



# GGN LONG-TERM STRATEGY 2025-2035

## Connecting Earth, Shaping Tomorrow

Global Geoparks Network  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday 14 July 2025 | 12:00GMT



10th Anniversary of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme

UNESCO Global Geoparks  
2015 - 2025



International Geoscience  
Geoparks Programme



Global Geoparks Network  
official website



visitgeoparks.org  
website

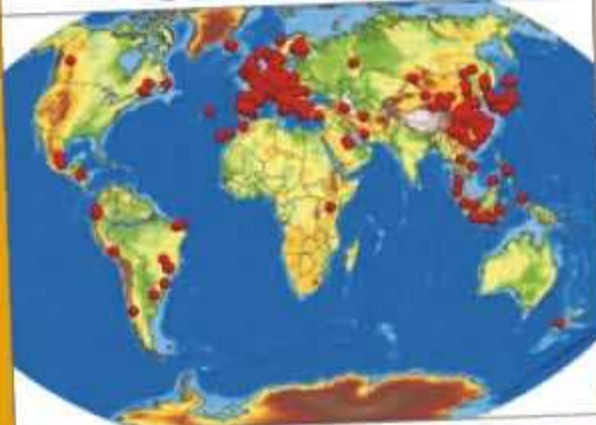
11th Global Geoparks Network  
Annual General Assembly for Accounts  
30 APRIL 2025



Your participation strengthens the Global Geoparks Network!  
**SEND YOUR VOTE NOW!**



WELCOME 16 NEW  
GEOPARKS



229 UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS  
IN 50 COUNTRIES

7th International Training Course  
on UNESCO Global Geoparks Management and Development  
8-13 October, 2023

Theme: Links among Geological Heritage,  
Abiotic/Biotic and Cultural Resources  
China University of Geosciences, Beijing



Geopark  
astronomy



Qurud-Qayla Potage  
Aran UNESCO Global Geopark, Iran

Qurud-Qayla, a traditional dish, is composed of two components in the local language. The 'Qurud' refers to corn, while 'Qayla' signifies mince meat. This is a corn and mince meat dish. The essential ingredients for this dish include butter, wheat, green beans, eggplant, tomatoes, onion, and aromatic herbs like basil and parsley. Presently, this culinary delight can be savored at numerous restaurants in Aran UNESCO Global Geopark and the tourist hubs within this geopark.



Online  
GGN Workshop  
on SDGs  
FOR GEOPARK MANAGERS

FEBRUARY 14, 2025  
12:00 - 14:00 GMT





# GGN LONG-TERM STRATEGY 2025-2035

Connecting Earth, Shaping Tomorrow

## 1.Preamble

Established in 2004 under the patronage of UNESCO, the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) has, over the past two decades, paved the way for a transformative movement.

By blending the protection of Earth's invaluable heritage with sustainable regional economic development, GGN has become a pioneer in integrating conservation with community growth. Through its commitment to networking and cooperation, GGN has nurtured an international platform that amplifies cultural exchange, fosters community engagement, and elevates the global visibility of these exceptional territories.

At the heart of GGN lies a core belief that Earth's geological, natural, and cultural treasures can be preserved while simultaneously contributing to local prosperity. This vision has grown through the years, and in 2015, GGN's efforts were officially recognized when it became a statutory partner of the UNESCO's International Geosciences and Geoparks Programme (IGGP), which includes the International Geosciences Programme (IGCP) and the UNESCO Global Geoparks Programme.

In 2025, the network spans 50 countries, with 229 UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGPs), each playing a vital role in shaping a sustainable future.

The GGN supports the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The integration of geological conservation, geotourism, and community empowerment drives the Network's work, addressing urgent challenges like climate change, natural hazard mitigation, and social resilience. Through education, local action, and a global vision, GGN's mission is to foster inclusive and resilient communities, while safeguarding our planet's heritage for generations to come.

In celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GGN and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Programme, 2025 stands as a defining milestone for the network. This moment builds on a foundation of resilience demonstrated during the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2022, the GGN Executive Board published a visionary paper, "UNESCO Global Geoparks in the 'World After': A Multiple-Goals Roadmap Proposal for Future Discussion," in the prestigious IUGS journal "Episodes" (Martini *et al.*, 2022, see annex).

This document not only showcased the GGN's adaptability and forward-thinking approach but also laid the conceptual groundwork for the 2025-2035 strategic plan we now undertake. Widely referenced in international publications, this roadmap is a precursor and visionary document that should support the GGN's vision for the future, providing clarity, direction, and ambition for the decade ahead.

