

# The International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme Newsletter

*An update of IGGP activities*



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



International  
Geoscience  
Programme



UNESCO  
Global  
Geoparks



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*...and more!*

## UNESCO and the IGGP

*UNESCO is the only United Nations organization with a mandate to support research and capacity in Earth Sciences, and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme is our flagship.*

Following the endorsement of the Member States, UNESCO's International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) has been implemented through two co-operative ventures with the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), and the Global Geoparks Network. IGCP and UGGp Councils coordinate their work through a shared UNESCO Secretariat and joint coordination meetings of their respective bureau which convene as necessary. The chairpersons of the two respective Councils co-chair the IGGP. UNESCO evaluates its programmes every 4-5 years, and the most recent IGGP evaluation assessed its overall performance while looking at the appropriateness of programme implementation mechanisms and processes. The report indicated a positive review and assessment of the IGGP and is available [here](#).

# IGCP Council 6th Session



The annual IGCP Council meeting decided to continue supporting 39 ongoing projects and approved 18 new projects, totaling 57 active IGCP projects in 2021, led by 316 project leaders from 92 countries. The presentations made during the IGCP Council by its members can be found [here](#) and the IGCP UNESCO's Secretariat annual report and presentations are available [here](#).

The IGCP continues to grow in its outreach activities. One area of particular interest is the gender representation: in 2021, 43% of all IGCP project leaders are female geoscientists.



World map showing IGCP Project leader (PL) and Scientific Board (SB) countries in 2021

## IGCP's contribution to the SDG's

The overall aim of the SDGs is to pave the way for a sustainable world and geoscience is at the core of this mission. To highlight and demonstrate the relevance of Geoscience for the accomplishment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, UNESCO published a series of digital flyers where 17 UNESCO Earth Sciences impact case studies directly addressing each SDG are presented. Read and download them [here](#).



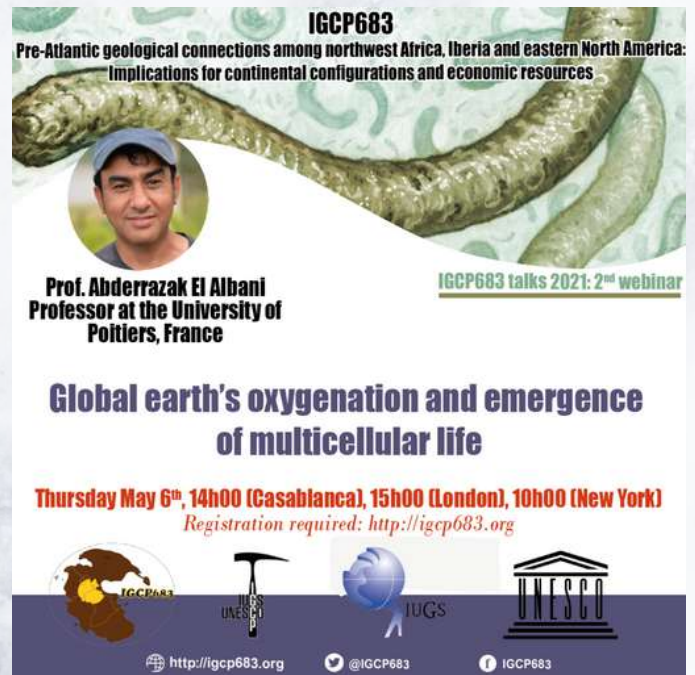
# IGCP Projects Outreach Work

*Despite the delicate international situation caused by the COVID19 pandemic, research and international cooperation did not stop, and neither did UNESCO. Making use of digital technology, IGCP projects held several online meetings.*

**IGCP 648.** “Supercontinent Cycles and Global Geodynamics,” held sixteen seminars in 2020 all available [online](#).



**IGCP 683.** “Pre-Atlantic geological connections among northwest Africa, Iberia, and eastern North America: Implications for continental configurations and economic resources,” held three webinars in October 2020, September 2020, and January 2021, with hundreds of participants. Their webinars, “Geology of Morocco: an Overview” and “Crustal Blocks of the Appalachian orogen” webinars, along with information on their other webinars, are available [online](#).



**IGCP 692.** “Geoheritage for Geohazard Resilience,” introduced two webinars per month! – Dec 2020 to June 2021. [Here](#) you can watch previous seminars or register for the new ones.

