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Global Geoparks

**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**UNESCO Global Geoparks Council**

**7<sup>th</sup> Session**

**Satun UNESCO Global Geopark, Thailand**

**From 4 to 5 September 2022 and from 7 to 9 December 2022 (virtual session)**

## **REPORT**

In accordance with the Statutes of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (Article 2, paragraph 2.7 and 2.10), the present document represents the report prepared by the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council to the Bureau on its decisions to be circulated to Member States and Associate Member States of UNESCO.

i- The seventh session of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council (hereafter referred to as UGGpC) of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) was held in two sessions. The first session in Satun, Thailand back-to-back with the seventh Asian Pacific Geoparks Network Symposium, from 4 to 5 September 2022, and the virtual session between 7 and 9 December 2022.

ii- In both sessions, 15 Council members and more than 100 observers from 20 countries attended this UGGpC session. Council members (voting) present: Helga CHULEPIN, Guy MARTINI, Martina PASKOVA, Marie-Luise FREY, Van TRAN TAN, Carles Canet, Sarah GAMBLE, Charalampos FASSOULAS, Setsuya NAKADA, Alireza AMRIKAZEMI, Alexandru ANDRASANU (online for Satun session also).

Other members present (non-voting) were, Kristof VANDENBERGHE (representative of UNESCO), Nickolas ZOUROS (representative of GGN - Global Geoparks Network), tim Badman (representative of IUCN) and Asier HILARIO (representative of IUGS - International Union of Geological Sciences).

iii- Apologies for absence:

**For the first session in September:** Gabriela Schneider (voting member), Tim Badman, representative of the International Union for Conservation of Nature- IUCN (non-voting member)

**For the virtual session in December:** Gabriela Schneider (voting member)

iv- The following observers from the Secretariat were present: Özlem Adiyaman Lopes (UNESCO HQ), Catalina Gonzalez Tejada (UNESCO HQ)

## **I. Opening by the Chairperson of the UGGpC**

Guy Martini, Chairperson of the UGGpC officially opened the meeting welcoming the observers from different countries and UNESCO offices around the world. He also thanked the UNESCO/UGGp Secretariat team and the Council members for their contributions and extensive work over the last year. The Chairperson invited the UGGpC members to introduce themselves and then summarized the work that had been undertaken during the past year, including the preparation of the seventh UGGpC session. It was noted that considerable work had been achieved including the preparation of Evaluation and Revalidation missions during the ongoing COVID19 Pandemic. The Chairperson explained that 71 volunteering experts of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) have been mobilized to deliver the missions in 2022. The Chairperson explained that most of the experts conducted at least two missions, and some up to 5 missions and thanked them highlighting that a mission is at least 10 days of voluntary work on the field plus the days to draft the mission report. The Chairperson explained that a total of 67 missions has been completed between February and November: 23 in Europe, 30 Asia Pacific, 9 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2 in Africa and Arab States and 3 in North America (Canada). The Chairperson mentioned that some last minutes changes had to be made because of health issues before departure of some evaluators, but no major incident happened during these missions, despite the travel restrictions and a limited number of available senior experts.

The Chairperson also referred to the fact that most of the planned missions that were pending since 2020 because of the Covid Sanitary Restrictions had been undertaken, with the exception of those in China. In consultation with the Secretariat, the Bureau keeps monitoring the sanitary situation in countries where travel is impossible due to sanitary measures, to organize the missions where and when feasible.

Taking into consideration the number of missions and their distribution during the year 2022, the Chairperson explained that it was decided to split the seventh UGGp Council into two sessions. The first one, was a presential session on 4 and 5 September at the Satun UNESCO Global Geopark under the seventh Asian Pacific Geoparks Network Symposium. The second one, was a virtual ad-hoc session organized by the Secretariat at UNESCO HQ.

At the opening of the virtual session, the Chairperson thanked the numerous observers and briefly recapitulated the results of the Satun session and shortly presented the remaining agenda.

Council members thanked the Satun Government and Satun UNESCO Global Geopark for organizing the seventh session of the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network Symposium, and the UNESCO Secretariat for organizing the ad hoc session.

The Secretariat explained furthermore the household rules and the code of conduct for the Council members and Observers and welcomed the representatives of the UNESCO Member States.

**II. Opening remarks** from the Outgoing Chair of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council were delivered

**III. Election of new Bureau members** (Chairperson, vice-chairperson and rapporteur)

The Council voted unanimously:

Chair: Guy Martini

Vice-chair: Setsuya Nakada

Rapporteur: Helga Chulepin

**IV. Opening remarks** of the incoming Chair of the UGGpC

**V. Opening remarks** from representatives of UNESCO, GGN, IUGS, IUCN and host organization from Satun UNESCO Global Geopark were delivered.

**VI. Adoption of the agenda and timetable**

The Chairperson asked the UNESCO Secretariat to present the agenda and timetable which were unanimously adopted by the Council.

## VII. Discussion of the evaluation of new UNESCO Global Geopark applications

- i- As per Section 5.5 of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Operational Guidelines, the UGGpC will recommend accepting an application, reject an application or defer it for a maximum of two years to allow for improvements to be made to the quality of the application. In the case of deferral, there is no need to repeat the field evaluation mission during this time.
- ii- The members of the UGGpC examined 26 candidatures for new UNESCO Global Geoparks; including 1 deferred application from 2020 and 2 from 2021; and 43 revalidations of existing UNESCO Global Geoparks, 1 extension of more than 10% and 5 extensions of less than 10% of existing UNESCO Global Geoparks.
- iii- Considering the priorities and mandate of UNESCO, the members of the UGGpC recommended to all aspiring UGGps and UGGps:
  - To incorporate and strengthen their contributions to the Global Agenda's, like the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Climate Agreement, or the Sendai Framework Agreement for Disaster Risk Reduction, throughout all their activities.
  - To improve the accessibility for people with special needs within the Geopark as well as within the partner institutions such as museums, interpretation centres, and other facilities, during their activities and in their communication material and tools.
  - To set up activities and campaigns to jointly celebrate relevant UNESCO and UN international days.

**1) Huasteca Potosina (Mexico):** The candidate territory is located in a part of the physiographic province known as Sierra Madre Oriental and part of the coastal plain of the Gulf of Mexico. The boundaries correspond to the municipal administrative boundaries of the political division of the State, including from North to South six municipalities of the 58 that make up the state: Ebano, Tamuín, Ciudad Valles, Tamasopo, Aquismón and Huehuetlán. The total area of the project is 7,153.97 km<sup>2</sup>. The Huasteca is considered to be the second most important region in the State of San Luis Potosí, socio-economically. The project region can be classified under three sub-provinces: Plains and Hills (Llanos y Lomerías), Huasteco Karst (Carso Huasteco) and the Gran Sierra Fold (Gran Sierra Plegada). The two main physiographic features that dominate the eastern region of Mexico and cover the territory of the Huasteca Potosina Geopark project are the Sierra Madre Oriental - the eastern Sierra Madre - (SMO) and the Coastal Plain of the Gulf of Mexico (CPGM). The SMO, the most relevant orographic element in the Geopark project, is a significant tectonic example, since its origin is associated with the Laramide orogenic phase, which occurred during the Upper Cretaceous and the Paleogene. The region that occupies the CPGM stands out in relation to the history of the development of oil exploration since the end of the 19th century. Several companies, mainly foreign, operated in various oil fields. In 1904, the first well that commercially marked the rise of the oil industry in Mexico was drilled near Ebano. Much of the territory of the Geopark is located on the geological unit known as the Valles-San Luis Potosí Platform, an extensive carbonated paleogeographic unit of the Upper Cretaceous on which marine sedimentary sequences were deposited, highlighting thick sections of evaporitic rocks and reef limestone of Mesozoic age. The climate is highly specific, with average temperatures of 26°C all year round but with record highs of 50°C in the month of May, making the Huasteca Potosina unique. The total

population within the Geopark project, as per the last census (2015), was 345,557 inhabitants. Three languages are currently used: Huasteco or Tennek, Nahuatl and Xi'úi.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Carles Canet and Helga Chulepin who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Huasteca Potosina (Mexico)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **defers** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for a maximum duration of two years. The Huasteca Potosina aUGGp should provide a progress report to be reconsidered for UGGp status. The report should address the following recommendations:

1. Establish Management body:
  - Improve the management body structure of the aUGGp with a legal recognition, including different stakeholders.
  - Clarify the aUGGp budget and the staff, consider increasing the aUGGp team members and ensure that most of the staff resides in the territory.
  - Consider establishing the management body office of the Geopark at the museum of culture which is being constructed.
2. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Strengthen the conservation measures for the geological heritage. Particularly, to strengthen the legal protection for more geological sites and assure the maintenance of the sites.
  - Improve the visibility of the protection measures at the geological sites, besides the visibility already given in leaflets, magazine, webpage, and social media.
  - Strengthen the aUGGp involvement in research related to the conservation and the promotion of the geological sites. Describe and promote the geological sites in the panels.
  - Strengthen the geological interpretation within the territory of the aUGGp, making it attractive and easily understandable to all visitors using a language adapted to the public.
  - Develop links between the geological and the natural and cultural heritage through interpretation, education, tours and geopark trails, as well as in the conservation strategies.
  - Continue working with the Climate Variability Laboratory (Variclim) of the UASLP on research and to promote educational activities related to climate change to different educational levels. Where possible make the link with Indigenous peoples, develop links, promote the cultural identity of the Indigenous populations, develop research in Indigenous knowledge (agriculture, ethno medicine, architecture, etc..).
  - Provide interpretation in Indigenous languages also and include places of importance for Indigenous communities in the UGGp experience, in respect with their traditions and in consultation with the communities.

3. Improve visibility:
  - Consider the installation of directional road panels, to facilitate site access to the main entrance and for various trails, geological sites, etc., and make sure the boundaries of the aUGGp's are clearly understood and reflected.
  - Consider creating a tourist map providing information about all aUGGp sites, partners and facilities.
  - Consider the use of English translation and Indigenous languages as considered relevant in all information and communication materials, guided tours and exhibitions.
4. Improve tourism development:
  - Improve facilities and infrastructure, ensuring their proper accessibility, by considering the installation of more visitor's centres, info kiosks, geosite trails, geosite panels and signs.
  - Improve education by developing and implementing training programmes for guides, tour operators and partners, local authorities, etc. for better interoperability of the aUGGp with the entire territory.
  - Establish a visitor experience monitoring system to ensure customer satisfaction and support continual improvement (i.e., visitor's surveys and questionnaires).
5. Develop a partnership strategy which includes clear methodology and criteria to become a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the aUGGp. This is applicable to accommodation, catering, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified. Consider giving these partners and local producers greater visibility using the Geopark logo and brand and develop specific promotional material.
6. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Geoparks Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, promoting the international value of the territory. Seek cooperation with the neighbouring UGGps.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The members of the UGGp Council expressed concerns, in particular regarding the management structure of the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark and would expect it to define the management body with a legal recognition, including different stakeholders with their respective roles and responsibilities. The Council members also requested more clarity regarding the budget and the staff. They also recommend increasing the human resources of the Geopark team, ensuring that most of the staff live in the territory. The planned Museum of Culture, currently under construction, could provide a nice opportunity to host the Management body so the Council Members expect the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark to explore that option. The Council also recommended to use Indigenous language(s) next to Spanish and English and to seek assurance that touristic activities avoid the sacred places or that any that such activities are developed in consultation with the Indigenous peoples.

The Council voted unanimously **to defer** this application

- 2) Ijen (Indonesia):** The candidate territory is located at the easternmost tip of Java Island in East Java Province which includes two districts, Banyuwangi and Bondowoso Regency and covers 4,723 km<sup>2</sup>. The location is bordered in the north by Situbondo Regency, in the east with the Bali Strait, in the south with the Indian Ocean, and in the west with Jember Regency.

The Ijen area is shaped by three different mountain ranges, the Giant Volcanic Complex in the north, the Ancient Volcanic Hills in the southwest, and the Karst Hills in the southeast. The main attraction is the Ijen Crater. The volcano, which is 2369 m a.s.l, emits blue flames and has a crater lake at the top. The Geopark altitudes vary between sea level and 3212.5 m at the top of the eastern rim of the Raung volcano. The eastern tip of Java is an area of human crossing and a historic trade intersection, making it a place of cross-cultural identities, represented in a variety of cultures, arts, and traditions. The landscape specificity also helped to develop an agrarian and coastal culture which is still well preserved today. The total population in this area is 1,842,363 people composed of Javanese, Madurese, Balinese, Arabic, Chinese, and Bugis ethnic groups.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Martina Paskova and Guy Martini who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- IUGS gave positive reviews for the geological heritage of international significance for some of the listed sites but recommends to better highlight other geological and geomorphological features of international significance, and to strengthen in particular geosites relating to the caldera formation, and on the karst and coastal elements.

Following the review of the **Ijen (Indonesia)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Strengthen the conservation measures for the geological heritage. Particularly, to strengthen legal protection for more geological sites and the maintenance at the geosites itself. For example, consider conducting an external impact study to assess effects of tourism on the authenticity of the Kemiren village.
  - Discourage the sale of samples of sulphur and other mined geological material by partners of the Geopark or at the information center.
  - Improve geological site information and geological maps and simplify the terminology by avoiding the use of complex scientific terms and make sure that the information is clearly explained for a general public, providing English language translations.
  - Interpretation panels in the geological and other sites, and other materials should be easily accessible to all visitors.
  - Strengthen geological heritage inventory and improve geological heritage research and conservation, increase number of geosites and set up promotion activities, in partnership with local and regional authorities. Particularly, consider providing a more detailed scientific description of the caldera-forming eruption, as well as more detailed scientific description of the limestone terraces to improve the geological sites interpretation.
  - Implement a sustainable mining strategy to improve working and living conditions of the local community, improve mining standards and conditions.
  - Define a sustainable tourism strategy, closely involving the people living there, to create other and better perspectives for them.



2. Consider the opportunity to re-define the UGGp boundaries to include the entire volcano. This could increase the UGGp visibility across its partners and population, and would bring advantages to the designation, to improve the geological heritage promotion and conservation of the entire volcano.
3. Improve visibility and partnership:
  - Develop a coherent Geopark brand identity in the entire aUGGp region (Geopark sites, entrance roads, interpretation panels, media) including Geopark logo, designs and layout for all communication material and educational activities.
  - Create and consolidate a Geopark platform for the marketing of products, handicrafts and tourist packages offered by the communities of the aUGGp.
  - Develop a partnership strategy which includes the methodology and criteria to become a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the Geopark. This is applicable to accommodation, catering, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified.
  - Consider the possibility of an official collaboration or partnership agreement with the other UNESCO designations in the territory and use the joint logo. Strengthen the relationship with the Biosphere Reserve and establish mutual collaborations, while ensuring a separate branding.
4. Develop and implement a strategy to make Geopark sites accessible by public transport. Support and promote use of public transport as well as other ways of sustainable travelling to and around the Ijen Geopark.
5. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory. Seek cooperation with the UGGps in the region.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The Members of the UGGp Council expressed concerns about the sale of geological material in the Geopark. The Council members understood that the material is legally mined and not to be considered as of important scientific value and as such does not correspond to article 3, para vii in the Statutes of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, but that the unsustainable circumstances in which the sulphur is mined and transported is a reason of concern. While fully understanding the fact that this provides an income for local communities, the Council members ask that more attention be given to the working conditions of the local communities involved in this practice and trade, and that the Geopark management body should not be involved in its sale.

The Council members agreed that the Geopark proposal left out important geological sites beyond the actual volcano and asked the management to invest in a more diversified geological inventory and develop more geosites (geological, natural and cultural).

The Council also requested a formal agreement between the Biosphere Reserve and the overlapping Geopark proposal and that they should cooperate where considered useful, while maintaining a clear and separate branding. Upon request from the Vice-Chairperson of the UGGp Council, an observer from Ijen provided further clarifications and expressed agreement with these recommendations.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**3) Maros Pangkep (Indonesia):** The candidate territory is located in the Maros and Pangkep Regencies in the southern arm of Sulawesi Island, at 30 km from Makassar City (1-2.5 hours).. The territory includes 24 districts and 183 villages spanning an area of 5,077.25 km<sup>2</sup> with an elevation of 0 -1300 masl. The Geopark is located near the Wallace Line and is dominated by a combination of terrestrial and coastal marine systems, built by three main landscapes: towers karst, the Bantimala Mélange complex and the Spermonde archipelago. The terrestrial section displays the tower karst landscape known as "The Spectacular Towers Karst", a landscape with a very complete hydrological system. There are hundreds of horizontal and vertical caves with complete speleothem characteristics and one of the longest subsurface channels in Indonesia. The syn-tectonic carbonate is mainly composed of coralline algae and foraminifera as a representation of equatorial systems during the Cenozoic in Southeast Asia. The information captured in these rocks can contribute to the development of global predictive models for understanding past climates and predicting the future. The karst system is underlined by the tectonic complex of the Bantimala Mélange (between 70 and 135 million years) which is composed of metamorphic rocks, deep marine sedimentary rocks, and tectonic blocks of oceanic crust. This tectonic linkage between Southeast Asia and Australia is important evidence of the early evolution of the Sulawesi Island and has become a reference for the synthesis and reconstruction of pre-tertiary global tectonics. In the coastal area, the Spermonde archipelago testifies of the impact of the geodynamic process of the Indonesian Throughflow (ITF) ocean currents and the interaction with the monsoon. These reef islands, which are part of the global coral triangle, represent modern equatorial carbonates and complete our understanding of the evolution of Sulawesi's paleogeography. The northeast is mountainous, with the highest peak represented by Bulusaraung Mountain (1,353 masl) and the western and southern sides are dominated by hilly areas. The middle and east are dominated by lowlands. The territory includes the Spermonde archipelago in the West, with Kapoposang Island as the farthest island. The climate is divided into a type C2, which is relatively dry in the west and a type B2, which is relatively wetter in the east. The area also includes the Bantimurung Bulusaraung National Park on the mainland and the Kapoposang Water Tourism Park in the ocean. There are 1,437 species of flora and fauna with 153 endemic species of Sulawesi and 52 protected endangered species. The area is inhabited by 655,236 people (2019) dominated by the Bugis-Makassar ethnicity, the majority of whom work in the agriculture, livestock, tourism, and mining sectors.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Martina Paskova and Guy Martini who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Maros Pangkep (Indonesia)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve Geopark visibility:
  - Provide information about the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark and the National

- and regional Network in interpretative panels. Create a unified identify and brand for such panels. Place these panels in easily accessible places without disturbing the landscape
- Develop a coherent Geopark brand identity in the entire aUGGp region (Geopark sites, entrance roads, interpretation panels, media) including Geopark logo, designs and layout for all communication material and educational activities. Consider the creation of a manual for use of the Geopark's mascots.
  - Ensure that the new UNESCO logo is used correctly by the UGGp and its partners, in line with the UGGp identity.
2. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:
    - Ensure the reduction of the quarrying impacts in the vicinity of the heritage sites of the Maros Pangkep karst system, and in particular on the fragile cave systems. Conduct impact studies and monitor the impact of the quarrying on the cultural, geological and other natural capital of the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark. Enforce the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures, in cooperation with the mining company and other involved partners, like for example sealing the road, planting trees around it, and closing some caves to protect the cave paintings from further destruction.
    - Enhance biodiversity protection activities in the Geopark area, ideally through partnership programmes with the national park administration and through capacity building activities and community programmes. Especially, continue supporting and collaborating with the different initiatives focusing on the coral reef's restoration.
    - Develop links between geological, natural and cultural heritage through interpretation, education, tours and Geopark trails.
  3. Improve management structure and budget
    - Make sure that the agreement with the regencies is renewed to assure adequate financial and human resources for the coming years and seek additional funding sources.
    - Develop the management structure and process to formally include local community representatives and consider enlarging expertise within the staffing structure.
    - Keep on protecting and promoting local Indigenous people as well their language to protect their cultural identity.
    - Prepare a Geopark's Strategy (master plan) with annual action plan in coherence with the UGGp's 10-year development policy and incorporate the climate change mitigation plans for the Spermonde Archipelago in the strategy and management plan.
    - Consider defining internal procedures to diminish plastic waste. This would also contribute to the Geopark's objectives and would serve as an example for all local actors.
  4. Improve education:
    - Facilitate participation of local schools in the national programme for Geopark schools.
    - Consider making the Geopark-supervised educational programmes in schools more adapted to the local setting, both in terms of geoh heritage and other heritages. Consider organizing them outside of the schools.
    - Provide capacity building courses for communities, women's groups, etc.
  5. Develop a partnership strategy which includes a clear methodology and criteria to

become a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the label of Maros Pangkep Geopark. This is applicable to accommodation, catering/culinary, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified. Consider providing these partners and local producers with greater visibility using the Geopark logo and brand as well as specific promotional material.

6. Further participate in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. Seek cooperation with the UGGps in the region, particularly with Geoparks with similar geology.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The Council discussed the stability of the funding structure, recognising that they have a legal support for 4 years, but that it is important that the sustainability in time is assured, including regarding financial and human resources. In addition, the Council discussed the conservation measures of the cave systems and requested that the commitment with the mining industry is closely monitored. The Council also discussed in detail the cooperation with partners and provided recommendations regarding partnership and branding.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

- 4) Aras (Iran):** The candidate territory is located in the Jolfa County and covers an area of 1670 km<sup>2</sup>. It is one of the 21 counties of E. Azerbaijan Province and can be divided into 2 districts of Central and Sah Roud. Tabriz City, the capital of the province, with its international airport is located 135km southeast of Jolfa. Although Hadishahr is the biggest city, Jolfa is the administrative centre and capital of the county. The Aras River is considered as the borderline between Iran, Armenia and Nakhichevan (Azerbaijan) and delineates the northern boundary of the Geopark. The lowest and highest points in this area vary between 400-3347masl. Kiamaki Mount in the northern part of the province is the highest peak. There are 3 protected areas in the Geopark territory: Kamtal National Park, Kimaki Wildlife Refuge and Marakan protected areas. It also includes a UNESCO World Heritage site: the "Armenian monastic Ensembles". Aras Geopark is part of the Lesser Caucasus terrane. The collision of Iran-Eurasia plates in the late Triassic and then, the Arabian-Central Iran microcontinents in the late Miocene formed this region. Oligocene intrusive rocks cropped out in the eastern part, extrusive igneous rocks in the southern part and folded and faulted Cenozoic flysch type deposits in the central part. The Paleozoic and Mesozoic successions are also exposed in the western part of the region. The most important geological sites are: Ordobad granitic to dioritic rocks in Oshtobin, Dacitic volcanic rocks in Kiamaki, a variety of folding and faulting in Cretaceous and Eocene flysch type sediments in Irri, Holoq and Asiab Kharabeh, The Permian- Triassic boundary in Ali Bashi\* Mountain, Qechi Qalasi travertine spring, Tohlom landslide and Dykes and Sills in Marakan. The End Permian mass extinction was undoubtedly one of the most important events in the Earth's History. This Permian- Triassic Boundary that can be observed in the Geopark is to be considered as the most important geological feature with international significance in this Geopark. The semi-arid climate in this area means that summers are very hot and winters get very cold (+40°C to -10°C). The Aras Free Zone Organization (AFZ) is the governing body of the area. The area is under the rapid

industrial and trading developments due to the benefits of the Free Zones Regulations. Numerous investment projects are run by domestic and international investors. About 65,000 people are living in this area, mainly employed in agriculture, livestock farming and trading. Most of the population is Muslim and speaks Azeri (Local Turkish) language, while the official language is Persian (Farsi).

