

GEOHERITAGE Newsletter



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Volcanic badlands of the Güímar valley (Tenerife, Canary Islands), where recent basaltic lava flows interact with semi-arid ecological processes to create a distinctive geo-bio landscape. The rough 'a'ā lavas and clinker fields form microhabitats that trap moisture, accumulate wind-blown dust and provide sheltered niches for pioneer xerophytic plants. These early colonizers stabilise loose volcanic debris, promote the initial stages of soil development and enhance the retention of organic matter, demonstrating clear feedback between geomorphology and vegetation. Variations in lava surface roughness, cooling textures and flow morphology generate contrasting thermal and hydrological conditions that structure plant distribution patterns across the lava field. The broader setting, framed by eroded volcanic ridges, illustrates how long-term geomorphic evolution and recent eruptive activity jointly shape habitat heterogeneity in the eastern sector of Tenerife. This example illustrates the need for integrated management to benefit both biological and geological interests where spatial overlaps and functional dependencies exist between the interests of KBAs and KGAs. (Photo and caption: Manu Monge-Ganuzas).

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Professor Kyung Sik Woo Steps Down as the Founding Chair of the Geoheritage Specialist Group

Wesley Hill and John Gordon

After twelve years of service as founding Chair of the IUCN WCPA Geoheritage Specialist Group (GSG), Professor Kyung Sik Woo is stepping down. In his message below, Professor Woo reflects on a journey that transformed geoheritage from a largely unrecognized field within IUCN into a globally respected pillar of nature conservation. Drawing on his academic background in geology and his early involvement in UNESCO World Heritage and Global Geopark initiatives, Professor Woo was invited in 2013 to establish the GSG following landmark IUCN resolutions recognizing the importance of geoheritage and geodiversity. Under his leadership, the GSG was formally approved, structured, and positioned as a professional, expert-driven network dedicated to advancing geoheritage conservation worldwide.

During Kyung Sik's tenure, the GSG developed strategic action plans, built a Steering Committee representing diverse disciplines and regions, and grew into a community of more than 150 leading experts. The Group has produced influential IUCN publications, organized major international conferences and workshops, and initiated working groups addressing key themes such as caves and karst, geoconservation, and climate change. Among the most significant achievements has been the conception, development, and ultimate adoption of the IUCN Key Geoheritage Area (KGA) program—now an official IUCN global initiative—representing a major step forward in recognizing and protecting sites of outstanding geological value.

As he is now stepping down and transitioning from GSG Chair, Kyung Sik expresses deep gratitude to the many colleagues, partners, and volunteers who have contributed their time and expertise in service of a shared mission. He emphasizes that the GSG's accomplishments are the result of collective dedication rather than individual effort, and he pledges to continue supporting geoheritage conservation and will stay involved in launching the KGA program. With confidence in the new incoming GSG leadership, Kyung Sik leaves a strong foundation and a clear vision for the GSG's continued growth and impact in the years ahead.

The GSG Steering Committee, are so very grateful for Kyung Sik's passion, leadership and hard work to create and assemble the IUCN WCPA Geoheritage Specialist Group which will continue forward in his legacy. His personal reflections on 12 years of building this important program within WCPA capture the history of the GSG and the extent of his immense contribution.

Following a call for expressions of interest, José Brilha, Sophie Justice and Meng Wang have been appointed by the WCPA Chair as co-chairs of the GSG for the next four years. WCPA regulations now state that Chairs of Specialist Groups serve in the position for 4 years and only for up to two terms.

José Brilha will lead on the KGA initiative, while Sophie Justice and Meng Wang will be responsible for other work areas. For one year, Kyung Sik Woo will work with José Brilha to develop the KGA initiative.

Reflections on the last 12 years

Kyung Sik Woo

It is hard to believe that 12 years have already passed since I established and served as the Chair of the IUCN WCPA Geoheritage Specialist Group (GSG). First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my colleagues who have dedicated so much time and effort together to geoheritage conservation and management. Before I step down from this position, I would like to document the history of the GSG's establishment and our various past activities in this newsletter. These stories are based on my personal records and memories, thus I kindly ask for your understanding should there be any minor inaccuracies due to my poor memory.

Since 1986, I had enjoyed a quiet academic life as a Geology professor at Kangwon National University (South Korea), focusing my research on carbonate sedimentology, paleoclimatology, marine geology, and speleology. My path of life shifted toward geoheritage conservation through my involvement in preparing for the 2002 Samcheok International Cave Expo and the project to nominate Jeju Island on the UNESCO World Natural Heritage List. Following the successful inscription in 2007, the Jeju Government asked me to draft the application for the Jeju Island UNESCO Global Geopark. This opportunity deepened my interest in both UNESCO programs. At that time, however, I was not aware of the IUCN activities on nature conservation. The only activities that I was involved in with IUCN were some field evaluations carried out for World Natural Heritage sites at IUCN's request.

At that time, various initiatives for geoheritage conservation were beginning to take shape within the IUCN, which I was not aware of. I think that the establishment and activation of the Geoheritage Specialist Group within IUCN were the hard-won results of dedicated efforts by some geoheritage experts in Europe. A pivotal moment occurred at the 2008 IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Spain. For the first time in IUCN's history, the significance of geoheritage and geodiversity was formally discussed. As a result, their significance was officially recognized and adopted firstly as an IUCN Resolution (Resolution 4.040). Four years later, at the 2012 WCC held in Jeju, South Korea, another milestone was reached with the adoption of Resolution 5.048. This resolution emphasized the importance of geoheritage and mandated its implementation within IUCN programs, marking a significant commitment by IUCN to prioritize geoconservation moving forward. After the congress, Tim Badman, the Director of the World Heritage Program in IUCN, contacted me for a meeting. He explained the implications of the new resolution and invited me to establish the Geoheritage Specialist Group (GSG) within the IUCN WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas). I remember questioning him at the time, asking, "I am already living a much busier life than you are, so why are you asking this of me?" Tim laughed and shared an old proverb that has stayed with me ever since: "If you want something done, ask a busy person."

