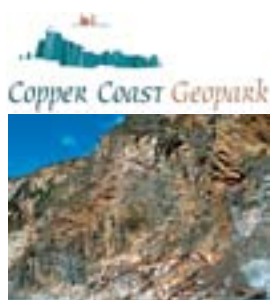


The European Geopark Partners



The Copper Coast is located in southern Ireland. The coastal cliffs expose a spectacular cross-section through mudstone of Ordovician age (505 - 438 million years ago). They are intruded by volcanic rocks including andesite and rhyolite. These rocks are overlain by red sandstones, including fossil rich layers of Carboniferous age.

www.coppercoastgeopark.com

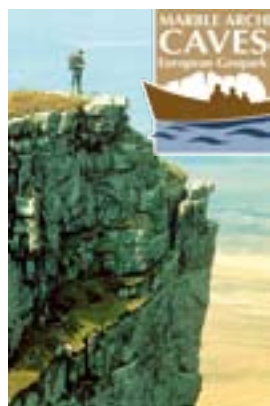


The rolling countryside of the West Eifel Volcanic Field or "Vulkaneifel" is located in the southwest of Germany. Roughly 400 million years old, the landscape covers an area of about 130.000 hectares. An extraordinary volcanic activity has created about 70 huge craters – the so-called maars. Eight of these maar lakes are still filled with water, the "Eyes of the Eifel".

www.geopark-vulkaneifel.de



The UNESCO-Geopark Bergstrass-Odenwald is located in the geographic triangle between the States of Hesse, Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg (Germany). The Geopark territory covers appr. 3200 km² between the Rhine valley in the west and the Main valley in the east. The region is bounded to the south by the Neckar valley and to the north by the UNESCO World Heritage Site Messel Pit. www.geo-naturpark.net



Located on the sedimentary Carboniferous rocks of south-west Northern Ireland, these parks are the leading tourism projects in the region. The distinctive sandstone summit ridge of Cuilcagh Mountain dominates the area. Bog yields to the most extensive area of limestone scenery in Northern Ireland.

Marble Arch Caves are widely regarded as one of Europe's finest tourist caves where visitors can take a fascinating boat journey into large caverns with beautiful stalactites and stalagmites.

www.fermanagh-online.com/tourism

The Partners

Natural Environment Research Council through its component body, the British Geological Survey (Geological Survey of Northern Ireland)

United Kingdom

Marble Arch Caves European Geopark

United Kingdom

Mining Heritage Trust of Ireland Limited on behalf of the Copper Coast European Geopark

Republic of Ireland

Vulkaneifel European Geopark – Geopark Gerolstein/TW Gerolstein

Germany

Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism Limited

United Kingdom

Waterford County Council

Republic of Ireland

Geological Survey of Ireland

Republic of Ireland

Eifel Tourismus (ET) GmbH

Germany

National University of Ireland, Cork. Department of Archaeology

Republic of Ireland

Natur- und Geopark Vulkaneifel GmbH

Germany

Geo-Naturpark Bergstraße-Odenwald e.V.

Germany

Welterbe Grube Messel gGmbH

Germany

Gemeinde Mudau

Germany

Stadt Walldürn

Germany



Geodiversity in Europe

Dr. Patrick McKeever



The small continent of Europe is home to several hundred million people living in over 50 nations and speaking dozens of different languages and dialects. No less diverse than its cultural heritage is the natural heritage of Europe. From the tundra of northern Scandinavia to the baking heat of southern Spain, Europe is home to many climates and a great diversity of habitats. The geodiversity of Europe is just as complex. By using our geological heritage and geotourism, we have a chance to raise awareness of this rich European geodiversity and to develop a common strategy for using it to build a peaceful and sustainable future for all of Europe's diverse people.

Today, when we think of geological heritage in European terms many, naturally, think of places such as Iceland, the Alps, Mount Etna or the Giant's Causeway. However, right across Europe there are rocks and landscapes that provide evidence of particular moments in our common European geological history. Geodiversity is an innovative term used by geoconservationists and can be defined as the range of geological, geomorphological and soil features, assemblages, systems and processes and can be considered analogous to the term biodiversity.

In north-west Europe, the four geoparks that have come together as part of this project each represent a unique aspect of Europe's shared geological heritage. The four areas are linked through their common history of landscape formation by the geological processes of volcanism and water-action. Each area has separately identified that sustainable exploitation of their geological heritage might be one way of helping address these matters. Furthermore, each area has separately realised that by linking with other areas in Europe, for example through LEADER IIC which funded the creation of the European Geoparks Network, that share the same concept and ideals, will be the best way to bring their visions to reality.



△ Cuilcagh Mountain Park · Karst Landform



△ Vulkaneifel European Geopark · Weinfelder Maar



△ UNESCO Geopark Bergstrasse-Odenwald · Fossil, Messel pit
▽ Copper Coast European Geopark · Anne Valley, Dunhill Castle



Issues to be addressed

Develop and implement a strategy for the sustainable economic development of rural geopark territories though the development of geotourism / eco-tourism as an innovative basis for future rural economic and social planning policies.

Improve the low public profile of geology and address the on-going loss of social awareness of the intimate link between European society and European geodiversity.

Exchange experience between the partners to develop joint, high quality tourism products aimed at enhancing the visitors experience but also on transferring knowledge of north-west Europe's geodiversity to the wider public. This will be done by developing tiered-level information, specific target group promotion and the development of links between the geoparks through common web-information and web-links.

To built and improve visitor centres for the promotion of north-west Europe's geological and cultural heritage by integrating the geological heritage of the four territories.

To develop standardised tourism products for the north-west European Geoparks aimed at supporting sustainable economic development that can be adapted and applied to other European Geopark territories across Europe according to the European Union Policies of Spatial Development.

To develop an integrated, multi-lingual tourism information leaflet which links the north-west European geopark territories with existing visitor streams, for example visitors from the Netherlands, and the education sector.

To exchange cultures and traditions between the geoparks with the aim of building a sustainable political, economic and social future in a peaceful Europe, according to the European Union Policies of Spatial Development.

The Measures

Project
start: 01.10.2002
end: 31.12.2006
duration: 51 month

Action name	Copper Coast European Geopark	Marble Arch Caves European Geopark	Vulkaneifel European Geopark	UNESCO Geopark Bergstrasse-Odenwald	Duration (Month)
Project concept development	X	X	X	X	12
Geopark corner	X	X	X	X	19
Cave lighting		X			12
Expansion of Cuilcagh mountain park		X			10
Tankardstown	X				40
Geological park	X				16
Optimised linkage of geopark units Vulkaneifel			X		36
Visitor centre at Kyll valley cycling centre Gerolstein			X		12
Children's playground			X		12
Audio-visual product	X	X	X	X	21
Geopark sculpture	X	X	X	X	23
Exchange visits	X	X	X	X	22
Signage	X	X	X	X	35
Web			X	X	36
Publications	X	X		X	28
Trails		X	X	X	5
Geological model		X			4
Animation of Vulkaneifel family			X		36
Geopotential - geological heritage monitoring and documentation			X		36
Marketing	X	X	X	X	36
Communications plan	X	X	X	X	36
Project staff	X	X	X	X	36
Project management	X				36
Company Formation	X				3
Tiered visitor service				X	