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alireza Amrikazemi, Guy Martini and Van Tran Tan who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Aras (Iran)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage, research and conservation:
  - Promote geological, natural, tangible and intangible cultural heritage and research and inventory of new geosites for the benefit of local communities, ethnic groups and visitors and the advancement of geosciences.
  - Explore and highlight potential links between the geological, cultural, natural and intangible heritage.
2. Improve visibility and infrastructure:
  - Improve the Geopark Visitor Centre's Museum in terms of content (e.g. biodiversity, local tangible and intangible heritage, geological processes, ages, use of material), and display (e.g. 3-D visualization, virtual reality etc.).
  - Develop adapted tourist maps with all the Geopark sites that are open to the public, including the relevant information about geology, culture, nature, socioeconomic data etc. and within the information centers, the info-points and Geopark partners.
  - Adapt language and content to the public in all aUGGp communication materials, leaflet, explanation panels, Geopark corner etc, making sure that the information is easily understandable.
  - Promote the Geopark to local communities creating a synthetic attractive Geopark image/slogan/headline, in consultation with local partners and communities.
3. Improve management and partnership:
  - Explain the role and function of the AFZ authority and the Jolfa County and seek with a better involvement of the latter. Enhance the collaboration between the management boards of the protected areas which fall under the Environment Protection Department of Jolfa County and which should be more involved in the Geopark's activities. The cooperation with these protected sites should be more visible and should lead to more geo-natural sites within these areas contributing as such to the Geopark experience.
  - Set up formal agreements with the World Heritage sites in the area and develop joint activities.
  - The Geopark team could be improved in terms of gender equality, language proficiency, and should be more sustainable, supported by a longer-term budget.
  - Consider the possibility to offer the Geopark information support (leaflet, panels, etc;.)

in Farsi, English and Azeri and develop actions to support the cultural identity of the Azeri people.

4. Climate change and natural hazards
  - Set up a policy to monitor rockfall, debris flow, flash floods, earthquakes etc. and set up mitigation plans to limit their impact. In partnership and under responsibility of the adapted national entities, the aUGGp could suggest the development of a hazard/disaster risk mapping as well as a hazard zoning for the territory, to support advice to local authorities/communities and visitors.
  - Integrate climate change related topics as an integral part of the Geopark's educational and training campaigns.
5. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. Seek cooperation with UGGps in the region, particularly those with similar geology.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**5) Waitaki Whitestone (New Zealand):** The candidate territory is located on the central eastern side of Te Waipounamu (South Island), Aotearoa (New Zealand). With an area of 7,214 km<sup>2</sup>, the Geopark boundaries are aligned with the administrative boundaries of the Waitaki District, and form part of the northern Otago and southern Canterbury regions. The Geopark is characterised by diverse landscapes ranging from steep alpine terrain with small modern glaciers in the Southern Alps in the far northwest, an array of ranges and basins, giving way to broad downlands and the braided channel of the Waitaki River in the east, and ending at the cliffed eastern seacoast. Within the downlands are the Geopark's most iconic landforms, including flat-topped mesas and karst topography developed on limestones, with scattered volcanic peaks. Many of the geosites of the aspiring Waitaki Whitestone Geopark yield evidence of a very dynamic basement geology reflecting the ongoing fracturing of Zealandia, the Earth's '8th continent', but mostly drowned landmass. The Waitaki Whitestone Geopark preserves many key components of the geological history of Zealandia. Zealandia's story begins in the Gondwana supercontinent, where Zealandia's basement rock was formed, including the greywacke and schist rock foundations of the Geopark. Opening of the Southern Ocean and Tasman Sea pushed the Zealandia block of continental crust out into the Pacific Ocean. Progressive subsidence of Zealandia's crust saw the sea slowly encroach across the land, heralding the deposition marine sediments and culminating in formation of the iconic Oligocene-age limestones of the Geopark, with hot-spot volcanic eruptions adding further nuances to the environment. The shallow seas enriched by volcanic nutrients nurtured a rich diversity of marine life, especially ancestral whales and dolphins. The propagation through Zealandia of a new boundary between the Pacific and Australian plates caused compression and uplift, and a small part of Zealandia progressively emerged from the sea to create the New Zealand landmass. Mountain-building, erosion, the coalescence of drainages to form major rivers, and episodes of glaciation on the highest ground, brought about the Geopark's landscape elements. The Geopark contains illustrative geological archives that are relevant not only to all of Zealandia but also our neighbouring fragments of Gondwana (Australia and Antarctica). The population of the Geopark is 22,300. Ōamaru is the largest town with a population of 13,715 and there are 16 towns and villages in the area. The Geopark offers a

home for local wine and food producers, which is reflected in the emerging range of geogastronomy offerings available. Although the dominant business sector in the Waitaki area is agriculture, tourism is a significant and growing contributor to the local economy.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Nickolas Zouros who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Waitaki Whitestone (New Zealand)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Establish a Geopark Geological Conservation Committee in collaboration with the District Council to support the Geopark Management Body. This body should include the University of Otago and all public entities responsible for nature protection within the Geopark territory. The Geopark conservation Committee should discuss, decide and propose all the necessary measures for the enhancement and protection of geological heritage sites and the necessary infrastructure for geological site protection and visitors' access.
2. Improve the Geopark visibility and partnership:
  - Create a Geopark visibility action plan and a marketing plan, including:
    - how the different partners should give visibility to the common Project;
    - the creation of Geopark promotional panels at the eastern and western entrance gates of the Geopark (Waitaki river mouth bridge, Oamaru, Omarama);
    - the integration of the Waitaki District Museum in Oamaru as a main partner of the Geopark;
    - the installation of "Geopark Partner" plaques at the entrance place of every partner;
    - the creation of Geopark info points at the main Tourist attractions and / or Visitor's Centers. The visibility of the Geopark in the Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony Center and Oamaru Gardens should be clearly improved.
  - Prepare promotional packages and offer a variety of activities under the branding of the Geopark. Initiate official agreements including roles, obligations and rights with all the partners. The visibility of the Geopark among the partners must be improved, for example:
    - Encourage activities offered by private sector such as helicopter flights, cycling and guided trips to operate in the Geopark area;
    - Create a network of viewpoints to admire the beauty of the fluvial and glacial landscapes;
    - Create and distribute a touristic map of the Geopark with the location of all the facilities and "Things to do". Consider offering guided tours to special geosites.
3. Improve education and interpretation
  - Educational activities offered by partners can be coordinated and packaged under the

brand of the Geopark. It is recommended to include topics related to climate change and geological hazards.

- Design a holistic Geopark interpretative strategy, based on the rich geodiversity of the Waitaki White Stone Geopark territory. Two clear initiatives can be considered:
    - a. Create a Geopark map including all the sites of interest and create interpretative materials to place in the field. Consider the creation of interpretative panels for the most significant geological heritage sites to be located in the field.
  - Consider creating an interpreted self guided Geopark-trail network in a selected number of geosites.
  - Prepare and implement a training program for Geopark-guides.
4. Strengthen networking with other UNESCO Global Geoparks and participate actively in the Geopark conferences and capacity building activities.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**6) Kinabalu (Malaysia):** The candidate territory is located in the state of Sabah on the northern end of the island of Borneo or East Malaysia. The Geopark territory spans approximately 4,750 km<sup>2</sup>, covering the whole of Kinabalu park (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the whole of districts of Kota Marudu, and Kota Belud and part of Ranau district. The Kota Kinabalu International Airport is about 15-20 min drive to Kota Kinabalu City. From there to Kinabalu Geopark is about 100 km (2h15m-drive) and the three major towns within Kinabalu Geopark are Kota Belud (1h 27m; 70 km), Ranau (2h 18m; 106 km) and Kota Marudu (2h 21m; 119 km). The nucleus is the Kinabalu Mountain, which is the highest peak in Malaysia and Southeast Asia (4095 m). There are hot springs near its foot at 550 m at Poring. Kinabalu Geopark has a mountainous topography in the northern part of the Crocker range, low plains, and fertile valleys. The Geopark has a wet tropical climate with temperature, humidity and rainfall becoming temperate at the higher areas. February to May are generally the driest months, October to January the wettest. The temperature at the Kinabalu National Park is between 15-24°C. At the peak of Kinabalu, the recorded temperature is around 4°C or lower. Geologically, the aspiring Geopark possesses the youngest granitoid intrusion in Southeast Asia (7-8 Ma). The intrusion has brought up the area over 4,000 metres above the present-day sea level, creating an outstanding mountainous landscape. Ophiolite sequence cutting across Sabah through Kinabalu represent an ancient oceanic crust (130 Ma) which records the subducted Proto-South China Sea lithosphere. The landscape of outstanding beauty, carved by the last glaciation activity in the tropical region, represents the rare glacial landscape in the Southeast Asia. Presently, there are 46 established geosites, which represent some of the important geological heritage of Kinabalu and contribute to the uniqueness of the regional geological and landscape history. The Kinabalu World Heritage Site is also part of Kinabalu Geopark representing Outstanding Universal Value based on Criteria (ix): significant on-going ecological and biological processes, and criterion (x): the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, cultural heritage, and economic development. There are about 423 villages in the Geopark and the total population is 291,300 people. The main economic activities in the Geopark include highland agriculture, animal husbandry and tourism activities with an average income of between RM2000 to RM3500. Rice is the staple food cultivated as wet paddy on alluvial plains and as dry paddy in hilly areas. Riverine fishing and occasional hunting are also major



socio-economic activities. Kinabalu Geopark also has an outstanding diverse local ethnic community and exceptional tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Kinabalu (Malaysia)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve visibility and partnership:
  - Develop a Geopark marketing plan, in consultation with Sabah Tourism which manages the territory, to highlight the priorities of the Geopark.
  - Provide the same standards for visibility, protection and conservation outside as within the National Park area and provide information in local languages besides Bahasa and English.
  - Further strengthen the interpretation and UGGp information at the Sports Complex at Ranau, to connect the Geopark with the wide audience attending the venue.
  - Lead and manage activities to deliver economic benefit for the local communities based on their rich cultural heritage and diversity, through for example the “Community Cultural Protocol”. This could include coordinating more events such as the community Mountain Day and integrating the cultural beliefs and languages into the Geopark. Given the importance of Mount Kinabalu throughout the whole Geopark area, the community Mountain Day could be expanded and prolonged to allow greater participation.
  - Develop a partnership strategy which includes clear methodology and criteria on becoming a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the label of Kinabalu Geopark. This is applicable to accommodation, catering/culinary, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified. Consider providing these partners and local producers with greater visibility using the Geopark logo and brand as well as specific promotional material.
  - Consider developing a toolkit with simple concise information sheets to support each of its different partners. This would also facilitate the training sessions offered at the museum and provide a simple summary for external partners to explain the Kinabalu Geopark. Each sheet could be tailored to a different audience (hotels, tour operators, mountain guides, schools, cultural centres) and present the core messages (what is a Geopark? where to get information? Why is the area unique, what to visit?)
2. Improve management:
  - Consider including or designating a person on the team dedicated to coordinate education programs in scientific and environment education, for primary and secondary education and for the public at large.
  - Work closely with the three districts (Kota Belud, Kota Marudu and Ranau) under a strong Geopark coordination to achieve the outcomes contained in the Interim Management Plan and to ensure that the 2023-2027 Management Plan contains

actions across the entire Geopark.

- Encourage wider career development, not limited to mountain guiding and rangers services, for the local population. Establish programs to support the development of enterprises across the territory.

3. Geopark boundary:

- Taking into consideration that the current boundary ends at the seashore and there are marine reserves and mangrove areas just outside the Geopark boundary, some of which falling under the same management body that also oversees the aUGGp (Sabah Tourism or Parks), consider the inclusion of such sites during potential future extension(s) of the Geopark territory. Potential inclusion of these marine reserves will diversify and strengthen the Geopark's identity and would facilitate the development of the Geopark throughout its entire area and connect the Geopark with a wider public.

4. Networking:

- Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. Seek cooperation with the UGGps in the region, particularly a stronger collaboration with Geoparks with similar geology.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**7) Khorat (Thailand):** The candidate territory is located in the middle to lower Lam Takhong Basin in Nakhon Ratchasima Province, Northeast Thailand. The Geopark covers 5 out of 32 districts in the province, Sikhio, Sung Noen, Kham Thale So, Mueang Nakhon Ratchasima, and Chaloe Phra Kiat districts. The total area is 3,167.38 km<sup>2</sup>. The Geopark is 170 km northeast of the Thai capital (Bangkok), connected by major highways. Khorat Geopark covers three topographical regions: 1) a mountain area with cuervas, 2) undulating plains, and 3) flat plains. The highest and lowest points are 782 and 163 meters amsl, respectively. The major river flowing through the Geopark is the Lam Takhong River. As part of the Khorat Plateau, the Geopark is underlain by Mesozoic rocks of the Khorat Group, consisting of sandstone, conglomerate, siltstone, shale, claystone, and rock salt. The rising of the Himalayas 65 to 55 million years ago caused lifting and folding of the rock layers of the Khorat Group to form a plateau and a basin. Alternating layers of more and less resistant rock has resulted in the formation of 2 rows of cuervas in the western Geopark region. Five geological features of international significance, ranked in order of importance, are 1) the high diversity of fossil mammals, especially elephants, from Neogene to Quaternary deposits, 2) deposits of iguanodont dinosaurs and associated animals from the Early Cretaceous, 3) sources of abundant and diverse petrified wood, 4) the type locality of the Khok Kruat Formation in the Khorat Group, and 5) a prominent section of the Khorat cuesta, one of the longest cuesta systems in the world. The climate is Tropical Wet and Dry, with a mean annual precipitation of 1,019.2 mm and mean annual temperature of 27.4 °C. The vegetation is mostly dry dipterocarp forest and dry evergreen forest. The population of Khorat Geopark is approximately 741,239 (2018), comprising mainly Thai Khorat, Thai Northeastern (Isan), and Thai Chinese groups. The major economic activity is agriculture (rice, cassava, and sugar cane) and animal husbandry.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Marie-Luise Frey and Sarah Gamble who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Khorat (Thailand)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve visibility:
  - Develop a public map showing the Biosphere Reserve and Geopark boundaries as well as all the Geopark sites opened to the public (geology, culture, nature), explaining the specific character of the Khorat Geopark.
  - Prepare a more simplified geological map which can be easily understood by any kind of visitors. Provide additional wayfinding signage in small villages to guide visitors travelling to the different geosites.
  - Improve English speaking language skills of the Geopark team.
2. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Provide further information about the general geological processes and their connection to both the landscape and the fossils in panels and other interpretive material. The link between the geology (the fossil record), as well as the impacts of the geology on human life (such as agriculture, temple erosion) should be better explained. The geology of the salt formation should be included on the general geological information panels.
  - Develop further the geological site inventory, giving details about the location, size and geological age and providing a description of stratigraphic sequences. This should include the locations of the younger formations in the territory, and be extended to soils to include for example important geosites (e.g. salt soils). As the “Cuesta” theme is mentioned in the Geopark motto and in promotional material, this geomorphological feature should be added into the geosite inventory and database.
  - Create a database about the biodiversity in the Kham Thale So Salt Production area linking it to the hydrological situation and the climatic development.
  - Consider the renewal of The Khok Duean Ha Petrified Forest Museum. This could include an overview of the Khorat Geopark territory and make a link to climate change, natural and cultural heritage. The museum could also highlight changes in biodiversity and landscape due to erosion of geomorphological forms and processes, like for example the soils and the water supply.
3. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. Seek cooperation with the neighbouring UGGps, particularly a stronger collaboration with Geoparks with similar geology.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**8) Toratau (Russia):** The candidate territory is located on the territory of the Ishimbay, Sterlitamak and Gafuri administrative districts of the Republic of Bashkortostan (Russian Federation). The area of the Geopark is 2289 km<sup>2</sup>. The Geopark in the West borders with the major cities of the Republic of Bashkortostan –Ishimbay, Salavat, Sterlitamak. The distance to Ufa (the capital of the Republic of Bashkortostan) is 140 km, to Orenburg (the capital of the Orenburg region) -240 km. The territory is geologically very diverse reflecting sedimentary sequences formed over eight geological periods from the Precambrian Riphean to the modern Quarternary. The Eastern part of the territory of the Geopark is the Western slope of the southern Ural Mounts, covered with forests. The Western part of the Geopark includes the vast Kamsko-Belskaya erosion-accumulative plain and the hilly right Bank of the Belaya River (heights of 200-400 m), ideal for the development of agriculture. Typical mid-size landforms -single mountains, rocky cliffs, river valleys and intermountain depressions, complemented by microforms of relief -ravines, terraces, weathering outliers, karst landforms (sinkhole and caves) -create a unique territory located on the eastern edge of Europe. Some of the geological sites of the Geopark are unique, and the section of the Permian deposits of Usolka is a global stratotype of the tier boundary of the International Stratigraphic Scale. The remains of Permian reef structures with an abundance of paleontological remains near the cities of Sterlitamak and Ishimbay are also world famous. A variety of Precambrian and Paleozoic sedimentary complexes common in the Geopark are of great scientific importance. The population living on the territory of the Geopark is 38.700 people, spread over 79 urbans and 21 rural settlements. The west of the Geopark, is characterized by grain and cattle-breeding, in the east by meat and dairy farming. The population is actively raising bees. The territory has a developed road network (especially in the western part). Highways connecting the territory with major cities pass through Ishimbay and Krasnousolsky. The railway connects Ishimbay and Strelitamak with the Ufa-Orenburg transport highway.

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

While the members of the Council recognize the strong assets of the Geopark and the valuable work done by the team, they had a real concern about the boundaries of the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark, which in the application don't seem to follow clear administrative or pre-existing boundaries. As this is one of the first criteria of a UNESCO Global Geopark, the Council would require more information about it. Also, the actual application is a reduction compared to the previously existing National Geopark and the reasons for that reduction need to be clearer explained. A second concern relates to the importance to include local communities in the Geopark team and the Council members would like to see clearer assurance that there is a local anchorage so that local communities are not only involved in the management, but also profit from its benefits.

Following the review of the **Toratau (Rusia)** application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **defers** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for a maximum duration of two years. The Toratau aUGGp

should provide a progress report to be reconsidered for UGGp status. The report should address the following recommendations:

1. Reconsider the boundaries of the aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark to assure they follow clear and pre-existing administrative boundaries. Explain the difference with the boundaries as they were known for the territory as a National Geopark. If there is a reduction of the territory compared to the National Geopark, strive to maintain agreements with the municipalities and partners in the excluded parts and anticipate a future expansion if needed.
2. Provide more information about the composition of the Geopark team and the respective roles and relationship with the territory. Assure that there is a strong local connection and that local communities are involved in the management and profit from its benefits.
3. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation: the Shikhan edifices have an important symbolical importance for the local population reflecting their connection with this important geological heritage. Conserving the Shikhans must secure a scientific, social and spiritual value for the population that can only be achieved through measures of legal protection, education for sustainable development and heritage awareness. It is therefore important that measures are taken to discourage any kind of vandalism, possibly through legal protection, education and awareness raising actions.
4. Improve the information provided in the interpretative panels to bring a story, connecting the geological information with the biodiversity and cultural heritage of the territory and adapt the information to a wide public, using for example more illustrations and short texts.
5. Improve the visibility of the Geopark and the network in the territory in order to make aware companies, public administrations and locals of its existence.
6. Create a unified identity and branding for the territory in consultation and cooperation with local companies, administrations and communities to make the Geopark more known and create ownership.
7. The new facilities to explore the Shikhan edifices: Toratau aUGGP should be an example of sustainable tourism integrated in the nature. It should discourage unrestricted walking and climbing which could affect the Shikhan preservation, the biodiversity and the paleontological deposits. Interpretative panels along the eco-trail and the path for climbing Toratau could be a good medium to bring such information.
8. Strengthen its involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the European Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks.

The Council voted to defer this application (2 abstentions) and offered the candidate Geopark the help of the Global Geoparks Network in achieving progress against the recommendations. Upon request by the Chairperson of the UGGp Council, an observer provided further explanation and thanked the Council for their recommendations.

The Council voted to defer this application (2 abstentions).

**9) Ida Madra (Turkey):** aUGGP territory is located within the Balıkesir Province; including Bergama town from İzmir Province, Ezine and Ayvacık towns from Çanakkale Province; the northwest of the Anatolian Peninsula, the South Marmara part of the Marmara Region. The

aUGGp has a surface area of 17.000 km<sup>2</sup>, surrounded by some of the largest cities of Turkey (280km from Istanbul, 200km from Izmir, 200km from Çanakkale (Troy), 150 km from Bursa and 150km from Manisa). More than half of the Geopark area consists of plateau surfaces, a third of mountains and the rest is covered by plains. Elevation, starting from sea level reaches up to 1774m at the summit of the Mt. Ida. The Ida Madra Geopark is surrounded by the Marmara Sea in the North and the Aegean Sea in the West. The aUGGp has pristine nature hosting two National Parks (Mt. Ida National Park and Birds Paradise National Park), a Ramsar Wetland and 7 Nature Parks. Ida Madra Geopark area located within Anatolide-Tauride Block, defined by the İzmir-Ankara suture, which forms a profound stratigraphic, metamorphic, and magmatic boundary. The dominant surface lithology of the Ida Madra Geopark is the Miocene volcanism products of both acidic intrusions and extrusives. The aUGGp has a rich geodiversity as result of its geological evolution and tectonic setting including: active travertine chimneys which bears strong analogy to black smokers, origin of life on earth and astrobiology; Geothermal travertine chimney and terraces formation indicators of active faulting; hydrothermal mineral enrichment and the formation of metallogenic ores through Tethyan Metallogeny Belt; Tectonics, faulting, volcanism, geothermal in western Anatolia and its role in understanding the geological evolution of the Aegean; Ancient mining and quarrying; long, deep, and intense interaction of culture and geology; Ignimbrite geoarchaeology; bedrock carved dwellings. There are 23 municipalities within the Geopark area with a total population of about 1.4 million people.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alireza Amrikazemi who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- IUGS considers the international geological significance of the key geosites has not been demonstrated clearly, despite the additional information requested by IUGS and provided by the aUGGP.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

The IUGS representative explained that the international geological significance of the territory was weakly explained in the application dossier as well as in the additional documents provided to the evaluators and UNESCO Secretariat by the Ida Madra aUGGp. Based on the information provided, only one Geosite demonstrates international significance, IUGS considers that most geosites demonstrate regional value.