Afterwards, to organize the GSG, I needed to create an opportunity to bring together the handful of individuals I had met at the Jeju WCC and the experts I had known over the years. At that time, the Korean government established the Korea Tidal Flat World Heritage Promotion Team to nominate the Korean tidal flats (Getbol) on the UNESCO World Natural Heritage List, and I was serving as the chair of this committee. Recognizing the need for financial support to move forward, I requested funding from the Promotion Team to host a workshop where global experts could get together for discussion in Korea. Fortunately, with

that support, I was able to invite several geoheritage experts (Graeme Worboys, Ibrahim Komoo, Jay Anderson, Enrique Díaz-Martínez and John Gordon) to discuss about the formation of the group. The travel and hosting expenses for these experts were funded by the Korea Tidal Flat World Heritage Promotion Team. We met at the Hotel Hyundai in Mokpo, where we spent several days in a small meeting room engaged in in-depth discussions regarding the necessity and background for establishing the Geoheritage Specialist Group (GSG). Following this meeting, I managed to draft and submit a formal proposal to IUCN WCPA. The GSG was officially approved within the IUCN WCPA in November 2013. Since then, it has been actively working towards global geoheritage conservation, and I have had the privilege of leading the group as the Chair.



The story behind the GSG logo is quite interesting. It was originally designed by the professor at Kangwon National University, for one of the National Geoparks in Korea. However, the local government office in charge of the geopark project expressed that they were not satisfied with the design. Recognizing that the logo was actually an impressive work of art, I chose to adopt it for GSG. I intend to keep this logo as the face of my future initiatives focused on geoheritage conservation as well in the future.

The APGN Symposium held in Jeju, South Korea, in September 2013 was an event I had prepared for two years as the Organizing Committee Chair. During this meeting, I first met Wesley Hill, who has been working with me on GSG matters ever since. At the time, Tim Badman, a director at IUCN, advised me that leading the group would be much easier with Wesley's help. Taking his advice, I sat down with Wesley at the venue and spent several hours persuading her until she finally agreed to support me. Looking back, I am not sure I could have led this group so successfully until now without Wesley's dedicated support.

Since the establishment of the GSG, various activities related to geoheritage conservation for the world have been initiated within the IUCN WCPA for the first time. Raising awareness of geoheritage, which was virtually a barren field within the IUCN WCPA as well as IUCN, was a truly challenging task. To improve this situation, I defined the role of the GSG by focusing on three key pillars: establishing strategic directions for geoheritage, developing programs for diverse tasks, and aligning these efforts with the IUCN's four-year strategic program. Following this, the group established a four-year action plan along with annual implementation plans, reporting these to the WCPA and consistently carrying them out ever since.

The GSG is composed of a Steering Committee (SC) and individual members. At the beginning, I believed that becoming a GSG member should require substantial experience in geoheritage conservation and management. But later I found out that WCPA membership was set as a prerequisite for eligibility to join the GSG. This requirement posed a significant challenge, as very few geoheritage experts were WCPA members at that time. We worked very hard to persuade many experts to join the WCPA. We established a standard where GSG membership was not granted to just anyone who applied. Instead, we sought experts capable of voluntary dedication and contribution. All applications were subject to review by a membership committee to determine eligibility. Roger Crofts played a critical role in this. Through this rigorous process, the GSG has grown to over 150 members, and I take great pride in the fact that our members are among the world's leading experts in geoheritage. However, recent changes in WCPA regulations have moved toward a system where any WCPA member can join the GSG. This shift is significantly influencing the quality and professional integrity of our group. While members of other WCPA Specialist Groups (SGs) or Task Forces (TFs) are mostly biodiversity and ecosystem experts, making it easier for them to transition between groups, the case for GSG is fundamentally different. The reality is that most WCPA members struggle to even distinguish between 'geoheritage' and 'geodiversity'. This is a critical issue that the GSG must address and improve through future consultations with the WCPA leadership.

The GSG SC consists of 23 members, including one Chair, six Vice-Chairs, six Regional Representatives, nine Thematic Representatives, and one delegate each from **UNESCO** and **IUCN**. Among the SC members, there are representatives from other global organizations such as **GGN** (Global Geoparks Network), **IAG** (International Union of Geomorphologists), **IAVCEI** (International Association of Volcanology & Chemistry of the Earth's Interior), **IUGS** (International Union of Geological Sciences), **ProGEO** (International Association for the Conservation of Geological Heritage), and **UIS** (International Union of Speleology). Historically, the committee tried to meet biennially to review the progress of ongoing programs. However, since the COVID-19 pandemic, our mode of operation has shifted, and we now conduct online meetings on an ad-hoc basis as needed. It was one of my great challenges to make up this new SC members every four years, and I think it has been very successful and constructive. The core management of the GSG is driven by deliberations within the SC. Our members have been highly active across various fields, with six IUCN publications standing out as key achievements that reflect the GSG's impact and expertise (Crofts and Gordon, 2015; Casadevall et al., 2019; Crofts et al., 2020; McKeever and Narbonne, 2021; Justice et al., 2025; Brilha et al., 2025). Especially notable is that two publications (Crofts et al., 2020; McKeever and Narbonne, 2021) could be published thanks to the financial support by the Cultural Heritage Administration (now the Korea Heritage Service) in Korea. Despite these successes, regional-level activities have yet to be fully activated. Moving forward, our priority must be to revitalize these regional initiatives, which will serve as a vital steppingstone for the GSG to establish a truly robust global network. This will be one of the tasks for the next GSG SC.

The GSG currently includes two Working Groups and one Task Force: the Caves and Karst Working Group (CKWG) and the Geoconservation and Climate Change Working Group (GCCWG). Until sometime ago, the CKWG operated independently within the WCPA as the Caves and Karst Specialist Group; however, it was integrated into the GSG. The fact that the WCPA Steering Committee finalized this structural reorganization at that time without prior notification to the GSG implies that the GSG standing within the WCPA has yet to reach its deserved level of recognition. The GCCWG was established in 2023 to address the growing

importance of climate change and to strengthen conservation efforts for geoheritage in response to its impacts. Additionally, a Task Force operated on a temporary basis to facilitate the establishment of the new **IUCN Key Geoheritage Area (KGA) program**. Since the KGA has now been officially adopted as a formal IUCN program, we have reached a stage where it is necessary to establish a new strategic direction for this Task Force's future activities.

The GSG operates without an independent budget; consequently, all activities are funded by the personal expenses of our members. Historically, our primary method of operation has been to meet and discuss GSG matters on the sidelines of various international academic conferences. Regarding the GSG homepage presence, we currently utilize a dedicated section within the official IUCN WCPA website, which has undergone steady and regular improvements over time. The Caves and Karst Working Group (CKWG) has maintained its own separate website to promote information regarding conservation in its specific field. The group has been making significant efforts to regain its independence from the GSG. Personally, I have already submitted my formal opinion to the WCPA leadership, stating that the Caves and Karst Specialist Group should once again be separated from the GSG and reinstated as an independent entity. Recently the proposal was accepted that the Caves and Karst Specialist Group should become independent again.

