

# GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2024

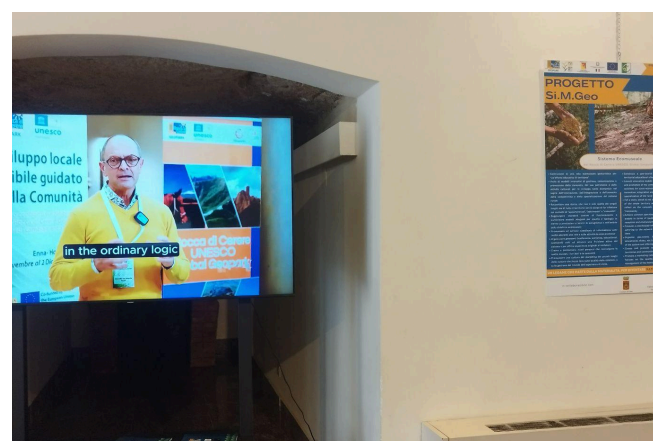
## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

### Geopark name, country, regional Network:

Rocca di Cerere UNESCO Global Geopark, Italy, European Geoparks Network

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2008/2024

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



Event: Exhibition and conference 'Growth and Support for the Territory', celebrating 20 years of the Global Geopark Network, 5-6 July, 2024, Enna

## **2. GEOPARK FIGURES**

**Number of Geopark staff:** 6 internal staff including 1 geoscientist. The company relies on the collaboration of the partners' staff through the "Steering Committee" and the Geopark staff.

**Number of visitors:** From April to September the Pergusa Visitor Center received about 3000 visitors. Likewise in the short summer opening it was possible to make use of the sites with free admission.

**Number of Geopark events:**

12

The events are always organized by the Global Geopark network with one or more partner entities as organizers and the supervision and sponsorship by the Geopark.

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:**

Numerous activities have been organised for schools, including some dedicated to sport and outdoor activities, such as Giocagin, a day entirely dedicated to young people and sport, and the kite festival, held in various municipalities in the geopark, with the aim of getting children outdoors through traditional games.

Moreover, courses were held by ITS ACADEMY in Food&Wine Tourism e Hospitality Management in Enna that enabled students to acquire high specific skills to contribute to the promotion and marketing of the area to create an integrated experiential geo-tourism offer, related to the enhancement of agri-food products that are the territory's identity, related to geological and cultural heritage

**Number of Geopark press release:**

About 10 articles regarding the activities and projects carried out by the Geopark have been published within online magazines and local newspapers. Moreover, several posts have been published on Geopark's social media.

## **3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES**

**Major achievements in 2024**

- Between 10-11 January, RdC UGGp participated to the first TPM of COSME project - fuTOURiSME "fostering digital & sustainable transition of TOURism SMEs for FUTURE innovation and resilience" - Transnational Project Meeting in Salerno with the lead partner, KINNO INNOVATION INTERMEDIARIES, from Greece and the other partners from Spain, Cyprus, Germany, and France.
- On the 4th February RdC UGGp celebrated World Wetlands Day, with a walk to discover the state of Lake Pergusa and discuss possible conservation solutions.
- On the 28th February, RdC UGGp participated to the KoM and the first Steering Committee meeting of Interreg Euro-MED project - FRED (Fire Free MED), promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system-based approaches. Kick-off meeting in Opatija with the lead partner, University of Rijeka and RGO Communications Ltd., from Croatia, and the other project partners from Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Greece, and Portugal.
- On 14 April, the 40th edition of "Vivicittà" took place, a 10km international race designed to encourage healthy living and outdoor activities, where adults and children can spend time together while respecting the environment.
- On 22 April, On International Earth Day, a hiking trip was organised to the Cozzo Matrice geosite.
- Between 12 and 24 May, EGN Week took place with various activities, including many dedicated to children, and ended with an evening walk at the Floristella Mining Park geosite.
- During the month of June, a major effort was made to replace all signage within the Geopark territory. This involved both road signs at the entrance and exit of the nine municipalities in the Geopark area and all explanatory panels located within the geosites.

The changes involved both the replacement of damaged and deteriorated signs and the updating of the texts so that the information provided is always accurate.

- Between 5-6 July Rocca di Cerere UGGp hosted the exhibition and conference 'Growth and Support for the Territory', in Enna, celebrating 20 years of the Global Geopark Network.
- Between 5-7 July RdC UGGp hosted the rivalidation mission carried on by Mr Goran Radonic and Ms Adina Popa, and received a Green Card.
- On 16 September, a meeting entitled "Let's build the Community Map together" was held in Aidone, which was also interesting for starting to plan the work that will be carried out in a more structured way during 2025 for the Si.M.Geo project.
- Between 20-22 September, RdC UGGp participated in the second edition of Microfestival, entitled "Rediscovering our lost lands," a festival featuring numerous conferences, photo exhibitions, and screenings.
- In Autumn, Together with the other partners in the fuTOURiSME project, RdC UGGp launched an open call to finance 60 SMEs across Europe in the tourism sector with the most innovative projects in terms of sustainability and digitalization.
- On December 6, RdC UGGp organized the first introductory seminar of the 'Farm to Fork' project together with the Department of Agriculture of the University of Catania and the CREA research institute.
- During the year, preliminary activities and planning for the project 'Strategic Planning in the Rocca di Cerere Geopark LAG area' took place, as well as numerous preliminary meetings with municipalities to begin planning the strategic plan that will be drawn up during 2025.
- Preliminary planning and programming activities have also been carried out for the Si.M.Geo. project, which will take place in 2025 and involves the networking of nine centers within the nine municipalities of the Rocca di Cerere UNESCO Global Geopark.
- During the course of the year, numerous projects co-funded by the European Union were carried out. The common goal of the projects is always to foster the development, knowledge and achievement of the SDGs of Agenda 2030.
- Realisation of the socio-cultural and geotouristic-recreational heritage-based offer system of the Rocca di Cerere Geopark area Community through the development of a production process that networks the cultural landscape enhancement activity with an innovative agricultural and agri-food chain and with the other production sectors (craftsmanship, transport, ICT, etc.) connected to this process.