In their deliberation, the main concerns by the Council were related to: (i) the very large size of the proposed Geopark with boundaries that are determined based upon a combination of administrative boundaries and a natural continuum of geologic and geomorphologic features.(ii) poor demonstration of international significance of the geological heritage and geological sites (iii) lack of comparison with an active UGGP which is located within 100km of the aUGGP boundary (iv) the fact that the Ida Mountain in Kazdagi National Park is only partially integrated in the aUGGP and that there is no joint management plan between the proposed aUGGP and the World Heritage site(s) in the territory (v) challenging management of an extremely large territory by only two full time permanent staff members and weaknesses of the management plan as well as the limited visibility of the aUGGP within its entire territory (vi) lack of geological heritage promotion and education at the geosites which are mostly cultural and geomorphological sites while large portions of the Geopark do not promote any geosite (vii) lack of networking and collaboration with existing and aspiring UGGPs.

Following their deliberation, all Council members agreed that a field evaluation by experts to assess the progress made in the territory is essential in case of a re-application and hence they voted for a rejection. The Council proposed to support the site in case they wish to re-apply by offering guidance through the Global Geoparks Network and UNESCO Secretariat.

Following the review of the **Ida Madra (Turkey)** aUGGp application dossier, IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes to **reject** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: Consider revising/changing Geopark boundaries:
  - Consider including the entire Ida Mountain respecting the administrative boundaries and demonstrating a coherent geological and cultural identity throughout the area of the Geopark. This could increase the visibility of the Geopark across its partners and local communities and will improve the geological heritage promotion and conservation.
  - Consider reducing the size of the territory or splitting the area into two or three different Geoparks, forging Geoparks with a clear coherence in terms of geology, culture and history, with a clear brand identity and with a scale that is effectively manageable.
2. Improve the Geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Provide detailed and scientifically supported information describing the international geological significance of the Geopark;
  - Strengthen the geological heritage inventory to ensure a more balanced geographical distribution of geological sites.
  - Improve geological heritage research, conservation and promotion activities, in partnership with local and regional authorities. Set up guidelines for quarrying at the granitic topography to avoid disintegration of the landscapes.
  - Explain the conservation measures on geosites which are located outside the protected areas that are used as touristic attractions.
  - Explain the geological difference with neighboring UGGps or Geoparks projects providing an independent geological comparative study.
3. Develop links between geological and the other territorial heritages (i.e., natural biotic, culture, intangible) through interpretation, education, tours and Geopark trails, available for local communities and visitors.
4. Improve visibility:

Develop comprehensive geosites map to improve geological conservation and geotourism activities. Develop accordingly (a) Geopark map(s) for Geotourism purposes.
5. Create a unified identity and branding for the territory in consultation and cooperation with local companies, administrations and communities to make the Geopark more known and create ownership.
6. Improve Geopark management:
  - Develop a long-term Geopark management plan that includes sustainable resources mobilization and number of fulltime staff members in accordance with the size of the Geopark territory.
  - Develop the management structure and process to formally include local community

representatives and consider enlarging expertise within the staff members.

7. Education: Strengthen educational activities, school programs and gender equality.
8. Partnership: Establish formal and effective partnerships with the National Parks, World Heritage sites, Ramsar and other environmental and patrimonial protection designations located within the Geopark territory and increase Geopark visibility and recognition in collaboration with other existing designations. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management structure to establish mutual collaborations between different designations and demonstrate their involvements while ensuring visibility of different brands and designations.
9. Geotourism: Improve tourism development, by a dedicated marketing strategy to create public awareness and promote the geotourism experiences that are offered by the Geopark.
10. Strengthen networking with other UNESCO Global Geoparks and participate actively in the Geopark conferences and capacity building activities. Specially work closely with neighbor UGGps such as Lesvos UGGp.

The Council voted unanimously to **reject** this application and offered support through the GGN and UNESCO Secretariat to support the applicant should they wish to reapply.

**10) Jeonbuk West Coast (Republic of Korea):** aUGGp territory is located in the midwestern part of the Korean Peninsula and is 250 km away from Seoul, Republic of Korea. The aUGGp has an area of 1892.5 sq km (land area 1150.1 sq km, sea area 742.4 sq km) with a population of 107,594 people. The mean population density is 93.53 people per sq km, but this ranges from the sparsely populated areas in the mountains to the urban centers of Gochang and Buan. The historical settlement of this area dates back to 700 AD, but prehistoric peoples also left many Bronze Age Dolmen sites in the Gochang area, which were designated as World Heritage in 2000.

The aUGGp is accessible through highway, national roads and high-speed railways. Gochang and Buan, two counties of Jeollabuk-do Province, are within 3-hours travelling time from Incheon/Seoul International Airport. The Jeonbuk West Coast aUGGp has over 1.8 billion years of geological history, mainly Jurassic igneous and Cretaceous volcanic rocks including small amounts of Orosirian gneiss etc. The region is famous for its beautiful coast and islands including two Cretaceous volcanic mountains as part of Korean Peninsula volcanic complexes connecting China, Korea and Japan. This region is one of the key areas to understand the volcanic history of the Izanagi Oceanic Plate movement underneath the Eurasian Plate, particularly, this area can be a place for the comparative analysis between Holocene and Cretaceous volcanoes. A large tidal flat between Gochang and Buan, Gomsoman Bay, produces vast amounts of marine products like salts, fish, salted seafood, etc., which is the main platform to the economic prosperity in this area.

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- The IUGS gave a positive review of the geological heritage of international significance.

Following the review of the **Jeonbuk West Coast (Republic of Korea)** aUGGp application dossier, IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3)



to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Partnership: Improve cooperation by establishing formal agreements between the aUGGp, the Biosphere Reserve and the World Heritage site management authorities to coordinate activities of common interest, while ensuring a separate branding.
2. Geotourism: Develop further a uniform identity, visibility and promotion activities throughout the territory. To do so, the administrative authorities of Gochang County and Buan County should harmonize promotion panels and materials to reflect the single and unified Geopark identity. This includes the development of a better map of the entire aUGGp which includes all the geological, cultural and natural sites, as well as relevant tourist information.
3. Geological heritage promotion and conservation: Develop links between the geological and the other heritages within the territory (cultural and natural biotic) through interpretation, education, tours and Geopark trails.
4. Networking: Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory. Seek cooperation with the UGGps in the region.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**11) Busan (Korea)** aUGGp territory is located on the southeastern coast of the Korean Peninsula. The region is situated at the southernmost part of a geopolitical belt that connects Asia, Siberia and Europe, while being a main gateway to the Pacific Ocean. Due to its location, the city serves as one of the main hub ports within the global maritime transportation network. The size of the aUGGp is 805.2km<sup>2</sup> with a population of approximately 3.4 million residing within it. Geologically, the aUGGp shows the complex history of tectonic evolution, crustal deformation, basin development, and volcanic activity, as well as depositional pattern from the Cretaceous to the Holocene in East Asia. The area provides vast information on the paleoclimate, paleoenvironment and paleoecology during the period. The region is the perfect example of a harmonic landscape with rivers (e.g. Nakdonggang), sea and beaches (e.g. Dadaepo, Taejongdae, and Haeundae) and mountains (e.g. Geumjeongsan and Jangsan).

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- In its initial review IUGS considered that there are geological features with potential for International Scientific Significance, that provide accurate and detailed information about the geology of the applicant territory, addressing all relevant geologic aspects. In the application form, the significance was supported mainly by local publications therefore and IUGS requested further publications from international literature to support the evidence for the international significance of the geology. The applicant provided more detailed information during the evaluation mission and demonstrated the international value of several sites (Dadaepo basin, Nakdonggang estuary and orbicular gabbro), supported by SCIE indexed articles in reputable journals and a list of references to publications.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

The main concern of the Council relates to the fact that the proposed Geopark is a metropolitan Geopark, which fully covers a large metropolitan city, which is not compatible with the main

purpose of the initial Geopark concept which aims to increase the sustainability of local communities in rural areas while involving people living within the territory. In their deliberations, the main concerns of the Council were related to: (i) the unclear added value of this Geopark to 3.4 million population people living in the city and how they will benefit from the Geopark (ii) Geopark boundary fully covers a major city without demonstrating how they will manage geological heritage conservation and promotion within a metropole (iii) lack of local community involvement in the Geopark management and geotourism activities. Following their deliberations, the Council agreed that Busan aUGGP should restructure their territory taking into account the Geopark concept and as this would require an experts' assessment in the territory, they voted for a rejection. The Council proposed to support the site in that endeavor by offering support through the Global Geoparks Network and UNESCO Secretariat.

Following the review of the **Busan (Korea)** aUGGP application dossier, the IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGP Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGP criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **rejects** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: Reconsider the boundaries of the Geopark to limit the inclusion of densely populated urban areas and expand to the area outside of the city to improve the geological heritage promotion and conservation while ensuring a coherent geological and cultural identity throughout the area of the Geopark and respecting the administrative boundaries. Make sure that geosites are evenly distributed over that territory. Work closely with the metropolitan city management to promote the Geopark to its population and visitors to increase the visibility of the Geopark across its partners and population, and to promote the advantages to the designation.
2. Geological heritage promotion and conservation: Strengthen the aUGGP inventory with clear criteria to identify geological sites and their protection status. Set up monitoring and conservation plans for the geological sites and the geological heritage.
3. Geopark management: Increase the community engagement in Geopark activities and implement more of a bottom-up approach. Develop the management structure and process to formally include local community representatives, as well as other public and private stakeholders. Strengthen efforts to contribute to the delivery of the SDG's by focusing on energy use, water supply, waste management & environmental management topics.
4. Geotourism: Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy to make sure that the Geopark's geotourism offer integrates the rich natural and cultural heritage of the area and considers the components necessary to achieve sustainable tourism. Control the number of visitors and avoid mass tourism to better protect the geological heritage.
5. Networking: Strengthen networking with other UNESCO Global Geoparks and participate actively in the Geopark conferences and capacity building activities. Especially work closely with UGGPs with same conditions sharing best practices such as Hong Kong UGGP for example.

The Council voted unanimously to **reject** this application and offered support through the GGN and UNESCO Secretariat to support the applicant should they wish to reapply.

**12) Hakusan Tedorigawa (Japan):** The aUGGP territory is located on the west coast of Japan, in Ishikawa Prefecture. It covers all of Hakusan City, with a total area of 754.93 km<sup>2</sup>. It

includes Mt. Hakusan (2,702m elevation), and the Tedor River basin flowing from Mt. Hakusan to the Sea of Japan. Mt. Hakusan is the highest peak, and the surrounding area is one of the world's high snowfall areas. Up to 10m of snowfall is not uncommon, with surrounding villages receiving about 2.5m on average. Thanks to the melting of heavy snows by autumn, the abundance of water flow has brought many blessings to the residents and shaped the topography. The Tedor River is one of the steepest in the world, with an average gradient of 1/27. This formed many erosive features such as V-shaped valleys and gorges in the upper to mid-river, and transports sediment downstream. The aUGGp comprises mostly of Hida Belt rocks, with rocks related to the Sea of Japan rifting volcanism, Quaternary volcanics of Hakusan volcano, and Quaternary sediments. This situation makes it significant for understanding the development of the Japanese archipelago 240 million years ago. These strata are visible in places where erosion by the Tedor River system has exposed them. Hida metamorphic rocks in the upper reaches of the Tedor River are the oldest rocks in the area and form the base. Above this is the Tedor Group, Upper Jurassic to Lower Cretaceous river-lacustrine strata consisting of conglomerate, sandstone, and mudstone. Many animal and plant fossils – including dinosaurs – have been found, and it is considered an internationally important area for understanding biological evolution. Mt. Hakusan's flora and fauna are considered some of the most diverse in Japan, and are protected through the Mount Hakusan Biosphere Reserve, and the Hakusan National Park. Since ancient times the ethnic group in this area has been Japanese, and no ethnic minorities exist. The population of Hakusan City in 2020 is 113,581 inhabitants. The population is skewed, with most inhabitants living in the plains. Population decline is high in the mountainous areas.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.

Following the review of the **Hakusan Tedorigawa (Japan)** aUGGp application dossier, the IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: Improve aUGGp map to integrate information material and clarify and better reflect the Geopark boundaries, to be clearly understood by locals and visitors
2. Improve visibility. When renewing panels, update them with appropriate logos and introduce information about biotic elements when relevant and if suitable consider providing information about the network of UNESCO Global Geoparks. Consider using QR-codes. Continue promoting the links between all natural and cultural elements and strengthen the information about the unique fauna and flora in relevant areas.
3. Geological heritage promotion and conservation: Set up monitoring plans to control the number of visitors to make sure they do not negatively affect the conservation of the geological heritage and to regulate tourism in the aUGGp territory.
4. Improve partnerships:
  - Establish effective partnerships with the Biosphere Reserve and other environmental protection designations managements within the Geopark territory, to promote

cooperation and enhance the visibility of the Geopark. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management structure, establishing mutual collaborations, while promoting different brands independently. The Geopark should emphasize and promote that the territory holds multiple UNESCO designations.

- Develop a partnership strategy that includes a clear methodology and criteria on becoming a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the Geopark. This is applicable to accommodation, catering, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified.
- Consider providing these partners and local producers with greater visibility exploiting the Geopark logo and brand as well as by producing specific promotional material.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**13) Merangin Jambi (Indonesia):** aUGGp territory is located in the central part of Sumatra Island in Indonesia, with Bangko as most important urban settlement. The population is predominantly of Malay ethnic origin (213,288 p.), the majority of whom are engaged in the agricultural sector. Its 4,832.31 km<sup>2</sup> area is entirely land based, with Mount Masurai (> 2,900 m a.s.l.) as highest peak. The aUGGp, marked by a great diversity of landscapes, composed of mountains, craters, valleys, waterfalls, rivers, lakes and caves, is home to more than 4000 species of plants and 372 species of fauna, including many rare and endangered species. The aUGGp counts three main geological attractions that are truly unique: the fossils of “Jambi Flora”, representing the West Sumatra Terrane of Cathaysia with Euramerican Flora, the karst landscape representing a Mesozoic era with prehistoric artefacts and the Masurai Caldera representing the Quaternary volcanic. The geological diversity in the area is also demonstrated by the karst stretches in the Manau River, resulting in a variety of landscapes, including exokarst and endokarst. The karst formation is orientated towards the southwest and belongs to the Peneta Formation of the Late Jurassic. The rock layers contain molluscs and small veins of quartz and calcite. The aUGGp is located within active Masurai tectonovolcanic complex that have caused the formation of several landscapes such as lakes, waterfalls, and hot springs. The Caldera Masurai was formed by a large eruption, 6 on the VEI scale, that happened 33,000 years ago.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Charalampos Fassoulas, Alireza Amrikazemi and Guy Martini who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- The IUGS gave a positive review of the geological heritage of international significance.

Following the review of the **Merangin Jambi (Indonesia)** aUGGp application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage conservation and interpretation:
  - Strengthen the geological heritage inventory to cover the structures and sites related to exo- and endo karst, the river and landscape development and evolution, as well as the soil characteristics. In addition to the karst forms, focus also on the “processes” to promote

and interpret the geology for the non-scientific public. Scientific significance of the volcanic heritage in this territory should be better explained based on research results.

- Consider conducting new scientific excavations to discover further Permian fossils sites away from the riverbanks to get a better access to this iconic heritage.
  - Improve the interpretation of geological heritage inside the aUGGp making them attractive and easily understandable for all visitors, considering for example the use of 3D designs and simple graphics.
2. Improve visibility:
    - Improve the use of English translation in all information and communication materials, guided tours and exhibitions.
    - To overview and promote sites of interest consider innovative means to interpret geodiversity in the lowland areas using cameras, towers etc.
  3. Improve Geopark management: Increase local participation in the Management Body by including the local representatives and stakeholders in the advisory or other management boards. The road plan for access to the geosites should proceed after careful assessment from the perspective of preserving the natural environment and natural hazards (disaster prevention).
  4. Geotourism:
    - Improve, in collaboration with local authorities and Geopark partners, the visitor access to some of the sites, such as the Telung Gedang wood trunk and the Muara Karing leaf fossils, considering the increasing numbers of visitors to these sites and provide information to potential risk sites ensuring visitors' safety.
    - Set up monitoring plans to control the number of visitors to make sure they do not negatively affect the conservation of the geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage.
    - Improve the offer, and capacity of the accommodations facilities to be able to host different categories of tourists and invest in geotourism development in the territory.
  5. Enhance training and educational activities by including topics related to the unique biodiversity and the interactions between natural and human environment, as well as the mitigation of natural hazards. Promote the local traditional knowledge to manage natural hazards and promote it to the younger generations and for the safety of the citizens and the visitors. Risk mitigation actions should thus be enriched with more educational activities and awareness raising initiatives.
  6. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international significance of the territory and seek cooperation with the UGGps in the region, in particular on geodiversity conservation and promotion topics.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

- 14) Raja Ampat (Indonesia):** aUGGp territory is located in Raja Ampat Regency, West Papua Province in Indonesia. The area includes 4 main islands, namely Waigeo Island in the north (including the Wayag Islands in the northernmost region), Batanta Island and Salawati Island in the middle, and Misool Island in the south. The sea area between the large islands and the surrounding small islands is an integral part of the aUGGp area, which has an area of not less than 36,660 km<sup>2</sup>. Raja Ampat district consists of 24 subdistricts, 121 villages, populated

by 64.141 people, with the density around 50 people per km<sup>2</sup> and the capital is Waisai, located in Waigeo Island. The overlying Mesozoic rocks include ultramafics, representing the ocean floor rocks, and together form the basement of karstic limestones. Strikingly, the karst topography is well developed in old (Eocene) as well as young (Miocene-Pliocene) limestones units. The most unusual and omnipresent landscape in Raja Ampat is the Tropical Islands Karst, shaped by sea level rise in the Quaternary Period. The formation of this "archipelagic karst" in Raja Ampat continues until now, resulting in many caves, including those below the sea level. These places have become famous diving locations, because of the beauty of its underwater cave system, combined with the extraordinary marine mega-biodiversity.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Charalampos Fassoulas, Alireza Amrikazemi and Guy Martini who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- The IUGS considers that despite the weak geological arguments presented in the dossier, there is clear potential for international scientific significance related especially to the drowned Karst of Raja Ampat.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

Following the review of the **Raja Ampat (Indonesia)** aUGGp application dossier, the IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: Improve the aUGGp map with all relevant information, reflecting clear Geopark boundaries and integrate this map in all relevant information material.
2. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Provide more detailed and supported information describing the geological international value of the Geopark;
  - Strengthen the geological heritage inventory to ensure a better geographical distribution of geological sites. Encourage the implementation of more scientific research both on the marine and terrestrial environment, to study its geodiversity and the potential international value it may have. Additional geological sites may be identified related to the active karstic processes, erosional structures like wave cuts, and the spheroidal weathering of the granitoids, the tafonis and landscape development in various places.
  - Ensure a strong partnership and cooperation with universities and research institutions.
  - Promote the importance of the geodiversity for all living nature in the territory and especially the role of the drowned karst in the preservation of unique species and ecosystems (mangrove forests, coral reefs etc.). Provide comprehensive interpretation about the role that the interaction of four lithospheric plates has on the existence of its flora and fauna in the various islands through educational projects, publications and other means.
3. Management and partnerships:
  - Implement the management plan in the whole territory, especially covering the southern part.
  - Protect and promote local Indigenous people on the different islands as well as their language to protect their cultural identity and strengthen their involvement, engaging them in decision making

in the Geopark Coordination Committee and using their knowledge in interpretation and other Geoparks activities.

4. Visibility:

- Install new panels and boards in all main islands and important sites of interest.
- Establish Info-center(s) or info-points in the islands of Misool, and Salawati.
- Develop further thematic Geopark trails terrestrial or marine, beyond those around Waigeo.
- Establish innovative solutions to further promote the Geopark as a geotouristic destination, in cooperation with the tourism business, as well as through the Regency's tourism webpages. These may include strategic collaborations with the tour operators at the Regency, placement of Info- panels at the jetty and airport of Sorong, etc.
- Improve the use of English language translation in all information and communication materials, guided tours and exhibitions.

5. Education and capacity building: Consider developing educational programs focused on the disaster risk reduction through prevention and preparedness actions because the Geopark territory is prone to risks related to geohazards and climate change. These educational activities could be developed for schools, but also for the site managers and the local communities.

6. Networking: Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the National, regional and Global Geoparks Network to exchange experiences, knowledge and practices.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**15) Tabas (Iran):** aUGGp territory is located in the northwest of the South Khorasan Province in Iran and covers an area of 22,771 km<sup>2</sup>. Tabas City is about 690 m a.s.l. and the highest peak of the region is Nayband Mountain (in the south of the aUGGp) with a height of 3009 m above sea level. Two other cities located inside the aUGGp are Deyhuk (85 km southeast of Tabas City) and Eshghabad (110 km north of Tabas City). According to the 2016 census, the last census in Iran, the aUGGp is home to 72,617 people. They speak Persian and Tabas Local Language. The landscape varies from plains to high mountains and active tectonics shaped many valleys (Sardar, Jenni, Tafto, etc.) in the region. Deserts and sand dunes are among other landforms typical for the area. Three important rivers in the east of the aUGGp originate from the Shotori Mountains. Agriculture is flourishing in this area, and a significant number of the residents are working in the various mines in the region. Tabas is considered as a transportation hub that connects the southwest, west and centre of Iran to the east and northeast of it with road, railway and air. The aUGGp has an active geological and structural history and is one of the complex geological units in Iran. Nayband Fault in the east and Kalmard fault in the west of the aUGGp are among the most important basement faults in Iran. These faults have been formed since the beginning of the structural evolution of Central Iran and they divide the facies and different sedimentary basins from the Infracambrian to Quaternary. Due to the specific geological conditions of this region, the process of geological and structural evolution in the Paleozoic does not correspond to the surrounding areas. In addition, this aUGGp features late carboniferous rocks that are found nowhere else in central Iran. The occurrence of intense subsidence during the Paleozoic and Mesozoic is another remarkable feature of this area.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alireza Amrikazemi, Guy Martini and Setsuya Nakada who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.

- ii- The IUGS considers that the proposal demonstrated its international value and the evaluators received additional information and references supporting the original dossier. As a result of this review, Tabas aUGGp is considered to have sufficient international value, in particular related to the collisions of the Arabian and Eurasian plates from the Precambrian period to the recent dynamic crustal movement.