As we step into this pivotal new chapter, the GGN long-term strategy for 2025-2035 presents a bold vision for uniting GGN member territories in advancing resilience, fostering innovation, and championing global sustainability. By positioning Geoparks as catalysts for education, conservation, and community empowerment, we are shaping a future built on inclusivity, collaboration, and shared purpose.

This strategy ignites transformative action, driving knowledge exchange and strengthening the preservation of Earth's heritage.

With optimism and determination, we embrace the opportunities of the next decade, confident in our ability to inspire meaningful change and build a thriving, sustainable world for generations to come.

In September 2023, the 4<sup>th</sup> Ordinary General Assembly of GGN, held in Marrakesh, Morocco, asked the GGN Advisory Committee to prepare a long-term strategic plan for GGN for the period 2025-2035. A task force team of volunteers from GGN's Executive Board and Advisory Committee drafted this long-term strategy for 2025-2035.

The text of the GGN strategy for 2025-2035 consists of the following chapters:

#### **GGN Strategy for 2025-2035:**

1. Preamble
2. Our mission, Our vision
3. Our key strategic actions
4. Monitoring, Progress, and Results

ANNEX “World After’: A Multiple-Goals Roadmap Proposal for Future Discussion”

## 2. Our Mission, Our Vision

The Global Geoparks Network is not just a network — it is a dynamic movement that brings together people, places, and passions to protect, celebrate, and amplify the remarkable story of our planet. From the ancient geological wonders that tell the tale of Earth's 4600-million-year history to the vibrant cultures that have flourished alongside them, GGN is dedicated to connecting Earth's natural and cultural heritage, ensuring that the legacy of our planet's past will continue to inspire future generations.

### A Bold Vision: Geoparks as Thriving Hubs of Innovation

At the heart of GGN is a bold vision: a world where every Geopark is a living, thriving testament to the Earth's awe-inspiring power and beauty. A world where communities do not just protect their heritage—they are inspired by it to build a brighter, more sustainable future. GGN is transforming how we understand and interact with our planet, creating a global network of Geoparks that are not just places of conservation but also vibrant hubs of innovation, education, and sustainable development.

### Two Decades of Global Change

For over two decades, GGN has been a catalyst for positive change, fostering collaboration across borders, cultures, and disciplines. Around the world, Geoparks are driving transformative progress, showing that sustainability is not just a concept — it is something that is happening every day, through the power of local communities. By connecting people with their geological, natural, and cultural heritage, GGN builds

pride, resilience, and purpose. Geoparks are living laboratories of creativity, where new solutions to protect the Earth's wonders are discovered while local economies flourish and the quality of life rises.

### Communities in Harmony with Nature

Imagine a world where every territory and its communities, no matter how remote, draws strength from its heritage and thrives in harmony with the natural world. This is the world GGN is building — a world where **Geoparks** are more than just preserved spaces — they are **dynamic, thriving regions that offer opportunities for education, tourism, and sustainable growth**. Every Geopark tells a unique story of connection, sustainability, and limitless potential, showing **what we can achieve when we work together** to shape the future of our planet.

### Global Reach, Local Impact

The strength of GGN lies in its global reach and deep local impact. By fostering cooperation across continents, we create a vibrant network of shared knowledge, best practices, and innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges for the life and people worldwide. Whether it is addressing climate change, natural hazards, or promoting social equity and gender equality, GGN stands at the forefront of these important issues. The power of GGN lies in its inclusivity, resilience, and unwavering commitment to making a real difference.

### Geology: Our Connection to Earth's Past

Geology — the foundation of life on Earth — is at the core of everything we do. It is the key to unlocking the stories of our planet, revealing how deeply interconnected we all are

with its history. Every rock, every landscape, every fossil is part of the grand narrative that shaped the evolution of Earth and the Life within it. By sharing this story, we help people see that they are part of something far greater — a story that transcends borders, generations, and cultures: a new future.

### **A Call to Action: Empowering Change**

But the story doesn't end there. GGN is a call to action.

It is about **empowering communities**, particularly women and youth, to lead the way toward a sustainable future. It is about engaging local people as the true guardians of Earth's heritage, ensuring that everyone has a voice and a role in creating the world of tomorrow.

It is about connecting science, education, and local knowledge to fuel innovation and drive real change.

