PRESS RELEASE: VIKOS-AOOS UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK: NETWORKS OF COOPERATING COMPANIES AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ZAGORI

PRESS RELEASE

UNESCO VIKOS-AOOS GLOBAL GEOPARK: NETWORK OF COOPERATING ENTERPRISES AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF ZAGORI.

EPIRUS SA in collaboration with the Municipality of Zagori, organized on the afternoon of Monday 13/7/2020 at the Open Theater of Monodendri "Angelos Kitsos" an informative event for tourism entrepreneurs and in general all active citizens of the region regarding the possibility of cooperation and participation in public promotion of Vikos-Aoos UNESCO Global Geopark .

The event was attended by the Mayor of Zagori Mr.Soukouvelos Georgios and the Deputy Mayor Mr. Tsaparis Ioannis, the presidents and members of the Association of Tourism Enterprises of Zagori, the Association of Tourist Enterprises of Monodentri and the Association of Papigo Professionals ,as well as other professionals and residents of Zagori and other neighboring areas such as Metsovo and Nestorio (Kastoria). The Mayor Mr. Soukouvelos opened the event with a short greeting and briefly referred to the difficulties that are faced by local companies due to the pandemic, and the efforts of the Municipality to support them, as well as in continuous cooperation with EPIRUS S.A. for the development and promotion of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark but also of the Municipality of Zagori in general.

From EPIRUS S.A., the members of the Board of Directors Mr. Rokkou Eleni and Mr. Exarchou Elsa, as well as the executives Georgia Kitsaki, Aristotelis Stagikas and Haritakis Papaioannou were present, who in collaboration with the representative of LIME Technology IKE Mr.Christos Bellos presented the THEMA project, implemented within the INTERREG Greece-Albania Program 2014-2020. One of the actions of the project, which has already been completed, concerns the design and development of three thematic routes, with various objects concerning culture, health-wellness and local products but also geology, the route of which is cyclically developed and includes the whole area of □□Vikos-Aoos Geopark. Their presentation is made with the use of new technologies, “smart tools”, such as mobile applications, which are already in operation. The pioneering element in this case, in addition to the presentation of the area, lies in the possibility of interaction of businesses and visitors-users through a game (gamification) that delivers virtual and physical rewards, which can be registered by interested companies.

In the second part of the event, the executives of EPIRUS SA developed the idea but also the way through which the active and voluntary participation of the local community in the promotion and development of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark can be achieved. This is about the activation through the foundation of two Networks: the Network of Volunteers and the Network of Collaborating Enterprises of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark, which aim at mobilizing civil society and the business community and involving them in the sustainable development of the region in accordance with the principles of the UNESCO Global Geoparks.

This event marked the beginning of the creation of the two Networks. Those interested can register in the Network of Volunteers and the Network of Collaborating Enterprises through the website of Vikos-Aoos Geopark . EPIRUS S.A., as the Body Management of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark, will schedule additional meetings with the members of the Networks during

which the guidelines for the operation of the networks will be jointly prepared.

EPIRUS S.A. intends to organize corresponding events and initiatives, which will concern the Vikos-Aoos Geopark in the area of Konitsa, in collaboration with the Municipality of Konitsa in the near future.





EUROPEAN GEOPARKS WEEK 2020

PRESS RELEASE, 6/18/2020

Training seminar for the Vikos-Aoos Geopark in the framework of the European Geoparks Week, Saturday 13 June 2020

