

Summary of the “GGN Action Plan 2025–2027” and the priorities of the Dutch UGGp’s

The Global Geoparks Network (GGN) Action Plan 2025–2027 establishes a comprehensive strategy to strengthen the role of UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGps) in addressing environmental, social, and governance challenges. The plan is organized into four pillars, each with specific objectives, actions, and indicators. The priorities of the Dutch UGGp’s are marked with green. The action points that certainly also have our strong attention but are already daily work in progress, being addressed or are being taken up as a priority by Geopark partners or none Geopark partners that are responsible are marked in yellow. Behind each marked action point, the recipient of the action is indicated in bold.

Pillar 1. Preserving the Earth, the Environment, and Resources

This pillar focuses on climate change adaptation, waste management, energy, and the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

The actions aim to:

- Increase public awareness of climate change through campaigns, **UGGp’s**
- educational materials, and community partnerships. **UGGp’s**
- Transform geoparks into living laboratories for climate research, **UGGp’s**
- promoting studies on mitigation and adaptation. **Regional and local governments with local community participation and stakeholder involvement (Dutch policy because of the urgency).**
- Promote the circular economy and zero-plastic practices through community activities and partner engagement. **UGGp’s**
- Integrate energy efficiency practices and renewable energy into geopark operations. **UGGp’s**
- Develop a climate change focal point and approve a GGN-wide carbon reduction and offset policy.
- Develop regional adaptation and mitigation plans and strengthen the management of geological, biological, and cultural heritage. **EGN**

Pillar 2. Strengthening Communities: Inclusion and Resilience

This pillar seeks to consolidate public participation and social cohesion, with emphasis on the SDGs, gender equality, youth engagement, and cultural inclusion.

Key actions include:

- Implement SDG action plans, with annual reporting from each geopark. **UGGp’s**
- Strengthen active participation of local communities in geopark management and activities **UGGp’s.**
- Promote institutional strengthening through increased staff, budget, and partnerships. **UGGp’s**
- Establish policies and actions for gender equality and greater representation of women. **UGGp’s.**
- Encourage youth inclusion and develop activities targeted at young people. **UGGp’s**

- Document and promote Indigenous cultures, local languages, traditions, and traditional knowledge. **UGGp's and the cultural partners**
- Address geological risks through educational campaigns, tools for schools, and mitigation plans. **The regionale safety organizations which work on natural hazard prevention and risk reduction**

Pillar 3. Optimizing the GGN: Capacity Building, Leadership, and Global Impact

The objective is to consolidate internal capacities, professional standards, and operational effectiveness across the network.

Actions include:

- Create an annual training calendar for aspiring geoparks, evaluators, and managers **GGN**.
- Promote mentoring and patronage programs between UGGps and aspiring territories. **DUTCH NFUGG**
- Conduct workshops and courses to improve the quality of evaluators and managers.
- Develop digital tools such as an educational library and a platform for sharing good practices.
- Strengthen GGN's governance structure, communication mechanisms, and consistent use of the GGN brand. **GGN**
- Improve public communication through accessible materials (comics, videos, publications). **GGN, EGN, UGGp's**

Pillar 4. Strengthening Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development

This pillar aims to increase the global presence of geoparks and foster strategic collaborations.

Actions include:

- Coordinate with the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) to maintain quality standards and evaluation processes.
- Create synergies with other UNESCO sites (Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage Sites) through joint activities. **GGN and UNESCO but also on national level by NL UNESCO Commission**
- Promote cooperation with UNWTO, IUGS, IUCN, and other international organizations.
- Participate in tourism fairs and global forums to position geoparks as sustainable tourism destinations.
- Support joint projects, scientific exchanges, and collaborative promotional actions. **UGGp's**

Conclusion

The 2025–2027 Action Plan outlines a solid roadmap for UNESCO Global Geoparks to advance climate adaptation, heritage conservation, community empowerment, institutional quality, and international cooperation. With clear indicators and timelines, the plan aims to strengthen geoparks as model territories for sustainability, education, and resilience.

In accordance with the agreements within the GGN-CC, the Dutch UNESCO Global Geoparks (De Hondsrug and Schelde Delta) made their action points of the GGN Action Plan 2025-2027. These were determined during a joint working session and further coordination thereafter. Many of the action points in the Netherlands have already been assigned to Geopark-affiliated authorities and/or Geopark partners, who are also involving local communities in participation processes. As a result various action points in the Netherlands do not fall under the primary responsibility of the UGGPs.

We would also like to emphasize that there is a big difference between what we want and what we can do. A geopark should not become bogged down in administrative burdens and a set of tasks that do not always fit the context of the country or region.

This requires a customized approach based on trust and the understanding that a UGGP is seriously committed to the quality standards of a UNESCO Global Geopark and to working on the SDGs within the possibilities and context of the UGGP in question and with the possibilities of a bottom-up approach and participation of the local community.