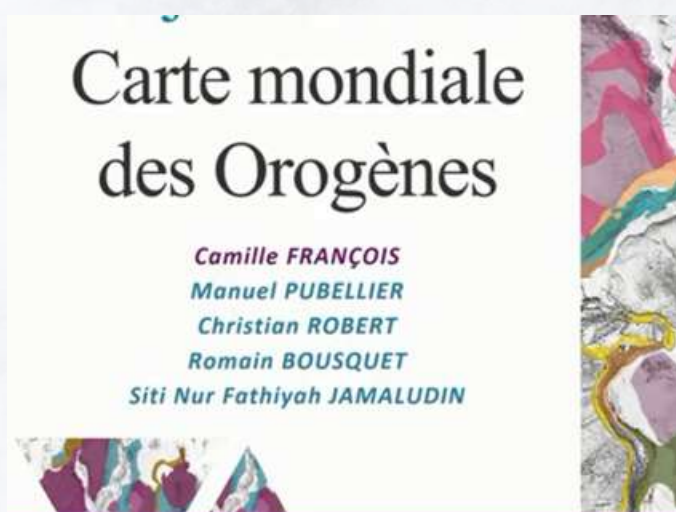
**IGCP 707.** “Origin, Distribution, and Biogeochemistry of Arsenic in the Altiplano-Puna plateau of South America,” organized two webinars on 14 May, 11 June, and 16 July. They provide insights on topics related to the origin and geochemistry of arsenic as well as its effects on human health, remediation technologies, and case studies around the world. All previous seminars are available on [YouTube](#). Visit the [webinar page](#) for more info.



# IGCP Projects Outreach Work



IGCP 668. “Equatorial Gondwanan history and Early Palaeozoic Evolutionary Dynamics” presented the long history of the Indian subcontinent in “The Ocean on the top of our Mountains” [animation](#).



IGCP 667. “World Map of the Orogens,” launched a mini-course on [YouTube](#), and shared their work and activities through their [newsletter](#).



IGCP 685 “Geology for Sustainable Development” developed several outreach [videos](#) to raise awareness on geosciences and the project also launched in collaboration with the [GFGD](#) the Higher Education Learning Resources containing eight modules which are available [here](#).

# New UNESCO Global Geoparks

On 21st of April 2021, the UNESCO Executive Board endorsed 8 new UNESCO Global Geoparks proposed by the 5th UGGp Council. This brings the geoparks total to 169 in 44 countries.

Meet the new UNESCO Global Geoparks [here](#).



Photo: Lukasz Zarzycki

## UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS

Celebrating Earth Heritage,  
Sustaining Local Communities



## UNESCO's contribution to Earth Sciences and UNESCO Global Geoparks.

In collaboration with IUGS, the IGCP secretariat and Prof Iain Stewart - UNESCO Chair in Geoscience and Jordan-UK El Hassan bin Talal Research Chair in Sustainability - produced a series of 3 hand-drawn animations showcasing the work of UNESCO in the Earth Sciences and how the UNESCO Global Geoparks contribute for our mission. Find them [here](#). You can also download our [English](#) and [French](#) brochures.

# UNESCO - IGGP Consultation

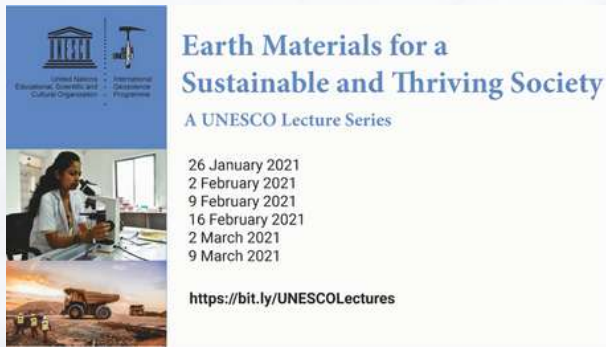
The UNESCO IGGP secretariat launched a survey to consult experts from the international earth sciences community (IGCP and UGGp's) on their views regarding the strategic directions for UNESCO's action in the field of Earth sciences, in line with the organization's mandate. Combining the results of this survey, along with the vision and goals from its councils and the Internal Oversight Services (IOS) evaluation report of the program, the secretariat drafted a report. The overall feedback and evaluation is that the program is delivering in its mandate well; yet, it would benefit from more staff and funding. Further, the results showed critical challenges, trends, and opportunities to be pursued, such as climate change adaption and mitigation from earth sciences perspective and geoscience education. The surveys emphasized the importance of visibility and partnerships at all different levels, with some suggested entities. The survey also stressed the importance of UNESCO's being a focal, leading point to help geoscience around the globe.