Together, we are not just conserving heritage — we are building a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

### **Boundless Potential: Shaping Tomorrow**

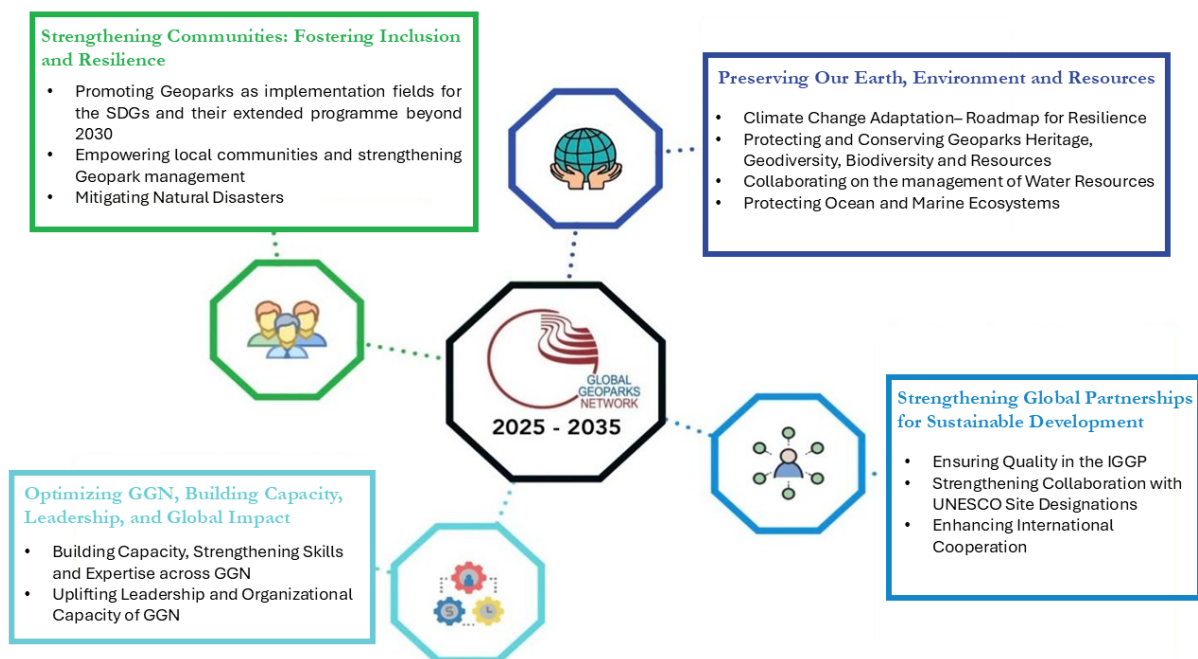
The journey ahead is filled with limitless potential, where the collective power of people and their communities, in science, and passion will light the way. GGN is a lighthouse that guides all to strengthen the **bottom-up approach** and collaboration. GGN is a beacon of hope and a testament to what we can achieve when we unite for the greater, common good. Together, we can build a world where every Geopark becomes a center of sustainability, education, and culture-transforming communities and inspiring global change.

The future is bright, and it is waiting for us to shape it, together.

### 3. Our key strategic priorities

Over the past 20 years, the GGN has made by the contribution of its members, remarkable strides in advancing its mission, successfully integrating Earth conservation, community development, and sustainable tourism across the globe. These efforts have been integral in fostering international collaboration, amplifying the visibility of UNESCO Global Geoparks, and driving positive change in the territories they serve.

Continuing to develop and expand upon these accomplishments, we recognize the need to adapt and prioritize our actions for the period 2025-2035. In this context, we have identified **12 key** strategic priorities organized in **4 pillars (action fields)** that will guide our focus in the next decade. These priorities build on the foundation of our previous achievements, addressing emerging challenges and harnessing new opportunities. By concentrating our efforts on these critical areas, we will ensure that the GGN not only strengthens its ongoing activities but also moves forward with a clear and impactful vision for the future, creating lasting benefits for both the planet and our communities we serve.



# GGN Long Term Strategy

**4 strategic pillars (action fields), 12 key strategic priorities  
organized in 52 strategic actions.**

## **Pillar 1: Preserving Our Earth, Environment and Resources.**

### **Key 1. Climate Change Adaptation– Roadmap for Resilience**

1. *Raising General Community Awareness on Climate Change*
2. *Encouraging Population's Actions on Waste Management and Recycling Material Use - Introducing zero plastic policy.*
3. *Analyzing UGGps Energy Use*
4. *Evolving the Network's Operation*
5. *Adoption of a GGN Carbon Offset Policy and Procedure*
6. *Collecting and using of Carbon Offsetting*
7. *Promoting Annual UGGp action plan on climate change adaptation*