Since the establishment of the GSG, the group has consistently published its newsletter at the beginning of every year. The publication of this newsletter is widely regarded as one of the GSG's most significant and essential recurring activities. In this regard, I would like to express my special thanks to the Vice Chair, John Gordon, who has dedicated immense time and untiring effort to make this possible.

The first in-person Steering Committee meeting of the GSG took place during the **2014 World Parks Congress** held in Sydney, Australia. During this congress, the GSG was able to co-operate an exhibition booth through the generous support of the Getbol (Korean Tidal Flats) World Heritage Promotion Team. Collaborating with ProGEO, an organization that has long played a leading role as an IUCN member, members of the GSG Steering Committee actively participated in various pavilion events and stream sessions.



The most significant milestone in GSG's history was the **1st International Conference on Geoheritage**, held in 2015 in Huanjiang, China, one of the serial WH sites of the South China Karst. Fieldtrips were carried out along the Lijiang River in Guilin as well as to the fantastic karst landforms in Huanjiang. Through the generous support of the Huanjiang local

government, all members of the GSG Steering Committee were invited to attend. The event was a resounding success, drawing approximately 250 participants from across the globe.



The greatest challenge I have faced while leading the GSG is the communication and exchange of information with the IUCN and IUCN WCPA. This remains a significant issue for the GSG today, fundamentally because geoheritage is rarely prioritized within the scope of interest for either body. To address this challenge, I attended the **WCPA Steering Committee meeting** held in the Czech Republic in May 2016. By participating in this meeting, I was able to meet many people involved in WCPA and connect directly with the members of the WCPA leadership and other key stakeholders, providing a vital opportunity to promote the importance of geoheritage conservation in WCPA. In August 2016, I attended the **IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC)** held in Hawaii, USA. During the congress, I met with José Brilha, Manu Monge-Ganuzas, and Lars Erikstad, who attended as the representatives of ProGEO. These meetings provided a valuable platform to engage in diverse discussions regarding future strategies between the GSG and ProGEO for geoheritage conservation.



In 2018, the workshop titled ‘**The 1st Workshop on Global Geoheritage International Significance and Biodiversity Values**’ was held on Vilm Island, Germany, organized by the GSG with support from the German Ministry of the Environment. This event was prepared through extensive discussions with Bärbel Vogel, who currently served as the GSG CKWG co-chair. I had spent a full year collaborating with her to prepare for this two-day event. The primary focus of the workshop was the evaluation of the international significance of geoheritage. Notably, it was at this meeting that I first proposed the concept of **Key Geoheritage Sites (KGS)** (Ju and Woo, 2018; Woo, 2018a), which led to in-depth discussions. During this workshop, the GSG officially decided to promote the KGS as a formal program within the IUCN. Unfortunately,

I vividly remember that after the first day of the workshop, I received the heartbreaking news of my mother's passing. I had to leave Germany and return home in the early hours of the second day.



Subsequently, the **International Association for the Conservation of Geological Heritage (ProGEO)**, the only global academic association dedicated to geoconservation, invited me to their general assembly in Poland. There, I delivered an invited keynote lecture on **Key Geoheritage Areas (KGA)** (Woo, 2018c). I believe this lecture was the turning point that prompted ProGEO, as an active IUCN member, to officially decide to pursue the establishment of the KGA as a formal IUCN program. Since then, I have continuously promoted the IUCN KGA initiative on a global scale by participating in numerous international meetings (Woo, 2018a,b,c,d; Woo, 2018 [in Korean]; Woo, 2019; Woo and Brilha, 2019; Woo, 2021a,b,c; Woo et al., 2022; Woo, 2023a, b; Woo and Kim, 2024; Monge-Ganuzas and Woo, 2025; Woo, 2025a, b).



In August 2019, a meeting was held at the IUCN headquarters to draft a thematic report concerning the revision of World Heritage Criterion (viii). Global geoheritage experts in WH were invited to participate. At the request of the IUCN for professional expertise, I recommended four GSG SC members to get involved in the project. In addition to myself, the following current GSG SC members participated: Paul Williams (Karst and Speleology) from New Zealand, José Brilha (Geoheritage and Geoparks) from Portugal, Piotr Migoń (Geomorphology) from Poland, and Tom Casadevall (Volcanology) from the USA. As a result

of this collective research, a significant report on World Heritage sites with geoheritage value was published (McKeever and Narbonne, 2021).



Following the 2018 Vilm Workshop, discussions regarding Key Geological Sites (KGS) continued to evolve. During the consultation process with the IUCN, the term **KGS** was renamed the **Key Geoheritage Area (KGA)**. This change was implemented to align the terminology with the **Key Biodiversity Area (KBA)**, an IUCN initiative already established and operational within the IUCN. In continuous collaboration with ProGEO, the GSG spearheaded initiatives to have the **Key Geoheritage Areas (KGAs)** recognized as a viable program during the 2021 IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC). As a result, **Resolution 074** was adopted at the Marseille WCC in 2021, marking the first official appearance of the term 'KGA' in an IUCN resolution. Professor José Brilha (University of Minho, Portugal), a Vice-Chair of the GSG, has led a Task Force dedicated to the KGA project. This task force conducted extensive research covering the objectives, necessity, and implementation strategies for the KGA. The group drafted the foundational documents required by the IUCN and facilitated a comprehensive consultation process involving IUCN members, IUCN commissions, and global geoheritage experts and organizations. Following strategic meetings between ProGEO, the GSG, and key executives within the IUCN, a formal proposal was submitted by ProGEO in January 2025 to adopt the KGA as an official IUCN program at the 2025 WCC. In March 2025, the official IUCN guidelines for KGA were published as an official IUCN publication (Brilha et al., 2025). Finally, in October 2025, at the WCC in Abu Dhabi, **Resolution 125** was adopted, officially establishing the KGA as a formal program of the IUCN.



Beyond my work with the GSG over the past 12 years, two milestones stand out as the most significant events of my life. The first was the publication of a paper on paleoclimate changes over the last 500,000 years in *Nature* in 2014, co-authored with my former student whom I mentored from his undergraduate years through to the PhD program. An interesting story is that this paper went through a rigorous 'Discussion and Reply' process with Paul Williams at the University of Auckland, a long-time friend of mine and a current member of the GSG Steering Committee. The second was receiving the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) Award of the Republic of Korea in 2017, followed by my induction as a **Member of the National Academy of Sciences** in 2021. As someone who has dedicated their entire life to the natural sciences, I consider these two achievements, along with my activities in the GSG, to be the most significant events in my life.



