided field trips, local products fairs, workshops, international days commemorations, capacity building and training courses. These have been in joint collaboration with government and local communities and authorities.

Examples are:

- Gastronomic exhibition (Peña del Aire geosite)
- Earth's Day
- Guidebook presentations
- Latin American Day of Geotourism
- LABChico science communication conferences
- Field mission of the Official Representative for UNESCO in Mexico (Frederic Vacheron)
- Technical field visits (Ohio University and U.S. Geological Service)
- Premiere of the series "Geoparques Mexicanos" was broadcast in Latin America and was directed by the Coordination of Open University and Distance Education (CUAED)

Geopark educational programmes

A geopark education program is offered by the Centro para el Trabajo en el Estado de Hidalgo (ICATHI). The program is offered in Spanish and is called Turismo y Geoturismo del Patrimonio y Geoparques Mundiales de la UNESCO. It is structured in 4 Blocks covering introduction to geology and environment, geoheritage and geoparks, sustainability, and responsible tourism. Duration of the course is 80 hours. Also, it covers field visits to geosites where practical subjects are treated. Requisites for taking the course are being at least 16 years old, reading and writing abilities, and having experience in tourism is consider an added asset.

Number of Geopark press release

The year 2019 was a prolific year in terms of visibility in the press for Comarca Minera, in which a total of 15 press releases in digital media were published.

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES (bulletize)

Major achievements in 2019:

- A new working group on genre equality was created within the Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network, fostered by Comarca Minera UGG, Araripe UGG (Mexico), Kutralkura UGG (Chile), and Río Coco geopark (Nicaragua). This is a pioneer group aimed to raise awareness of inclusive participation, respect and equality among individuals and communities in the region. This group is working on statutes to be released in the months to come.
- The International Meeting on Geoparks, Sustainable Tourism and Regional Development, held in Comarca Minera (25-27 November 2019), in junction with the UNESCO Representative office for Mexico and Hidalgo State. Experts and renowned specialists on geoparks were invited to share their experiences and knowledge with locals and experts of Mexico.
- Winning award “Enrique Beltrán” to Sergio Gómez García (geopark guide) for his labor in favor of the conservation of natural resources, favored and recommended by the Scientific Coordination of Comarca Minera. This is relevant given the continues involvement and commitment of geo-guides, from which Mr. Sergio Gómez is a key representative of geopark principles in his community (Mineral del Chico municipality).
- Field mission of the Representative office of UNESCO for Mexico to Comarca Minera in April 4th. The visit was successful in terms of collaboration, partnership and to raise awareness of the geopark concept with key institutions (e.g., Mexican Geological Survey) after the Federal government entrance in 2018 which by law demanded new authorities in charge.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and Participation:

1. It is worth of mention, also, the continued contributions of Comarca Minera in the GGN Bulletin which for 2019, published news of LABChico (the first educational underground laboratory in Latin America and Mexico) can be read in the 2019 issue 2.
2. Participation with photographs for exhibition at interpretation center of Lushan UGG, China.
3. GeoLAC coordination by Comarca Minera during 2018-2020, technical visits to geopark projects (Volcán de Ruiz, Colombia, and Platåbergs Geopark, Sweden).

Management and Financial status:

The management structure of the Comarca Minera geopark is made up of a civil association which is the direct link with the population, geosites and government for the actions carried out in the geopark. The members of this association are members of various academic institutions that come together in a multidisciplinary way to address the geopark from different fronts. This change of consortium structure to Civil Association is underway and was carried out to have a stronger structure that supports the development and stability of the Geopark in the face of government changes. Salary of scientific and technical staff is offered by the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Current scientific (i.e., LABChico) is being funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund of United Kingdom, which contributes with 112.8k British pounds (~141 500 US Dollars) aimed to work package 2 and 3 of the project (detectors, equipment, salaries for posdocs positions, communication science conferences). Signaling project, to strengthen the visibility of the geopark, covered 75k Mexican pesos (~3 thousand US Dollars) for the instalation of information panels. The geopark has obtained different sources of financing which come from the partners of the geopark. Financial projects have been carried out from which resources have been obtained to finance attendance at conferences, publications, materials and staff salaries.

Geoconservation:

A second edition of the Comarca Minera guidebook is being prepared. This is relevant given the early stage in which geoconservation is permeating in the country. Also, the Dark Sky strategy, a pioneer project for Mexico, was first proposed at the end of 2019 aiming to conserve dark skies that serve to practice astronomical tourism. Over the next months a place and conditions will be studied to put in action the guidelines of the International Dark Sky Association. Regarding academic studies and investigations, a master thesis is being carried out in the area with the purpose of studying methodologies, its benefits and limitations regarding geoconservation.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism):

Latin America International Geotourism Day, in partnership with other GeoLAC members is a established day for celebrating geoheritage by organizing field trips, conferences and outdoor activities in the territories of Latin America. Also, the International Meeting on Geoparks, Sustainable Tourism and Regional Development was a successful evento that gathered experts

from various Latin American Geoparks but also from Europe and Asia, conforming a unique event to discuss benefits and best practices of geopark territories.

New Education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction:

One of the recent capacity building and training courses offered in the geopark is validated by the Instituto de Capacitación para el trabajo en el Estado de Hidalgo, which covers, besides geology and tourism, geoconservation, history and sustainable development. One of the instructors (Dr. Juan Carlos Mora) has backing experience in geological risk and volcanology. Also, as mentioned above, LABChico is planned to be the first underground educational laboratory of Mexico and Latin America having the social purpose of improving local capacities in terms of tourism, science education and training, thus contributing to sustainable development.

Strategic Partnership:

New key partnerships have been established with local education institutions (Universidad La Salle de Pachuca), and continuing with the collaboration of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo in which researchers ascribed to the Department of Earth Sciences and Materials as in charge of the management and conservation of the Mineralogy Museum. Also, a strategic partnership with the Mexican Geological Survey is in an early stage, after the entrance of new federal government in Mexico in 2018, it is expected further collaboration with this institution in 2020.

Promotional activities:

Digital media and social networks are vital to the communication strategies of the geopark. Infographics and promotional videos are made and shared on a regular basis. Social media is one of the main and probably most important promotional channel for Comarca Minera, since it allows to reach thousands of followers (almost 5 thousand) on a daily basis.

4. Contacts

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