### **Key 2. Protecting and Conserving Geoparks Heritage, Geodiversity, Biodiversity and Resources**

1. *Raising General Community Awareness on Geopark Heritage and enhancing links between all types of heritage*
2. *Protecting and Conserving Geological Heritage*
3. *Collaborating on the management of Protected Natural Areas and Protecting Biodiversity*
4. *Promoting Cultural Heritage and enhancing links between all types of heritage*

### **Key 3. Collaborating on the management of Water Resources**

1. *Encouraging sustainable management of Water Resources in Geoparks*
2. *Promoting conservation of existing water sources*
3. *Sustaining rivers and healthy water-dependent ecosystems*

### **Key 4. Protecting Ocean and Marine Ecosystems**

1. *Protecting coastal resources and combat marine pollution in Geopark*
2. *Reducing plastic pollution in the oceans and coasts*
3. *Supporting Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).*

## **Pillar 2: Strengthening Communities: Fostering Inclusion and Resilience.**

### **Key 5. Promoting Geoparks as implementation fields for the SDGs and their extended programme beyond 2030.**

1. *Continuation of the activity of the GGN SDGs working group at international, regional and national levels.*
2. *Reporting from each Geopark on its contribution to SDGs.*
3. *Creation of a GGN Report on the contribution of Geoparks to SDGs.*

### **Key 6. Empowering local communities and strengthening Geopark management**

1. *Ensuring the participation of Local Communities in Geoparks management*
2. *Strengthening the Geopark management body staff and partners (increasing of the number of staff, budget, number of partners).*
3. *Ensuring the gender equality as a basic framework in the Geopark operation and communication of Geopark.*
4. *Ensuring the involvement of the young generation in all levels of Geoparks is essential to for the development and prosperity of these territories in the future*
5. *Ensuring the recognition and representation of Indigenous communities in Geoparks*
6. *Documenting and promoting local knowledge, traditions, and intangible heritage*
7. *Creating policies and tools to preserve and promote local languages*
8. *Working to confront demographic challenges in rural areas*

### **Key 7. Mitigating Natural Disasters**

1. *Strengthening the activity of the GGN Geohazards working group activity at the international, regional networks and national and community levels.*
2. *Creating specific tools designed for the population as well as for schools to help them detect risks and respond effectively (e.g., Creating a comic book designed to help local populations in poor rural areas detect signs of possible landslides)*
3. *UGGp action plan on geohazards and disaster mitigation.*
4. *Preparation of an annual GGN report on geohazards and climate change.*

## **Pillar 3: Optimizing GGN, Building Capacity, Leadership, and Global Impact**

### **Key 8. Building Capacity, Strengthening Skills and Expertise across GGN**

1. *Comprehensive and coordinated planning of the capacity building activities. Creation of an annual calendar by GGN in collaboration with UNESCO Secretariat for capacity building: aspiring Geoparks, Geopark evaluators, Geopark managers.*
2. *Capacity building activities for aspiring Geoparks: address the uneven distribution of UGGps and expand the GGN, in particular in African, Middle East, Central Asian countries, small islands developing states (SIDS), etc.*
3. *Capacity building activities for Geopark evaluators: proving and maintaining the quality of evaluators as well as recruiting qualified volunteers who want to contribute to maintaining the quality of the IGGP.*
4. *Capacity building activities for Geopark Managers: intensive courses for new managers of the GGN members.*
5. *Supporting capacity-building activities for GGN members at regional and national levels*
6. *Developing GGN digital tools for its members (Geoparks Educational e-Library, Geoparks e-Learning Database).*

### **Key 9. Uplifting Leadership and Organizational Capacity of GGN**

1. *Strengthening GGN's management structure and statutory bodies operation to ensure its long-term partnership with UNESCO. Strengthen functionality of the GGN, building on the achievements of the GGN over the past 20 years.*
2. *Strengthening networking among UGGps at regional and national levels.*
3. *Enhancing regional and national connections between UGGps with thematic targets to improve the quality and outcome of the GGN, emphasizing the use of GGN logo.*
4. *Communication and promotion of the UGGp concept. Developing user-friendly materials (e.g., comics, videos, publications) to clearly communicate the UGGp concept and language to local communities.*
5. *Empowering national GGN Networks and strengthen their connection and collaboration with the National Commissions for UNESCO and the National Delegations at UNESCO.*

## **Pillar 4: Strengthening Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development**

### **Key 10. Ensuring Quality in the IGGP**

1. *Facilitating the GGN's tasks in relation to the IGGP.*
2. *Facilitating the roster of Evaluators in conjunction with UNESCO / IGGP Secretariat.*
3. *Organizing advisory missions in aspiring and yellow-card holding Geoparks.*
4. *Supporting activities co-organized in conjunction with UNESCO / IGGP Secretariat.*
5. *Strengthening the position of the IGGP in member states in relation to other UNESCO programmes.*
6. *Strengthening collaboration with IGCP.*