### **Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation**

- Cooperation with GeoFOOD working group
- We attended at the following meetings:
  - The 49<sup>th</sup> EGN CC meeting, held in Kula-Salihli UGGp, Turkey, 5th - 9th of March.
  - The 50th EGN CC online meeting hosted by Hateg UGGp, 18th - 19th September.
  - The 17th European Conference of UNESCO Global Geoparks held from 2nd to 4th October 2024, organized by Reykjanes UNESCO Global Geopark, Iceland.

### **Management and Financial Status**

The Rocca di Cerere UGGp is managed by the Rocca di Cerere Geopark Company, a non-profit mixed consortium established pursuant to Articles 2615/ter and 2462 of the Italian Civil Code. The RdC UGGp is composed of public members (Municipalities of Enna, Aidone, Nissoria, Leonforte, Villarosa, Assoro, Calascibetta, Piazza Armerina) and private organisations (CNA, ARPA, CAMPUS, ERMES, Legambiente, AGIA, DONNE IN CAMPO, ASS. AREA 8, etc.) that are associations operating in the cultural tourism sector, for the valorisation of the Geopark's local heritage and environmental education aimed mainly at the student population.

The management of the Rocca di Cerere Geopark is entrusted to the Steering Committee, composed of the company's board of directors and the managers of the best geosites (Archaeological Park of the Villa Romana del Casale WH, Azienda Forestale Regionale di Enna, Floristella and Grottacalda Mineral Park, Italia Nostra non-profit national association), 'Kore' University of Enna and the Enna Superintendency, the latter as the body in charge of

the protection of the historical, cultural and natural heritage of the entire territory. The same consortium company, responsible for the management of the Rocca di Cerere Geopark, also operates as a LAG ("Local Action Group"), which allows it to implement sustainable development plans and/or actions mainly aimed at strengthening the Geopark through EU funds.

This makes it possible to obtain the necessary resources to develop, finance and implement projects and specific activities and services aimed at the promotion and direct development of the Rocca di Cerere Geopark.

### **Geoconservation**

RdC UGGp collaborated in drafting the new law on geoparks presented to the regional parliament, whereby the region undertakes to provide financial support to municipalities within the Geopark area, with the aim of promoting the territory to which they belong.

### **Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)**

The RdC UGGp, in collaboration with the partner of the National Confederation of Craftsmen and SMEs of Enna (CNA), started a cooperation action aimed at building geotourism services and making the tourist phenomenon more profitable through the support to the creation of new geotourism services focused on the geological, naturalistic and gastronomic heritage of the territory.

'Kore Siciliae' intends to offer an authentic and transforming experience that starts from the land that hosted the Myth of Persephone (Kore) and continues every day in the storytelling of the guides, in the hands of the artisans, in the harvest of the earth.

The Rocca di Cerere UGGp geotouristic itineraries have been presented at the TTG Travel Experience in Rimini, Italy's leading event for the promotion and marketing of Italian tourism, since 2021.

The itineraries of the RdC UGGp were presented to buyers through a representation that made use of 'colours'. Based on the plot drawn by the strength of the 'Tellus' of this piece of Sicily, the geological history of the Mediterranean basin is intertwined with the life of human beings and the landscape, thus becoming a 'myth'.

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

- Rocca di Cerere UGGp has tackled the issue with extreme determination by developing two specific projects, FRED, Fire Free MED, and Smart Structure. The main objectives of these projects are:
  - Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system-based approaches.
  - Developing an innovative multidisciplinary service to support wildfire management, with special reference to prevention and impact reduction activities in hilly and inland areas.

### **Strategic partnership**

- University:
  - University of Catania, Dept. of Geology
  - University of Catania, Dept. of Agricultural Economics
  - University of Enna KORE
  - University of Siena.
- Research Centres:
  - CREA
  - CNR
  - Fondazione Archimede Academy
  - ASSOGUIDE
- Public bodies:
  - Regional Archaeological Park Morgantina e Villa Romana del Casale (manager of Villa Romana UNESCO WHS)

- Other subjects:
  - LAG Terre del Sesia (Piemonte) partner of Sesia Valgrande UGGp
  - VIS Archipelago UGGp associated partner in FRED project

#### **Promotional activities**

- A weekly social media activity is carried out through which all activities and projects in which Rocca di Cerere UGG takes part are reported and promoted. The main channels used are Facebook, Instagram and Youtube.

#### **4. CONTACTS**

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