

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2024

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Kula - Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark, Türkiye, European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2013 / 2023

Representative photo with caption (from the most important event this year)



The 49th European Geoparks Network meeting was hosted by the Kula Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark.

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 16 staffs including 3 geoscientist(s)

Number of visitors: If total number of the visitors to the geopark is difficult to estimate, show the number of the visitors to the major geosite(s), museum or visitor center. 250.000 visitors.

Number of Geopark events: Clarify the events held by management body and cooperative organization. 75

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: 25

During 2024, many educational activities were organized in the geopark. The main themes were about introducing geoparks, their concept, introducing Kula-Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark, clean environment, sustainable development etc during the trainings. Some educational activites were also

carried out for important days and weeks, such as World Mountain Day, World Water Day, Mother Earth Day, International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, World Environment Day, Geoparks and sustainable Development, Environment and importance of geoparks.

Number of Geopark press release: 117

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2024

- The 49th European Geoparks Network meeting was hosted by the Kula Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark.
- Participation was made in the Travel Turkey fair held in İzmir on December 3-5, 2024, and thousands of people were introduced to the geopark.
- Approximately 2,700 students received education on topics such as geoparks, World Water Day, and Mother Earth Day.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Geopark Coordinator Prof. Dr. Tuncer Demir served as an inspector at Vietnam's Lang Son Geopark from July 6-11, together with Kristin Rangnes.
- Ahmet Serdar AYTAÇ, the Coordinator of Kula-Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark, participated in the international conference themed 'UNESCO Global Geoparks for Sustainable Development and Cooperation' organized by UNESCO and the Global Geoparks Network in Almaty, Kazakhstan.
- Prof. Dr. Tuncer DEMİR and Assoc. Dr. Ahmet Serdar AYTAÇ attended the 17th European Geoparks Network Conference, held in Iceland from October 2 to 4, representing the Kula Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark.

Management and Financial Status

- There was no change in Geopark's management body. Geopark budget was increased by 10 million 11 thousand TL.

Geoconservation

- Damaged signs and directional panels were replaced with new ones, and some new information boards were introduced in the geopark.
- Regular maintenance and repairs were carried out on walking trails and railings in the area.
- Some new walking trails were built to help visitors better explore the geological sites.
- A new Visitor Center was established, and the geopark office was moved to an area close to the volcanic terrain.
- An information center was added to the visitor center, creating a museum-style building where people can obtain all the information about the geopark.
- A cafeteria and restrooms were built in the visitor center to meet the visitors' needs for food, drink, and toilets.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Prof. Dr. Tuncer DEMİR represented the Kula Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark at the 17th European Geoparks Network Conference. At the conference, Prof. DEMİR gave a presentation on the educational programs carried out at the Kula-Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark and their importance in terms of sustainable development.
- Ahmet Serdar AYTAÇ, the Coordinator of the Kula Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark, attended the international conference themed 'UNESCO Global Geoparks for Sustainable Development and Cooperation' held by UNESCO and the Global Geoparks Network in Almaty, Kazakhstan.
- Students ranging in age from primary school to university were given training in the concept of sustainable development.
- The Geopark Municipalities Union provided financial support to partner organizations and cooperatives..

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

- Face-to-face training was provided to primary and secondary school students on the importance of water and geoconservation, Environmental and Geopark topics during World Mountain Day on December 11, International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction on October 13, and Geoparks Week from May 22 to June 7.
- **Strategic partnership**
- A portion of the project titled "Blue Marble Institute – No Need to Grow Up to Be a Scientist," carried out within the scope of the 4004 TÜBİTAK program and in which Kula-Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark is also among the partners, was conducted in the geopark area. In this context, cooperation was established with Manisa Celal Bayar University.
- On the last day of the TÜBİTAK-supported project "CurioSpace: A Journey of Curiosity from Nature to the Depths of the Universe," trainings on geoparks, geology, and astronomy were provided. Students were informed about the intersections of astronomy and geology and the role of geoparks in these scientific fields. Representing the geopark, Tourism Officer Ali KARATAŞ participated in the training.
- Training on 'Artificial Intelligence and E-Commerce' was organized in collaboration with the Women's Labor Evaluation Foundation (KEDV) and the Salihli Women's Initiative Production and Business Cooperative. The training was conducted by Ali Karataş, Tourism Officer at Geopark.
- In the training program organized in cooperation with the Salihli Tourism Association, information was provided on the effects of artificial intelligence on the business world and employment. The training was delivered by Ali KARATAŞ, Geopark Tourism Officer and programmer.

Promotional activities

- Participation was made in the Travel Turkey fair held in Izmir on December 3-5, 2024, and thousands of people were introduced to the geopark.
- The book titled “Geohazards in European Geoparks,” published by the Geopark Municipalities Union, addresses geological hazards in Europe and the measures taken against these risks. The book covers educational and awareness activities related to geological hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, landslides, and coastal erosion. The design of the book, which lists Associate Professor Dr. Ahmet Serdar AYTAÇ, the Geopark Coordinator, among its editors, was done by Ali KARATAŞ, the Geopark Tourism Officer.
- Visitors of all ages to the geopark were provided with information about the geopark, and some educational activities were organized on-site.
- Various educational activities were organized for many schools on different topics.
- Representatives of Kula-Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark participated in meetings held in Italy and the Netherlands.
- The geopark was promoted both domestically and internationally through partnerships with different projects.
- Geopark promotional activities were carried out on TV, radio, and newspapers.
- Various promotional videos were filmed and shared on social media.

4. CONTACTS

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