### **Key 11. Strengthening Collaboration with UNESCO Site Designations**

1. *Developing a collaborative proposal for joint activities between site UNESCO designations*
2. *Promoting the resources and the potential of the UGGps as sustainable developing territories*

### **Key 12. Enhancing International Cooperation**

1. *Strengthening collaboration with UNESCO, the World Tourism Organization - UNWTO, the International Union of Geological Sciences - IUGS, the International Union for Nature Conservation - IUCN, with other international relevant organizations (i.e. ICOMOS, IGU etc.).*

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIC ACTIONS

### **Pillar 1: Preserving Our Earth, Environment and Resources.**

#### **Key 1: Climate Change Adaptation– Roadmap for Resilience**

The Global Geoparks Network (GGN) has made valuable contributions to addressing climate change, primarily through its role in preserving geological heritage. By studying past climate patterns, GGN helps to deepen our understanding of the long-term effects of climate change. However, there is much more that can be done, and GGN recognizes the need to enhance its efforts in this crucial area.

For GGN there is a growing need for targeted actions to improve climate change resilience. Geoparks can serve as critical sites for scientific research, where data on environmental changes can be gathered, analyzed, and shared globally. At the same time, GGN aims to better integrate the traditional knowledge of local communities, which has proven invaluable in adapting to climate shifts.

Over the next decade, GGN intends to enhance its role by engaging in more active collaboration with local communities, scientists, and stakeholders, in order to tackle climate change. Through knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and focused actions, GGN will aim to enhance resilience at the local level, offering practical solutions and support to reduce the impacts of climate change on both natural and human systems. This roadmap lays out a framework for these future actions, ensuring that GGN's network evolves into a more proactive force in mitigating climate change effects and promoting sustainable adaptation strategies.

1. *Raising General Community Awareness on Climate Change*
2. *Encouraging Population's Actions on Waste Management and Recycling Material Use - Introducing zero plastic policy.*
3. *Analyzing UGGps Energy Use*
4. *Evolving the Network's Operation*
5. *Adoption of a GGN Carbon Offset Policy and Procedure*
6. *Collecting and use of Carbon Offsetting*
7. *Promoting Annual UGGp action plan on climate change adaptation*

#### **Key 2: Protecting and Conserving Geoparks Heritage, Geodiversity, Biodiversity and Resources**

The Global Geoparks Network (GGN) encourages the holistic approach on the Earth's heritage and resources. Protection and conservation of the geological heritage, protection and enhancement of the biodiversity, and promotion of the cultural heritage, lies within the conceptual definition of a Geopark. Furthermore, by actively linking geodiversity and biodiversity, the GGN champions integrated approaches that reinforce the interconnections of natural heritage and ecosystem health. This holistic strategy will guide Geoparks to continue making impactful contributions beyond 2030.

1. *Raising General Community Awareness on Geopark Heritage and enhancing links between all types of heritage*
2. *Protecting and Conserving Geological Heritage*
3. *Collaboration in the management of Protected Natural Areas and Protecting Biodiversity*
4. *Promoting Cultural Heritage and enhancing links between all types of heritage*

### **Key 3: Collaborating on the management of Water Resources**

Water resources are intrinsically linked to geology and are a vital component of the SDG 6: "*Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*". Water is a core focus within the mission of UGGps, which aims to "*promote awareness of the need for the sustainable use of Earth's natural resources*" (UGGp guidelines, ii).

Many UGGps are already collaborating with schools and local stakeholders to develop and implement educational initiatives on water resources, focusing on practices such as water reuse and reducing consumption, tailored to the needs of their communities. In this context, UGGps play a crucial role in territorial management, supporting the development of regional and national strategies by providing valuable studies and data. This ensures that sustainable water management practices are effectively integrated into local and regional planning, empowering communities to safeguard water resources for the future.

1. *Encouraging sustainable management of Water Resources in Geoparks*
2. *Promoting conservation of existing water sources*
3. *Sustaining rivers and healthy water-dependent ecosystems*

### **Key 4: Protecting Ocean and Marine Ecosystems**

Our planet, the "Blue Planet," is home to oceans and seas that cover more than 70% of Earth's surface. These vast bodies of water are essential for life, providing food, regulating climate, and generating most of the oxygen we breathe. Oceans also serve as the backbone of many global industries, including tourism, fisheries, and international shipping. Despite their critical importance, our oceans face unprecedented threats due to human activities. Each year, approximately eight million tons of plastic waste enter the oceans. In addition, climate change is causing severe damage to ecosystems like coral reefs, overfishing is destabilizing fish stocks, nutrient pollution is creating harmful dead zones, and nearly 80% of the world's wastewater is discharged untreated (UN, 2020).