Following the review of the **Tabas (Iran)** aUGGp application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: assure that adequate activities are undertaken throughout the territory. If this is not possible, consider reducing the territory in the future.
2. Improve Geopark management:
  - Develop further a comprehensive management plan for the Geopark, clarifying the role of the Tabas Parvadeh Coal Company (TPCC), important financial donor of the Geopark, and clarify if the aUGGp's decision-making is independent from this company or not. Ensure the local communities' participation in decision making.
3. Education and research: Conduct more research and provide continuous education about geoscience and geological heritage. Coordinate educational activities offered by the aUGGp and its partners and promote these activities under the Geopark brand while diversifying educational programs for different levels of education.
  - Consider providing training for Geopark guides in close cooperation with local communities.
4. Visibility:
  - Develop an overview story of the common identity of the region, taking into consideration the links between geological and the other territorial heritages through interpretation, education, tours and Geopark trails. For example, the water resources and circulation under the ground should be told as an important story for the development and culture of the city and villages in this aUGGp. As the caravansaries are important cultural heritage, their history and evolution should be explained with links to the rise of Tabas city and in connection with the Silk Road in terms of the hydrogeological and geographical context.
  - Include the role of the TPCC in the historical and cultural development of the Tabas region, as a promoter of the SDGs, and as a valuable geological site for coal formation.
  - Develop the connections between the geographical distribution of geological and other natural phenomena like deserts, mountains and animals and plants and the development of the city and villages in relation to climate change and integrate it in the Geopark story telling.
5. Geological Heritage Conservation and Promotion: Provide detailed and scientifically supported information describing the geological international geological significance of the Geopark.
6. Partnerships: Develop a partnership strategy which includes clear methodology and criteria on becoming a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the Geopark. This is applicable to accommodation, catering, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified. For example, develop



a clear branding to promote local products, emphasizing the specificities that mark the identity of the different communities.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**16) Sunnhordland (Norway):** aUGGp territory is located on the west coast of Norway in the region of Sunnhordland, Vestland, including 8 municipalities and spans over 4.764 km<sup>2</sup>, including a sea area of 1.765 km<sup>2</sup> and a land area of 2.995 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 64.000 inhabitants. Most of the inhabitants live in villages and small towns, leaving large areas sparsely inhabited. The town of Leirvik in Stord municipality is the regional centre and a hub for infrastructure where the biggest shipyard and a university branch are situated. Most areas can be reached in two-three hours from the cities of Bergen and Stavanger. The landscape offers a wide range of different sights appealing to various interests. The western part, facing the North Sea, consist of an archipelago at the mouth of the 183 km long Hardanger fjord. Many of the low islets that are exposed to the open sea barely have any vegetation. In contrast, larger islands in more sheltered waters are often overgrown with pine, deciduous forests and heather. At the eastern part of Sunnhordland alpine mountains are overlooking the fjord with the outer coast facing the North Sea. The largest mountain rises 1565 m.a.s.l. and is embraced by the Folgefonna Ice Cap, the 3rd largest glacier in Norway. The glacier is part of a national park and covers an area of 214 km<sup>2</sup>. Waterfalls and glaciers that have attracted tourists since the early 1800's dive into the fjord from the steep mountain sides. Geologists took a special interest in the region when pyrite became a valuable resource in the 1850's, and exploitations of geo-resources has a long tradition in the area. This landscape became exposed as the ice rapidly retreated around 11.000 years ago. Within the aUGGp, two of the major ancient growth zones on Earth are juxtaposed. Whereas the oldest zone formed by continental arc magmatism, the younger formed by island-arc magmatism and by arc-continent and continent-continent collision. The variety of plutonic and volcanic rock complexes that are exposed within these contrasting terrains display the rock types that make up the crust and give insight into the deep crustal and surface processes that build continents. Today the landscape continues to sustain the society. The archipelago harbours fish farming, the glaciated mountainous areas support hydroelectric power production and aluminum production plants, and the sheltered deep fjords enables the construction of platforms for offshore petroleum industry and for the harvesting of wind energy.

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

Following the review of the **Sunnhordland (Norway)** aUGGp application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:

- Improve the geological interpretation inside the aUGGp making them visible and easily understandable for all visitors. Integrate a simple explanation of the geological history of the area on the website and in the main Geopark leaflet and simplify the geological presentation.
  - Strengthen the links between the geological, natural biotic, and cultural heritage through a variety of media, especially on the Geopark map and the website. Consider exploring the historical and cultural links between Sunnhordland aUGGP and Shetland UGGp from communities' interactions and relocations, quarrying and use of the bakestones perspectives,
  - Continue to work with the University of Bergen but also pursue with the recruitment of a Geopark geologist as planned.
2. Improve visibility
    - Increase the visibility through the introduction of Geopark 'proud partner' plaques at the entranceways of the key sites and partner establishments,
    - Improve the Geopark website by adding more information about the Geopark partners and support the partners whose online information about the Geopark needs to be improved,
    - Ensure Geopark visibility at the Halsnoy Monastery that provides a fascinating link between the geology and the cultural history of the area. The external interpretation would benefit from an update and the Geopark logo should be incorporated at that point
    - Continue developing opportunities with Akrafjorden Oppliving, the Official Tourism Board of Akrafjorden and provider of outdoor activities.
    - Complete and install the interpretation panels for the Etne Terrace and Petroglyphs and other sites,
  3. Geotourism: Explore dedicated self-guided kayak tours either delivered through the Geopark or partner organisations.
  4. Networking: Take up all opportunities for networking and exchange with existing and aspirant UGGP's through ongoing dialogue, visits and attendance at national and international UGGP meetings and conferences.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**17) Nisyros (Greece):** aUGGp territory is located within the south-eastern part of the Aegean Sea and spans over 481 km<sup>2</sup>. Nisyros has a population of 1008 residents, while the surrounding islets, Strongyli, Pachia, Pergousa (volcanic) and Kandeliousa (non-volcanic), are not inhabited. The capital of Nisyros is Mandraki and is the largest of the four villages (Emborios, Pali, Nikia). It is home to 681 residents out of the total population. All the settlements are considered as historically preserved areas and built with an eastward orientation, in order to be shielded from the western wind. The aUGGp is part of the South Aegean Volcanic Arc, one of its most active and geotectonically complex regions that generated the largest volcanic eruption in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea (Kos Plateau Tuff), 161.000 years ago. The circular shape of Nisyros which is entirely composed of volcanic rocks covers an area of just 42 km<sup>2</sup> with a total width of 8.5 km and a coastal circumference of about 25km. The prominent cone shape makes it the most fascinating stratovolcanic edifice in Greece. It features volcanic eruption vents (necks, dome vents, cones) as well as hydrothermal explosion craters and emission spots (fumaroles, hot steam and hot springs).

The most distinct structural feature of the island is the caldera, a huge collapsed crater among the island's peaks with a diameter of around 3.6 km. It is almost circular featuring steep walls with a drop of 300-400m between the northern and eastern rim. Inside the caldera, there is the Lakki plain of 110m a.s.l. to the east, and the voluminous rhyodacitic domes of up to 698m in height (Profitis Ilias) filling the western part. The major faults cut Nisyros volcano into different tectonic blocks and all the Lakki hydrothermal craters are associated with them. The minor faults might be a result of the dominant conjugate fault systems. Thermal springs, partly combined with CO<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>S emissions and temperatures up to 60°C are bound to faults along the northern, north-eastern and southern shores at sea level. Their waters are mixtures of magmatic, meteoric and marine origin.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Nickolas Zouros and Charalampos Fassoulas who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

Council deliberations focused on the weaknesses of the management structure which is mainly led by university staff without considerable involvement of local communities, and the necessity of special programmes for geoeducation, disaster risk reduction, local business management as well as geotourism. The Council indicated that the main weakness of this Geopark application is the limited number of full-time staff and the lack of a permanent geoscientist while the visibility of the Geopark should be improved including an Information center, panels, website, as well as partnerships and networking with other Geoparks. The Council didn't follow the evaluators' suggestion to include Yali Island, excluded in the application dossier, in the territory as it has been too excavated by on-going pumice mining.

Following the review of the **Nisyros (Greece)** aUGGp application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **defers** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for two years. The Nisyros aUGGp should provide a progress report to be reconsidered for UGGp status. The report should address the following recommendations:

1. Geological heritage promotion and conservation: Develop links between geological and the other territorial heritages (i.e., natural biotic, culture, intangible) through interpretation material, museums, information centres, education programmes and activities, tours and Geopark trails.
2. Improve visibility:
  - Include information on the Geopark in all museums, visitor centres and particularly at the Stefano Crater volcano information point, so that visitors are aware that the heritage is connected to the Geopark and its geology.
  - The Geopark needs to be active on social media and regularly update the webpage.
  - Improve the entrance signage to the Geopark at all of the ports and also in Kos, the main source of visitors to Nisyros.
  - Develop a Geopark corner in the new Geopark interpretation centre.
3. Develop and deliver specific education programmes for schools, guides, local businesses and the

local community. This should include information on the Geopark and also on the geological and other heritage of the entire territory and should be tailored to meet the requirements of each specific audience. Local people should be trained by the Geopark team for disaster risk reduction.

4. Improve Geopark management and staffing:
  - Ensure a management plan which is agreed upon by all relevant stakeholders and partners and enables well-functioning of the aUGGp as well as the social and economic needs of the local populations. The management plan must be comprehensive, incorporating the governance, development, communication, protection, infrastructure, finances, and partnerships within the Geopark as well as landscape protection and conserves a cultural identity of local population.
  - The aUGGp needs to have adequate staff, specifically a dedicated full-time Geopark Manager and a Geopark Geoscientist, with daily responsibility for the delivery of all Geopark activities. This should be complemented by staff with responsibility for the development and delivery of education activities.
  - To increase the effect of the Geopark on the sustainable development of the area, consider developing and strengthening the involvement of local communities and especially young people. For example, develop a youth platform to directly involve them in the management.
5. Develop a formal partnership programme for local businesses including a formal partnership agreement, a branding policy, clear criteria for inclusion, and increased visibility at specific partner locations.
6. Continue participating in the Hellenic network of Geoparks and improve networking outside of Greece. Ensure more active participation in the Global Geopark Network including specific relevant working groups, especially by members of the Geopark Management Body.

The Council voted unanimously to **defer** this application

**18) MurGeopark (Italy):** aUGGP territory is located in the southeast of Italy and comprises the Alta Murgia region, where a Cretaceous sector of the Apulia Carbonate Platform crops out, and the adjacent Premurge area, where the south-westward lateral extension of the same platform turns toward the south Apennines Chain and is thinly covered by Plio-Quaternary foredeep deposits. The whole area covers 2,550 km<sup>2</sup> and is mainly hilly, with altitudes up to about 680 m a.s.l. (Torre Disperata, 686 m; Monte Caccia, 680 m), characterized by the occurrence of woods, karst caves, sinkholes, escarpments, depressions caused by water erosion (known as “lame” and “gravine”), extensive pastures, architectural elements and towns related to agricultural activity and pastoralism. The area comprises the Alta Murgia National Park, a protected area which covers approximately 68,000 hectares, and includes several Natura 2000 sites. The Premurge area is mainly clay with rounded hills hosting small villages. The area includes the municipal territory of fifteen towns between the provinces of Bari, Barletta-Andria-Trani, and Taranto. The total population reaches about 440,000 inhabitants. There is a natural balance between the ancestral landscapes and the traditional houses (farms, jazzi, cisterns, dry stone walls), the agro-pastoral activities (pastoralism and agriculture), traditional food products, medicinal herbs and ancient routes of transhumance, called "tratturi". The aspiring Geopark area is marked by a rich biodiversity with different types of steppe and sub-steppe habitats, unique in Italy. There are about 124 wild species present, representing about 25% of the 500 recorded for Italy. The avifauna of the Murgia is among the most important of the steppe and semi-arid areas of the Mediterranean basin. Several

international, national and regional laws protect the sites, justified by the richness of the environmental, landscape and historical-cultural components.

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

The main concerns by the Council relate to the lack of added value of the Geopark to the existing Alta Murgia National Park, and lack of additional human and financial resources which should be committed to develop true Geopark activities, related to the geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage of the territory. The Council noted from the application file for MurGeopark and the report by the evaluators that the Geopark is making this transition, but the applicant did not demonstrate that the aUGGp is already functioning as de-facto Geopark. The branding is currently mainly based on the National Park resulting in a lack of visibility for the aspiring Geopark and a lack of dedicated Geopark activities. The Council agreed also that the applicant could not demonstrate the involvement of local communities in the creation and management of this aspiring Geopark and also missed the partnership agreements with the Castel del Monte, a UNESCO World Heritage site which is located within the aspiring Geopark, and other possible partners. The Management Plan for the Geopark is very similar to the Management Plan of the National Park and does not demonstrate the added value of the Geopark. The MurGeopark, a territory much larger than the National Park, needs additional resources to be managed properly. In that sense, the Council agreed that this territory does not show their functioning for more than one year as a Geopark which is one of the main requirements to become a UNESCO Global Geopark. In their recommendations, the Council members encourage the applicant to continue the transition from a National Park towards an actual Geopark.

In their deliberation, three Council members proposed a deferral, which would mean that the MurGeopark aUGGp sends a progress report explaining the implementation of the Council recommendations within two years. The submission of a progress report would not require an additional field evaluation mission. However, eight other Council members consider that such experts field mission is required to assess the progress made in the territory, and hence, they voted for a rejection. Thus, the Council proposed to support the site in that endeavor by offering support through the Global Geoparks Network and UNESCO Secretariat.

Following the review of the **MurGeopark (Italy)** aUGGp application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **rejects** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: Improve aUGGp map to integrate information material, clarify and better define Geopark boundaries in the map.
2. Improve Geopark management:
  - Ensure that the management body has financial and human resources to establish and further develop the Geopark, in coherence with the management of the National Park,

- Clarify the decision-making process involving the different municipalities and other stakeholders, including those that fall outside the National Park,
  - Develop the management structure and process to formally include local community representatives and consider increasing the Geopark staff, including a geoscientist on a full time and stable basis,
  - Consider English language training of the members of the Management body as well as of the people that will work with foreign visitors.
  - Organize meetings with the private owners of the stone quarries and other owners in the areas outside the National Park to inform them on the UGGP regulations related to selling geological material.
  - Establish effective partnerships with the World Heritage site and other environmental and patrimonial protection designations located within the territory. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management structure and establish mutual collaboration, while distinguishing different identities and branding.
3. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation:
- Strengthen geological heritage inventory to ensure a better geographical distribution of geological sites. In particular, increase the number of the geosites provided with interpretation panels in the areas that are not included in the National Park.
4. Improve visibility:
- Develop an overview story of the common identity of the region, taking into consideration the links between geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage, through interpretation material, museums, information centres, education programmes and activities, tours and Geopark trails,
  - Ensure the visibility of the Geopark brand on all communication and information materials,
  - Improve the use of English translation (and other foreign languages) in all information and communication materials, guided tours and exhibitions.
  - Consider renaming Geopark with a name having local meaning and is related to the Geopark identity.
5. Improve education programs, research and capacity building:
- Develop educational programs in Geology for the secondary schools.
  - Extrapolate educational activities to the rest of the population (informal and non-formal education) in conjunction with the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda.
  - Develop research and education on climate change and other types of hazards, especially on earthquakes, frequently occurring in the region, in collaboration with researchers from the University in Bari and other universities in the region with whom the Park collaborates.
6. Partnership: Develop a partnership strategy which includes a clear methodology and criteria on becoming a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the Geopark. This is applicable to accommodation, catering, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products, but is not restricted to those identified.
7. Networking: Sustain the networking with other UGGPs in southern Europe with similar geological structures and agricultural characteristics.

A **rejection** of this application was voted on with 8 members supporting the rejection and 3 members supporting deferral.

**19) Cabo Ortegal (Spain):** aUGGP territory is located on the Northwest of Spain with a size of 631 km<sup>2</sup> that spread over 7 municipalities. The total population of the territory is 27,683 inhabitants, with a total population density of 43.87 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>. There are however important differences between the coastal municipalities (75 inhab./km<sup>2</sup>) and the inland municipalities (25 inhab./km<sup>2</sup>). The territory is undergoing an important demographic crisis, since, in addition to the high dispersion, there is a clear tendency towards depopulation, due to the loss of nearby industrial activity (demographic loss rate of 29.62% in the last decade) and high population aging (population aging rate of 33.19%). From the physical point of view, the territory is formed by low mountain chains that, in the north, lead to a very steep coast, with spectacular cliffs over 600 metres high. Also noteworthy are the rias, islets, coves and extensive sandy beaches, some associated with coastal lagoons, of great biodiversity. The inland area is dominated by small mountain chains, between 200-600 metres in altitude, cut by river valleys. The climate is oceanic, with abundant rainfall and mild temperatures throughout most of the year. The geological characteristics of the territory of international relevance are related to the origin and rarity of the materials found there. Most of the geological formations are related to the closure of the Rheic Ocean during the Variscan Orogeny. An orogeny that allowed the exhumation of a large number of rocks present today in the territory of the aUGGP, but the international importance of this territory is also due to the excellent visualization of the Mohorovicic discontinuity, showing good examples of mantle layering. The largest eclogite outcrop in the world, a complete ophiolitic sequence of the Upper Palaeozoic, acidic-intermediate submarine Ordovician volcanism, chromium and platinoid mineralizations associated with mantle rocks, the presence of recumbent folds affecting the crust-mantle interface, the wide and varied outcrops of granulites or the important shear zones and structures associated with strike-slip faults during the tectonic stacking of the Variscan orogeny.

- i. A conflict of interest was declared by Asier Hilario who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote. Ben van Wyk de Vries replaced him on behalf of IUGS
- ii. Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii. Summary of discussion:

Following the review of the **Cabo Ortegal (Spain)** aUGGP application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGP Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGP criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark management: The new directly-employed team roles should reflect those identified and communicated during the evaluation mission. Ensure the recruitment of a geoscientist on a full time and stable basis.
2. Visibility:
  - Provide further and rigorous information describing the geological international value of the Geopark.
  - Expand and update onsite interpretation and infrastructure in priority locations, as identified in Cabo Ortegal aUGGP comprehensive audit and action plan. This

interpretation should have a strong focus on graphics, use media and site infrastructure appropriated to the setting, and tell the relevant stories in engaging ways.

3. Education and capacity building: Expand current successful examples of educational programmes and create more general materials for teachers, as planned.
4. Partnership: Identify robust criteria for businesses to become “Friends of the Geopark”, creating an opportunity similar to that currently available to legally constituted local Associations. This should lead to further added-value branding of local products allied to the purposes and values of the Geopark.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**20) Costa Quebrada (Spain):** aUGGp territory is located in the North of Spain and is geologically located in the North Cantabrian Basin next to the Asturian Paleozoic Massif. It spans over an area of 473 km<sup>2</sup> on the rolling hills of the central coast of Cantabria in the district historically known as La Marina. The eight municipalities have a total population of 265.079 inhabitants that are unevenly distributed. The eastern part is the most densely populated, as it includes the urban and metropolitan areas of Santander, the capital city of Cantabria. The Mesozoic and Cenozoic deposits over which the area lies are clearly separated from the more rugged reliefs of the interior valleys (La Montaña) by the thrust fault and straight ridge of the Escudo de Cabuérniga and its Carboniferous and Permian outcrops. The lower stretches of rivers Pas and Saja meander across this territory to meet the Bay of Biscay, forming well developed estuaries. Several prominences stand out in this gentle relief. The periclinal terminations and mesas at the axis of the San Román-Santillana syncline reach its highest altitude at El Tolío (La Picota) Hill, with 246 m. a.s.l.w. Some other prominent reliefs include the limestone outcrops of Camargo and the interfluvial hills in southern Piélagos. It is characterized by sedimentation in terrestrial first, and marine environments later, during some 200 Ma throughout Mesozoic and Cenozoic Eras, with the Cretaceous as the best represented period. The strata tilt and orientation, from subvertical to horizontal, and parallel to perpendicular to the coastline, or the contrasting lithologies regarding erodibility determine to a great extent a rich and expressive catalogue of littoral geomorphology, representative of a retreating coastline. The evolution of erosive modelling in the area can be clearly observed and reconstructed through the analysis of a great variety of morphologies and outcrop erosive behavior. Also, the presence of limestones forms valuable cavities listed as UNESCO World Heritage.

- i. A conflict of interest was declared by Asier Hilario who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote. Ben van Wyk de Vries replaced him on behalf of IUGS
- ii. Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii. Summary of discussion:

The main concerns by the Council are related to the aspiring Geopark branding, the coastal boundaries of the Geopark territory as well as to the management plan which is not completed as most of the partnerships are being discussed and not finalized as of summer 2022, while the Geopark team is mainly formed by voluntary staff, which may jeopardize the sustainability of the Geopark. The Council members agreed that this Geopark is being developed and not functioning



yet as a de facto Geopark. Based on the application file and mission report, they decided that the territory is functioning as a geological park lacking joint management with other UNESCO designated sites such as World Heritage sites and missing connection with the cultural and natural heritage. They concluded that a new expert's field mission will be needed to assess the improvements made and hence they voted for a rejection. The Council proposed to support the site in that endeavor by offering support through the Global Geoparks Network and the UNESCO Secretariat.

Following the review of the **Costa Quebrada (Spain)** aUGGP application dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **rejects** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark boundaries: Improve aUGGP map to integrate information material, as well as clarify and better define Geopark boundaries.
2. Improve management:
  - Complete outstanding agreements in relation to the governance, management, staffing and funding of the Geopark,
  - Reassess the Governance structure taking into consideration of findings discussed during the evaluation mission, to ensure that it conforms to the good practice.
3. Improve visibility:
  - Consider dropping the reference to “parque geológico/geological park” from the Geopark brand, this will avoid branding confusion between Geopark and Geological Park.
  - Increase the visibility of the Geopark concept on the website, as well as in interpretation panels and information in the field, and through the local and regional media. This should signal a move away from the Geological Park branding.
  - Maintain and protect all infrastructure like interpretation panels and try to keep them free from graffiti. Repair damaged panels.
  - Improve the collaboration between the Geopark (and its management body) and both the Altamira National Museum and the Cultural Heritage Museum in Santander, to ensure that these two outstanding facilities can become flagship venues for the Geopark.
4. Partnership: Establish effective partnerships with the management bodies of the World Heritage site and other environmental and patrimonial protection designations located within the territory, foster cooperation to increase visibility and recognition of the Geopark. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management body of the Geopark to demonstrate an effective level of independence of each site, establishing mutual collaborations, while ensuring a separate branding.
5. Strengthen the networking with the Geopark networks and work closely with the Geoparks Forum in Spain to overpass the difficulties related to the Geopark concept.