Over the past 12 years since 2013, I have dedicated myself to geoheritage conservation and management, leading this group to the best of my ability. I believe the GSG has made remarkable strides, advancing into a position where it now plays a pivotal role in international geoheritage conservation. This achievement would have been impossible without the unwavering support of all our members. Every member of the GSG has invested immense time and effort, not for personal fame or profit, but solely for global mission needed in this world. I am truly convinced that the recent adoption of the IUCN KGA resolution is the direct result of that collective dedication. Looking ahead, I pledge my utmost efforts to ensure the successful implementation of this IUCN KGA initiative and will continue to provide my full support so that the GSG remains a cornerstone in the global conservation and management of geoheritage. I am hoping that the new 3 GSG Co-Chairs will lead the GSG towards our goal for global geoheritage conservation and management.

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Geoconservation enters the IUCN Global Agenda at WCC 2025

Manu R. Monge-Ganuzas

For the first time in the history of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), geodiversity and geoheritage are explicitly integrated into its Strategic Vision towards 2045 and its global Programme of Action (<https://iucn.org/vision-and-programme>). The new Vision redefines Nature as an inclusive whole, encompassing both biotic (biodiversity) and abiotic (geodiversity) components, recognising that geological, geomorphological and soil processes form the physical foundation sustaining ecosystems and life (for background, see GSG Newsletter No. 9 and Justice et al., 2025). This marks a turning point: the IUCN moves from focusing exclusively on biodiversity to embracing a holistic view of nature, where Earth's geological elements and dynamics are essential for ecological resilience, climate change adaptation and sustainable land management. The document states that future conservation must address “linked biodiversity, ecosystems, and geodiversity”, establishing geoheritage conservation as an integral part of the ecosystem approach.

This integration responds to international commitments such as the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both calling for the conservation of nature in all its diversity. In line with these commitments, the IUCN proposes expanding conservation “to genes, species, ecosystems, and associated geodiversity”, explicitly including geological values within global nature action.

Within this context, the Key Geoheritage Areas (KGA) concept was endorsed at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) 2025 through Motion 125 and adopted as Resolution 124 (<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/52774>). While this decision provides a formal framework for identifying and safeguarding geological sites of global significance, the Congress also served as a platform for intense networking and strategic dialogue. Key agreements were reached with the IUCN Secretariat and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) to coordinate the next steps for KGA implementation, including technical guidelines, governance models and integration into existing conservation planning tools.

These efforts aim to ensure that geological heritage, which preserves unique records of Earth's history and supports ecological processes (hydrological cycles, soil regulation, carbon capture), is fully recognised for its contribution to biodiversity and human well-being (geotourism, cultural identity, scientific knowledge). An inclusive approach remains central, acknowledging the role of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in management and decision-making.

This milestone reflects years of dedicated work by geoscientists and partners, whose expertise, advocacy and international networking have laid the groundwork for a truly integrated vision of nature conservation—where biotic and abiotic heritage are protected as one.

The path ahead is a shared and dynamic landscape, full of opportunities to work together with respect and fairness. There is still much to do, but this is work we will carry out collectively, with collaboration and mutual support at its core. Today, geoheritage has a recognised place in the global conservation agenda: we exist, we are stronger than yesterday, and tomorrow we will be stronger still.

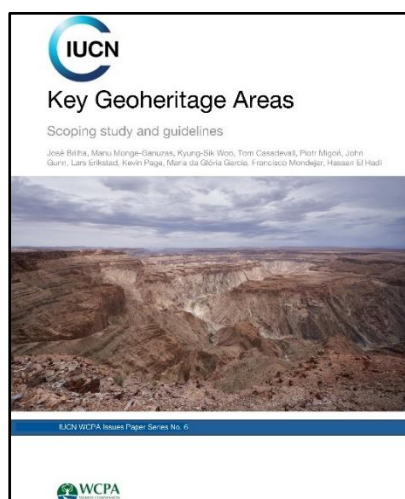
Now is the time for all geoscientific organisations and professionals to unite, share knowledge and act as one. Together, we can turn this milestone into lasting progress, ensuring that geoconservation becomes a permanent pillar of nature conservation for generations to come.

Justice, S., Crofts, R., Gordon, J.E. & Gray, M. (2025). *The Meaning of Nature: Clarification for strengthened protection and management*. IUCN WCPA Issues Paper Series No. 5. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. Available at: https://iucn.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/meaning-of-nature_pdf-final.pdf

Key Geoheritage Areas

José Brilha and Manu R. Monge-Ganuzas

Amongst its operational paragraphs, IUCN [Resolution 7.074](#), adopted at WCC 2020, requested the Director General of IUCN and WCPA to: "support the development of a detailed study envisaging the establishment of a future IUCN initiative on Key Geoheritage Areas, as a complement to the existing Key Biodiversity Areas programme, in order to protect geoheritage sites of global conservation significance and move towards more integrated nature conservation". To undertake this task, the Key Geoheritage Areas Task Force was set up by GSG and led by José Brilha. Following a public consultation, the Group published a *Scoping Study and Guidelines* for the establishment of KGAs (Brilha et al., 2025). This groundbreaking document underpinned the case for Motion 125 at the WCC 2025 (see above) and provides an essential platform for taking forward the KGA initiative.



A KGA is defined as an "area with well-defined boundaries where significant geological features (including rocks, minerals, fossils, sediments, soils, landforms and landscapes) represent past or on-going Earth processes contributing substantially to the global understanding of the planet's history and its life-support systems and provide opportunities for increasing public awareness, knowledge and understanding of geoheritage conservation. In addition to their scientific value as geoheritage, KGA may also have supporting cultural, ecological, aesthetic, and/or educational values" (Brilha et al., 2025).

As set out in the *Scoping Study and Guidelines*, the aim of the KGAs' initiative is "to recognise and conserve geoheritage sites of international significance. It seeks to communicate and promote this information to raise public awareness about the value of these sites, foster their conservation and advance geoconservation practices worldwide. "

Moreover, where significant biological and geoheritage interests overlap in particular areas, "the recognition of KGAs can foster integrated management to the benefit of both biological and geological interests. Together with KBAs, KGAs will provide a comprehensive network of the globally most important areas for nature conservation where protection and management should be prioritised, and which will support initiatives of national and local administrations. " A pilot study in Spain and Scotland indicates a strong likelihood of close spatial overlaps and functional dependencies between KBAs and potential KGAs, highlighting the need for integrated management to optimise effective area-based nature conservation (Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2026).

