



## Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network

# Activity Report 2024



The Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network (GeoLAC) during 2024 carried on different activities in order to strength the networking among the members, during the year several online meetings were held and one presential one during the 7<sup>th</sup> Regional conference in the Caminhos dos Canions do Sul UNESCO Global Geopark in Brazil.

The GeoLAC welcome two new members from Ecuador to the network, bringing the total number of GeoLAC members to 15 in seven countries. During 2024 the GeoLAC coordination was actively involve in different Global Geoparks Network (GGN) activities and initiatives such as the 20<sup>th</sup> GGN Anniversary, the involvement with several Working Groups activities and capacitration initiatives, also one of the biggest commitments of the GeoLAC trough this year, has been to strength the communication with GGN in order to approach the LAC UGGp more to the Global activities and responsibilities.

It is also important to mention our coordinator's participation in the GGN Executive Board meetings for better articulation and communication of global strategies at the regional level, as well as her active participation in the coordinating teams of several working groups: SDGs, Gastronomy, Indigenous Peoples, and Therapeutic Landscapes.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Regional GeoLAC Conference

The 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference was held in Brazil in the Caminhos dos Canions do Sul UNESCO Global Geopark between 6 to 9 November, the conference count with more than 300 participants, a full scientific program with 8 main topics. The conference was also an opportunity for engage the local population of the UGGp, and to promote the local artisans of the territory. During the conference several meetings were held, the GeoLAC plenary, with the participation of the institutional members, the aspiring projects representatives as observers and with the presence of the President, General Secretary an Executive Board Member of the Global Geoparks Network.

During the conference was also held a special meeting with the aspiring projects in the region to understand better their challenges and find possible opportunities for support these territories. Along the conference, the GeoLAC coordination was present in the National Networks Meetings of Brazil and Ecuador to strength the networking among the national and regional level.

### 7<sup>th</sup> GeoLAC Anniversary

In 2024, GeoLAC celebrated its seventh anniversary. This was the first year GeoLAC commemorated the history of the network. To mark the occasion, a video was produced featuring excerpts and testimonials from its founding, and a comprehensive social media campaign was launched highlighting the 15 territories that comprise the network with images and key information about each one.



### Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Geoturism Day

As in previous years, during the Easter weekend, the Latin American Geotourism Day was celebrated, in which all the UNESCO Global Geoparks of GEOLAC participated, as well as aspiring projects with various activities such as seminars, talks, walks, guided tours, workshops and others that allowed to involve visitors and local population in learning about the Earth heritage, geodiversity and geoconservation. The different activities carried on by the UGGps were shared and disseminated on the communication networks of the GeoLAC supporting the cooperation and communication among the members.

### Indigenous Peoples Day Round Table

To mark the International Day of the Indigenous Peoples, a round table discussion was organized on the role of indigenous leaders in UNESCO's Global Geoparks in Latin America and the Caribbean. This panel included the participation of different key actors from indigenous communities in various of the geoparks: Araripe, Mixteca Alta, Kutralkura, Caminhos dos Canions do Sul, and Colca and Volcanes de Andagua.

**GEOLAC - REDE DE GEOPARQUES DA AMÉRICA LATINA E CARIBE**

**GGN - REDE GLOBAL DE GEOPARQUES**

**9 DE AGOSTO 2024**

**DIA INTERNACIONAL DOS POVOS INDÍGENAS**

Em 09 de agosto, criado em 1995, é comemorado o Dia Internacional dos Povos Indígenas. A criação da data comemorativa pela Organização das Nações Unidas (ONU) pretende garantir condições de existência minimamente dignas aos povos indígenas de todo o planeta, principalmente no que se refere aos seus direitos à autodeterminação de suas condições de vida e cultura, bem como a garantia aos Direitos Humanos,

GRUPO DE TRABALHO DOS POVOS INDÍGENAS DA GEOLAC - GGN PROGRAMA INTERNACIONAL DE GEOCIÉNCIAS E GEOPARQUES DA UNESCO - IGGP

## Sustainable Development Goals Regional Workshop

In cooperation with the GGN SDGs working group, a workshop on SDGs in geoparks in Latin America, Africa and Canada was held. In this workshop, each country participated with examples of good practices on the implementation of SDGs in UGGps. From GeoLAC, examples were shared from Araripe, the mining region, Imbabura, Colca and the Andagua Volcanoes, Kutralkura, and Grutas del Palacio. These examples highlighted best practices related to the inclusion of Indigenous groups, gender equality, solid waste management, and the promotion of local products.



## 8<sup>th</sup> International Summer University on UNESCO Global Geoparks in Ibero-American Region towards Sustainable Development Goals

In association with the UNESCO Chair in Geoparks, Sustainable Regional Development and Healthy Lifestyles, the eighth edition of the International Summer University of this Chair was held, but this edition, being together with GeoLAC, was especially intended for the Ibero-American space, and therefore the official languages for the first time were Spanish and Portuguese. This allows for broad participation from Latin American geoparks as well as projects and applicants in the region. There were around 200 attendees who had the opportunity to learn from various case studies in the region and in Europe.

### Commemorative dates on international days

Due to its commitment to dissemination and highlighting important dates, GeoLAC, following the values of the GGN, promotes and celebrates important days throughout the year such as the International Day for Geodiversity, the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, World Environment Day, Earth Day, among other important events for local development in geoparks.



### Networking, cooperation and capacitation main activities

During 2024, GeoLAC sought to further integrate with its various members, as well as with the activities of the GGN and with aspiring projects in the region. This allowed for the development of different collaborative and networking activities, such as participation and support in the national meeting of the Geoparks of Ecuador, participation in the UNESCO Global Geoparks Intensive Course in Lesvos, participation in the Spanish Geoparks Network Conference, and advisory visits to territories for project monitoring, such as the Bridge of the Americas project in Panama.



### Final remarks

During this period, GeoLAC has joined numerous initiatives at the national, regional, and global levels. This year, communication and cooperation at different levels have been strengthened, seeking to redirect the regional network's objectives in a more coordinated manner with the GGN.

While the work carried out highlights good practices and achievements, it is important to recognize that GeoLAC still has a long way to go and several challenges to face. Among these, the lack of member participation in international activities due to language difficulties is a limiting factor, as is the network's lack of resources for generating new integrative initiatives. Despite these challenges, GeoLAC continues working with a commitment to promoting networking and cooperation for the better development and involvement of its members at all levels: local, national, regional, and global.