



UNESCO/Global Geoparks Network

GRANT FOR GEOPARKS in Small Island Developing States



MALDIVES

FOREWORD



Since the UNESCO Global Geoparks merged in 2015 with the International Geoscience Programme, these exceptional sites have received increased international recognition and interest. They have demonstrated their important contribution to sustainable development, by reconciling the protection of the geological heritage of international value with local economic activities, mainly through geo-tourism. Geoparks promote the interlinkage between their geological, natural and cultural heritage and raise awareness for natural hazards and climate change. We believe in their bottom-up approach, driven by the commitment of local communities and indigenous peoples. It makes them

resilient territories, as demonstrated during the current pandemic.

Yet, the concept remains largely unknown in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), despite their rich and diverse geological features and enormous potential to create Geoparks.

UNESCO is therefore strongly committed to engaging with the GGN in a dedicated strategy to promote Geoparks and build capacity and is proud to launch the GGN Grant initiative, together with our local partners. We trust that soon these regions will see more UNESCO Global Geoparks, in support of our common heritage, planet Earth.

Shamila Nair-Bedouelle
UNESCO Assistant Director-General for the Natural Sciences



The Global Geoparks Network (GGN) was founded in 2004 under the auspices of UNESCO aiming to encourage networking and international collaboration between rural territories with an important geological heritage and in need of new sustainable development policies.

The GGN was expanded rapidly to include territories in all continents but with less representation in Small Island Developing States, areas with great importance for our planet. Small Island Developing States include areas of geological significance, ecological wealth and cultural value ideal for the development of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

In order to encourage and support local authorities and communities,

to present candidatures for new UNESCO Global Geoparks, the GGN in close collaboration with UNESCO launched, in 2021, a new initiative: The UNESCO/GGN Grant for Small Island Developing States.

UNESCO and the GGN call Geopark initiatives in all Small Island Developing States to take advantage of this grant and the knowledge and experience in building and managing Geoparks all around the globe.

Thanks to this grant, I hope that the recognition of UNESCO Global Geoparks in the Small Island Developing States could contribute to the sustainable development of these Nations on which depend to a large extent the future of our planet.

Professor Nikolaos Zouros
Global Geoparks Network President

UNESCO Global Geoparks

2001

A collaboration agreement is signed between UNESCO Division of Earth Sciences and the European Geoparks Network

2004

17 European and 8 Chinese geoparks get together at UNESCO headquarters in Paris to form the Global Geoparks Network (GGN)

2015

During the 38th General Conference of the Organisation, the 195 Member States of UNESCO ratified the creation of a new label, the UNESCO Global Geoparks, expressing governmental recognition of the importance of managing outstanding geological sites and landscapes in a holistic manner.

UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development.

A UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGp) uses its geological heritage, in connection with all other aspects of the area's natural and cultural heritage, to enhance awareness and understanding of key issues facing society, such as using our earth's resources sustainably, mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing natural disasters-related risks.

By raising awareness of the importance of the area's geological heritage in history and society today, UNESCO Global Geoparks give local people a sense of pride in their region and strengthen their identification with the area,

The creation of innovative local enterprises, new jobs and high quality training courses is stimulated as new sources of revenue are generated through geotourism, while the geological resources of the area are protected.



Global Geoparks Network



UNESCO supports efforts in all countries to establish UNESCO Global Geoparks all around the world, in close collaboration with the Global Geoparks Network (GGN).

The Global Geoparks Network is a non-profit and non-governmental organization founded in 2004 as an international partnership developed under the umbrella of UNESCO. The Global Geoparks Network is the official

partner of UNESCO for the operation of the UNESCO Global Geoparks.

Networking serves to develop models of best practice and set quality-standards for territories that integrate the protection and preservation of Earth heritage sites in a strategy for regional sustainable economic development. All UNESCO Global Geoparks are institutional members of the Global Geoparks Network.

Small territories of huge importance



CARIBBEAN



AFRICA, INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH CHINA SEA (AIS)



PACIFIC

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are a distinct group of 39 UN Member States and 20 Non-UN Members that face unique social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. They are located in three geographical regions: **the Caribbean, the Pacific and Africa, Indian Ocean and South China Sea (AIS).**

No UNESCO Geopark exists, until now, among these Nations.



Among the 169 existing UNESCO Geoparks, 10% are base in small islands where they play an essential role for geological heritage conservation and promotion, climate change awareness, population involvement and establishment of new strategies for geotourism and integrated sustainable economical development.



