

To all Permanent Delegates and
Observers to UNESCO
National Commissions for
UNESCO

**The Assistant Director-General
for Priority Africa and External Relations**

12 February 2024

Ref: SC/EES/EG/24/552

Sir/Madam,

On behalf of the Director-General, I am pleased to invite you to **the Open Session of the International Geoscience Programme Council** and the presentation of the new UNESCO Global Geoparks applicants followed by an information meeting on UNESCO Global geoparks. This meeting will take place in **Room IV (Fontenoy Building) from 2 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Tuesday 12 March 2024**. The Provisional Agenda is attached herewith for your kind information.

Developing an advanced understanding of the Earth's fundamental processes and resources is essential to reaching UN Sustainable Development Goals. The International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, with its two pillars, the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP) and UNESCO Global Geoparks, aim to enable UNESCO Member States to use the UNESCO designated sites as learning sites for inclusive and comprehensive approaches to environmental, economic and social aspects of sustainable development.

The International Geoscience Programme is a joint programme of UNESCO and The International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS). It supports scientific projects related to the Earth sciences across the world, selected by the International Geoscience Programme Council and Scientific Board and involving the five themes of the Programme:

- Earth Resources: Sustaining our society;
- Global Change: Evidence from the geological record;
- Geohazards: Mitigating the risks;
- Hydrogeology: Geoscience of the water cycle; and,
- Geodynamic control of our environment.

The International Geoscience Programme Council will assemble in closed session from 10 to 12 March 2024 to evaluate 29 ongoing projects. The Open Session that will be held on 12 March 2024 will allow us to present the major outcomes of the International Geoscience Programme Council meeting and the outcomes of IGCP projects in 2023. An information sheet on each International Geoscience Programme theme and the 2023 annual report will be made available online at the following address: <https://www.unesco.org/en/igpp/igcp-council#resources>

On the occasion of the Open Session, and within the framework of the UNESCO Global Geoparks, new geopark applications, as well as one application for area extension, will be presented. An information sheet on each application is available online at the following address:

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384423>

We aim to make best use of your participation in the open session by also collecting your inquiries and suggestions regarding the UNESCO Global Geoparks pillar of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme. We invite you therefore to an information session on the UNESCO Global Geoparks concept and procedures, which will be held immediately following the presentations of the new geoparks applications. The aim of this meeting is to present and discuss the recent and future capacity building and promotion events related to UNESCO Global Geoparks and their achievements. Your participation would be very valuable to us.

In the event that you are able to attend this meeting, we would appreciate it if you could kindly confirm your participation to Ms Ozlem Adiyaman Lopes (tel.: +33 1 45 68 14 33; e-mail: igpp@unesco.org), Earth Sciences and Geoparks Section of the Natural Sciences Sector, at your earliest convenience.

Please accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.


Anthony Ohemeng-Boamah



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International Geoscience
and Geoparks Programme

**9th Open Session of the International Geoscience Programme Council and presentation
of the new UNESCO Global Geoparks applicants**

Information meeting on UNESCO Global geoparks

12 March 2023 – Room IV (2 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.) – Fontenoy Building

Agenda

2 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.

1. Welcome speech by Mr Kristof Vandenberghe, Chief of Earth Sciences and Geoparks Section, Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, Natural Sciences Sector, UNESCO
2. Welcome speech by Mr John Ludden, President of the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS)
3. International Geoscience Programme (IGCP) Council Members: Presentations of current geoscientific vision, portfolio of the IGCP and outcomes of the 9th Session of the IGCP Council
4. Earth Sciences and Geoparks Section:
 - a. 2023 Capacity building and outreach activities
 - b. Results of the 8th UNESCO Global Geoparks Council and 2023 new geoparks applications
5. Discussions and closure

3.30 p.m. - 4 p.m. Coffee break

4 p.m. - 5.30 p.m. Information meeting on UNESCO Global Geoparks

1. Welcome speech by Mr Kristof Vandenberghe, Chief of Earth Sciences and Geoparks Section, Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences, Natural Sciences Sector, UNESCO
2. Welcome speech by Mr Nikolas Zouros, President of the Global Geoparks Network
3. Earth Sciences and Geoparks Section:
 - a. Concept of UNESCO Global Geoparks
 - b. Essentials of UNESCO Global Geopark nomination procedure for Member States
 - c. Challenges and opportunities for the establishment and management of UNESCO Global Geoparks
4. Discussions and closure

6 p.m. - 8 p.m. Cocktail – UNESCO (7th Floor)