

GGN/EGN - Geopark Annual Report 2020

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: BEIGUA UNESCO Global Geopark (Italy, European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2005 / 2016



Included in the initiatives related to AGENDA2030 themes “Sunrise trekking & musical silent concert” in collaboration with Varazze municipality.

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 14 staffs (5 permanent + 11 by contract) including 2 geoscientists (by contract); to be added 1 scientific coordinator + 5 researchers (geoscientists from University of Genoa through an official partnership/agreement)

Number of visitors: about 100.000 (estimation of the visitors to the major geosites, trails, museums, visitor centers and information points).

Number of Geopark events: 93 events organized by Beigua UGG management body (but realized only 43 because of the COVID-19 pandemic)

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: 34 classes (607 students)

(classes involved are far fewer than in other years due to restrictions from March 2020)

Number of Geopark press release: 22 press releases, Facebook: 12162* (+17%), Twitter: 4.250* (+4%), Instagram: 5200* (+31%) * like at 31/12/20

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

- **Lockdown: Beigua Geopark gets smart!**

During lockdown Beigua Geopark organized many digital initiatives:

- ✓ Stay safe, stay in touch, share emotions!
- ✓ Nature quizzes in IG' stories
- ✓ Draw your Beigua UGGp and share with us!
- ✓ Virtual Bio Blitz on FB engaging our team of expert
- ✓ **Digital birdwatching:** to celebrate Migratory Bird Day
- ✓ Organization of an **Italian Digital Event to celebrate EGNWeek2020** (9 Italian UGGs) (on their social media Italian UGGs shared a long visual story on how water produce the shapes in the landscape)
- ✓ **Environmental Education activities were transferred on line:** we organized a smart educational for teachers providing interesting ideas for teaching on line and insiping future educational project, and we recorded a short video lesson about nature for primary school children.

- **Safe guided hikes:** implementation of new specifications to make hikes safe from covid-19 contagion.

- **AGENDA2030 educational programme** (more details in the paragraph on educational activities)

- **New MTB Trail** in Beigua Geopark to promote Sustainable mobility

- **ACTIVE PROJECTS IN 2020:**

Interreg Marittimo 2014-2020 CambioVia – Walking of BiODiversity: an agreement was signed with the Regione Liguria for collaboration in the Interreg CamBioVia project for the enhancement of local biodiversity with actions that promote accessibility, innovation, enhancement of natural and cultural resources in order to ensure territorial cohesion and promote employment and Sustainable Development

WWF Project about wetlands in Beigua UGGp: Improvement of the conservation status of wetlands in Beigua Park Interventions on 3 existing wetlands and restoration of 4 new

wetlands

Rural development program 2014-2020, sub-measure 8.5 - Forestry interventions:

Requalification of the path network in the Deiva Forest and realization of the Forestry Restructuring Plan, arrangement of the Gava road in the Lerone Forest.

Rural development program 2014-2020, submeasure 7.1 - Protection and management plans of Natura 2000 Network sites: surveys and monitoring in two SAC - Special Areas of Conservation.

LifeWolfAlps EU (2020-2015): national wolf monitoring in Italy coordinated by ISPRA on the behalf of the Ministry of Environment: involvement in the working group of Liguria Region.

- **AVIATION MONITORING:** breeding species (annual) 30 days of field work, 148 listening points, 1500 observations, 74 species contacted Seasonal migrations of Short-toed Eagle 11 days of field work in spring 11 days of field work in autumn Spring migrations of Honey Buzzard 10 days of field work Spring migrations of Whooping Crane Social experiment from the end of February to the beginning of March

- **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT:** 3 interventions of maintenance and restoration of grassland habitats for red partridge and related species

- **ZOOTECNIC HERITAGE PROTECTION** Installation of 2 new electric shepherds and extension of an existing one