Vikos Aoos Geopark as a member of the UNESCO Global Geoparks network participates in the “European Geoparks Week” with the online promotion and general promotion of the area, as well as with an intensive Geology seminar in the highlands of Mount Tymfi. In this context and taking all the necessary measures due to the coronavirus pandemic, students of Konitsa IEK with the specialty “Mountain escorts” with their instructors, as well as collaborators of the Laboratory of Geographical and Environmental Education of the University of Ioannina participated in the geological topic “Limestones and glaciers in the highlands of Tymfi” that took place on Saturday, June 13, 2020. The route followed was “Mikro Papigo – Astraka refuge – Drakolimni”. The 22 participants had the opportunity to learn about the unique geological history of the area and especially about the geological phenomena that took place in the relatively recent past, whose “evidence” is scattered all around the area and can be observed, such as the remnants of the last glaciers. The presentation of geology and geotopes was made by Mr. Panagiotis Paschos Dr. Geologist of IGME Periphery Unit of Epirus and supplemented with data of the wider natural environment by Mr. Haritakis Papaioannou, Dr. Biologist / EPIRUS SA.

The knowledge gained by the participants from this seminar is valuable. With the methodical and successful actions of the geopark, on the one hand, the first generation of Geo-guides is created, which is expected to contribute to the fuller information of the visitors of the area, and on the other hand, the educational material created for the first time by the University of Ioannina is enriched. The actions for the

Vikos-Aoos Global Geopark are carried out in the framework of the cooperation of Development Epirus SA with the Region of Epirus. European Geoparks Week: In June of each year, the 74 European UNESCO World Geoparks simultaneously carry out a series of activities to promote their areas. These actions are always carried out under a different slogan and are part of the “European Geoparks Week”. 2020 is a difficult year in many ways due to the coronavirus pandemic. On the other hand, having in mind that 2020 corresponds on the one hand to the 20 years of the establishment of the European Geoparks Network and on the other hand to the 10 years of the establishment of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark, it was not possible for the geoparks to remain completely inactive. Thus, the central motto for this year in the framework of European Geoparks Week is “UNESCO Global Geoparks – areas of resilience” and more specifically for Greece and Cyprus “Greece-Cyprus UNESCO Global Geoparks: Discover safe natural and cultural monuments”, suggesting the special value but also the dynamics of these areas to “resist” serious disorders, one of which is this year’s coronavirus pandemic. In this context, all the geoparks were adapted to the existing conditions and it was decided that the majority of all relevant actions be done online, with a few exceptions, assessing the situation locally each time, as was done for this seminar in the Tymfi highlands. The relevant projection-promotion material (video-spot, posters, etc.) is already being formed. We hope that a new cycle of actions will follow with the initiative of the Vikos – Aoos Global Geopark for the awareness of the local citizens.


VIKOS AOOS
GEOPARK
Experience with safety
UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS in GREECE and CYPRUS
natural and cultural monuments
United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization
Vikos - Aoos
UNESCO
Global Geopark
ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΙΑΚΗ
ΗΠΕΙΡΟΥ Α.Ε.
Ανακαλύψτε με ασφάλεια
ΠΑΓΚΟΣΜΙΑ ΓΕΩΠΑΡΚΑ
UNESCO
ΕΛΛΑΔΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ
μνημεία της φύσης
και του πολιτισμού










ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΙΑΚΗ ΗΠΕΙΡΟΥ Α.Ε.
VIKOS AOOS GEOPARK
UNESCO
Εκπαιδευτικός, Επιστημονικός και Πολιτιστικός Οργανισμός των Ηνωμένων Εθνών
Βίκος - Αώος Παγκόσμιο Γεωπάρκο ΟΥΝΕΣΚΟ
Experience with safety natural and cultural monuments
Ανακαλύπτω με ασφάλεια μνημεία της φύσης και του πολιτισμού

EDUCATIONAL VISIT-SEMINAR FOR UNIVERSITY OF IOANNINA STUDENTS AT VIKOS-AOOS GEOPARK,25 OCTOBER 2019

On Sunday, October 20, 2019, an educational visit-seminar for students of the University of Ioannina took place at the Vikos-Aoos Geopark as part of the acquaintance events of the members of the wider local community (Universities, associations, etc.) with the Geopark. The participating students had the opportunity throughout the day to learn the secrets of the Geopark on issues related to geo-diversity and biodiversity.

