Geoparks:
New Mission for Geographers

Work Report of IGU Commission
on Geoparks(IGU-CoG)
2008-2012

August 14th ,2008 in Tunis

Outline

- Background Information

  What's Geopark? Why? How?
- Contribution from Geographers: past and present
- Commission on Geoparks
- 2008-2012 Work plan

Background Information

- **IGCP-IGU-IUGS-UNESCO** convened to pursue 'Education in Earth Science' by promoting Geopark initiatives as an inter- and multidisciplinary activity (Paris, 2001 and 2003)
- **IGU-IUGS** agreed to create an Inter-Union Initiative on Geoparks (Utrecht, 2003)
- **IGU-IUGS-UNESCO** to launch the **GEOSEE** Initiative: "Geoparks Approach: science, heritage, communication, socio-economy and education" in Beijing 2004 (Paris, 2004)

Other Geopark Initiatives

Continental networks:

1. European Geoparks Network (**EGN**)

- 32 Geoparks in 12 European countries (Germany, UK, Austria, Croatia,etc.)

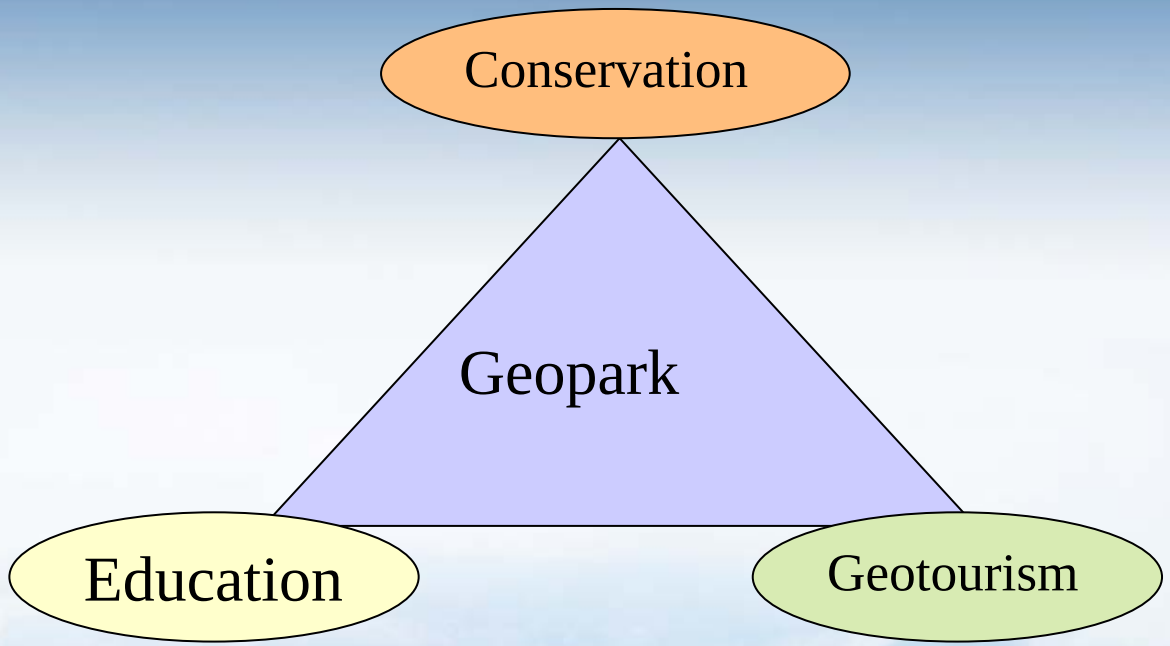
National networks:

1. Germany with 6 Geoparks
2. China with 138 Geoparks(21 world Geoparks)

Geopark: Concept

- **GEOPARK** is a nationally protected area containing a number of **geological heritage sites** of particular importance, rarity or aesthetic appeal. These Earth heritage sites are part of an integrated concept of protection, education and sustainable development. (UNESCO). A GEOPARK achieves its goals through a three-pronged approach:

Geopark



Conservation

- A GEOPARK seeks to conserve significant geological features, and explore and demonstrate methods for excellence in conservation.
- The management authority of each GEOPARK ensures adequate protection measures in consultation with collaborating universities, geological surveys or relevant statutory bodies in accordance with local traditions and legislative obligations.

Education

- A GEOPARK organizes activities and provides logistic support to communicate geoscientific knowledge and environmental concepts to the public. This is accomplished through protected and interpreted geosites, museums, information centers, trails, guided tours, school class excursions, popular literature, maps, educational materials and displays, seminars and so on. A GEOPARK also fosters scientific research and cooperation with universities and research institutes, stimulating the dialogue between the geosciences and local populations.

Geotourism

- A GEOPARK stimulates economic activity and sustainable development through geotourism. By attracting increasing numbers of visitors, a GEOPARK stimulates local socio-economic development through the promotion of a quality label linked with the local natural heritage. It encourages the creation of local enterprises and cottage industries involved in geotourism and geoproducts.