Brilha, J., Monge-Ganuzas, M., Woo, K.-S., Casadevall, T., Migoń, P., Gunn, J., Erikstad, L., Page, K., Garcia-Mota, M. G., Guillen-Mondejar, F., & El Hadi, H. (2025). Key Geoheritage Areas. Scoping study and guidelines. *IUCN-WCPA Issues Paper Series No. 6*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland. <https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/wcpa-publications/iucn-wcpa-issues>

Monge-Ganuzas, M.R., Gordon, J.E., Crofts, R., Juffe Bignoli, D., Brilha, J.B. (2026). Synergies between potential key geoheritage areas (KGAs) and key biodiversity areas (KBAs) in Spain and Scotland: Toward a holistic nature conservation framework. *Journal for Nature Conservation* 91, 127232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnc.2026.127232>

Caves and Karst Working Group (CKWG)

John Gunn and Bärbel Vogel

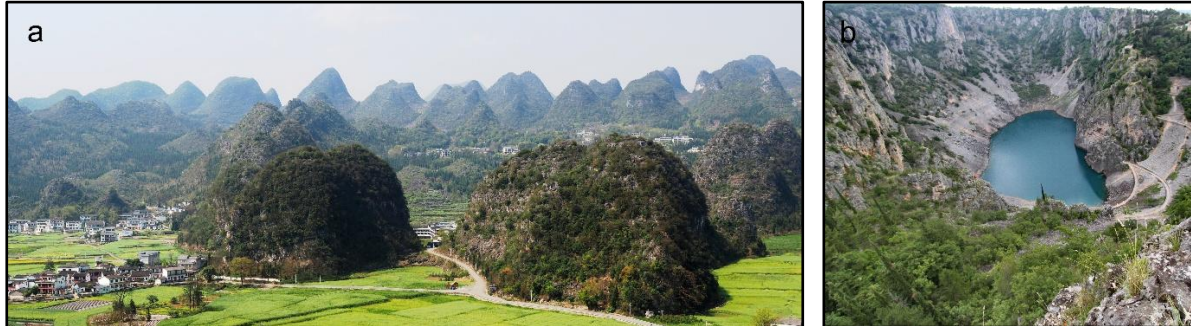
International Day of Caves and Karst

In 2021 the International Speleological Union (UIS) proclaimed an International Year of Caves and Karst and this was extended into 2022 because of the Covid-19 pandemic. One outcome was a second edition of the IUCN *Guidelines for Cave and Karst Protection* which was edited by members of CKWG and was jointly published by IUCN and UIS in 2022. The UIS also decided to develop a proposal for an 'International Day of Caves and Karst' (IDCK) which was supported by the CKWG. After much work the proposal was submitted to UNESCO by the Slovenian Government in 2025. The proposal received widespread support and at the 43rd Session of the UNESCO General Conference in Samarkand, the 13th September was proclaimed as the 'UNESCO International Day of Caves and Karst'. The IDCK is very good news for cave and karst geodiversity which will also be celebrated on the UNESCO International Geodiversity Day (6th October).

New International Protected Areas with Caves and Karst

Further good news is that 7 of the 16 new UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGp) designated in 2025 contain Caves and Karst. There are now 229 UGGp, of which 92 contain carbonate or

evaporite caves and karst, 11 have volcanic caves and 5 have littoral caves or pseudokarst. There was also an important new cave and karst World Heritage Site in 2025, Peruaçu River Canyon in Brazil, designated under criteria (vii) and (viii). Caves are also present in two new World Heritage Sites designated under criteria (iii), The prehistoric sites of the Khorramabad Valley (Iran) and Rock Paintings of Shulgan-Tash Cave (Russian Federation).



a. Wan Fenglin in the Xingyi UNESCO Global Geopark (Guizhou Province, China) which was designated in 2024. "Fenglin" is the Chinese term for a karst landscape with conical or vertical sided peaks and there are reputed to be more than 10,000 peaks in the Wan Fenglin site which was selected as one of four scenic areas in China to appear on a national postage stamp in 2013. (Photo: John Gunn). **b.** Modro Jezero (Blue Lake) in the Biokovo-Imotski Lakes UNESCO Global Geopark (Dalmatia, Croatia) which was designated in 2024. The lake lies inside a mega-doline or tiankeng that was formed by collapse into a void probably formed by hypogenic processes. The doline is 700m long, 400m wide and 290m deep, measured from the highest point on the rim. The lake fills and drains via underground conduits and the water level ranges from zero (dry) to around 100m. (Photo: John Gunn).

European Union (EU) Nature Restoration Regulation

On 9 April 2025 a meeting was organised by WCPA Europe on the European Union (EU) Nature Restoration Regulation. Core elements and objectives of the EU Nature Restoration Law were discussed, including the expected impact on nature conservation and societal benefits, as well as cross-sectoral engagement opportunities and implementation strategies. Over 40 WCPA members participated, two of whom were members of the CKWG (Bärbel Vogel and Gordana Beltram). Angelika Rubin, who presented an overview on behalf of the EU Commission, pointed out that caves and karst are an exceptional case but she could not give any advice for their protection.

WCPA Europe WG on an EU definition on strict protection

The Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 of the European Union includes the commitment to “*Strictly protect at least a third of the EU’s protected areas - representing 10% of the EU land and 10% of EU sea*”. IUCN and WCPA Europe support the target, recognising that there may be variations in the way that the concept of ‘strict protection’ is currently interpreted in different countries. A technical note to the EU discussion on strict protection was developed by a working group of the IUCN WCPA regional representation for Europe. Bärbel Vogel participated in the discussions, adding the special need for protection for areas that cannot be restored such as caves and karst.

20th International Congress of Speleology

Cave and karst protection and management was a strong theme at the 20th International Congress of Speleology (Belo Horizonte, Brazil, 20-27 July, 2025), with 44 oral presentations and 20 poster presentations. CKWG members Kyung Sik Woo and Paul Williams respectively delivered Keynote Lectures on '*Cave Conservation for Future Generations*' and '*UNESCO World Heritage Caves and Karst: Present Situation and Future Prospect*'. Lee Anne Bledsoe spoke on '*The CaveMAB Network: Working to understand and protect caves and karst resources within the UNESCO World Network Of Biosphere Reserves*', and John Gunn discussed '*Project MIKAS (Most Important Karst Aquifers Springs): progress and request for information*'.

IUCN World Conservation Congress

The WCPA and the International Union of Speleology (UIS) in cooperation with the Italian Speleological Society hosted a session on Cave Biodiversity at the Learning Zone of the IUCN World Conservation Congress. Kyung Sik Woo discussed future protection strategies and KGAs, and Bärbel Vogel gave an overview on protection and policy. For further information see <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/cave-biodiversity>.