Specialized geologists from the Geopark presented to the students the peculiarities of geomorphology,hydrogeology and geology of the western part of the Geopark from the junction of the rivers Aoos and Voidomatis in the plain of Konitsa to the straits and the valley of the Sarandaporos river with its tributaries, as well as the unique geological phenomenon of Amarantos thermal vapors.

Similarly, biologists and environmentalists, professors of the University of Ioannina, presented to the students the unique ecosystems of this whole area and especially the vegetation units and the rare flora and fauna from invertebrates to large mammals. During this educational visit-seminar the students had the opportunity to walk on dirt roads and authentic old paths and to delve into the peculiarities of mountain rivers, oak and black pine forests as well as mountain lakes and their special fauna.

At the same time, they were informed about the efforts made at local level for the development of the alternative tourism and especially hiking tourism, after walking a small part of the long path “Epirus Trail”. In addition, in the little free time they had, those who made it due lack of time, got a taste of the relaxing and healing properties of Amarantos Steam Baths.

The educational trip-seminar was attended by 45 students of the University of Ioannina from six different departments / schools (Biological Applications and Technology, Primary Education, Medicine,Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics).

The thematic units of the seminar were developed by the professors of U.O.I Mrs. Vasiliki Kati (Department of Biological Applications and Technologies – Biodiversity Laboratory), Mr. Konstantinos
Gavrilakis (Department of Primary Education – Laboratory of Geographical & Environmental Education), the Head of the Hellenic Geological Survey & Mining Research, Mr. Evangelos Nikolaou, Dr. Hydrogeologist and the Head of the Structure of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark / EPIRUS SA Mr. Haritakis Papaioannou Dr. Biologist.

The educational visit-seminar was organized by EPIRUS SA, as the management body of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark, with the participation of the University of Ioannina (Department of Biological Applications & Technology), the Hellenic Geological and Mineral Research Authority (IGME) and with the support of the Epirus Region.

It is noted that this is the first time that such an event is held, which is part of the implementation of the Geopark’s strategy – as part of the UNESCO Global Geoparks – for the understanding of its special features and values by members of the wider local community.










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WORKING MEETING BETWEEN VIKOS-AOOS GEOPARK AND SAUERLAND- ROTHAARGEBIRGE NATURAL PARK OF WESTFALIA

PRESS RELEASE

Meeting between Vikos-Aoos Geopark and Sauerland-Rothaargebirge Natural Park of Westphalia.

Ioannina 23/10/2019

14-17 October 2019, a working meeting was held between representatives of the management body of the Sauerland-Rothaargebirge Natural Park of Westphalia and EPIRUS SA, as the management body of the Vikos Aoos Geopark. The purpose of the meeting was the final definition of the framework of cooperation between the bodies of the two areas (Geopark – Natural Park) according to a defined agenda of issues and specific financial tools.

The arrival of the representatives of the Natural Park and the consequent meeting comes as a follow-up to previous working visits, which took place during June 2018 and June 2019 in Greece and Germany respectively.

The meeting was attended by the director and deputy director of the Sauerland-Rothaargebirge Natural Park, Mr. Detlef Lins and Georg Schmitz, and the director of the LEADER LAG of the Sorpesee area, Mr. Morgenbrod Lars. From the Greek side, the director and executives of EPIRUS SA participated: Mr. Gerasimos Papailias, director, Mr. Charitakis Papaioannou, Head of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark, Mr. Aristotelis Stagikas and Mrs.Georgia Kitsaki scientific staff of Vikos-Aoos Geopark / European Programs Team and Elias Mokos CLLD LEADER Program Coordinator.The meeting was also attended by Ms. Gabriela Scheiner on behalf of the Hellenic-German Assembly, who encourages and supports from the beginning this cooperation.