- When the 'World Geopark' label was set up in July 2004 the 17 European Geoparks were joined by 8 of China's national geoparks as World Geoparks, and by October 2005 there were 33 World Geoparks listed, and by end-June 2008, 57 Global Geoparks (informally the terms UNESCO Geopark, World Geopark and Global Geopark are used interchangeably) from 18 different countries.

World Geoparks in Europe

- Vulkaneifel, Germany
- Terra Vita Naturpark, Germany, where the Third Global Geopark Conference was held in June 2008, in Osnabrück (Osnabrueck)
- Naturpark Bergstrasse-Odenwald, Germany
- Geopark Swabian Alps, Germany
- Geopark Harz, Germany
- Mecklenburg Ice Age Park, Germany
- Petrified Forest of Lesvos, Greece - where the 6th European Geoparks Network conference was held in October 2005
- Psiloritis Natural Park, Crete, Greece
- Réserve Naturelle Géologique de Haute-Provence, France
- Parc Naturel Regional du Luberon, France
- Maestrazgo Cultural Park, Spain
- Subbeticas Geopark - Parque Natural de las Sierras Subbeticas, Spain
- Sobrarbe Geopark, Spain
- Cabo de Gata, Spain
- Beigua Geopark, Italy
- Geological and Mining Park (Parco Geominerario), Sardinia, Italy
- Parco delle Madonie, Italy
- Adamello Brenta Nature Park (Italy)
- Eisenwurzen Naturpark, Austria
- Kulturpark Kamptal, Austria
- Copper Coast, Ireland
- Marble Arch Caves / Cuilcagh Mountain Park, Northern Ireland, UK
- North Pennines, UK
- Abberley and Malvern Hills, UK
- English Riviera Geopark, England
- North West Highlands, Scotland, UK - where the 7th European Geoparks Network conference was held in September 2007, in Ullapool
- Lochaber Geopark, Scotland, UK
- Fforest Fawr, Wales, UK
- Hateg Country Dinosaurs Geopark, Romania
- Bohemian Paradise, Czech Republic
- Naturtejo Geopark, Portugal
- Gea-Norvegica Geopark, Norway
- Papuk Geopark, Croatia

World Geoparks in China

- Wudalainchi Volcanoes Geopark in Heilongjiang
- Jingpohu Geopark in Heilongjiang
- Yuntaishan Geopark in Henan
- Songshan Geopark in Henan
- Funiushan Geopark in Henan
- Wangwushan-Daimeishan Geopark in Henan
- Huangshan Geopark in Anhui
- Lushan Geopark in Jiangxi
- Longhushan Geopark in Jiangxi
- Zhangjiajie Sandstone Peak Forest Geopark in Hunan
- Shilin Karst Forest Geopark in Yunnan
- Danxiashan Geopark in Guangdong
- Taining Geopark in Fujian
- Yandangshan Geopark in Zhejiang
- Xingwen Geopark in Sichuan
- Hexigten Geopark in Inner Mongolia
- Keshiketeng Geopark in Inner Mongolia
- Fangshan Geopark in Hebei
- Leiqiong Geopark in Heinan
- Taishan Geopark in Shandong
- Zigong Geopark in Sichuan

中国的国家及世界地质公园分布示意图

Other World Geoparks

- Araripe GeoPark in Brazil
- Qeshm Island Geopark in Iran
- Langkawi Geopark in Malaysia
- Kanawinka Geopark in Australia.

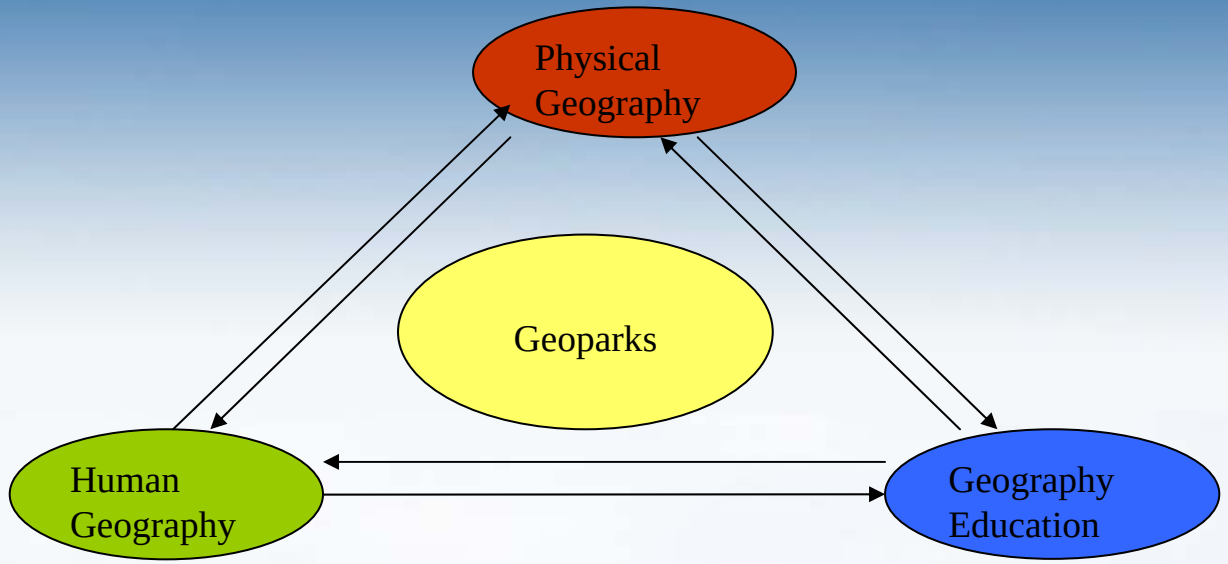
- The **First International Geopark Conference** took place in June 2004 in Beijing (where the Global Geopark network has an office provided by the People's Republic of China) with over 300 people from 40 countries attending.