The Council voted unanimously to **reject** this application

**21) Caçapava (Brazil):** aUGGP territory is located in the south-eastern South America, around the 30°S parallel, in the so-called Latin-American “southern cone” (Cone Sul

Latinoamericano). The geographical area is in the Rio Grande do Sul State, in southernmost, subtropical Brazil, approximately 200km away from the national southern border with the Republic of Uruguay. The territory boundaries follow administrative boundaries of the municipality of Caçapava do Sul and covers an area of 3,047 km<sup>2</sup>. A very relevant character of the territory is its position of “sentinel”, a perfect place for watching and guarding the surrounding landscapes. Hills and ranges in the Caçapava territory have been chosen as Indigenous settlements (in pre-Colombian times), as borderline areas between territorial sovereignties of Portugal and Spain (in the 18th century), as a theoretically impregnable place for a revolutionary capital (around 1839), and as a perfect place for the construction of a fortress (around 1850), for defending the frontiers of the Brazilian empire. In terms of geomorphology, the region is part of the Sul- rio-grandense Plateau, also called Serras do Sudeste (‘south-eastern ranges’), an area of relatively high altitudes (reaching 500 m a.s.l.) with respect to the low-lying, younger, sedimentary terranes of the central and coastal plains. From a geological point of view, the territory of the Caçapava aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark is part of the Sul-rio- grandense Shield, the area comprising the oldest geological materials and the most complex geological evolution in Rio Grande do Sul State. Gneiss, marbles, diverse schists, amphibolites, granitoids, rhyolites, andesites, basalts, sandstones, and conglomerates are some of the rocks that record craton-related, as well as collisional and post-collisional events. Ages for those rocks (or individual minerals within them) range from the Archaean to the Ordovician. The territory also displays important tectonic and magnetic features, from simple fractures and faults to crustal-scale lineaments or sutures, as well as world-class sulphide ore minerals. Fluvial deposits of Quaternary age, including fossils of the Pleistocene megafauna (especially the remains of three genera of ground sloths), are also present. For its geodiversity-related singular habitats, approximately half of the territory of the Caçapava Aspiring Geopark is considered as being of high conservation relevance by the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment. Part of the grassland areas of Caçapava do Sul are also certified as “valuable grassland areas”. Such native grasslands retain and preserve a unique, sustainable way of living, that of the family sheep and goat ranchers (“pecuaristas familiares”), especially in the Guaritas area of the Caçapava Aspiring Geopark. These people are a “traditional population” of the Pampa of southernmost Brazil.

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

During the Council’s discussion about the location of the aspiring Geopark, it was highlighted that there are less than 100 km between **Caçapava aUGGp** and Quarta Colônia aUGGp (Brazil), also being evaluated during this Council Meeting. Due to this situation, they presented an independent Geological Report, confirming that both territories have different geological heritage.

Following the review of the **Caçapava aUGGp (Brazil)** aUGGp application dossier, the IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate does fulfil the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Strengthen geological heritage inventory to ensure a better geographical distribution of geological sites and include natural biotic and cultural sites.
  - Continue and strengthen the establishment of geodiversity protection measures in the new geosites of the territory.
  - Maintain continuous dissemination campaigns on the importance of protecting geodiversity and the natural resources of the Geopark.
2. Improve management:
  - Review financial resources and team to ensure that adequate funding is available to sustain an adequate number of permanent staff members for the management of the territory.
  - Ensure cooperation with the landowners where there are important geosites of the Geopark to permit people to visit the sites.
3. Improve visibility:
  - Increase the use of English and other languages in panels, brochures and promotional and marketing materials.
  - Include navigation for visitors to get to the Geopark on the official aUGGp website.
  - Continue with the installation of new interpretive panels and the updating of the existing ones at the geological sites, and at other sites of historical, cultural or natural interest, etc.
  - Make sure that new visitor center is operational within the next four years
4. Integrate the historic presence of the Indigenous peoples in the storytelling of the Geopark and continue involving the Guarani People in the management of the Geopark.
5. Improve networking:
  - Continue working closely together with the other Geoparks in the Rio Grande do Sul State to set up joint promotion campaigns and activities, for example by promoting the Geoparks to potential visitors from nearby areas and neighboring countries (Argentina, Uruguay, Porto Alegre, etc.).
  - Improve the cooperation with others UGGps, in the region and at Global scale, especially with those territories where Caçapava inhabitants have historic bonds (i.e. Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Africa, etc).

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**22) Quarta Colônia (Brazil):** aUGGP territory is located in the south of Brazil at the center of Rio Grande do Sul State. It covers an area of 2,923 km<sup>2</sup>, comprising a territory that demonstrates the transition between the Brazilian Meridional Plateau and the Sul- Riograndense Peripheral Depression (Depressão Periférica Sul-Riograndense) and between two major Brazilian ecosystems: the Atlantic Forest and the Pampa, with enormous biodiversity covering forests and grasslands. The aUGGp area is formed by the boundaries of nine municipalities which, all together, have a population of 62,193 inhabitants. The capital, Porto Alegre, is 270 km away, accessible by highway. The geological succession at the aUGGp is the opening of the Atlantic Ocean and the break-up of the Gondwana during the Mesozoic. Subjacent to those, lie the Triassic sedimentary successions that yield the Geopark's greatest Geoheritage treasure: a rich fossil fauna and flora recognized internationally, and which has been

scientifically documented for decades of research. This fossil record helps document a crucial moment in the history of life on Earth, for Triassic ecosystems represent life's takeover after the massive Permo-Triassic extinction at the end of the Paleozoic. The aUGGp was home to the most varied forms of animal and plant life 230 million years ago, at the dawn of modern ecosystems, and is today endowed with Triassic fossils of great international relevance. The territory of European descendants and quilombolas, which has millennial traces of Indigenous settlements, also holds the records of the oldest dinosaurs on the planet and welcomes its visitors for a real trip back in time, diving into the history of the Earth, of the ecosystems and of human culture. In the Quarta Colônia Geopark, among fossils, trails and vantage points, among colonial villas, bountiful spreads and memories, time becomes scenery and space becomes an invitation to discovery.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Helga Chulepin who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Positive reviews of geological heritage of international significance were received from the IUGS.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

Following the review of the **Quarta Colônia aUGGp (Brazil)** application dossier, the IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:

1. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Improve conservation measures, consider creating new regulations in collaboration with the local municipalities. Prepare recommendations for geological heritage protection actions for local residents and visitors, as well as maintenance and supervision measures especially for the Geosites.
  - Collaborate with local authorities and communities to protect the important and rich palaeontological heritage and to avoid illegal selling of fossils.
2. Improve visibility:
  - Increase visibility of the Geopark in the territory and of the Geopark's map in the geosites panels, facilities and infrastructure around the territory. Avoid the maps with information about only one municipality. Provide information that is understandable by a wider audience, including in the English language. Promote the Global Geopark Network in Geosites and webpage.
  - Set up Geopark's corners in cooperation with local authorities and based on local existing infrastructures and facilities from public and private partners to explain and promote the Geopark, the Geopark concept and the regional and global networks.
  - Collaborate with the tourism entrepreneurs from the different municipalities, to promote a better circulation of visitors around the entire Geopark. Improve the offer in the English language to foreign visitors.

- Increase the number of indicative road signs, Geosites signs, Geosites trails, and information centres at municipalities.
- 3. Education and capacity building: Take actions through education and partnerships in order to promote climate change mitigation and adaptation activities in collaboration with the residents of the territory. Consider creating joint projects with the local agribusiness and sustainable tourism service providers to mitigate climate change impacts.
- 4. Continue working to convert the territory of Quarta Colônia into a world reference in paleontology, consider initiating international scientific collaborations and projects to promote the Geopark as a destination for scientific tourism.
- 5. Promote the Indigenous peoples that lived in the territory to keep their history alive for next generations, consider creative story telling options.
- 6. Improve networking:
  - Continue working closely together with the other Geoparks in the Rio Grande do Sul State to set up joint promotion campaigns and activities, for example by promoting the Geoparks to potential visitors from nearby areas and neighboring countries (Argentina, Uruguay, Porto Alegre, etc.).
  - Reinforce the networking with the Global Geopark Networks and Red GeoLAC, participating in events, courses and conferences. Improve and develop thematic networking with other UGGps, especially those with paleontological heritage.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

**23) Rutas del Agua (Mexico):** aUGGp territory is in central Mexico at the western sector of the state of Aguascalientes, 430 km northwest of Mexico City. The aUGGp is located in rural area including 5 municipalities at the west and north of the state of Aguascalientes which is the third smallest state in Mexico. It covers 2462 km<sup>2</sup> ha which is 44% of the state's surface and counts a population of over 194 000 inhabitants, mainly living from agricultural activities. The State of Aguascalientes is geologically located in the conjunction of three geological-physiographical provinces: the Central Plateau, which occupies the eastern and central part of the entity; the Sierra Madre Occidental (SMO), to the west, and a small entrance in the south of lacustrine and volcanic deposits which are part of the Trans-Mexican Volcanic Belt. The first two are part of the aUGGp, which takes up most of the SMO territory in the state, and a smaller portion of the Central Plateau in the north-east. The SMO is the largest outcrop of ignimbrites in the world, as a result of volcanic activity and of the development of calderas during the Oligocene and the Miocene. In its relief we can identify an ignimbrite lava plateau, canyons, a marginal slope on the west, and mountain elevations. The Central Plateau is considered as an intermountain depression, filled out in the Cenozoic by volcanic and detrital materials. Its relief corresponds to an inclined surface from south to north with ridges and isolated mountains. There are volcanic rocks, Mesozoic sedimentary, as well as intrusive and metamorphic rocks. The geological events can be identified according to their characteristics with calcareous and volcano-sedimentary sequences as well as rhyolitic granites and porphyries of the Mesozoic; rhyolites, tuffs, andesites, and basalts as Tertiary Volcanic Units; and alluvium and residual soils as Quaternary Units.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Carles Canet and Helga Chulepin who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.

- ii- The IUGS considers that there are geological features with potential for International Scientific Significance, but those have not been well demonstrated in the dossier.
- iii- Summary of discussion:

Council deliberations focused on the weaknesses of the management structure, to guarantee the long-term project, as well as the visibility of the aspiring which is partially seen but not at the strategic points of the Geopark to guide visitors or inform residents. Even the facilities such as Geopark office is located outside the Geopark. Council agreed that Geosites inventory including geological, cultural and natural heritages is not available yet.

The main concern by the Council is that the evaluators observed and reported that Rutas del Agua aUGGP is not functioning yet as a de facto Geopark and evaluators proposed a rejection following filed evaluation mission. Following their deliberations Council agreed that Rutas del Agua aUGGP is not a de facto Geopark functioning for a year hence they voted for a rejection. The Council proposed to support the site in that endeavor by offering support through the Global Geoparks Network and UNESCO Secretariat.

Following the review of the **Rutas del Agua (Mexico)** aUGGP application dossier, the IUGS assessment and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does not fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **rejects** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark with the following recommendations:

1. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation:
  - Prepare the inventory and improve the geological heritage description according to any commonly used methodology,
  - Develop the geological map of the Geopark territory,
  - Conduct research about the natural and geological risks associated to the graven and subsidence.
  - Focus on water and its geodynamics, highlighting hydrogeological, geomorphological, hydrothermal, as well as cultural and historical processes linked to this subject. Implement geoconservation measures according to the vulnerability inventory.
  - Develop strategies to strengthen the link between geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage in the interpretation, education and sustainable development. Increase collaboration with the natural protected areas.
2. Improve visibility:
  - Develop a webpage, social media, leaflets, panels, publications, etc. The Geopark map must be available on online and offline media and should be shared with the population, education, geotourism operators, in order to promote the entire Geopark area and involve the local communities and visitors.
  - Provide English translation in all information and communication materials, guided tours and exhibitions.
  - Develop geosites with permanent facilities and infrastructures, such as panels, with educational, touristic and geological information, road signals and touristic services infrastructure as trails, parking areas, etc.
3. Improve management:

- Establish alliances, or operation rules to ensure budget and personnel for at least four years. Include the recruitment of a geoscientist working for the Geopark activities on a full time and daily basis.
  - Ensure the full and effective participation of the local communities and Indigenous peoples in planning and implementing the management and development of the Geopark. Reinforce the aspects of the distinctive cultures, including their languages, knowledge systems, practices, values and worldviews.
4. Improve education:
    - Develop information and interpretation materials about the Geopark´s heritage and the links between them, for the broad public.
    - Establish the Geopark Rutas del Agua educational programmes through partnerships with the different education level representatives.
    - Implement educational programmes and tools in the entire territory, for all educational levels, related to geoscience and local geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage, making formal partnerships with educational institutions.
  5. Increase research on issues related to the use of water, climate change and natural hazards. Take actions through education and partnerships to promote mitigation and adaptation activities with people from the territory. Collaborate with projects to mitigate drought impacts such as reforestation and water friendly business.
  6. Plan the Geotourism strategy with the local stakeholders, universities and local authorities, including the Marketing strategy and capacity building for local operators, guides, and services. Include the accessibility for touristic offer concepts into that strategy. Establish concrete Sustainable Development Policy following the SDGs goals. Promote the Geopark branding policy for local products, and establish the formal partnership agreements, criteria, promotional actions, etc. (with local stakeholders like hotels restaurants, guides, etc.).
  7. Improve partnerships with public and private stakeholders to improve and extend existing facilities.
  8. Develop an active collaboration, exchange and communication with the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), and regional GeoLAC network, in order to attend and/or participate on formation events, workshops, social networking, etc. Get support from networking and the GGN members experience to define the better conservation measures.

The Council voted unanimously to **reject** this application and offered to support through the GGN and the UNESCO Secretariat should the candidate wish to reapply.

## **VIII. Discussion of the evaluation of an extension of more than 10% of an existing UNESCO Global Geopark**

### **1) Kutralkura (Chile)**

UNESCO Global Geopark territory is located between 38°05'S and 39°38'S, and between 70°50'W and 72°40'W, approximately 15 km from Temuco and 700 km from Santiago in Chile. The eastern limit coincides with the border of the Republic of Argentina. Its original area covered the municipalities of Curacautin, Vilcun, Lonquimay, and Melipeuco, with a surface of approximately 8,053 km<sup>2</sup>. Kutralkura UNESCO Global Geopark proposes expanding the

territory to 12,078 km<sup>2</sup>, including also the communes of Lautaro, Cunco and Curarrehue, and the Association of Cordilleran Municipalities of Araucania, the entity responsible for its management. Within the extended Kütralkura UGGp, the total population increased to 124,981 inhabitants, mostly rural (45,6%). There are 7 main urban centres: Cunco, Curacautín, Curarrehue, Lautaro, Lonquimay, Melipeuco and Vilcún and numerous Mapuche-Pewenche Indigenous communities. The main geographic characteristic is the presence of six active volcanoes related to the subduction of Nazca plate under the South American continental plate and that gives rise to the Andes Mountain range. The rocks of the territory record a geological history of more than 300 million years associated with the convergent margin of the South American plate. In these active plate margins, several oceanic plates have been recycled under the continent through the subduction process, generating intense volcanic and tectonic activity. Additionally, the geomorphology shows the action of glaciers that covered part of the territory about 20,000 years ago. The most important water bodies are of glacial origin. The ecosystems include forests, wetlands, high Andean prairies, scorias and areas of high peaks.

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Helga Chulepin who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Kütralkura (Chile)** extension dossier and evaluation report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve visibility:
    - Increase visibility of the Geopark in the territory and of the Geopark's map in the geosites panels and webpage
    - Explain better the conservation measures for visitors in each geosite open to the public, including in the National Parks.
    - Avoid the maps with information of one municipality only.
    - Continue the standardization of the interpretation panels.
    - Include translation into English and other relevant languages, like local Indigenous languages, in leaflets and exhibitions at Museums and Geosites.
  2. Improve data and infrastructure of the anthropological museum of Cunco, for its importance for the historiography and anthropology of the Mapuche peoples, who are very present and influential in the territory of the Kütralkura Geopark.
  3. Keep on working to integrate Indigenous representatives in the Kütralkura Geopark management committee, to continue improving the policies to integrate Indigenous peoples into the Geopark management, programme and decision making.
  4. Strengthen partnerships with the Biosphere Reserve. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management structure and demonstrate mutual collaborations, while ensuring a separate branding.
  5. Strengthen the cooperation with volcanology research institutions to improve geological heritage research, conservation and promotion activities related to the volcano.



The Council voted unanimously to **endorse this extension** of more than 10%.

## **IX. Discussion of the deferred aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks from 2020**

### **1) Bohol Island (Philippines)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Martina Paskova who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
  - ii- Summary of discussions:

The Council members agreed that substantive progress was made against the recommendations given in the 2019 UNESCO Global Geoparks Council session and they encouraged the Geopark team to keep on working to assure further progress.
  - iii- Following the review of the **Bohol Island (Philippines)** progress report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorses** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:
1. Develop a clear map of the aUGGp including maritime parts. This map needs to be officially adopted by the Philippine Administration and transmitted to UNESCO/UGGp Secretariat via official channels with a clearly specified evaluation of the terrestrial and marine aUGGp, Section 3 (i).
  2. Evidence of Geopark visibility implementation:
    - Create and extend Geopark identity developing the logo, Geopark website, producing more information along with materials such as leaflets, tourist maps and information panels.
    - Working with Geopark partners, utilise existing facilities as Geopark Information Centre
    - Consider establishing a visitor centre in Tagbilaran (the main city) to provide extensive Geopark information whilst establishing clear partnership networks to support visitor programmes.
  3. Develop the management structure and process to include local representatives and consider the establishment of a geoscientist post within the staffing structure. Representatives from the Indigenous people (Eskaya) should participate in the management of the Geopark.
  4. Strengthen involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the Asia Pacific Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks.
  5. Coordinate educational activities offered by partners and promote these activities under the Geopark brand.
  6. The Council indicated furthermore that territorial employment and education issues should further be addressed.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

## X. Discussion of the deferred aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks from 2021

### 1) Mourne Gullion Strangford aUGGp (UK)

- i. Summary and discussion:  
The Council agreed that the the Geopark accomplished what was expected.
- ii. Following the review of **Mourne Gullion Strangford aUGGp (UK)** progress report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate does fulfil the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorse** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:
  1. Provide more information about the actual size of the marine part of the UGGp.
  2. Explore the opportunity to use local languages like Gaelic and other languages relevant for foreign visitors
  3. Develop a visitor map including the geological, natural and cultural heritage.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

### 2) Lavreotiki aUGGp (Greece)

- i. Summary and discussion:  
The Council agreed that the the Geopark accomplished what was expected.
- ii. Following the review of **Lavreotiki aUGGp (Greece)** progress report, the UGGp Council decided that the candidate **does fulfil** the UGGp criteria (Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks, Section 3) to become a UNESCO Global Geopark and proposes that the Executive Board **endorse** this candidate as a UNESCO Global Geopark for four years with the following recommendations:
  1. Urgently update the website and the map of the UGGp.
  2. Continue improving the visibility of the Geopark with panels, leaflets and other media.
  3. Continue developing educational activities.
  4. Increase formal partnerships with local stakeholders like hotels, homestays, restaurants, tourism operators, based on a clear criterion. Develop actions to select and promote local products.

The Council voted unanimously to **endorse** this application

## XI. Discussion of the revalidation of existing UNESCO Global Geoparks postponed from 2020

The following revalidations were intended to be conducted in 2020. Due to the Global pandemic, the revalidation missions were postponed to 2021 and in some cases 2022. The date for their next revalidation remains unchanged – this was decided by the Council as it was considered the only option to handle the backlog. The consequence is that for some sites it decreases the time that these sites have to respond to the recommendations before their next revalidation. From their

next revalidation onwards, they will be back in a normal interval of 4y between each revalidation mission (or two years in case of a yellow card). This is important for Geoparks that receive a green card with recommendations, but even more so for Geoparks that receive a yellow card. The UGGp Council is aware that this puts an important time strain on some of the revalidated sites and offers its support to assist them in responding to the recommendations.

### **1) Comarca Minera (Mexico)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Helga Chulepin and Carles Canet who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Comarca Minera (Mexico)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Continue identifying more geological sites, better distributed throughout the UGGp area.
  2. Crucial infrastructures like the information centre and LabChico should be further developed and integrated with the UGGp.
  3. Develop a priority list in the continuous efforts to improve the visibility for the entire Geopark Area and prepare a more detailed marketing and communication strategy.
  4. A fulltime UGGp manager should be employed by the new association.
  5. Continue efforts integrating all communities in the UGGp to join as members in the association.
  6. Develop and implement criteria for local products and services.
  7. Improve geoconservation measures to protect the obsidian and increase the visibility and effectiveness of these measures towards the different audiences and visitors. If geological material is sold within the UGGp territory, then it is recommended to send an explanatory note to UNESCO Secretary and request for UGGp Council consideration.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The Council expressed clear concerns about the visibility of the Geopark in the territory and recommend the team to invest more in networking.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **2) Mixteca Alta (Mexico)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Carles Canet who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Mixteca Alta (Mexico)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Strengthen the geological expertise and interpretation inside the UGGp, including:
    - Increase participation of a geoscientist in the team.
    - Complete geological map and update the list of geological sites
    - Create an attractive map and a simple UGGp guidebook.
    - Improve the visibility of the geological history of the territory and promote the

- general storytelling of the UGGP.
  - Improve and update the material to the UGGp guides and the information in the small museums about the UGGp
- 2. Develop a clear strategy for geotourism directed to a broad public (resources, infrastructures, communication media, key messages and partners).
- 3. Strengthen and secure the management body and budget of the UGGp with the involvement of regional and/or national authorities and local communities and the creation of a legal entity.
- 4. Harmonise the criteria for the use of the plaques (name plates) of the UGGp at the entrance of municipalities and facilities.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The Council had important concerns by the fact that the UGGp is managed by the UNAM University, with a strong dependence on the University. The Council recommended to explore a stronger cooperation with the regional government and with local communities. In terms of interpretation the members also recommended that the UGGp invests more in the Geopark story telling for a wide audience and explores more geosites. The Council recognizes the importance of the UGGp for educational purposes but recommends it to develop a stronger tourism strategy with involvement of local partners.

GREEN Card voted with one abstention.

### **3) Batur (Indonesia)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Batur (Indonesia)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Strengthen the visibility with local communities, visitors and partners and invest in digital media activities. Develop the website to include information in English as well as information about sites and geotrails to visit. Develop further social media to ensure regular postings, about the UGGp and other UGGps in the network and encourage local partners and visitors to share postings.
  2. Develop a strategy to keep information panels up to date and well maintained. Publicly displayed information should be updated to include the current Batur UGGp logo and UGGp name, the new UNESCO logo and basic information in English. Where appropriate, information panels should be updated to display the whole Geopark area and the sites of interest to visitors.
  3. Develop briefing and communication material to support each of its different users or partners (restaurants, hotels, tour operators, trained guides, schools) with information and language adapted to different audiences. Such material should include information about the UGGp concept, where to get more information about Batur UGGp, the linkage between the geology of the area, cultural traditions and beliefs, climate change, women involvement, and include a short explanation about the most remarkable sites.
  4. Continue working with school children, local inhabitants, and partners (Hotels, restaurants, tourism operators.) from the entire UGGp area, to inform them about

natural hazards, explain why they occur, and provide information and training to be better prepared.