United Nations Environmental Assembly (UNEA-7)

In addition to proclamation of the IDCK, 2025 marked a historic milestone as caves and karst were discussed for the first time at the UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA-7) in Nairobi, where the Indonesian Government tabled a '*Draft resolution on the karst ecosystem for global water, biodiversity, climate resilience and economic development*'. Bärbel Vogel, Secretary of CKWG, is also President of the German Speleological Federation (VdHK) who are affiliated to UNEA, and VdHK sponsored Ana Celis to attend the Nairobi meeting. CKWG assisted with material for an Official Side Event by VdHK on '*Karst-Aware Decisions for a Sustainable Planet: Bridging Science and Policy. Turning knowledge of the hidden geoecosystems into sustainable action*'. Ana was also invited to contribute to the IUCN official side event '*Flow Forward: Transboundary water cooperation to restore and sustain water ecosystems from the source to the sea*' where she provided information on Transboundary karst aquifers. The full event can be viewed on YouTube, with Ana's contribution towards the end; see <https://www.youtube.com/live/m0Lvclr9KYM>.

Unfortunately member states were unable to agree on a final version of the Resolution and it was withdrawn by the Indonesian delegation. However, it is hoped that a revised Resolution will be tabled at UNEA-8 in two years' time.

Bärbel Vogel was accepted as a reviewer of the Global Environmental Outlook GEO-7, the most comprehensive scientific assessment of the global environment, which was published at UNEA-7. Speleological papers are now cited in GEO-7.

For more information on UNEA, the draft resolution, and Geo-7, see <https://www.karst-aware.org/>.

Going forwards

Historically there was a Caves and Karst Specialist Group in the WCPA but this became inactive and was disbanded by the WCPA Steering Committee. In 2018, following an intervention from Kyung Sik Woo, Caves and Karst became a Working Group within GSG, and although this

arrangement has been very productive, there was a feeling amongst some that it was somewhat restrictive and inhibited a more holistic approach to caves and karst in protected areas. Following discussion with the Chair and Steering Committee of the WCPA it has been agreed that a new Caves and Karst Specialist Group will operate in the WCPA from the start of 2026. The group intends to have strong links with GSG, and hopes to contribute to the development of Cave and Karst KGAs, but will also be promoting an integrated approach to management of caves and karst in protected areas designated primarily for reasons other than geoheritage, most notably Ramsar Sites and UNESCO Biosphere Reserves. Members of the GSG who have an interest in Caves and Karst are very welcome to join the new group whilst also remaining as members of the GSG.

Global Geoparks Network Activities in 2025

Marie-Luise Frey

Global Geoparks Network Representative in GSG (WCPA)

<https://www.globalgeoparksnetwork.org/>

Activities of the Global Geoparks Network in 2025

In 2025, the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) celebrated significant successes with the admission of new members and the expansion and strategic development of its activities, celebrating the 10th Anniversary of UNESCO Global Geoparks. The Network currently consists of 229 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 50 countries. As a special focus, the GGN has developed and adopted the Long-Term Strategy 2025-2035. Further priorities included the promotion of sustainable development goals (SDGs), organization of the International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks in Kütralkura Global Geopark in Chile, and capacity building courses, as well as participation in Geopark advisory, evaluation and revalidation missions in cooperation with the UNESCO Global Geoparks Secretariat.

Network expansion and jubilees

In April and finally in November 2025, the UNESCO Executive Board approved the inclusion of 16 new Global Geoparks at its 223rd Session, marking the growth from 213 to 229 UNESCO Global Geoparks. The Global Geoparks Network now covers an area of almost 855,000 km², equivalent to the size of Namibia. The 16 newly designated geoparks are in China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (marking its first geopark and contribution to the protection of the shared mountain range with China), Ecuador, Indonesia, Italy, Norway, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia (hosting its first two geoparks), Spain, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

The UNESCO Global Geoparks for the first time expanded to include two new countries. Saudi Arabia is represented by North Riyadh (table mountains, coral reefs) and Salma (740 million-year-old volcanic rocks). Mt Paektu (North Korea) documents one of the largest eruptions in history. The approvals were granted by the UNESCO Executive Board, who adopted the decision of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council following expert evaluation. With the official recognition by UNESCO they became members of the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), the statutory partner of UNESCO according to the UNESCO Global Geoparks Statutes and Operational Guidelines.

A celebration of 10 years of UNESCO Global Geoparks, at the UNESCO Headquarters in March 2025 with partners such as IUGS and IUCN, highlighted the progress in community empowerment and sustainable tourism. Regional extension targeted Africa, the Middle East and Small Island Developing States.

Strategic priorities 2025-2035

The GGN long-term strategy (published in April 2025), agreed by the GGN members in the September General Assembly, defines 12 priorities in four pillars: preserving the Earth (climate adaptation, geohazards), strengthening communities (SDG implementation), education/innovation and network structure. Highlights include annual SDG reports per geopark, CO₂ compensation guidelines and action plans on climate change and geohazards risk reduction, such as landslides. Working groups on SDGs and geohazards have been expanded internationally and regionally.

Conferences, promotional activities and awards

The 11th International UNESCO Global Geoparks Conference took place for the first time in South America, in Kutralkura UNESCO Global Geopark (Chile), in the Araucanía-Region, 8 – 12 September 2025. A platform for knowledge exchange on geology, tourism and management was provided for more than 700 participants from the majority of GGN member territories and nations from all GGN continental networks. More than 500 presentations were given, 9 thematic workshops took place, more than 50 videos were shown at the Geopark Film Festival and 23 excursions took place. See:

<https://www.facebook.com/globalgeoparksnetwork/posts/11th-international-conference-on-unesco-global-geoparks-2025kutralkura-unesco-gl/1218093323691639/>

The main conference topics were:

- Geoconservation and geohazards: discussions on protective measures against erosion, volcanoes and landslides, including CO₂ compensation plans.
- Sustainable geotourism: best practices for community-based initiatives and economic resilience.
- Education and innovation: workshops on geosciences, school programmes and digital tools for geopark management.
- Network strategy: adoption of the GGN long-term strategy 2025-2035 with a focus on Africa, island states and topics such as SDGs and tourism in preparation for participation in the International Tourism Exchange in Berlin in March 2026.

The conference strengthened global cooperation and concluded with calls for annual progress reports. The number of participants, themes and number of presentations indicate also the scientific impact the UGGps have achieved in collaboration with IUGS over the last 10 years when the UNESCO Executive Board approved the new International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme of UNESCO in 2015.

Outlook

GGN positions UNESCO Global Geoparks as laboratories for resilience and the SDGs, with biennial action plans and annual progress reports. The new long-term strategy 2025-2035 strengthens the UNESCO partnership and aims for sustainable growth until 2035.