- **MAINTENANCE OF THE TERRITORY:** Maintenance of 427 km of pathway with interventions entrusted to local associations, agricultural cooperatives, direct growers. 2500 hectares of state forest maintenance (ordinary maintenance works (cleaning and cutting of trees), arrangement of paths and forest management plan (works on submeasure 8.5 RDP)) 115 panels maintenance (refurbishment 3 notice boards and 9 panels with graphics and printing). Maintenance of 9 equipped green areas.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Attendance at the 1st EGN Digital Forum
- Attendance at the 2nd EGN Digital Forum (15th September 2020)
- Attendance at the 1st GGN Digital Forum (17th & 18th November 2020)
- Contribute with a text about Beigua UGG in EGN Newsletter:16/2020
- Contribute with a text about Beigua UGG in EGN Magazine Issue 17

Management and Financial Status

The Beigua Geopark is managed by the Beigua regional nature Park Authority, that is a public equivalent body supervised by the Regional Administration of Liguria, founded in 1996 (Regional Law n. 12/1995). The Beigua Park Authority has the responsibility for all necessary actions towards the benefit of the area in combination with the protection of the nature park and the four Sites of the European NATURA 2000 Network (Birds Directive and Habitats Directive). The Beigua Geopark financial status especially depends on Regional Administration and on EU projects. During 2020 the financial status was about 645.000,00 €.

Geoconservation and Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Regular programmes of walks and guided tours have been realized compliance with health restrictions related to the pandemic of Covid-19. Geopark Guides offer a rich and varied **calendar of excursions, photographic treks and cultural-educational activities**. The activities are promoted through the website, press releases, social channels and posters and are aimed at different segments of the public: expert hikers, families with children, photography lovers.

New safe excursions mode:

In order to be able to carry out the proposed initiatives in total safety, important changes have been made:

- Quotaed number of participants.
 - Compulsory registration on line.
 - Mandatory mask and distance during the excursion.
 - mandatory hand disinfection with gel frequently.
 - Self-certification on temperature below 37 degrees and no contact with positive persons in the last 15 days).
- **Photo competitions:** the second edition of the #ScattailBeigua competition which was attended by hundreds of shots of the Geopark. The second edition, dedicated to winter, started in late 2019 and will end in February 2020.
 - **Photographic contest** on "the migration of Beigua's birds of prey".
 - **Photographic exhibitions:** Geological and naturalistic itinerant photographic exhibitions, periodically exhibited at Visitor Centers, Refuges and other public places in the District

- Joining the **European Geoparks Week 2020** with several digital activities, because of lockdown (like live presentation on Facebook involving a virtual trek through the spring flower to investigate the connection between endemic species and geology)
- Joining the **World Biodiversity day** and the **European Day of Park** with digital activities
- Joining “**Week of the Planet Earth**” with several activities

New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction

- Until the start of the pandemic educational programs for primary and secondary schools have been realized in Beigua Geopark according to specific agreement with local School Authorities, during the lockdown period **Environmental Education activities were transferred on line**. We organized a smart educational for teachers providing interesting ideas for teaching on line and inspiring future educational project, and we recorded a short video lesson about nature for primary school children.
- **Junior Geoparker 2020**: during summer and compatible with the periods of restrictions by covid-19 a calendar of meetings is proposed for children aged 6 to 11, to spend an afternoon with the Park Guides between educational workshops and explorations in nature. At each meeting, the kids get a passport stamp and can become Junior Geoparker, little ambassadors of the Beigua UNESCO Global Geopark in the world!
- **International Day for Disaster Reduction**: on the International Day for the Reduction of Natural Risks, the 13th October 2020 , the Geopark organizes initiatives with Junior Geoparker to promote "best practices" and self-protection rules in the event of natural risks, with particular attention flood and forest fire risks, the most likely in our region.
- The theme of climate change is instead developed in the project "**Regional strategy for sustainable development - 2030 AGENDA** " where the Beigua Geopark is the regional leader for the management and communication of the results obtained. The project that the Beigua Park Experience Center has created to contribute to the construction of the Regional Strategy for sustainable development of 2030 Agenda, provides for a participatory path that involves all stakeholders till the end of 2020.
- “**Pedibus & Plastic free**” projects: **learning environmental sustainability at school**
Beigua Geopark has launched two new initiatives to involve schools on the themes of AGENDA 2030 about sustainable mobility and waste reduction. Started in 2014 with many

enthusiastic adhesions, this year the Pedibus project has covered a larger area. This is a walking bus driven by volunteers who take children to school along safe routes: like a real bus, there are several lines, intermediate stops and it is an opportunity for children to empower themselves. The Plastic free project has also started, with classroom meetings and visits in the Geopark area to raise awareness among students through role-playing games and educational workshops on the use of plastic and on possible environmentally friendly alternative materials.