5. Empower the Batur UGGp technical management team to engage and collaborate with the local, regional and national government on all aspects related to the UNESCO Global Geopark and throughout the entire area, including to ensure the funding needed for the implementation of its projects.
6. Ensure the UGGp efforts to contribute to the SDG's (the identification and conservation of sites, tourist infrastructure, community participation etc.) are evenly spread throughout the entire UGGp area. The UGGp may have different priorities in different areas, but its efforts should not be concentrated on the caldera area alone.
7. Continue the capacity building activities with the local communities, empowerment of women and engagement with schools to identify, preserve and promote the geological, natural, and cultural heritage, especially to develop the safeguards measures and information sharing about the local language, culture and beliefs.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **4) Qeshm Island (Iran)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alireza Amrikazemi and Van Tran Tan who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Qeshm Island (Iran)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Develop further the English language competence of the staff, to increase the attractiveness of Qeshm as an international tourist destination and facilitate international networking.
  2. Consider ecosystem restoration with adapted, local, endemic plants to combat desertification and climate change.
  3. Improve and promote the connection between the geological, cultural and natural heritage, including Indigenous knowledge, traditions and stories, in the future panels, leaflets, publications, books, maps and promotional activities.
  4. Inform local communities and visitors better about the natural hazards related to the area (rockfall, droughts, etc.), and involve them in mitigation and adaptation measures with for example awareness raising campaigns or hazard zoning maps to prevent and minimize the impact of such risks.
  5. Continue exploring, in consultation with local authorities and partners, the potential to include new geological sites in the UGGp, and create safe conditions to visit them, provide interpretation, protection and conservation measures.
  6. Develop cooperation with the salt cave system, which is currently on the Tentative list for UNESCO World Heritage recognition.
  7. Improve the cooperation with the Hara Mangrove Forest UNESCO Biosphere Reserve by creating common conservation plans, training, outreach and communication, while distinguishing the different site designations in outreach material, in the Information Visitors Centres, museums, and other medias.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **5) Cheongsong UGGp (Korea)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Van Tran Tan who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Cheongsong UGGp (Korea) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  - 1. Increase visibility:
    - Continue incorporating English and other relevant languages together with Korean language in all information and communication materials, museums, information centres, guided tours and exhibitions. Consider adding QR-codes for further information.
    - Develop a coherent Geopark brand identity in the entire UGGp region adding the Geopark's logo on products of your Geopark partners and use it in all communication and promotional material of the Geopark. Ensure that the new UNESCO Global Geopark logo is used correctly on all signage and in line with the UGGp identity. Avoid using the UNESCO logo on commercial products. Consider avoiding the extensive use of the prefix 'Geo' and use 'Geopark' instead.
  - 2. Education and capacity building: Continue strengthening the educational activities by promoting them to a larger audience (school students, local communities, local authorities, visitors etc.). Consider signing an agreement with the local department in charge of education. Consider organizing a "Train the Trainers" programme and Geopark's clubs at schools etc.
  - 3. Management: consider reinforcing the Geopark Management team
  - 4. Geotourism: Consider conducting research about the tourism/Geotourism capacity that the territory can sustainably manage and foresee measures to limit the negative impact of tourism.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## **XII. Discussion of the revalidation of existing UNESCO Global Geoparks postponed from 2021**

The following revalidations were intended to be conducted in 2021. Due to the Global pandemic, the revalidation missions were postponed to 2022. The date for their next revalidation remains unchanged – this was decided by the Council as it was considered the only option to handle the backlog. The consequence is that for some sites it decreases the time that these sites have to respond to the recommendations before their next revalidation. From their next revalidation onwards, they will be back in a normal interval of 4y between each revalidation mission (or two years in case of a yellow card). This is important for Geoparks that receive a green card with recommendations, but even more so for Geoparks that receive a yellow card. The UGGp Council is aware that this puts an important time strain on some of the revalidated sites and offers its support to assist them in responding to the recommendations.

## 1) Satun (Thailand)

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Marie Luise Frey and Sarah Gamble who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Satun (Thailand)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Provide clearer information about the linkages between the geological processes in the territory and the cultural heritage. The traditional storytelling and local traditions should be clearer reflected, in communication and outreach material like the information panels, brochures and website. Incorporate legends and stories relating to the landscape and geological sites into self-guided materials, such as interpretive panels and guidebooks.
  2. Translate the geological map into English.
  3. Establish a cave ecosystem monitoring system (e.g. CO<sub>2</sub>, temperature, biodiversity monitoring, etc.) to create a baseline from which impacts of future development can be measured. Control visitor access through guided tours and other appropriate local methods to protect and safeguard the cave health in the long term.
  4. Further develop geotourism promotion by explaining the cohesive geologic story throughout the UGGp and support a better distribution of visitors away from the beach areas by placing information points, panels, museums and other infrastructures at touristic hotspots to encourage visitors and locals to more of the Geopark.
  5. Continue to replace all logos with the correct Satun Global Geopark logos as well as the updated UNESCO Global Geopark logo.
  6. Work with the partners to develop a marketing strategy and identify new partners and local products.
  7. Better involve the local Indigenous peoples like the Maniq and Chao in the UGGp management structure and develop a plan of action to protect and integrate their culture in the UGGp storytelling.
  8. Participate in working groups and other tangible projects between UGGps in addition to setting up joint conferences. Explore the possibility of staff exchanges, school exchanges, and expert exchanges outside of Thailand and beyond Asia.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## 2) Rinjani Lombok (Indonesia)

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Rinjani Lombok (Indonesia)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve the visibility and information provided in some of the geological sites, with more information about the linkage of different scientific fields and the main topics of the UGGps, such as: geodiversity, biodiversity and the cultural heritage, including the language and traditions of the Local and Indigenous peoples. Explain in your exhibitions or trails the connection between geology, soil and biodiversity to increase

the better understanding of our planet and the importance of the protection of our environment.

2. Improve further the general infrastructure for sustainable tourism after the 2018 Earthquake further, including roads, electricity, water and waste management.
3. Provide further support to the existing women empowering projects such as SMAN 1 Sembalun High School or Senaru women hiking guides.
4. Develop infrastructure for better visibility and visitor management. Establish better touristic and educational infrastructure for certain geological sites such as: Gili Trawangan islands and Sembalun valley information centre for example.
5. Explore options to manage the tourism in the Gili islands in a more sustainable manner.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **3) Ciletuh Palabuhanratu (Indonesia)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Ciletuh Palabuhanratu (Indonesia)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Develop a simplified geological map in addition to a Geopark touristic map with all the Geopark sites (geological, natural biotic and cultural), including a road map and access sites
  2. Provide more information on the information boards about the connections between geology, biodiversity, soil and agriculture where relevant. Information boards relating to nature conservation should provide information about endangered ecosystems in addition to species conservation.
  3. Expand further infrastructure in some places of the UGGp, for example in areas in the north and in the south that are harder to reach. Provide more information points for visitors in the southernmost part of the territory.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **4) Grutas del Palacio (Uruguay)**

- i- Conflict of interest were declared by Helga Chulepin who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Grutas del Palacio (Uruguay)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Increase the number of geological sites and introduce more geological explanations on the panels understandable for different publics. For example, include a generic context of the geological process that are represented with simple and clear graphics and a description of the different geological sites and their relevance.
  2. Improve management structure, strengthen the participation of the UGGp staff in the Specific Advisory Commission of the Grutas del Palacio and Chamangá Protected Areas and, vice versa, the representation of the Ministry (General Directorate of the



Environment) in the UGGp Advisory Council, so that there is co-management involving the conservation and monitoring of geological and other natural aspects.

3. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation, particularly ensuring the conservation of the geological heritage of international interest. Make every effort to make Chamangá an accessible area that can be easily visited.
4. Consider the construction of an interpretation centre for the UGGp, which could also house its administrative headquarters.
5. Improve the infrastructure, consider building a parking lot at the Zoologico Sculptoric Park.
6. Extend the educational programme on geology and UGGps to all schools in Flores and other Uruguayan departments, starting with Soriano.
7. Enhance Management Plan, including the administration and strategic plans required for the current stage of development of the UGGp. Include the definition of governance duties and functions.
8. Explore the possibility to include the history of Indigenous peoples, their myths and legends in the UGGp storytelling. For example, try to recover the traditional name by which the geological sites were originally known, such as the Cueva del Palacio de los indios (Cave of the Palace of the Indians).
9. Collaborate with UGGps from other continents to create new learning and experiences.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The Management plan and infrastructure related issues were already mentioned in the previous evaluation report and they should be fully completed by the next revalidation in 2025. The Council also recalled the lack of a visitor centre as well as the limited number of geosites as a reason of concern.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **5) Percé (Canada)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Sarah Gamble who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Percé (Canada)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a YELLOW Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Assure a stable UGGp team over time in order to deploy the action planning the long term and maintain links with local actors and public authorities.
  2. Establish a stronger cooperation with all relevant tourism agencies of the territory to promote the Geopark brand, particularly with the municipality tourism office (Percé Tourist Office), member of the Geopark's cooperative.
  3. Cooperate closer with the municipality to assure that the UGGp is entrusted with a leading role in some specific projects on sustainable development.
  4. Develop the visibility of the UGGp and of its partners by engaging the members of the management cooperative in cooperation agreements, foster interaction and mutual promotion between partners, promote local products and services offered through the municipality tourist office.

5. Produce a user friendly and simplified UGGp map for a general public with a well-defined boundary of the UGGp, visible in the Map of trails and geological sites as well as the main informative panels.
6. Set-up informative panels in the viewpoints at Pic de l'Aurore and at the parking of the Percé Rock at the entrance of the village.
7. Set-up the Global Geoparks corner in the Tecktonik Museum.
8. Strengthen and clarify the collaboration with the National Park of Bonaventure Island and Percé Rock through a cooperation agreement. For example, improve the Geopark's visibility and contribute with the geological sites of the Bonaventure Island by linking them to the rich natural and historical heritage.

### **Discussion by the Council:**

The Council had important concerns about the management of the Geopark and in particular the high staff turnover in the team and the loss of knowledge as a consequence. The Council recognized that small local communities are located in remote areas and the Geopark territory is isolated for part of the year but geotourism is developing and the Geopark team should collaborate with the national park management team and improve the dialogue.

The majority of the Council was of the opinion that the Geopark management is able to correct the situation but will need to tackle the shortcomings urgently and swiftly in order to make sufficient progress before it is expected to provide the progress report in 2024 for the Council in that same year.

A YELLOW Card was voted with 8 members supporting the 'Yellow' card and 2 members a green card

### **6) Ngorongoro-Lengai (Tanzania)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Martina Paskova and Guy Martini who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Ngorongoro-Lengai (Tanzania)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a YELLOW Card considering the following recommendations:
  1. Explain the discrepancies between the map of the UGGp provided at the application stage and the map provided in the progress report.
  2. Set up immediate safeguard measures to protect the paleontological heritage (fossils and ichnofossils) in Laetoli.
  3. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:
    - Assure permanent monitoring and control of the access to the road that crosses the historical stratigraphic and paleontological outcrops.
    - Bearing in mind the uniqueness and fragility of much of the UGGp Geological Heritage, it is necessary that there are warnings stating that it is totally prohibited to destroy or remove geological elements from the territory. Immediately prevent the partner in the NCAA (Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority) gift shop in Loduare Gate from selling geological material and send a formal document to the IGGP Secretary for consideration by the UGGp Council to explain and justify such sale in case it wishes to continue this practice.

- Upgrade the already existing concrete monoliths with information about geoheritage conservation and protections and provide interpretation for the different geological sites, as well as in the interpretation centres and museums.
  - Scientific works must be properly formalized and articulated with the partner research entities and universities, and the scientific coordinator of the Geopark must be aware of their development, evolution and results.
4. Increase the visibility of the UGGp and awareness of the UGGp, which is currently practically non-existent, by creating visible gateways to the territory, and marking geological sites with the name and logo of the UGGp. The map of the territory with the marked geological sites must be reflected and promoted in leaflets, panels, publications, and other outreach materials. Prepare a geotourist map to be distributed to the many thousands of tourists who visit the territory.
  5. Keep the website and social media updated with the promotion of the activities carried out in the territory.
  6. Consider the creation of a 'Geoparks corner' at least in the new UGGp headquarters. All museum infrastructures and visitation sites must be properly operationalized and identified as part of the UGGp.
  7. The management structure must include representatives of Indigenous peoples and involve them more actively in the development of the management plan for the UGGp that responds also to their needs.
  8. The UGGp Management Structure should make efforts to promote more activities to raise awareness and protect the Hdzabe, Datoga and Maasai communities. Specially, when promoting immersive activities aimed at tourists that involve visiting and experiencing some of the settlements of the Maasai, Datoga and Hdzabe communities, ensure the safeguarding and respect their traditions.
  9. Develop a partnership strategy which includes clear methodology and criteria on becoming a partner, outlining the associated agreements with the UGGp. This is applicable to accommodation, catering, transport providers, activity providers and producers of local products and handicrafts produced by local Indigenous peoples but is not restricted to those identified. Consider providing these partners and local producers with greater visibility using the UGGp logo and brand as well as specific promotional material.
  10. Establish effective partnerships with those responsible by NCAA, WHS, MAB, Ramsar and other environmental protection designations of the territory, so that the UGGp can have the same public visibility and recognition by those who demand the territory. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management structure and demonstrate an effective level of independence from the NCAA.
  11. Improve education:
    - Educational programs need to be planned annually and must actively involve teachers from the schools in the UGGp area in their development and implementation.
    - Develop specific educational programs to promote resilience towards climate change. Engage Indigenous knowledge of resilience regarding extreme drought.
    - Develop capacity-building and training activities for policymakers, development agents, stakeholders, teachers and students. It is necessary to train more local

guides, so that they can be agents of protection and promotion of the territory's identity and tellers of traditional knowledge and experiences.

12. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and the African UNESCO Global Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with Global Geoparks under the umbrella of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. Increase networking with other UGGps, in particular with territories with experience in partnerships with Indigenous peoples, with examples of good practices in the promotion of geological sites and locally based products in the territory.

### **Discussion by the Council**

The Council discussed several elements of concern. First of all, reduced and amended Geopark boundary, seemingly excluding certain local communities, needs to be clarified urgently. The Council also had strong concerns about the lack of visibility and geological interpretation throughout the territory and the weak protection and conservation measures in place for some of the geological sites. The Council also recommended the reinforcement of the Geopark team, both with human and financial resources, to make sure that the UGGp receives the proper visibility, branding and attention, and a dedicated management as a UNESCO Global Geopark, next to the other site denominations that the territory enjoys.

Several UGGp Council members considered that some of the observations were in breach with the statutes and hence, would require for a red card. The majority of the Council was of the opinion that the Geopark management is able to correct the situation but will need to tackle the shortcomings urgently and swiftly in order to make sufficient progress before it is expected to provide the progress report in 2024 for the Council in that same year. The Council therefore offered the territory support and guidance if requested. Upon request by the Chairperson of the UGGp Council, an observer took the floor and thanked the Council for their recommendations and informed them that the UGGP made progresses with the protection of geological materials and they will welcome the support from UNESCO and GGN for further improvements.

YELLOW Card voted unanimously.

### **7) Mudeungsan (Korea)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Van Tran Tan who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Mudeungsan (Korea) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage, conservation and promotion:
  - Strengthen the geological heritage inventory to ensure a better geographical distribution of geological sites in the West of the territory.
  - Develop strategies to strengthen the links between geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage in the interpretation, education and sustainable development. Consider investigating more about the local knowledge related to geological heritage (e.g., the meaning of Mudeungsan, Jangbuljae, Ipseokdae etc.).
2. Improve visibility:

- Develop a Geopark map including geological, natural and cultural sites, as well as the Geopark partners.
- Consider using English and other relevant languages together with Korean language in all information and communication materials, museums, information centres, guided tours and exhibitions. Consider adding QR-codes for further information.
- Ensure better involvement of Guangzu City in the UGGp activities. While they are already active with funding, ecopark, national park etc., their involvement is mainly focused on the Eastern part, concentrated in particular around Mt. Mudeung, while a major part of the City - the Western part - appears not yet involved. Consider establishing more visitor and/or info centers in that part of the City and establish new sites (geological, cultural etc.) to encourage their involvement to the Geopark activities. Consider explaining the formation and evolution of the Gwangzu plain, the stream that runs through the city as part of the Geopark's history.
- Consider uniform Geopark branding and consider avoiding extensive use of the prefix Geo (Geo-archive, geo-village, geo-partner etc.).

### 3. Partnership:

- Establish effective partnerships with those responsible of the World Heritage, Biosphere Reserves and other environmental protection and patrimonial designations of the territory (Ecopark, National Park, UNESCO media art city, memory of the world,), to increase the visibility and recognition of the Geopark. It is important to include representatives of these institutions in the management structure and demonstrate mutual collaborations, while ensuring a separate branding. For example, on the path to Mudeung Mt., in addition to promoting the columnar joints in welded tuff, consider also promoting its biodiversity and cultural values.
- Consider extending the partnership strategy to find new partners from, for example but not restricted to, accommodation, catering, transport and activity providers and local products producers. Consider establishing performance indicators and good practices for the partner companies.

4. Education and capacity building: Develop a UGGp-wide educational program where the UGGp is promoted along with such issues as climate change, natural disasters and SDGs.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## 8) Izu Peninsula (Japan)

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Izu Peninsula (Japan) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Geopark management: Ensure that local communities are directly involved in the decision making and programme of the Geopark.
2. Visibility: Improve the visibility of some of the sites, especially along some of the guided tours accompanied, for example the Geoguide and the association provide very interesting experience with the visit of the cultural trail in the neighborhood of writers

Yasushi Inoue and Yasunari Kawabata, but Geopark team may consider installing a sign to show the start of the trail with further indications to fully improve this visit.

3. Improve communication related to the connections between geological, natural and cultural heritage. Provide more information about the biodiversity connected to the geosites to enhance the interest in and understanding of these sites. Consider adding this information also on the panels.
4. Management body: Continue striving for gender balance in the management structure.
5. Partnerships: Develop further the cooperation and partnerships with local producers of food (seaweed and -algae for example) and handicrafts.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## **9) Itoigawa (Japan)**

i- A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.

ii- Following the review of the Itoigawa (Japan) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Improve communications and develop strategies to strengthen and promote the link between geological, natural biotic, cultural and intangible heritage in interpretation, education and sustainable development activities within the Geopark.
2. Management body: Strive for gender balance in the management body.
3. Partnership: Provide comprehensive guidelines for the assignment of new partners and develop a charter for assessing partnership performance to produce competitive and sustainable partnerships.
4. Promote geotourism:
  - Conduct structured visitor survey that includes the country of origin, economic background, etc.
  - Consider organizing further international events within the Geopark in collaboration with Geopark partners, and the national, regional and Global Geopark Networks.
5. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network, consider joining the GGN Working Groups. Foster further collaboration with other UGGps from outside of APGN, for example within the same working group.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## **10) Unzen (Japan)**

i- A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.

ii- Following the review of the Unzen (Japan) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage, conservation and promotion:

- Conduct a broader geological study to increase the understanding of other geological processes, beyond those related to the latest eruption, particularly those of older rocks such as the Tatsuishi Seashore Geosite where the geology and geomorphology can be related to Sea Level Changes and paleoclimatic changes, coastal erosion (physical and biological) and geohazards. The geology and geomorphology can also be linked with marine and terrestrial flora and fauna, and can be linked with culture, history and intangible heritage.
  - Develop strategies to strength the link between terrestrial and marine geological, natural biotic, cultural and intangible heritage in the interpretation, education and sustainable development.
2. Management body: Strive for gender balance in the management structure.
  3. Education and capacity building: Ensure the involvement of younger generations to ensure the sustainability of the UGGp. Improve capacity building encouraging young people to get involved in the management and activities of the UGGp. For example, conduct regular training for young people to become professional Geopark guide; provide grants or incentives for young people who return to the territory and create new entrepreneurship opportunities for economic development; creating new jobs opportunities for young people within the UGGp area.
  4. Geotourism: Ensure that the geotourism packages benefit the local guides and community. Promote and redesign these packages to offer a full experience including the geological, nature and culture heritage of the area. Promote these products internationally and nationally rather than only focusing on local tourists and those from the neighboring areas. Consider increasing number of English-speaking tour guides and developing further geotourism industry.
  5. Networking: Forge further cooperation with other UGGps outside the APGN, preferably those who have a similar geological background, and consider joining one of the GGN Working Groups.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **11) Oki Islands (Japan)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Oki Islands (Japan) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve geological heritage, conservation and promotion:
    - Develop a simplified geological map of the Geopark area, the new map should use a terminology which will be understandable for scientists and general public. Consider producing digital format of new geological map and promote it widely. A new geological map should include information about the geosites, an explanation of the Geopark and GGN as well as other relevant aspects about the geological, natural biotic and cultural heritage.
    - Define a Geological Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan in the Geopark area in cooperation with national geological authorities.

2. Improve geotourism:
  - Create new materials to promote the Geopark such as touristic Geopark map, including information about local museums, accommodations, restaurants, local guides, roads, geosites, tracks and trails as well as dedicated activities.
  - Consider commercializing locally and sustainably crafted materials with the Geopark logo. Consider selling these materials in the museums and information and interpretation centres, in local tourist companies, and online to generate income and improve the visibility of the Geopark as a tourist destination.
  - Revise the safety planning of geosites to assure safe access to the different geosites. Consider improvement urgently to secure the safety of the infrastructures and instructions as well as access to some of the hiking trails.
3. Improve visibility:
  - Improve the visibility of the UNESCO Global Geopark with new panels and materials and better promoting the Geopark in the information centre. Consider creating a “Geopark Corner” and ensure that the new UNESCO logo is used correctly on all signage and in line with the UGGp identity.
  - Improve the visibility of the Geopark partners, for example by using plaques indicating “Partner of Oki Island UGGp” outside of the buildings and companies or on the websites and on other communication and promotion tools of the UGGp and the different partners.
  - Consider organizing cultural, scientific, sporting and touristic events, both for visitors and for the local population.
4. Continue playing active role on the networking development by sharing interesting and long experiences as UGGp in different aspects (e.g. educational activities, management and governance system).

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## **12) Cao Bang (Vietnam)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Guy Martini and Van Tran Tan who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Cao Bang (Vietnam) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage, conservation and promotion:
  - Design and develop revised geological map with relevant information for a diverse public to explain the complex history of the territory. Make sure that revised map indicates the position of the geosites and place each of them in its geological context and environment.
  - Explain the rich biodiversity and unique species along the trails heading to certain sites (Angel Eye Mountain, Magic Stone or near Ho Chi Minh Temple).
  - Consider restoration of the historical French colonial house in the mining district of Ban O. It is one of the last remainders of this period and abandoned for about 70 years and it is about to disappear, and its conservation should be prioritized. Consider explaining the link between this house and earth resources, in connection



with the history of the region and the local population. Consider urgent safeguarding action, associated with an assessment of how to use this house for cultural and tourism activities.