- The **Second Global Geopark Conference** (or World Geopark Conference) was held in Belfast, Northern Ireland, in September 2006 with 320 participants from 40 countries and 6 continents.

- The Third Global Geopark Conference was held in Osnabrück (Osnabrueck), Germany - in the Terra-Vita Geopark - in June 2008, with around 500 participants from 60 countries.

GEOPARKS
The Geographical Contribution

A **GEOPARK** involves more than geological issues. The idea of **GEOPARK** is originally very much related to the geological scientific interest of sites. Anyhow, **LANDSCAPE** plays a role and the fact that **SOCIAL** and **ECONOMIC** issues must be considered, the geological scope alone seems to be limited. That is why "**GEO**" is more than geology; it involves **GEOGRAPHICAL** and **GEOmorphological** issues as well.


Physical Geography
Geoparks
Human Geography
Geography Education

What did Geographers do about Geoparks?

- Prof. José Luis Palacio-Prieto was elected to be the member of UNESCO International Advisory Group for Geoparks in 2004.

What did Geographers do about Geoparks?

- In August 2004, the IGU Executive Committee launched a new task force on Geoparks, an initiative that could bring a geographical perspective to the UNESCO program for the management and protection of the natural and cultural heritage.

The First International Forum on Geoparks: Interpretation and Sustainable Development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College of Geography and Remote


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IGU-Commission on Geoparks

- At the end of 2007, the IGU Executive Committee decided to launch the Commission on Geoparks and continue the work of Geopark Task Force.

Executive members of IGU-CoG

- Dr..Wei,Dongying (China)(Chair)
- Dr.Thandi Nzama（South Africa）
- Dr.Wolfgang Eder（Germany）
- Dr.Nickolas Zouros（Greece）
- Mr.Duane Fast （Canada ）
- Prof.Dr. Carole Murphy（USA）
- Dr.Wang Min(Secretary)(China ）
- Dr.Lloyd Richardson (Treasurer)

Advisors

- Prof.Dr. José Luis Palacio-Prieto
- Prof.Dr. Hiroshi Tanabe
- Prof.Dr.James Wilson

- Mission and Objectives
- Work Plan 2008-2012
- Constitutions and Bylaws
- Website: www.igu-cog.org
- Funding opportunities

Vision of IGU Commission on Geoparks

To promote the development of Geoparks from the Geographical perspectives.

The Commission's specific objectives

- (1) communicate the role of Geoparks as tools of education, Geotourism and nature conservation;
- (2) further develop the concept of sustainability as applied to Geoparks;
- (3) communicate the importance of understanding a broad range of processes that affect the development and sustainability of Geoparks, including the natural environment, political, and socio-economic processes;
- (4) communicate the results of the research by members of the Commission to various academic, industry and policy arenas in order to **influence policy** in an effective and appropriate manner.

Work plan 2008–2012

- The Commission used years 1–2 (2008–2009) to develop the Commission's research programme and develop the **methodological frameworks** to analyse issues of the Geoparks, including relationships with associated institutions and IGU Commissions.
- Years 3–4 (2010–2012) will focus on the development of **comparative studies** on Geoparks, tourism and corresponding social, economic, environmental and political change.

future Conferences

- November 2008, Third Executive members' meeting, Portland, USA
- 2009 The second International Forum on Geoparks, Taining World Geopark in China
- 2010 Heritage Interpretation Conference in Geoparks

Commission on GEOPARKS
Links to other IGU Commissions

Commissions:

- C00.07. Geographical education
- C00.16. Land degradation and desertification
- C00.21. Sustainability of rural systems
- C00.23. Biogeography and biodiversity
- C00.24. Diversity in mountain systems
- C00.27. Geography of tourism…
- C00.29. The cultural approach in geography
- C00.31. Local development

谢谢！

Thank you – Merci – Danke

For Your Attention