The marine environment is a key component of several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 12, 13, and 14). It is also a central focus in the UGGps guidelines, which advocate for the sustainable use of Earth's natural resources.

While 30% of UGGps are located in coastal or maritime areas, only a few have fully integrated the marine environment into their heritage and conservation efforts. It is essential that UGGps situated in coastal areas recognize the value of their marine environment, incorporating it into their promotion and action plans to ensure its protection and sustainable management.

1. *Protecting coastal resources and combat marine pollution in Geopark*
2. *Reducing plastic pollution in the oceans and coasts*
3. *Supporting Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)*

## **Pillar 2: Strengthening Communities: Fostering Inclusion and Resilience.**

### **Key 5: Promoting Geoparks as implementation fields for the SDGs and their extended programme beyond 2030**

GGN is committed to positioning UGGps as dynamic platforms for sustainable development by leveraging their potential to address global challenges. Through continued collaboration at international, regional, and national levels, the GGN empowers these territories to act as living laboratories where geodiversity conservation, territorial heritage promotion, local innovation, and sustainable economic growth thrive.

By ensuring that every UGGp regularly reports on its contributions to the SDGs, the GGN creates a framework of accountability and transparency. The annual GGN Report serves as a key tool to showcase the collective efforts of the Geopark network in advancing sustainability goals.

- 1. Continuation of the activity of the GGN SDGs working group at international, regional and national levels.*
- 2. Reporting from each Geopark on its contribution to SDGs.*
- 3. Creation of a GGN Report on the contribution of Geoparks to SDGs.*

### **Key 6: Empowering local communities and strengthening Geopark management**

The GGN operates with a bottom-up approach, ensuring that local communities are central to the planning, management, and development of UGGps. This approach recognizes the value of local knowledge, culture, and practices, with a particular focus on integrating Indigenous wisdom alongside modern scientific understanding.

Given that 30% of UGGps host Indigenous populations, their rich traditional knowledge plays a critical role in sustainable land management, conservation, and disaster risk reduction.

However, GGN's commitment extends beyond Indigenous communities to all local populations within these territories. Empowering local communities to take an active role in Geopark management is essential for ensuring that their voices are heard and that they have the necessary tools and resources to contribute effectively. GGN will work to enhance local capacity by offering targeted training programs and practical tools that focus on environmental education, disaster preparedness, sustainable practices, and the safeguarding of local heritage.

By fostering a collaborative environment, GGN aims to ensure that local communities are not only participants but also leaders in the protection of their natural and cultural heritage. This empowerment will improve their resilience to climate change and other challenges, while simultaneously promoting sustainable livelihoods that respect and preserve their traditions.

- 1. Ensuring the participation of Local Communities in Geoparks management*
- 2. Strengthening the Geopark management body staff and partners (increasing of the number of staff, budget, number of partners).*

3. *Ensuring the gender equality as a basic framework in the Geopark operation and communication of Geopark.*
4. *Ensuring the involvement of the young generation in all levels of Geoparks is essential to for the development and prosperity of these territories in the future*
5. *Ensuring the recognition and representation of Indigenous communities in Geoparks*
6. *Documenting and promoting local knowledge, traditions, and intangible heritage*
7. *Creating policies and tools to preserve and promote local languages*
8. *Working to confront demographic challenges in rural areas*

## **Key 7: Mitigating Natural Disasters**

Over the next decade, the GGN will strengthen its role in reducing the impacts of natural disasters, exacerbated by climate change, through a multi-faceted approach that combines scientific research, community engagement, and capacity-building. By empowering local populations with the knowledge and tools needed to detect potential risks, GGN will enable them to take proactive measures to ensure their safety and resilience by introducing new tools and hazard action plan models.

Through targeted education and the integration of traditional knowledge with modern science, GGN will equip UGGps and their communities to understand the hazards they face and develop strategies for disaster preparedness. This approach will ensure that local populations are not only aware of risks but are also prepared to respond effectively to safeguard their communities. Additionally, GGN will continue to promote global cooperation and the sharing of best practices to enhance disaster risk reduction efforts. By fostering strong networks and supporting local initiatives, GGN will contribute to mitigating the effects of climate change and natural hazards, helping to create a safer, more resilient future for both communities and natural heritage.

