



GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2020

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Comarca Minera UNESCO Global Geopark, Mexico, Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2017



Figure 1. Meeting with locals at Peña del Aire geosite, Huasca de Ocampo. Information was given to inhabitants to obtain support of the Dark Sky Park initiative in their community, the first dark sky reserve of its kind in Latin America. The application process has advanced with a new field season for measuring sky quality in the next months. February 2020, some weeks before national lockdown.

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 13 staffs including 4 geoscientists.

Number of visitors: The geosite with more visitors per year is Prismas Basálticos, with 500 thousand people each year.

Number of Geopark events: In the first quarter of 2020, approximately 8 events were held, among which were, the 3rd LabChico Science Day, visits to geosites, installation of signage, courses, etc. , participation in forums, organization of talks in the gender equality group of the GeoLAC Network, virtual events, among others.

Number of school classes realize 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* (Tourism and Geotourism of Geoheritage in UNESCO Global Geoparks). 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. In the same way, the *Basura-Cero* (Garbage-Zero) course has been taught 4 times, directed to the municipality of Omitlán de Juárez, which served as professional practices and to enter to the regional label *Escuelas por la Tierra* (Schools for the Earth).

Number of Geopark press release: 1 note published in the GGN Newsletter 2020, issue 1.

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2020

- Coordination of Comarca Minera UGGp has been restructured and consolidated with a civil association legally constituted by the Mexican law.
- New strategic explanatory panels installed in 5 geosites of Comarca Minera, including a 'Welcome' panel in the main square of Pachuca city. This was carried out with key participation from the local community who approved the information and location points for installation.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Consolidation of the Gender Equality Group, a pioneer initiative coordinated by Rio Coco UGGp, Nicaragua, and Comarca Minera UGGp, Mexico. A note was submitted to the GGN

Bulletin and published in early 2021.

- Participation in several webinars and online events regarding: (1) gender equality topics (March-December 2020), (2) regional workshop organized by UNESCO Costa Rica (september 2020), (3) International Day for Indigenous People in geopark territories, (4) sending of photographs to Asian geoparks to contribute to visitor center exhibitions in their territories.
- Consolidation of the 'Geovivencias' journal, in which Comarca Minera participated in the publication guidelines and where Carles Canet is part of the editorial board.

Management and Financial Status

- The Comarca Minera UGGp management body is represented by a civil organization legally constituted under the Mexican Law. Operability is in charge of a variety of experts in the fields of geology, history of geological sciences, architecture, environment, law and graphic design. With respect to financial status on november 2020 the scientific team applied to a call on scientific projects given by the Nacional Coincul for Science and Technology. Salaries to technical team is provided by the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). The partner project of LABChico (the first underground physics laboratory in Latin America) is being supported by the UNAM and the Global Challenges Research Fund of the United Kingdom. The geopark still needs to consolidate its budget entry in the long term to carry out the entire agenda in the territory.

Geoconservation

- 1 master thesis on geological heritage, methodologies and geoconservation was published by one member of the geopark team. This material constitutes a useful resource to implement strategies of geoconservation in the territory, with special regard to Cerro de Las Navajas geosite.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

The activities carried out by the guides in the territories are based on the promotion of geotourism, since the interpretation of the geological heritage is promoted by providing a conservation and valorization approach, themes supported by geotourism. All this reinforced through the training courses given. Likewise, with the installation of tourist signage, it has contributed to publicize the values of geotourism through the creation of texts focused on the conservation of geoheritage.

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

- Carles Canet and Miguel Cruz designed and started lecturing the 'Geological Heritage and Geodiversity' masters course at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. It is the first course of its kind in Mexico and covers topics on historical background, concepts, case studies, UNESCO Global Geoparks and geoconservation.

Strategic partnership

- Comarca Minera UGGp is in close partnership with Rio Coco UGGp, Nicaragua, and one successful initiative so far is the establishment of the Gender Equality Group. The master plan for the group is being edited and ready for publication soon.
- Comarca Minera UGGp is also in close collaboration with the Representative UNESCO office for Mexico whose joint work dates to early 2019 where a site visit took place was carried out to the area, followed by a late 2019 international meeting on sustainable tourism. In 2020 a written memory of the event was edited and its publication will take place soon.

Promotional activities

The promotion of the activities is carried out through the social networks of the geopark whose visibility has allowed them to have a wide reach. Likewise, communication is carried out through internal groups that some of the leaders and guides of the territory have so that they disseminate all the activities that are carried out.

4. CONTACTS

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