During the meeting between the two areas, cooperation issues were discussed in terms of the management structure of the two areas as a natural park / geopark, the further development of alternative tourism, the optimization of services and information to visitors (eg, Information Centers, routes, etc.), the implementation of visitor counting systems, the promotion of local products, the operation and implementation of the LEADER program in the two areas, etc.

In particular, it was decided to submit proposals in transnational programs and specifically in CLLD LEADER on the

subject of cycling and hiking tourism in the two areas and ERASMUS on the exchange of experts, such as professionals in the field of alternative tourism (eg eco-guides) as well as young people (eg students) from both countries in order to improve their knowledge and skills. It was also decided to further explore the possibility of submitting proposals in other European funding programmes, in addition to the two mentioned above.

At the same time, with the participation of Ms. Sofia Fouki, Head of the Tourism Department of the Epirus Region, the promotion of local products of the Geopark to the Municipalities of the Sauerland-Rothaargebirge Natural Park was discussed through a well-known chain of department stores in Germany (super markets) with which the Natural Park maintains excellent cooperation.

The guests, accompanied by executives of EPIRUS SA / Geopark Vikos-Aoos visited the two Municipalities of the Geopark, Zagori and Konitsa and met with the Mayors and members of the Boards of Municipalities as well as with producers of local products.

The working meeting took place in the framework of the development strategy of cooperation of the Vikos-Aoos Geopark with other areas with similar characteristics in Europe.


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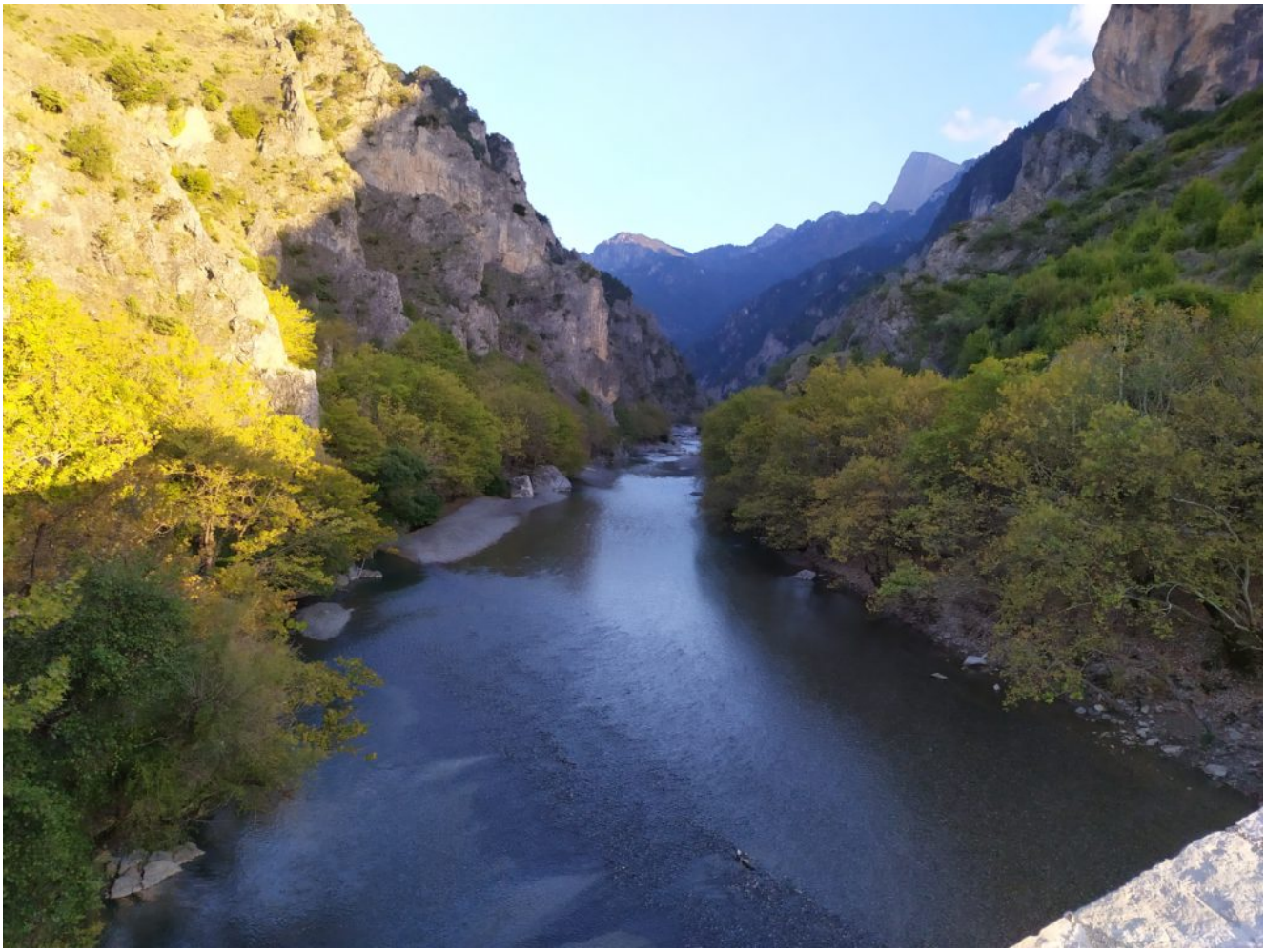