After eight years of dedicated, constructive and successful development and work by the GGN President Professor Nikolaos Zouros and the elected GGN Executive Board, the members of the GGN elected a new GGN President, Professor Artur A. Sà, and a new Executive Board until 2029.

The Oeste UGGp (Portugal) was chosen as the host and venue for the next Global Geoparks Conference and General Assembly in September 2027.

Geoheritage Activities in the United States in 2025

Tom Casadevall

Geoheritage interests in the U.S. continued to grow despite several setbacks due to cuts to budgets and workforce staff at many Federal agencies in 2025 – especially the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the National Park Service. Announcement that the U.S. will withdraw from UNESCO (once again) in July 2025, and the withdrawal of Federal agencies from the IUCN in January 2026, has hampered our international efforts in fields including nature conservation and basic international cooperation.

Geoheritage Sites of the Nation

In 2025, the USGS launched its first geoheritage application. The USGS project ‘*Geoheritage Sites of the Nation*’ provides an initial inventory of geoheritage sites to showcase the geodiversity and natural heritage throughout the U.S. and its territories. Sites were selected from geologic features that have been previously identified as geologic points of interest on Federal land designations. The project is led by Christina DeVera, USGS-Reston.

For the initial inventory, one geoheritage site on Federal public lands within each U.S. state and territory was selected to provide a geographically distributed dataset that highlights the geodiversity of the nation (n=55). Sites were further characterized by the scientific significance of the geologic phenomena, educational opportunity for both formal and informal learning, cultural connections to the landscape, historic and present-day examples of economic opportunities, and the aesthetic features within the Federal public lands. The application also includes links to the USGS National Geologic Map Database to allow users to discover spatially related geologic mapping publications and information products within the expansive database. See: https://apps.usgs.gov/geoheritage_sites_of_the_nation/

Geological Society of America and Geoheritage

The Geological Society of America (GSA) supports “the conservation of Geoheritage sites to meet present and future educational, scientific, aesthetic, cultural, and economic needs.” The GSA Position Statement 20 further celebrates geoheritage without borders by encouraging the “alignment of U.S. initiatives with international geoheritage, geoconservation, and geodiversity programs, e.g. the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network, the IUCN Geoheritage Specialist Group, and the IUGS Commission on Geoheritage.” See: <https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/gsa/positions/position20.aspx>

In 2025, the GSA became the new institutional home for the U.S. Advisory Group on Geoheritage which formerly operated under the auspices of the U.S. National Committee for the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGS) at the U.S. National Academies. GSA Geoheritage efforts are housed within the History, Philosophy, and Geoheritage Division (HPG). For more information visit: <https://community.geosociety.org/histphildiv/home>

Among the activities sponsored by the GSA in 2025 was a Geoheritage webinar series of three hour-long webinars. These three webinars were recorded and may be viewed at: <https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/GSA/edu-career/geoheritage.aspx>

GSA – Pardee Keynote Symposia

Since 2021, the GSA has sponsored three Pardee Keynote Symposia on Geoheritage at its annual meetings. In 2025, the Pardee Keynote Symposium '*Geoheritage Without Borders: International Perspectives on the Conservation and Celebration of Geodiversity*' was held during the GSA annual convention in San Antonio, Texas, the USA location of the San Antonio Missions, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This symposium was convened under the leadership of Priscilla Grew (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) and jointly sponsored by the GSA and ProGEO, with 18 talks which explored innovative partnerships to conserve geoheritage and celebrate geodiversity.

The Symposium featured a keynote address by Jack Matthews highlighting the UNESCO International Geodiversity Day, and there were talks by Tom Casadevall, Chair, and members of the U.S. Advisory Group on Geoheritage. Officers of ProGEO including President Kevin Page



discussed new initiatives to promote sustainable development. Mauricio Faraone from Uruguay, ProGEO Vice President for Latin America and the Caribbean, provided an update on cooperation with the Association of Iberoamerican Geological and Mining Surveys (ASGMI). There were talks on the first IUGS Heritage Stones proposed in Mexico, geoconservation in Jamaica, and UNESCO Global Geoparks in Canada. James Rattling Leaf (Rosebud Sioux) and Louis Williams (Diné/Navajo) provided

Indigenous perspectives.

Photo of GSA Pardee Symposium participants, GSA Connects meeting, San Antonio, Texas, October 21, 2025. From left: Photo caption: Priscilla Grew (U.S.), Emmaline Montserrat Rosado González (Mexico), Mauricio Faraone (Uruguay), Maria da Glória Motta Garcia (Brazil), Tom Casadevall (U.S.), Sherene James-Williamson (Jamaica), Jorjan Dolphy (Jamaica), Kevin Page (United Kingdom), Steve Semken (U.S.), Stan Hurst (U.S.), Alicia O'Leary (Canada), Louis Williams (U.S.) and Jack Matthews (United Kingdom)

International Geodiversity Day, 2025

Murray Gray and José Brilha

The fourth International Geodiversity Day (IGD) had the theme of 'One Earth: Many Stories' and, although nominally taking place on 6 October 2025, in practice included events before and after this date. 187 events were registered on the IGD website, though we know that several events were held without being registered. For example, India does not appear in the Table below, yet we are aware of a conference held at UNESCO House, New Delhi, on 6-7 October, 2025 on the theme 'Geodiversity and Geoheritage of India and Its Sustainable Development', and had over 50 delegates. Other unregistered events also include a number in UGGps and several school activities in Portugal. Also, activities organised online by an international organisation (for instance, GGN or IAG) cannot be linked to just one country. We believe that the total number of events being held is unknowable given that event registration is a voluntary activity, but possibly amounts to double the number registered?

Having said that, in comparison with 2022-23-24-25, the pattern has been 249-170-250-187 events, respectively. However, an important point to note is the increased dominance of the number of events in Iraq: beginning with zero events in 2022, the number rose to 56 events (23.2% of the total) in 2024 and to 65 events in 2025 (34.2% of the total).

As the table below shows, European nations held the next highest number of events with Spain, UK and France taking the next three places behind Iraq, followed by Portugal and Brazil tied on 11 events apiece. Disappointing news is that the number of countries holding events was down in 2025, with the 22-23-24-25 pattern being 39-50-56-34, respectively. We lost 10 countries from the previous year in 2025 including Switzerland (with the strange pattern 0-0-8-0), Chile (2-3-5-0), Denmark (0-1-5-0), Peru (0-0-4-0), and China (0-1-3-0), but we gained Bangladesh and Nigeria with one event each. Countries that have so far registered no events in the first four years include Australia, Germany, Russia and South Korea, and there are no events being registered in small island states. The number of events held in person was 86%, the remainder being either online or hybrid sessions.

