

The English Riviera Declaration

The 7th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks was held from the 27th to the 30th September in Torquay, English Riviera UNESCO Global Geopark, United Kingdom, and was attended by 700 delegates from 63 countries.

After deliberation the delegates hereby affirm that;

1. We welcome the formation of the first new UNESCO site designation of its kind in over 40 years- the UNESCO Global Geoparks- and formally recognise that this was the result of a global collaborative effort over many years between the Global Geopark family , National Commission's and Permanent Delegations of UNESCO and the UNESCO Secretariat.
2. Recalling that UNESCO was established 70 years ago in the wake of World War Two with the aim of promoting peace in the minds of men and woman through international cooperation and collaboration-values which are at the heart of the Global Geopark Network-we believe that the UNESCO Global Geoparks have found their natural home.
3. Recalling that the Global Geopark Network was founded in 2004 as the international network of collaboration among territories sharing values linked with the celebration of geological heritage and promotion of sustainable local development. We encourage strengthening of networking and activities aiming to support the UNESCO Global Geoparks.
4. Considering the complex challenges that Humankind is facing, we recognise the unique contribution that the work of UNESCO Global Geoparks make in tackling these challenges through the holistic approach of integrated education, outreach, research, culture, sustainable development, community engagement and capacity building.
5. We note the contribution that UNESCO Global Geoparks can make toward promoting the Health and Wellbeing Agenda through providing opportunities to access the natural environment, engage in physical activity and gain an understanding of the planet we share.
6. We encourage the Global Geoparks Network and other stakeholders to continue to work together to promote increased understanding, disseminate evidence and outcomes from pilot projects and adopt and share best practice in this field.
7. Recognising that natural disasters represent major risk to Health and Wellbeing worldwide, we believe that UNESCO Global Geoparks have significant potential to contribute to disaster risk reduction and enhance disaster preparedness within the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. We encourage UNESCO Global Geoparks to perform and promote education awareness activities and to reinforce cooperation in the field of disaster risk reduction between sites for the sharing of good practices and the establishment of thematic projects.
8. We welcome the increased interest in UNESCO Global Geoparks from across the world and encourage greater partnership working between aspirant, new and established UNESCO Global Geoparks in order to promote best practice and increase the impact of the work of UNESCO Global Geoparks around the world.
9. At a time when conflict threatens to divide and displace many communities around the globe we would like to celebrate the ability of the UNESCO Global Geoparks to bring people together from all continents and backgrounds. "The rock connects us."