1. *Strengthening the activity of the GGN Geohazards working group activity at the international, regional networks and national and community levels.*
2. *Creating specific tools designed for the population as well as for schools to help them detect risks and respond effectively (e.g., Creating a comic book designed to help local populations in poor rural areas detect signs of possible landslides).*
3. *Promoting UGGp action plan on natural hazards and disaster mitigation.*
4. *Preparation of an annual GGN report on natural hazards and climate change.*

## **Pillar 3: Optimizing GGN, Building Capacity, Leadership, and Global Impact**

### **Key 8: Building Capacity, Strengthening Skills and Expertise across GGN**

GGN is committed to empowering its members through comprehensive capacity-building initiatives that enhance the management, conservation, and sustainable development of UGGps. These initiatives focus on building expertise across areas such as geological heritage conservation, community engagement, sustainable tourism, risk management, and communication. By offering tailored training, resources, and opportunities for knowledge exchange, GGN supports its members in implementing best practices, strengthening resilience, and addressing local and global challenges.

In collaboration with the UNESCO Secretariat, GGN will coordinate annual capacity-building activities aimed at aspiring Geoparks, Geopark evaluators, and Geopark managers. These activities will also focus on expanding the Global Geoparks Network, particularly in regions with significant growth potential, such as Africa, Middle East and Central Asia, and Small Island Developing States. Additionally, GGN will develop digital tools, such as an e-Library and e-Learning database, to facilitate knowledge-sharing and access to essential resources. Through these efforts, GGN will help UGGps enhance their governance, communication strategies, and overall management, ensuring their long-term sustainability and their positive impact on local communities and global environmental goals.

1. *Comprehensive and coordinated planning of the capacity building activities. Creation of an annual calendar by GGN in collaboration with UNESCO Secretariat for capacity building: aspiring Geoparks, Geopark evaluators, Geopark managers.*
2. *Capacity building activities for aspiring Geoparks: address the uneven distribution of UGGps and expand the GGN, in particular in African, Middle East, Central Asian countries, small island developing states (SIDS), etc.*
3. *Capacity building activities for Geopark evaluators: proving and maintaining the quality of evaluators as well as recruiting qualified volunteers who want to contribute to maintaining the quality of the IGGP.*
4. *Capacity building activities for Geopark Managers: intensive courses for new managers of the GGN members.*
5. *Supporting capacity-building activities for GGN members at regional and national levels*
6. *Developing GGN digital tools for its members (Geoparks Educational e-Library, Geoparks e-Learning Database)*

### **Key 9: Uplifting Leadership and Organizational Capacity of GGN**

The Global Geoparks Network is dedicated to solidifying its leadership and operational structure to ensure its role as the central coordinating body for UNESCO Global Geoparks worldwide. Building on two decades of achievements, GGN is focused on stabilizing and enhancing its management framework to support its mission effectively.

Strengthening of the operation of the statutory bodies of the GGN and enforcing the operation and monitoring the outcomes of the GGN Working Groups (in organic contact with their regional Working Groups) will further strengthen the impact of the GGN activities.

A reinforced operation unit within the GGN Secretariat will be established, equipped with optimized administrative systems, and comprehensive databases for archiving key materials such as documents, photos, and videos. These improvements will streamline operations and enhance communication across the network.

Efforts to increase GGN's visibility will focus on expanding its digital footprint through dynamic websites and social media platforms, showcasing the network's activities and fostering engagement. Clear and consistent communication of foundational concepts and terminology will unify members and reinforce the shared identity of the GGN.

Through strengthened networking activities at regional and national levels, GGN will foster collaboration, expand its influence, and support the development of a cohesive and vibrant global network of Geoparks. These initiatives position GGN as a robust and innovative coordinating structure that empowers its members and ensures the continued growth and impact of the network.

- 1. Strengthening GGN's management structure and statutory bodies operation to ensure its long-term partnership with UNESCO. Strengthen functionality of the GGN, building on the achievements of the GGN over the past 20 years.*
- 2. Strengthening networking among UGGps at regional and national levels.*
- 3. Enhancing regional and national connections between UGGps with thematic targets to improve the quality and outcome of the GGN, emphasizing the use of GGN logo.*
- 4. Communication and promotion of the UGGp concept. Developing user-friendly materials (e.g., comics, videos, publications) to clearly communicate the UGGp concept and language to local communities.*
- 5. Empowering national GGN Networks and strengthen their connection and collaboration with the National Commissions for UNESCO and the National Delegations at UNESCO.*

