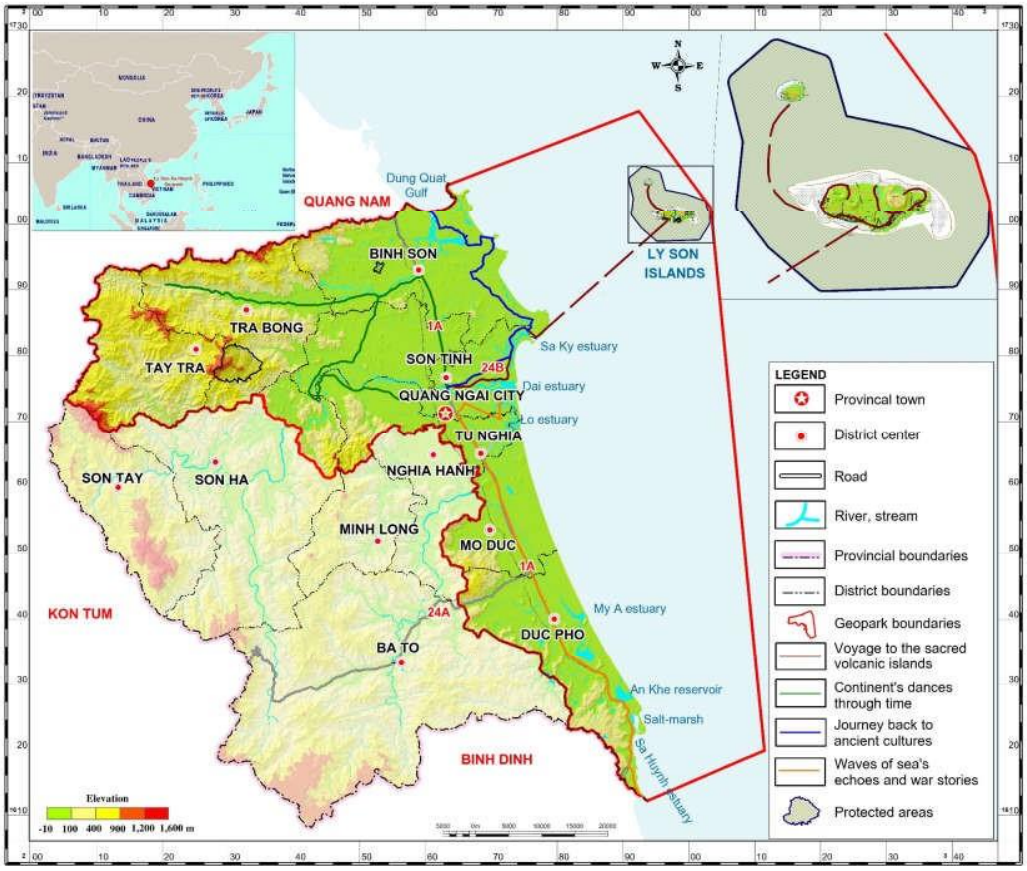
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'education, la science et la culture

Géoparcs mondiaux UNESCO

Applicant UNESCO Global Geopark

Ly Son-Sa Huynh Geopark, Vietnam

Geographical and geological summary



1. Physical and human geography

Located in Quang Ngai Province of Central Coastal Vietnam (central point coordinates: N15°06'20"; E108°47'50"), Ly SonSa Huynh Geopark - the Land of Motions - covers a land area of 2,537km2 and an internal sea area of 2,617km2, and can be reached by several routes by land, sea and air. The Geopark is characterized by high mountains in the west (highest summit 1,431m asl), flat and narrow coastal lowland in the east (a coastline of c.130km) and a number of small islands in the northeastern corner. Subject to tropical climate with two distinct dry and wet seasons, it also features a dense network of rivers, lakes, reservoirs, wetlands, bays and lagoons. A population of c.1,023,000 people, including several ethnic groups, live in the area, occupied mostly in agroforestry, fishing, seafood farming and salt production, trade and services and small industries. Many archaeological, historical and cultural relics, mainly of the ancient Sa Huynh, Champa and Vietnamese cultures, are recognized and conserved. Many festivals and traditions, in particular the UNESCO "Art of Bai Choi" Intangible Cultural Heritage, also contribute to the values of the Geopark.

2. Geological features and geology of international significance

LSSHAUGGp is distinctive in terms of its geological features and geoheritage value. It's history started c.2 billion years ago, being a piece of the Gondwana ancient super-continent. Subsequent drift to the north along with collision, subduction, accretion and divergence of its various members resulted in a very diverse assemblage of magmatic and sedimentary rocks, which were subject to at least two major regional metamorphic events c.460-410 and 260-225 Ma ago. During Late Cenozoic (c.35-17 Ma ago), the strong interaction between Eurasian, Australian and Pacific plates strongly tensioned the area, forming a new oceanic crust in the South China Sea, which was followed immediately thereafter (c.17 Ma ago to present) by its subduction along the Manila Trench. These processes triggered multi-episodic volcanic activities, though reduced but still occasionally taking place c.10,000 years ago till present in the Southeast Asian region. Also during this period, the oceancontinental interaction was active with many cycles of marine transgression-regressions, evidence of which remains quite abundant, particularly those that happened in the last few hundred thousand years. LSSHAUGGp can, therefore, be considered a lively outdoor geological museum with many types of geological formations, rocks, minerals, hot springs, landforms, landscapes, volcanic craters, waterfalls etc., illustrating a very dynamic area - the Land of Motions.