In conclusion, the number of registered events in 2025 was disappointing with decreased numbers in many countries and losses of several countries. But by counting only registered events, we may be seeing only half of the total number. The pattern was partly masked by the large number of events in Iraq. Please email me if you would like to see the full Table - j.m.gray@qmul.ac.uk

Countries with 3 or more events in 2025 ordered according to number of events in 2025.

Country	2022	2023	2024	2025
Iraq	0	6	56	65
Spain	26	19	28	16
UK	29	34	18	13
France	4	14	9	12
Portugal	30	22	27	11
Brazil	5	11	4	11

Italy	11	4	10	9
Croatia	3	1	8	6
Canada	6	6	6	5
Slovenia	0	2	2	4
Slovakia	2	1	2	4
Poland	4	8	8	3
Japan	1	1	3	3

ProGEO NEWS

Two new ProGEO initiatives may be of interest to GSG members.

The Geoconservation Glossary Thematic Working Group has been established to develop and maintain a comprehensive, internationally agreed glossary of terms related to geoconservation. Clear and consistent terminology is essential for effective communication among scientists, policy makers, educators, and stakeholders involved in the conservation of geological heritage.

The Geoconservation Certification Scheme Working Group has been established to explore the development and long-term management of a geoconservation certification award scheme. The proposed scheme aims to promote awareness, best practice, and conservation actions in geoconservation, while increasing engagement with geoheritage and ProGEO among its participants.

Further information is available at: <https://www.progeo.ngo/groups>

Recent Publications of Geoheritage Interest

Justice, S., Crofts, R., Gordon, J.E. & Gray, M. (2025). *The Meaning of Nature: Clarification for strengthened protection and management*. IUCN WCPA Issues Paper Series No. 5. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. Available at: https://iucn.org/sites/default/files/2025-01/meaning-of-nature_pdf-final.pdf

Brilha, J., Monge-Ganuzas, M., Woo, K.-S., Casadevall, T., Migoñ, P., Gunn, J., Erikstad, L., Page, K., Garcia-Mota, M. G., Guillen-Mondejar, F., & El Hadi, H. (2025). Key Geoheritage Areas. Scoping study and guidelines. *IUCN-WCPA Issues Paper Series No. 6*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland. <https://iucn.org/our-union/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/wcpa-publications/iucn-wcpa-issues>

Reynard E, Brilha J (eds) (2025) *Geoheritage: Assessment, Protection, and Management*. 2nd ed. Elsevier, Amsterdam.

Monge-Ganuzas, M.R., Gordon, J.E., Crofts, R., Juffe Bignoli, D., Brilha, J.B. (2026). Synergies between potential key geoheritage areas (KGAs) and key biodiversity areas (KBAs) in Spain and

Scotland: Toward a holistic nature conservation framework. *Journal for Nature Conservation* 91, 127232. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.inc.2026.127232>

Earth Heritage Magazine. Issues 63 and 64 were published during the past year. The magazine includes news and popular articles on geoconservation and is available free at: <https://www.earthheritage.org.uk/>

Forthcoming Meetings

- **European Geosciences Union (EGU) General Assembly, Vienna, 3-8 May 2026.** The meeting includes two sessions related to geodiversity and geoheritage.
GM 4.2 Geodiversity and Geoheritage at Risk: How to identify, evaluate and manage threats. Further information is available at:
<https://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU26/session/56798>
ITS3.4/GM3 Mythogenic landscapes: From Geodiversity through Geomythology to Geoheritage. Further information is available at:
<https://meetingorganizer.copernicus.org/EGU26/session/57668>
- **9th Asia Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) Symposium, 4-12 September 2026, Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark, Malaysia.** Further information is available at:
<https://apgn2026.lada.gov.my/>
- **18th International European Geoparks Conference, Saimaa UNESCO Global Geopark, Lappeenranta, Finland, 16-18 September 2026.** Further information is available at:
<https://saimaageopark.fi/en/egn2026/>
- **GeoLAC 2026 – 8th Conference of the Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network, Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca, Mexico, 21-23 October 2026.** The Conference is organised by the Global Geoparks Network of Latin America and the Caribbean together with UNESCO Global Geoparks partners, the UNESCO Mixteca Alta Global Geopark, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and the Government of Oaxaca. Further information is available at: <https://geolac2026.org>

About the IUCN WCPA Geoheritage Specialist Group

Established in 2013, the Geoheritage Specialist Group (GSG) provides specialist advice and guidance on all aspects of geodiversity and geoheritage in relation to the establishment and effective management of protected areas, and to support the integration of geodiversity into all relevant IUCN programmes.

Further information about the GSG is available at:

<https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/geoheritage>

GSG Co-Chairs: José Brilha (KGA), Sophie Justice, Meng Wang, Kyung Sik Woo (only for 2026)
Secretary General: Wesley Hill (wesleymhill@gmail.com)

To become a member of GSG, geoheritage experts must be members of the WCPA.

GSG also maintains a list of 'advisors' in the wider geoheritage community, who are not WCPA/GSG members. If you would like to be included on this list and to receive details of announcements and copies of the Newsletter, please send an email to Wesley Hill, including your full contact details (address, email, country and your geoheritage interests).

WCPA and GSG Membership Update

Wesley Hill

If you know a Geoheritage or Geoconservation expert who works with protected areas and would like to invite them to be a member of our network, please email Wesley Hill (wesleymhill@gmail.com) and she can provide you with an official Letter of Invitation for them to join. You can then invite them directly by forwarding the Invitation Letter.

<https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/get-involved>

To join the Geoheritage Specialist Group Member Network, click on the **WCPA Geoheritage, Geoconservation, Caves and Karst Network 2021-2025**. The first step is to become a member of IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), then the next step is to join our network of experts.

Useful Links

IUCN-WCPA Geoheritage Specialist Group: <https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/geoheritage>

Global Geoparks Network: <http://www.globalgeopark.org/>

The European Geoparks Network: <http://www.europeangeoparks.org/>

Asia Pacific Geoparks Network: <http://asiapacificgeoparks.org/>

Latin America and Caribbean Geoparks Network (GeoLac):
<https://www.visitgeoparks.org/latin-american-geopark-network-geol>

UNESCO International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme:
<https://www.unesco.org/en/iggp/igcp>

ProGEO (The European Association for the Conservation of the Geological Heritage):
<http://www.progeo.ngo/>

International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS): <https://www.iugs.org/commissions>

The GSG Newsletter is compiled by John Gordon. Contributions to future Newsletters are welcome from the wider GSG membership and others on IUCN-related geoconservation activities and issues in protected and conserved areas. Please send contributions to: jgordon0914@gmail.com.