Belitong UGGp (Indonesia)

4,800 km² of land and 13,000 km² of sea area, with a population of 288,771.



Lanzarote UGGp (Spain)

Its total surface is 2,500 km², comprising 866 km² of land with 151.000 inhabitants.



Oki Island UGGp (Japan)

Total surface of 673.5 km² (including a marine area 327.5 km²), with a population of 24.500.

Specific challenges. Many possibilities.



Rich geological heritage

46% of all SIDS present an active and dangerous geological heritage of international value with one or more volcanoes with eruptions possible at anytime. Many SIDS also offer important sites, witnessing the memory of the evolution over time of Earth and sea.



Unique biodiversity

SIDS, thought of as biodiversity "hotspots," have been regarded as making the greatest contribution to global biodiversity proportional to their size, as they contain some of the richest reservoirs of plants and animals on Earth.



Multicultural heritage

A huge geographical range that generates extremely diverse cultural conditions between regions and their peoples. Their history reflects the economic, social and cultural rich exchanges and what they have given to the rest of the world.



Climate change risks

SIDS are located in some of the most vulnerable regions of the world and are exposed to intense and frequent natural and environmental hazards with increased deleterious social, environmental and economic consequences.



A mandatory sustainability

Their special geographical situation and their huge natural and cultural richness makes SIDS unique for visitors, but at the same time, confronts them with a number of challenges and vulnerabilities. Sustainable tourism and Geotourism is more than necessary in SIDS.



Empowering new generations

Facing the loss of traditional societal structures and values and the declining level of youth employment and job opportunities, the SIDS young generation needs strong support to become change agents for sustainability within their own communities and fundamental actors in SIDS climate change mitigation and other challenges.





UNESCO/Global Geoparks Network **GRANT FOR GEOPARKS** in Small Island Developing States

The **UNESCO/Global Geoparks Network Grant** is a tailor made consultancy service specifically dedicated to support local teams to develop a UNESCO Geopark project. The grant includes several steps and actions. GGN Experts will advise and accompany the granted territory from the initial idea to the official application as UNESCO Global Geopark. All services provided through the grant will be free of charge for the territory.



Analysis of the territory

Two GGN Experts will be dedicated to each granted territory. They will hold digital meetings with the granted territory to analyze the context and prepare the field mission.



Field mission

The two GGN Experts will conduct a 10 day mission to the granted territory. During this mission, the experts will visit the main sites of the granted territory, engage with local communities, government representatives, local associations, potential Geopark partners and other relevant stakeholders.



On-line assistance

After the mission, the GGN Experts will prepare a report with the different steps that the granted territory will need to take and the challenges it will need to resolve. The experts will keep on providing guidance through digital meetings in view of a formal submission of an application file.



Training

This grant also includes the participation of the granted territory's Managers in the yearly UNESCO Global Geoparks intensive courses as well as their integration into the UNESCO mentorship and knowledge exchange programme.



Supporting local initiatives

We target emerging Geopark initiatives in Small Island Developing States, but also existing nature parks and national parks with geological features of international value, intermunicipalities, associations involved in rural development and other management bodies that would like to start developing a viable Geopark.

✓ The assessment criteria will in the first place be based on:

- ... the presence of an **existing management body** and of people with interest in the UNESCO Global Geoparks concept and able to engage in this endeavour and support the initiative;
- ... the presence of **geological heritage of international value**;
- ... the basic understanding and **affinity of candidates with the UNESCO Global Geoparks concept**.

✓ Secondary criteria will relate to **government support, funding perspective, tourism potential, security** and **community involvement**.



How to present a candidature

1

Interested candidates should download the form from the link <http://globalgeoparksnetwork.org/application-form-SIDS-grant.pdf>

2

Complete the attached form and send it before 30th April 2022
K.Vandenberghe@unesco.org,
ml.faber@unesco.org and
ggnsecretariat@hotmail.com.

3

The three best proposals will be notified by 31st May 2022.



For any further information regarding this UNESCO/Global Geoparks Network Grant or the UNESCO Global Geoparks in general, please contact K.Vandenberghe@unesco.org, ml.faber@unesco.org or ggnsecretariat@hotmail.com.

Useful information related to UNESCO Global Geoparks can be found on the following websites:

- > <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/unesco-global-geoparks>
- > www.visitgeoparks.org
- > <http://www.globalgeoparksnetwork.org>





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