- **“Puliamo il Mondo” (Clean the world):** according to AGENDA 2030 themes, during October was organized an initiative to raise awareness for the collection of waste in the territory of Beigua Geopark called “Puliamo il mondo” in collaboration with Legambiente and Federparchi.
- Organization of **digital course for teachers** on the topics of the Geopark and its activities and peculiarities
- In collaboration with the University of Genoa (DISTAV): **Curiosity Driven Project 2019-2022:** a project dedicated to Ligurian paleoenvironments, funded by the University, for the measurement of geological sections and paleoenvironmental reconstruction in its geography and ecology in the fossil sites of la Maddalena (Sassello)

Strategic partnership

The Beigua Geopark is strongly supported by local communities and stakeholders which are substantial part of the management body (Regione Liguria, Provincia di Savona, Città Metropolitana di Genova, n. 10 Local Municipalities, University of Genoa, Tourism Operators Associations, Agricultural Associations, Breeding Associations, Forestry Associations, Handicraft Associations, Environmentalist Associations, Hunters Associations, Sports & outdoor Associations, University of Genoa, Regional and Local School Districts. Many others national and local bodies collaborate with the Beigua Geopark (Museum of Natural History of Genoa, Italian Alpin Club, Italian Federation for Hiking, Italian Union for Sports, Italian Federation for Parks and Nature Reserves, ISPRA National Institute for Environment Protection and Research). For years Beigua Geopark has been collaborating with teachers from the geology department of the University of Bremen.

Promotional activities

- **During the Lockdown Beigua Geopark gets smart with a lot of digital projects:**

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 - Virtual Bio Blitz on FB engaging our team of expert
 - **Digital birdwatching:** to celebrate Migratory Bird Day
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 - **Environmental Education activities were transferred on line:** we organized a smart educational for teachers providing interesting ideas for teaching on line and insiping future educational project, and we recorded a short video lesson about nature for primary school children.
- **Social media:** Beigua Geopark is present on Facebook (with two pages: Parco Beigua – UNESCO Global Geopark dedicated to activities strictly connected to the protected area and ViviBeigua to promote the touristic area in collaboration with Local Authorities) and on Twitter and Instagram. The social accounts are monitored on a daily basis and contents to post are planned in advance. Our followers are growing steadily, without any form of paid marketing. **Creation of a new Telegram account.**
 - **Press releases and newsletters:** 22 press releases were produced to describe the activities of the Geopark, the progress of the ongoing projects and new initiatives in the area involving the interested parties. To these is added an average of 30 releases sent for the promotion of excursions and educational workshops organized by the Geopark.
 - **Posters:** Realization of monthly posters to promote the activities proposed in the Geopark. The posters are posted at the Visitor Centers and Information Points of the Geopark as well as being sent via email to the tour operators belonging to the Park circuit and to all the tourist offices in the area, in Genova and in the most important tourist areas of the Region.
 - **Website:** Daily updating of Beigua Geopark website (www.parcobeigua.it) and creation of pages to describe new projects.
 - **Periodical publications:** "Parco del Beigua - Beigua Geopark" newsletter published quarterly (8.000 - 12.000 paper copies; downloadable also by the web site) published and distributed in Summer, Autumn and Winter (not in Spring 2020 for the lockdown). It contains articles and information about tourism, activities and events; special features are dedicated to the Geopark territory and its highlights, EGN, GGN and UGG, etc. In summer a special issue of ViviBeigua is also printed, 12,000 copies distributed throughout the area.

4. CONTACTS

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