## **Pillar 4: Strengthening Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development**

### **Key 10: Ensuring Quality in the IGGP**

The quality and impact of the IGGP / UNESCO Global Geoparks rely on a robust framework of support, evaluation, and continuous improvement. The close collaboration between GGN and UNESCO Earth Science Section - IGGP Secretariat plays a critical role in facilitating this by assisting UNESCO in its tasks to maintain high standards of geological heritage protection, sustainable development, and community participation across the network. This includes working together for the success of GGN conferences and events, capacity building activities, promotional campaigns and facilitating the roster of qualified evaluators, ensuring that evaluations reflect the UGGps philosophy and criteria. The GGN also supports aspiring Geoparks and those facing challenges by organizing advisory missions that provide expert guidance. To further strengthen the position of UGGps, the GGN advocates for a balanced recognition of the Programme alongside other UNESCO designations, ensuring that Geoparks' role in sustainable development is consistently reinforced. Collaboration with the IGCP / UNESCO Global Geoparks enhances the global scientific and conservation efforts, reinforcing Geoparks' capacity to contribute to the global community.

1. *Facilitating the GGN's tasks in relation to the IGGP.*
2. *Facilitating the roster of Evaluators in conjunction with UNESCO / IGGP Secretariat.*
3. *Organizing advisory missions in aspiring and yellow-card holding Geoparks.*
4. *Supporting activities co-organized in conjunction with UNESCO / IGGP Secretariat.*
5. *Strengthening the position of the IGGP in member states in relation to other UNESCO programmes.*
6. *Strengthen collaboration with IGCP.*

### **Key 11: Strengthening collaboration with UNESCO site designations**

GGN aims to deepen collaboration across various UNESCO site designations, including World Heritage Sites and Biosphere Reserves, to foster shared learning and integrated approaches to conservation and development. By identifying opportunities for joint activities, the GGN supports the creation of synergies that optimize resources and enhance the collective impact of UNESCO's conservation programmes. This collaborative approach not only strengthens the global efforts to address the SDGs but also ensures that UGGps are aligned with other UNESCO initiatives. Through these partnerships, the GGN amplifies the role of these territories in promoting sustainable development, climate action, and the protection of our shared natural heritage, creating a united front for a sustainable future.

1. *Developing a collaborative proposal for joint activities between UNESCO site designations*
2. *Promoting joint activities with other UNESCO designations.*

## Key 12: Enhancing International Cooperation

GGN recognizes that global cooperation is key to addressing complex challenges such as geodiversity loss, climate change, and socio-economic inequalities. By forging strong partnerships with international organizations like UNESCO, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and other International Organizations (e.g., International Geographical Union, International Association of Engineering Geologists (IAEG), etc.), the GGN strengthens its capacity to advance its missions. These partnerships not only facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity building but also foster joint initiatives aligned with the SDGs.

Through coordinated efforts, the GGN demonstrates its leadership in promoting sustainable practices, while also contributing to the broader global agenda for environmental protection, community empowerment, and responsible tourism. The power of these international collaborations enhances the GGN's role as a global model for sustainable development.

1. *Strengthening collaboration with UNESCO, the World Tourism Organization - UNWTO, the International Union of Geological Sciences - IUGS, the International Union for Nature Conservation - IUCN, with other international relevant organizations (i.e. ICOMOS, IGU etc.).*

## **4. Monitoring, progress and results**

This long-term strategic plan will be implemented at the global, regional and national levels under the direction of the GGN Executive Committee. The action plan that the GGN Executive Board will develop every two years will be based on this 10-year strategic plan.

Depending on the changes in the world and society surrounding GGN over the next 10 years, some amendments or reviews of the strategic plan created this time should be made with the cooperation of the GGN Advisory Committee.

During the last year of this strategic plan's validity, the GGN Executive Board and the GGN Advisory Committee should work together to create a new strategic plan for the next 10 years.

This GGN long-term strategic plan 2025-2035 will be implemented through a collaborative, multi-level approach, with oversight provided by the GGN Executive Board at the global, regional, and national levels.

Every two years, the GGN Executive Board will develop an action plan grounded in this 10-year strategic framework, ensuring that the plan remains responsive to evolving challenges and opportunities. To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, each network will submit annual reports to the GGN Executive Board, outlining progress and achievements. The GGN Advisory Committee will evaluate the GGN's overall performance annually, with assessments based on a set of indicators developed by the Indicator Task Force.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of global and societal contexts, the long-term strategic plan will be subject to periodic appraisals and revisions in collaboration with the GGN Advisory Committee, allowing the plan to adapt to new developments and priorities. As the strategic plan approaches its conclusion, the GGN Executive Board along with the GGN Advisory Committee will jointly formulate a new 10-year plan to guide the network's future actions and ensure continued progress towards its long-term goals.