2. Improve visibility: Implement a monitoring system, involving interpretation centers and partners to obtain information about origin, feedback about the visit to the territory and recommendations and suggestions of the tourists/visitors.
3. Education and capacity building: Develop educational programs dedicated to climate change adaptation and set up awareness raising activities for natural hazards due to the Geopark location in a mountainous area where climate change effects are amplified. Collaborate with schools and with partners and stakeholders on these issues considering SDGs and UN Agenda 2030.
4. Management body: Consider increasing the participation of local population in geosites management by creating a steering committee (Coordination for coordination and supervision in the villages) within the management body.
5. Engage new measures to protect and promote still existing local and ethnic languages promoting their use locally to keep them alive. This would be relevant for the activities proposed to the 'Geopark Ambassadors' or in the interpretation panels and leaflets.
6. Networking: Promote the fact that the Geopark is a member of the GGN in the five information/touristic centres, by providing a map of the network, showing pictures of twinned Geoparks, consider joint promotions and collaborations with the members of the Asian Pacific Geoparks Network and other UGGps.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **XIII. Discussion of the revalidation of existing UNESCO Global Geoparks 2022**

#### **1) Tuscan Mining Park (Italy)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Tuscan Mining Park (Italy)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Continue and complete the upgrading of the new material and contents for the Geomet Museum of Geodiversity, and the new 7 corner panels for Geopark gateways.
  2. Consider installing signs of the UNESCO Global Geopark designation on principal national and regional roads on the Tuscan Mining region to reinforce the visibility of UGGp as an international touristic destination.
  3. While the Tuscan Mining UGGp has an exceptional mining industrial heritage based on the history of exploitation of geological resources that it fully promotes, a stronger emphasis to tell the story between the different episodes of the geological history and the continuous evolution of the (natural) landscape, combined with the use of land for minerals exploitation (by humanity). It would strongly contribute to the visitor experience and understanding. The creation of more maps and cross sections and block diagrams, using a user-friendly simplified geology is recommended.
  4. Evaluate the possibility to reinforce the visibility of the existing local network namely on social and economic activities (ex: recognition or certification of teachers, volunteers,

- rangers, hotel owners, restaurant owners, handcrafters) as partners of the UGGp.
5. Tuscan Mining Park UGGp was recently extended to include 3 new municipalities. Proceed the efforts to engage with stakeholders in this extension area; promote the new maps, projects and actions and use them as an opportunity to develop activities and information related to geothermal topics.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## 2) Cilento e Valle di Diano and Alburni (Italy):

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Cilento e Valle di Diano and Alburni (Italy)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Explore the possibility to extend the area of the UGGp to cover the importance of all geodiversity, cultural sites, traditional villages, Natura 2000 areas, marine areas that the national park already promotes and manages, in a holistic way.
  2. Support the active networks of “UGGp members” or “UGGp collaborators” like “geo-schools” or “Eco-Schools”, “Ambassadors”, “geo-partners” or other partners and give these networks a formal character, to improve the cooperation with them and to provide more local visibility to the geopark in local schools and local communities within the UGGp area.
  3. Strengthen the image of the territory at International and National level. Consider installing new panels and/or new signs at regional and national level on roads, indicating the three UNESCO classified areas (UGGp, MAB, WHS). Use the correct integrated logo of UNESCO for territories with multiple UNESCO designations.
  4. Improve contents of some museums. An exploration of the past, present and future of the evolution of the landscape through geological episodes could be interesting, in order to understand better the paleo-environments, evolution of wildlife and the climate change process. For example, in the Museum in Castellabate the Virtual Aquarium could be adapted to a more sensorial approach with a more immersive situation by using for example the Geological Time scale to explain in a didactic way the different paleoenvironments throughout history and its impact on landscape and species. The Museum of Geodiversity and Landscape must be completed and the windows could be covered to reducing the light and create as such a more real and immersive environment.
  5. The website of the UGGp needs to be more focused on the Cilento e Valle di Diano and Alburni as a UNESCO Multi-Designation site and a sustainable tourism destination with a clear focus on tourism experiences (Ecotourism & Geotourism). The site should also contain educative programs linked to geodiversity, biodiversity and culture.
  6. Improve the new panels with more user-friendly language and consider the development of digital tools like Mobile Applications to help visitors to discover and understand the effective evolution of the landscape and the use of soils by humanity, in particular in some geological sites of particular geotourism interest.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 3) Adamello Brenta (Italy)

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alexandru Andrasanu who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Adamello Brenta (Italy)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. While the Geopark is contributing to the development of all the partner municipalities of the natural park/UGGp, it is recommended that the UGGp advocates for a better use of the added value that the UNESCO Brand provides as a UNESCO Global Geopark to make sure that the work undertaken by the park/UGGp team is officially mentioned and implemented in the local and regional development strategies for the benefit of local communities.
  2. Develop a label for UGGp products and define clear criteria for their development, recognition and promotion.
  3. Improve education, in particular on topics related to natural hazards and connect the educational activities better with other national and international territories and use them as a tool to improve cooperation & exchanges with other UNESCO Global Geoparks (schools, associations, universities).
  4. Increase the cooperation of the three UNESCO designations in the area (MAB, WH, Geopark) and use their potential to be part of the regional tourism strategy and one of the added values of the tourism in Trento Region with great potential to attract administrative and financial support.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 4) Ore of the Alps (Austria)

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alexandru Andrasanu who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Ore of the Alps (Austria) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Strengthen the educational activities of the UGGp with schools and other target groups increasing the presence of the UGGp inside the schools, develop programs in adults' education (+55) introducing topics like soils and natural hazards.
  2. Establish a calendar of annual events and activities of the UGGp. The calendar could be part of the general calendar of events of the area avoiding overlapping of different events
  3. Develop the label for UGGp products, and define clear criteria for their development, recognition and promotion.
  4. Continue to promote UNESCO Global Geoparks as territories of sustainable development at the regional and national level.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 5) Novohrad – Nograd (Slovakia-Hungary)

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Novohrad – Nograd (Slovakia-Hungary)** revalidation report,

the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Consider exploring additional financial sources, like state and EU-funding programmes, to diversify the budgetary basis and strengthen the financial sustainability on both sides of the border.
2. The visibility of the UGGp needs improvement, at least at the visitor center, and needs to be developed beyond the most important touristic site, Hollokö WHS.
3. While the information presented in the field or in printed material is offered in several languages, the information in the foreign languages provided in the museums requires some improvement.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **6) Hateg Country (Romania)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Alexandru Andrasanu who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Hateg Country (Romania)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Efforts should be made to further develop the facilities of the university and, if possible, the resources for municipalities, for education, interpretation, research and general UGGp representation.
  2. The region has started to develop a new tourism strategy. The UGGp should be integrated into this strategy even more than before.
  3. For better visibility it is recommended to translate some of the interpretation/information panels and leaflets from UGGp partners which are only in Romanian.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **7) Trollfjell (Norway)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Trollfjell (Norway)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Provide a better map of the entire UGGp which includes all the geological sites, the World heritage site(s) and the National Park boundaries as well as relevant tourist information.
  2. Improve visibility by improving the UGGp website, the information provided on geological sites and with the partners.
  3. Explore the potential of developing a dedicated visitor centre for the UGGp.
  4. Improve the cooperation with the National Park and Helgeland Museum to better promote and preserve the Sami culture and their language in the area.
  5. Permanent UGGp staff should undertake the yearly intensive course on UGGp to ensure that they all have the required knowledge to develop and manage a UGGp. Make sure that Sami communities are fully represented and involved in the management of the UGGp.

6. Develop a label for UGGp products and define clear criteria for their development, recognition and promotion.
7. Expand the already successful sustainable tourism strategy that is operational in Vega and Leka across the entire area.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 8) Magma (Norway)

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Magma (Norway)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. For sites with high visitor, ensure that there are plans in place to mitigate damage and regulate the number of visitors that have access to the sites.
  2. Develop Geopark Corners in each municipality to ensure that the entire area is covered and understands the role of the wider Global Geoparks Network.
  3. For future information panels and leaflets, ensure that the geology is presented in an understandable and attractive way for a broad audience and as part of the wider UGGp geological story in a clear and concise way.
  4. Further work needs to be done to ensure the integration of geological heritage with both natural biotic and cultural. This should be for all areas of communication including panels, leaflets, tours, projects, website and partner contributions. This would be augmented by the formation of a specialist scientific committee to provide knowledge and expertise through a holistic and collaborative approach.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 9) Basque Coast (Spain)

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Basque Coast (Spain)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. The geological and prehistoric heritage in the Deba Valley is of great importance for the Basque Coast and the UGGp. It is therefore recommended to continue the project “Valley of Prehistory” with the establishment of an open-air museum. It is also important to balance the Geopark presentation to make sure it is equally reflected in the three towns of Mutriku, Deba and Zumaia.
  2. The georoute to the flysch viewpoint in Zumaia (no. 21 in the itinerary) is very attractive but leads close to the steep slope to the coast. Efforts should be made to make this route more secure against possible accidents.
  3. Efforts should be made to extend the partnerships to other partners such as producers of local products and tourism service providers.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 10) Molina and Alto Tajo (Spain)

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Molina and Alto Tajo (Spain)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Make sure that the several museums in small villages, dispersed over the UGGp, have clear and regular opening hours. It would be useful to create a kind of connection between the central Museum of Molina and the other museums, for example by providing information and contact numbers/e-mails in small brochures and the website including a map of all museums.
  2. Because of the UGGp size it is not easy to achieve the same visibility in all parts of it. The recommendation is to:
    - Keep working on the installation of road panels with the UGGp logo especially along main roads.
    - Make sure there is the UGGp and official logo at the entrance of the museums, for example Museum of Fuentelsaz and the Museum of Corduente.
    - Set up a panel which shows the map and basic information of the UGGp in the city of Molina de Aragon.
    - Use the new UNESCO logo in all materials (educational, promotional, interpretative and informative).
  3. Continue to increase the international profile of the UGGp by using English in panels, brochures, publications and website. For example, the interpretation panels of the Ethnographic exhibition in Hombrados or panels in the History Museum of Cubillejo de la Sierra are only in Spanish. Also, consider the use of QR codes as a substitute for English on panels.
  4. In one of the most attractive parts of the Geopark (River Gallo Gorge), there is an educational route (Georuta 5) with several interpretative panels. All panels are quite old and in bad condition and should be replaced with new ones.
  5. The UGGp has adopted the implementation of the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism creating a network of collaborators, but because of strict criteria, not so many stakeholders could fulfil demands. It is therefore recommended that the UGGp sets up a "second level" of UGGp partners with clear criteria and formal agreements. This partnership would be more inclusive with less demanding criteria than ECST membership. In that way, the number of official UGGp partners can increase.
  6. Considering interpretation to the broad public it is recommended to:
    - Provide better explanation to a broad public about kaolin clay and its usage in everyday life beside as clay for pottery and porcelain at the Panalen Mining Visitor Centre.
    - Provide more information about the UGGp at the Molina castle, which is one of the most visited attractions. Show for example the connection between geology and the medieval castle (type of rocks used to build castle walls? Where were the stones quarried? Visible differences between Muschelkalk Limestone and Buchenstein Sandstone? What are ripple marks? Etc.). It could be a small leaflet, interpretative panel or QR code.
  7. Improve the dissemination of the results of the scientific research regarding the UGGp, for example with articles, poster, participation to conferences and meetings

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **11) Courel Mountains (Spain)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Courel Mountains (Spain)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a YELLOW Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Develop a long-term management plan that includes sustainable resources mobilisation and UGGp staffing. While the involved municipalities follow the Sustainable Tourism Plan for the Courel Mountains as developed by the University of Santiago de Compostela, it is important that the UGGp develops their own management plan which will be delivered by UGGP staff. A successful UGGp requires a strong annual budget and staff fully committed to the project on a daily basis. Although, the UGGp seems to be able to attract important investments through local municipalities and the Provincial Government, the UGGp annual budget is currently considered insufficient, namely for hiring qualified staff. In order to develop and implement educational programmes devoted to the great geological heritage, it is necessary to hire staff with educational qualifications. The daily management of a UNESCO Global Geopark also requires a geoscientist on a full time and stable basis.
  2. Develop a Geopark specific logo (without reference to UNESCO) for commercial use and ensure that the UGGp logo is used correctly by local partners.
  3. Keep improving the visibility of the UGGp by providing more relevant information in English and other foreign languages.
  4. Consider the possibility of asking for the permission to place welcome boards along the N-120 national road, main entry point for most of the potential visitors to the UGGp. Explore cooperation with the provincial and regional authorities to transmit this request from the municipalities to the national road authority.
  5. The subject of climate change and megafires must be included as a priority in the landscape conservation, nature tourism and environmental education agenda of the UGGp.

### **Discussion by the Council**

While the Council recognized the strong points of this Geopark, it was concerned by the fact that there is no geoscientist available on a full-time basis within Geopark team. The Council would also like to see more clarity about the Geopark team composition, more information about the masterplan to be delivered, and receive more assurances about the sustainability of the budget.

YELLOW Card voted unanimously.

### **12) Imbabura (Ecuador)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Imbabura (Ecuador)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:

1. Finalize the Inventory of Places of Geological Interest of the Geopark based on the methodology developed by the IGE (Instituto Geológico de Ecuador).
2. Establish clear criteria and quality standards related to sustainability, use of locally sourced products, limited waste and carbon footprint, kilometer 0 principle, and involving local and Indigenous peoples for example. Consider changing the name to 'Geopark Friend/Geoparque Amigo' and promote the concept to give those UGGp partners more recognition and value. Define criteria to become Geoparque amigo.
3. Promote the commercialization of sustainable tourism services and products, in collaboration with the provincial tourism department, through for example online marketing platforms or by approaching travel agencies who see the added value of geotourism and the potential that the UGGp has to offer. Help them design specific packages, including places to sell local products at interpretation centres and museums, and support their marketing.
4. Involve Indigenous peoples in the UGGp management to assure that interpretation is also provided in Quechua and that their cultural identity is correctly reflected and respected in the UGGp.
5. Extend the scientific committee to other disciplines that work in the UGGp beyond geology, volcanology, or seismology, and invite for example also scientific experts in archaeology and ethnography.
6. Strengthen actions against climate change, both with the implementation of projects (reforestation, alternative energies, waste management) and through awareness raising and education with schools and in general with the local population.
7. Strengthen and extend education and awareness raising to prevent risks related to natural hazards. Imbabura is a place with important potential natural risks and this task must be incessant in all fields, land planning, training and education.
8. Continue supporting and engaging with other UGGp initiatives in the country and the region.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 13) Rokua (Finland)

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Rokua (Finland)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Even though some of the international projects focusing on environmental/sustainable education ended, the UGGp should continue to use the gained experiences and lessons learned in its other environmental activities and try to continue such projects.
  2. Financially the UGGp is supported by commitments to core funding from the founding members on a 4-year cycle coinciding with the 4-year revalidation cycle. It is important that these arrangements are signed-off and can be demonstrated in time for all future revalidation missions.
  3. This is quite an extensive UGGp which has developed an interesting tourism portfolio. To ensure that this development can continue properly it is recommended to extend the team with the recruitment of permanent staff.



4. Better knowledge of tourism wants, needs and trends could be gained through more proactive visitor analysis and evaluation, using every means, from questionnaires to mobile data to counters and used to usefully shape tourism and UGGp management and development plans.
5. Continue to include the new UNESCO-Logo as well as the EGN Logo (also on the homepage) step by step or when renewing info panels. Also include English information. Try to get the permission to set up entry signs for the UGGp.
6. One of the most popular trails, Lemmenpolku, needs a major recovery programme, to protect the trail and surrounds and for ease of walking as well as for safety reasons.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **14) Vis Archipelago (Croatia)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Vis Archipelago (Croatia)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Increase the promotion outside the Archipelago in cities (like Split or Zagreb for example) where most visitors come from, as well as at the Archaeology Museum of Vis.
  2. Improve the understanding of the panels for a family audience (e.g. geological map). Some panels should present a more detailed and understandable geological interpretation of the regional geology. The UGGp should produce educational tools models, to make people understand the specific geological phenomena of the archipelago, such as diapirism, to a family and school audience.
  3. Ensure a strong partnership with universities, research institutions and museums throughout the year, to ensure the functionality of the new information centre from Biševo.
  4. Increase the impact of the UGGp on the sustainable development, develop and strengthen further the involvement of local stakeholders.
  5. Highlight for example the link between the geological particularity (karst and diapir) of the Vis Island and water to increase the awareness of tourists regarding water saving, especially in accommodations.
  6. The cooperation between the municipalities of Vis and Komiza should be improved with common projects based on the goals of the Geopark (e.g. cultural events with the participation of wine growers from Vis and fishermen from Komiza).
  7. Develop cooperation between the Geopark, local schoolteachers and local associations for the creation of new activities, educational and interpretation tools for heritage (local traditions, geology, nudges on watersaving) and partnerships with the Faculties of Natural Sciences and Tourism in Split, as well as cultural and scientific institutions to provide training for guides and qualified staff to introduce the specific Vis Archipelago heritage.
  8. Develop a sustainable tourist offers (e.g. agri-tourism) to extend the tourist period beyond June-September.
  9. Consider offering thematic trails based on the existing information panels (e.g. on the geology and geological phenomena, on biodiversity, intangible heritage, the route of vine, etc.).

10. Strengthen involvement in the activities of the national, regional and Global Geoparks Network, for example to deal with the particularities of insularity.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **15) Monts d'Ardeche (France)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Guy Martini who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Monts d'Ardeche (France)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Continue the full integration of the two designations – the National Park and the UNESCO Global Geopark – across the territory with the use of joint branding on print, digital media, panels and entry points, and expands the series of 'in boundary' signage whilst making sure that there is a clear distinction between the branding of two designations, with a clear distinctive UGGp brand and dedicated activities, including with partners.
  2. Review the technical nature of some of the language used in interpretative material – it is currently generally good but would benefit from being even more accessible. Consider also providing the information in the regional language.
  3. Engages more in the communication tools of the European and Global Geopark networks, including the magazines and newsletters, continue supporting the development of Geoparks in other countries and integrate at least an international project with existing UGG during the next four years.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **16) Terras De Cavaleiros (Portugal)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **Terras De Cavaleiros (Portugal)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Consider engaging with other UGGp in the country and relevant authorities to place welcome panels at main entry points and along the main motorway leading to the UGGp. Improve the visibility of the Geopark in the most visited touristic area in the UGGp – "Fraga da Pegada" beach. Engage with relevant authorities to establish a new information center and improve information panels in that area.
  2. Only 11 of the 43 geological sites in the UGGp area have interpretation panels or other amenities, like car park facilities. It is recommended that more geological sites be homogeneously equipped to attract and inform the public properly.
  3. Provide new geological trails by connecting several geological sites. Upgrade damaged panels and improve access to and security of some trails. The Biological educational trail in the Biodiversity Station of Santa Combinha for example can be upgraded with different geological topics, linking the geological diversity of the area with its cultural and natural heritage.

4. Promote the cooperation with scientific research institutions and encourage students and universities to conduct PhD thesis and dedicate scientific articles to the geology of the UGGp.
5. Strengthen and formalize cooperation with the Meseta Ibérica Transboundary Biosphere Reserve and develop joint activities in the field of environment, tourism, culture and business development and research in order to serve local communities and provide employment and future perspective for this rural territory.
6. Develop more innovative educational material to explain the UGGp's complex but interesting geology to different publics and to students.
7. Improve the visibility of the UNESCO Global Geopark and the Global Geoparks Network in partnering facilities, like restaurants and stores. Establish Geopark corners with display units, printed materials leaflets, brochures, rock samples, information about geotouristic offer, local products etc in these facilities.
8. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network and European Geoparks Network. Actively engage in international cooperation with other UNESCO Global Geoparks through joint projects.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **17) North Pennines AONB (UK)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **North Pennines AONB (UK)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Retain a full-time geologist position based on core-funding, rather than on project-funding as is currently the case.
  2. Create at least a half-time volunteer coordinator post, in order to effectively manage the work of volunteers.
  3. Replace the old UNESCO logo with the one defined in the new UNESCO Graphical Standards in the UGGp's online/digital communication channels (website, Facebook, Twitter, email signatures, letter headers, etc.) at the time of the transition to the new AONB branding but it should be done by the end of 2023 at the latest.
  4. Consider using multilingual information panels and communication materials.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **18) M'Goun (Morocco)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the **M'Goun (Morocco)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve visibility by placing more panels and landmarks indicating that the visitors are in the UGGp's territory. Furthermore, the rich biodiversity and cultural heritage should also be included in the on-site interpretation. To limit the vandalism of the panels we suggest changing the material from which they are constructed and the locations where they are placed.