## International Geodiversity Day

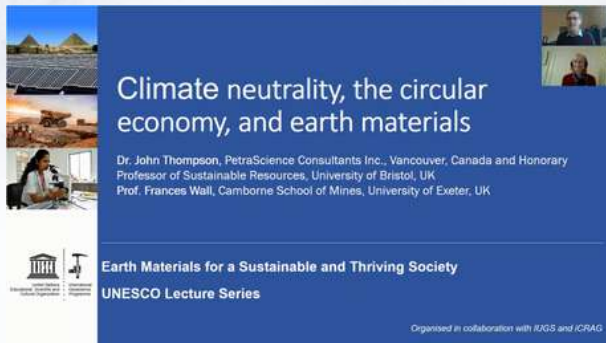


Following a call from IUGS, over 100 organizations from the civil society, the academic world and major international geoscience and nature conservation organizations, for the establishment of an International Geodiversity Day, the 211th session of UNESCO Executive Board endorsed its proclamation. This commemoration day will be celebrated by UNESCO every year on the 6 October. Watch the promotional video that encouraged Member States to approve this proposal.



## UNESCO Lecture Series: Earth Materials for a Thriving Society

In January, UNESCO’s Secretariat launched a new series of Earth Sciences lectures designed for a global audience. These provided diverse perspectives on Earth materials and their role in society. Developed in collaboration with the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and iCRAG - Irish Centre for Research in Applied Geosciences – the lectures were produced and broadcast live between 26 January and 9 March 2021 and counted with over 4,300 participants from 145 countries. Recordings of these lectures are available [here](#).



## UNESCO - IFPEN PhD Grants

In 2020, IFP Energies Nouvelles (IFPEN) and UNESCO have signed a framework partnership agreement concerning research and training in the field of geoscience. This collaboration mobilizes IFPEN’s expertise to support the priorities of UNESCO’s International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP), such as the promotion and understanding of the “Earth Systems” and sustainable use of natural resources. IFPEN and UNESCO will propose thesis topics in line with these themes. The aim is to train future research engineers to enable them to overcome the scientific and technological challenges associated with the energy transition. Find the list of topics on the IGGP Annual Report [here](#) and [here](#).



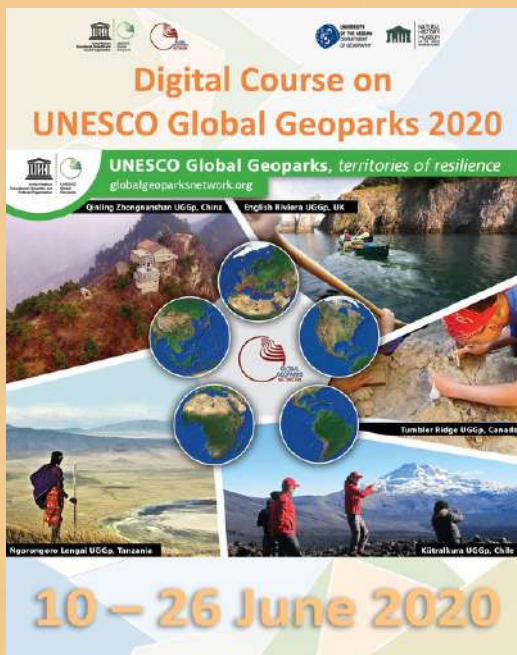
# 2021 New UNESCO Global Geopark Applications

16 areas have applied to be designated UNESCO Global Geopark and have entered the official process of evaluation by UNESCO. In order to enable Member States to exercise their oversight responsibility - as set out in 5.4 Applications review of the Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks - a series of documents available on our website provide a geological and geographic summary, including a detailed map indicating the location, of each applicant.



Yimengshan UNESCO Global Geopark, China  
(approved in 2019)

## Digital Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks 2020 UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS: Territories of Resilience



UNESCO and the Global Geoparks Network are co-organizing the 12th session of the International Course on Geoparks 2020 “UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS: Territories of Resilience”.

The Course is hosted and delivered by the University of the Aegean – Department of Geography and the Natural History Museum of the Lesvos Petrified Forest at Lesvos Island UNESCO Global Geopark, North Aegean Region, Greece, one of the first Global Geoparks in the world.

The Course will take place from 10th to 26th June, 2020 through digital platform.

Learn more and apply [here](#).





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## **UNESCO**

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