2. The interpretation panels should provide the information also in Amazigh language to increase social acceptability of the interventions. The panels should be placed in such a way so that they don't block the view.
3. Geoheritage conservation and infrastructure: the local authorities have decided that the Azilal museum should be managed by the regional Council. As the museum is dedicated to the UGGp it should work in close collaboration with the Geopark M'Goun Association and follow the high standards of a UNESCO Global Geopark's museum concerning its exhibitions, operation and visitor services including the museum's shop. The information provided in the museum and in some geological sites is too scientific and needs to be diversified and adapted to the public.
4. The dinosaur footprints in Taghbalout-louaridene, although being unique in the world, are in a non-protected area exposed to degradation and human activities spoiling one of the most impressive geological sites of the UGGp. The area should be protected and conserved following the standards of the nearby louaridene site which is exemplarily protected and conserved.
5. The overlap with the biosphere reserve of Cedraie de l'Atlas should be clearly indicated in the UGGp's maps and the Geopark should emphasise and promote that the territory has multiple UNESCO designations.
6. The use of the UNESCO logo must follow specific rules and cannot be used in commercial products – avoid using it on products sold by partners of the UGGp and use the Geopark specific logo instead. Furthermore, create and place a specific sign to identify partners of the UGGp and make them recognizable for visitors. The promotion of the partners and their products should be supported through an improved version of the UGGp's website which could also include an e-shop.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### 19) Dong Van Karst Plateau (Vietnam)

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Guy Martini and Van Tran Tan who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the **Dong Van Karst Plateau (Vietnam)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve management:
    - Develop the management structure and process to include local community representatives and consider strengthening and diversifying the expertise and the number of experts within the staffing structure. Consider recruiting a biologist, an environmental and education specialist and a marketing specialist to the team, to better promote transdisciplinary work and initiatives between geology, biology and culture, and carry out educational programs on these themes.
    - Liaise with the different districts to promote internal coordination and cooperation and avoid internal competition.
  2. Consider diversifying the funding resources to assure a sustainable and adequate specific Geopark budget.
  3. Geotourism:

- Promote sustainable and community-based tourism, in respect with nature and local traditions, and conduct an assessment of the maximum tourism carrying capacity in the most popular places.
  - The “Museum of Cultural Space of Ethnic Minority Stone Mountains” needs a specialized intervention and scientific supervision, so that its exhibitions, in particular those related to geological heritage, are adequate and attractive to visit.
4. Education and capacity building: Develop a closer cooperation with the territorial network of schools at all levels. Consider developing specific educational programs, strengthening the training of teachers, and improving activities for schools related with natural and cultural heritage and on challenges and issues of the UGGp.
  5. Networking: Strengthen cooperation with other UGGps, especially with the ones working on Climate Change, water management, geohazards, geotourism, geoeducation and/or Indigenous populations. There is space for improvement of cooperation within the APGN and the GGN.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## 20) Jeju (Korea)

- i. No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii. Following the review of the **Jeju (Korea)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:
    - Strengthen geological sites and the geological heritage conservation such as the Seogwipo Formation. Continue efforts to stop people of stepping on, destroying, collecting or selling fossils. Relevant information should be provided also by the guides of the sites. Consider adding new signage to explain Geopark rules.
    - Strengthen the geological heritage inventory to ensure a better geographical distribution of geological sites and consider increasing the number of geosites, integrating these new sites in the promotional strategy and in the geotourism offer.
    - Improve visitor access and information to sites that pose possible risks, especially, in several geological sites such as the Manjanggal of the Geomunoreum Lava Tube system. This is particularly relevant for staircases. The accessibility could be improved to allow visitors to enjoy the site in a safe manner and could provide access to visitors with disabilities.
    - Improve the UGGp’s maps, which are oversimplified, with a stronger focus on the Geopark. Create an UGGp geological map for a larger public.
    - Promote more actively the biodiversity and the cultural heritage and its linkages with the geological heritage.
  2. Improve visibility:
 

Consider using social media more efficiently to communicate Geopark activities with the broad public and to celebrate the international days such as the geodiversity day.
  3. Education and capacity building: Develop educational programmes related to geohazards which concern the UGGp such as typhoons, earthquakes and tsunamis, landslides, etc.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## 21) San'in Kaigan (Japan)

i. A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.

ii. Summary of discussion:

Council deliberations focused on the selling of geological materials by a museum located within the Geopark boundary. The Council recognized that the Geopark management is not involved in the sale of geological materials and that this museum is not a partner of the Geopark. However, the Genbudo museum is mentioned on the Geopark map, is right next to one of the most visited geosites and is managed by a private owner. The Council members recognized that Sain'in Kaigan UGGp is one of the oldest Geoparks in Japan and that they are discouraging the selling of geological materials. They encourage the Geopark to continue collaborating closely with all organisations located within the UGGp territory and to work closely together with the Japanese National Geopark Committee, the Japanese National Geoparks Network and the UNESCO National Commission of Japan to stop this practice. They voted for a yellow card.

iii. Following the review of the **San'in Kaigan (Japan)** revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a YELLOW Card with the following recommendations:

1. Improve geological heritage promotion and conservation:

- Stop the selling of geological material at the Genbudo Museum which is located within the territory of the the San'in Kaigan UGGp. Collaborate therefore with Toyoka city who is the owner of the Genbudo geosite, and other actors as deemed necessary, and seek the support from the Japanese National Geoparks Committee and Network, the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO and the UGGp Council.
- Assure a secure access to the Genbudo geosite and improve the visibility of the UGGp in further developments within the territory.

2. Improve management:

- Ensure that the core secretariat of the Geopark management (general manager and the three academic specialists, including two geologists) are involved in developing cohesion and coordination of Geopark activities, in cooperation with the Promotion Council.
- Consider strengthening the independence of the UGGp management entity in line with the initiatives taken by neighboring Geoparks for example.

3. Improve partnerships:

- Obtain formal partnership agreements with key stakeholders, such as the San'in Kaigan National Park to reinforce close partnership.
- Develop guidelines for the appropriate use of the UNESCO Global Geoparks logo taking into consideration of the active involvement of private businesses in the Geopark governing body. The UGGp is encouraged to seek guidance from the Japanese Geoparks Network and GGN.
- Finalise the development of a certification system for branding local products based on the Geopark branding strategy.

- Improve the visibility of the GGN and APGN and definition of the Geopark concept at core facilities of the UGGp, consider creating dedicated spaces, “Geopark corners”. Where these already exist, it is important to update outdated information.
4. Networking: Continue active engagement in the international Geopark network activities but also try to increase the level of activities in projects involving schools and other stakeholders in the UGGp communities.

A YELLOW Card was voted with 7 members supporting the ‘Yellow’ card, one member the ‘Green’ card and 1 member abstained.

## **22) Aso (Japan)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Aso (Japan) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve Geopark facilities: Ensure the safety of all geosites in collaboration with the local governments and initiate a risk mitigation plan. Involve and inform the staff about the risk mitigation plan and ensure them to be alert at all times for natural hazards. Consider placing signage to inform visitors about the risks at strategic locations such as the Nabegataki Fall, where the rock fall risk is high taking into consideration the rock structure.
  2. Improve visibility:
    - Improve and standardize Information panels at strategic areas, especially at the 8 local governments taking into consideration of the GGN/UGGp/APGN requirements, logos and updated text. Set up a joint and harmonized strategy and plan for the sites which are located under the jurisdiction of villages or towns, explaining how to do it collectively and effectively. Consider reducing written text on the new panels which may be explained using a diagram and photo, consider using QR codes to use space effectively. Consider installing new panel design for the Ikeyama-Yamabuki Geosite which is a precious water source for Ubyuama Village,
    - Consider using the new main office of Aso UGGp at the National Friendship Youth as reference center for the UGGp information dissemination. Consider creating a special place/corner within the new main office of Aso UGGp to promote relevant information about the GGN/APGN, the points of interest in all 8 local municipalities, including geological sites, natural - and cultural sites.
    - Continue promoting Aso UGGp as digital nomad hub by converting abandoned houses into workspaces for young people.
    - Improve partnership
    - Continue with the Entrepreneurship Incubator Program which is a good example of involving communities in Geopark activities, sparking new and innovative talents and promoting the use of local materials.
    - Cooperate with Yamato town in opening the magnificent Suyo Gorge which is an important geoheritage site where the overlap of all four giant eruptions can be seen. This would be an excellent opportunity for interpreting the geological heritage and connecting it to the biodiversity, involving the Aso Geo-Guides for interpretation.

3. Strengthen networking by establishing more collaboration programs with other members of GGN/APGN and cooperate in research, promotion, education and community engagement.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

### **23) El Hierro (Spain)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Nickolas Zouros and Asier Hilario who left the room and were not present for the discussion and vote
- ii- Following the review of the El Hierro UGGp (Spain) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve the visibility of the El Hierro Geopark:
    - Prioritize the functioning of new El Hierro Geopark website for the Geopark management body actions.
    - Make special efforts for the promotion of El Hierro as a UNESCO Global Geopark using the UGGp programme logo together with the El Hierro Geopark logo.
    - The Geopark should also be visible through its pages in social media and should be more active providing information on its activities also in GGN, EGN and UNESCO social media.
    - Further efforts should be made to present to the local community and the visitors of the island the exceptional geological heritage of the island and the reasons for its recognition as a UNESCO Global Geopark, member of the European and Global Geoparks Network.
  2. Strengthen the Geopark management body to develop further the Geopark activities on the island and the Geopark promotional activities which will contribute to the broader understanding and visibility of El Hierro as a UNESCO Global Geopark.
    - Strengthen the Geopark administration with permanent staff dedicated exclusively to the El Hierro Geopark including a geoscientist on daily basis.
    - Strengthen partnerships with those responsible for the Biosphere Reserve. It is important to include representatives of this institution in the management structure and demonstrate effective collaborations, while ensuring a separate branding.
  3. Strengthen Education:
    - Raise awareness about the volcano phenomena and work closely with the research institutions specialized in volcanos.
    - Raise awareness about limited freshwater resources for the visitors and promote the marine environment linked to the UGGp heritages.
  4. Strengthen Networking:
    - Strengthen the cooperation with other Geoparks in Spain, in Europe and other parts of the world, especially with those in volcanic areas. Common educational and promotional activities with other Geoparks should be encouraged.
    - Support visits of schools and universities. Strengthen cooperation with other UGGps through the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), and regional networks of the GGN.
    - Work together with international partners to learn from each other, exchange good experiences and contribute to increasing understanding among different communities



and cultures. The Geopark activities should be strengthened in collaboration with other Geoparks in common projects financed by EU programmes such as Horizon, Interreg etc.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **24) Odsherred (Denmark)**

- i- No conflicts of interest were declared by members of the UGGpC.
- ii- Following the review of the Odsherred UGGp (Denmark) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve infrastructure: Consider creating a Visitor Centre specifically dedicated to the Geopark. This could be done through dynamic, integrated and interactive presentations, using new information and communication technologies.
  2. Improve visibility: Unify the design and style of information panels in the Geopark, in particular as many of these panels are up for renewal. Link the information on the Geopark website with the Odsherred tourist reservation centre. Consider adding the name of the geosites of interest in the next edition of the tourist map. Consider providing the information on the Geopark website in English directly on the page.
  3. Improve partnership
    - Initiate separate partnership agreements for the UGGp and VisitOdsherred. The partnership agreement for the UGGp should reflect the values of an UGGp. It would be interesting to work more with local food producers on sustainability and ecological criteria.
    - Emphasis active youth participation to the Geopark activities and promote volunteer actions.
  4. Improve Education and capacity building activities:
    - Promote outreach and educational activities related to the importance of climate change and the understanding of natural hazards. The UGGp could also implement, or support initiatives related to climate change mitigation and adaptation in its own organization such as partner and stakeholder.
    - Undertake an awareness campaign to abandon the piling stones custom on the beach and/or place warning signs. In addition, removing these artificial formations helps to recover the landscape, but it must be done by technical personnel from coastal management. The UGGp must remove the photographs of these mounds from its digital and paper publications.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **25) Stonehammer (Canada)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Sarah Gamble who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote
- ii- Following the review of the Stonehammer (Canada) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Improve education and capacity building activities:

- Consider using virtual and augmented reality functions with educational and scientific content generated by the UGGp team and its partners.
  - Ensure small release notes and interviews on day-to-day scientific discoveries.
2. Improve Geopark management structure:
    - Prepare an evaluation of the success of internationally multi-designated area concept before the end of the next revalidation period.
    - Revise customer questionnaires by adding further quality related issues and use the results for future decisions.
  3. Improve partnership:
    - Ensure that all communities are bounded to the UGGp by official membership or through signing a binding memorandum of understanding, including a code of conduct following the community reform. Disseminate the Acknowledgment of First Nations to new partners and renewals.
    - Strengthen parentship by increasing the number of partners, such as tourism providers.
    - Promote the Community supported agriculture Farming concept in the UGG with a special campaign.
  4. Develop a climate change and adaptation strategy for the UGGp region (communication, resilience, monitoring) with the provincial authorities.
  5. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with other UGGps and engage itself in one of the working groups.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

## **26) Tumbler Ridge (Canada)**

- i- A conflict of interest was declared by Sarah Gamble who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii- Following the review of the Tumbler Ridge UGGp (Canada) revalidation report, the UGGpC decided to award a GREEN Card with the following recommendations:
  1. Continue to work on the crucial reconciliation issue and share this experience with other UGGp's.
  2. Finalize the recruitment of a new geologist as a permanent UGGp staff.
  3. Develop a zoning concept for the rivers stems to separate motorized and non-motorized boat traffic, think about possible limitation regulations, verify if it is possible to install flexible footbridges or marked special landing places or zones and inform UGGp partners about possible negative effects on the environment of an unregulated tourism.
  4. Improve partnerships development:
    - Extend the Geopark Direct Operator Program to achieve an even greater outreach potential (consider collaborating with Mickle Company).
    - Finalize new formal cooperation with the TR Museum Foundation.
  5. Strengthen the involvement in the activities of the Global Geoparks Network promoting the international value of the territory through the partnership with other UGGps and engage itself in one of the working groups. Gender priority should be considered a priority. Consider joining GGN Karst Working Group.

GREEN Card voted unanimously.

#### **XIV. Discussion of extension requests (<10%)**

##### **1) Ningde UGGp (China)**

- i. Summary and discussion regarding the extension: The requested extension involves an increase of 7.92% of its size from 2660.74 km<sup>2</sup> to 2829.82 km<sup>2</sup>. The request is proposed, after discussions with experts, communities and Indigenous peoples, to include Carp Brook, Qinxu Ancient Mining Site, volcanic landform of Shimen Mountain in Louping, ancient Louping village, scenic segments of Huotong River, Guying Fairy Pool, ancient Huotong Town, covering essential geological, natural and cultural heritage.
- ii. Following the review of the extension request report and annexes from **Ningde UGGp (China)**, the UGGpC decided to ACCEPT the request.
- iii. The UNESCO Global Geoparks Council recommends Ningde UGGp to continue the process of aligning the UGGp with pre-existing administrative boundaries before the next revalidation.

The UGGp Council also proposed that the Secretariat assures that the next revalidation team has access to this extension request dossier and to the recommendations by the UGGp Council.

##### **2) Shilin UGGp (China)**

- i. Summary and discussion regarding the extension: The requested extension involves an increase of 4.5% of its size from 350 km<sup>2</sup> to 365.7 km<sup>2</sup>. The request is proposed to include the Shese Village, Haiyi Village and Zhalong Village, in which most people living are Yi ethnic minority and to include new interesting geological sites (Volcanic rocks, stone forest, karst caves, cone karst, subterranean river, valley, basin, etc.). This proposal corresponds to the UGGp Council recommendation to increase the size of the UGGp beyond the World Heritage Site buffer zone.
- ii. Following the review of the extension request report and annexes from **Shilin UGGp (China)**, the UGGpC decided to ACCEPT the request.

##### **3) Lauhanvuori Hämeen kangas UGGp (Finland)**

- i. Summary and discussion regarding the extension: The requested extension involves an increase of 9.9% of the size of the UGGp from 4908 km<sup>2</sup> to 5395 km<sup>2</sup>. The extension is proposed to align with the preexisting municipal administrative boundaries, in coherence with the first UGGp Council recommendation for the UGGp.
- ii. Following the review of the extension report and its annexes for **Lauhanvuori Hämeen kangas UGGp (Finland)**, the UGGpC decided to ACCEPT the request.

##### **4) Toya-Usu UGGp (Japan)**

- i. A conflict of interest was declared by Setsuya Nakada who left the room and was not present for the discussion and vote.
- ii. Summary and discussion regarding the extension: The requested modification involves a reduction of 9.8% of the size of the UGGp from 1.180 km<sup>2</sup> to 1.064 km<sup>2</sup>. Since its

approval in 2009, the UGGp territory included an area outside of the four municipalities, located on the northern part of the territory. The original dossier proposed to encompass the entire pyroclastic flow deposits of the Toya caldera eruption (110,000 years ago), including a part that falls today outside of the municipal border of Toyako. In the light this, the Toya-Ustu UGGp Council has decided, in agreement with all stakeholders, to reduce the area, in line with the IGGP's statutes.

- iii. Following the review of the extension report and its annexes for **Toya-Ustu UGGp (Japan)**, the UGGpC decided to ACCEPT the request.

## **5) Beigua UGGp (Italy)**

- i. Summary and discussion regarding the extension: The requested extension involves an increase of 7.94% of the size of the UGGp from 392.3 km<sup>2</sup> to 423.47 km<sup>2</sup>. It is proposed to include the Municipality of Urbe in the province of Savona which for a long time had expressed its intention to enter the Natural Park and the UGGp. With the full support of the Natural Park Authority, this request has now been formalized by the Liguria regional law N°. 7 of July 15th, 2022, which has set the new boundaries of the Beigua Regional Nature Park. To align the UGGp boundaries with the ones of the Regional Nature Park, it is now suggested to extend the UGGp, which will now also include a new geological site. This site is included in the National Inventory of Italian Geological sites of the Italian National Institute for Environmental Protection and Research and is an important geodiversity site.
- ii. Following the review of the extension request report and its annexes for **Beigua UGGp (Italy)**, the UGGpC decided to ACCEPT the request.

## **XV. Discussion of a deferred extension requests (<10%) from 2021**

### **1) Huangshan UGGp (China)**

- i. Summary and discussion: The UGGp Council acknowledged that it had received all necessary explanations and arguments supporting the extension request, including about the consultation process, the needs assessments, the reasons and expected impact and consequences of the new boundaries as requested. The request would increase the territory from 160.6 km<sup>2</sup> to 173.43 km<sup>2</sup>.
- ii. Following the review of the extension request report and its annexes for **Huangshan UGGp (China)**, the UGGpC decided to ACCEPT the request.

## **XVI. Summary of the Outcome of the Seventh UNESCO Global Geoparks Council session**

As a result of this thorough examination and in the presence of over a 100 observers and representatives of more than 20 Member States, the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council proposed to forward the nomination of 18 new UNESCO Global Geoparks to the Executive Board of UNESCO, for their endorsement during the 2023 spring session.

From the 43 existing UNESCO Global Geoparks under revalidation, 39 received a green card, 4 received a yellow card. A green card denotes renewal of the UNESCO Global Geopark label for

four years, whereas a yellow card restricts this renewal period of two years, to give the Geopark time to address the Council's recommendations.

## **NEW APPLICATIONS**

### **Proposed for designation:**

1. Ijen, Indonesia
2. Maros Pangkep, Indonesia
3. Aras, Iran
4. Waitaki Whitestone, New Zealand
5. Kinabalu, Malaysia
6. Khorat, Thailand
7. Bohol Island, Philippines
8. Jeonbuk West Coast, Republic of Korea
9. Hakusan Tedorigawa, Japan
10. Merangin Jambi, Indonesia
11. Raja Ampat, Indonesia
12. Tabas, Iran
13. Sunnhordland, Norway
14. Cabo Ortegal, Spain
15. Caçapava, Brazil
16. Quarta Colônia, Brazil
17. Mourne Gullion Strangford, UK
18. Lavreotiki, Greece

### **Deferred**

1. Huasteca Potosina, Mexico
2. Toratau, Russian Federation
3. Nisyros, Greece

### **Rejected**

1. Ida Madra, Türkiye
2. Busan, Republic of Korea
3. MurGeopark, Italy
4. Costa Quebrada, Spain
5. Rutas del Agua, Mexico

## **REVALIDATIONS**

### **Green Card**

1. Comarca Minera, Mexico
2. Mixteca Alta, Mexico
3. Satun, Thailand,
4. Rinjani Lombok, Indonesia
5. Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu, Indonesia

6. Tuscan Mining Park, Italy
7. Cilento e Valle di Diano and Alburni, Italy
8. Adamello Brenta, Italy
9. Erz der Alpen, Austria
10. Novograd-Nograd, Slovakia/Hungary
11. Hateg Country, Romania
12. Trollfjell, Norway
13. Magma, Norway
14. Basque Coast, Spain
15. Batur, Indonesia
16. Qeshm Island, Iran
17. Grutas del Palacio, Uruguay
18. Molina Alto Tajo, Spain
19. Imbabura, Ecuador
20. Rokua, Finland
21. Vis Archipelago, Croatia
22. Monts d'Ardeche, France
23. Terras de Cavaleiros, Portugal
24. North Pennines, UK
25. M'Goun, Morocco
26. Cheongsong, Republic of Korea
27. Mudeungsan, Republic of Korea
28. Izu Peninsula, Japan
29. Itoigawa, Japan
30. Unzen Volcanic Area, Japan
31. Oki Islands, Japan
32. Non Nuoc Cao Bang, Vietnam
33. Dong Van Karst Plateau , Vietnam
34. Jeju Island , Republic of Korea
35. Aso , Japan
36. El Hierro , Spain
37. Odsherred , Denmark
38. Stonehammer Canada
39. Tumbler Ridge, Canada

#### **Yellow Card**

40. Percé, Canada
41. Ngorongoro-Lengai, Tanzania
42. Courel Mountains, Spain
43. Sain'in Kaigan, Japan

It also approved a request from Kütralkura UNESCO Global Geopark in Chile to extend its surface area by more than 10% and from Ningde (China), Shilin (China), Huangshan (China), Lauhanvuori Hämeen kangas (Finland), Toya-Usu (Japan) and Beigua (Italy) to modify their surface area by less than 10%.

## **XVII. Discussion on issues related to the missions**

- 1) The official request from Peru to postpone the revalidation mission to Colca y Volcanes de Andagua UGGp, since the Covid pandemic in the region did not allow for secure conditions to conduct the mission, the request was accepted by the Council, and the situation will be reassessed by January 2023.
- 2) Communication issues related to the evaluation mission of Mujib aUGGp, Jordan. The Secretariat gave an overview of the recent exchanges to plan a mission to this candidate territory and the issues to find suitable dates. The UGGp Council agreed that the Secretariat would make a last attempt to engage with the concerned applicant and relevant authorities and provide an update by December.
- 3) Demand of withdrawal Joyce Country and Western Lakes aUGGp, Ireland. The Secretariat explained the formal request from this territory to withdraw their application, for information.
- 4) The IUGS representative briefly explained the delay in setting up revised IUGS Guidelines for geoheritage assessment. It was agreed that the IUGS representative provided an update by the December 2022 meeting and a first draft early 2023.
- 5) One Council member (Ms Helga Chulepin) had added an item related to territory modification requests of >10% on the agenda. It was agreed that the application template for such requests, which automatically lead to a new application, doesn't need to be adapted, and the Secretariat committed to assure that the evaluators of these sites have access to all prior application documents, progress reports and UGGp Council recommendations, in support of the assessment of the modified territory.

## **XVIII. Any Other Business**

- 1) It was suggested to include an item about the quality of evaluation and revalidation reports in one of the next UGGp Council sessions. This should also be an item on the next evaluator training.
- 2) Importance of attending Capacity Building/training – proof of International Value of Geological heritage: GGN president Nickolas Zouros proposed as a general recommendation that staff working for the aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks, new UNESCO Global Geoparks as well new staff who join to existing Geoparks shall follow capacity building events and trainings offered by GGN, the regional networks and UNESCO, to have better understanding of the Geopark procedures, concept and good practices. He indicated that it is important that these trainings remain accessible and available, considering different time zones and language requirements. Guy Martini endorsed the invitation to attend international trainings. Martina Paskova agreed that qualified staff with proper understanding of the Geopark concept is essential and contributes for example to a more sound and detailed description of the geological heritage of the applicant and overall application files in some cases.
- 3) Revision of the explanatory note that comes with the checklist and its 101 questions: UGGp Council Guy Martini proposed to update these documents.

- 4) Geological Heritage inventory development: Van Tran Tan emphasized that aUGGs need to develop a comprehensive inventory and description of the Geological Heritage of their territory and these should be supported by relevant scientific articles in their application dossiers however IUGS reviews indicate considerable weakness for the explanation of the international significance of geological heritage as well geological sites demonstration. Van Tran Tan asked if UNESCO/GGN can provide trainings in that regard. UNESCO Secretariat responded that UNESCO is partnering with international organisations to deliver trainings on geological heritage inventory procedures.