PARTICIPATION OF VIKOS-AOOS GEOPARK IN THE 15TH EUROPEAN UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS CONFERENCE

Vikos-Aoos Geopark, as a member of the UNESCO Global Geoparks, participated in the 44th Meeting of Steering Committee of the European Geoparks Network and in the 15th European Global Geoparks Conference, held at Sierra Norte de Seville UNESCO Global Geopark, from 23 to September 27, 2019.

We were given the opportunity, as in all our international participations, to have meetings with colleagues from other Geoparks, to learn about the practices and management of their Geoparks and how we can take advantage of all this experience that has been developed in Global Geoparks.

The large family of Geoparks grows every year.There are 147 UNESCO Geoparks in 41 countries,75 of them in Europe. Hundreds of geoscientists, scientists of other specialties and staff of Geoparks from all over the world
presented their activities in geodiversity, geo-education and sustainable development. We exchanged views, participated in a workshop and discussed for future collaborations with other Greek and European Geoparks. We renewed our date of meeting for March 2020 at the 45th Coordination Meeting of the European Geoparks Network at Papuk UNESCO Global Geopark of Croatia.






44th EGN COORDINATION
EUROPEAN GEOPARKS
COMMITTEE MEETING
15th EUROPEAN GEOPARKS CONFERENCE
44th EGN Coordination Committee Meeting
Natural Park Sierra Norte de Sevilla
UNESCO Global Geopark
Geoparks: memory of Earth, Future for People


EUROPEAN
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GEOPARKS



COOPERATION BETWEEN VIKOS-AOOS GEOPARK-UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK WITH UNIVERSITY OF PRAGUE,CZECH REPUBLIC

A multi-day educational visit of 45 students with their professors from Chech University of Life Sciences,Prague .was successfully held on period 10-14/09/2019 at the Vikos-Aoos Geopark.

The visit took place in the framework of the Memorandum of

Cooperation signed between the University of Prague and EPIRUS SA, as the management body of Vikos Aoos Geopark and concerns the cooperation in the implementation of the summer school entitled “Mountain Ecology and Conservation” which focuses on ecology, conservation, management,biodiversity and geodiversity of extensive mountain complexes, such as Vikos-Aoos Geopark.

The 45 students during their short visit that remained in our area crossed the Aoos gorge in two parallel mountaineering routes, climbed to Drakolimni, climbed to Astraka, they crossed the Vikos gorge and walked along the Voidomatis river. Representatives of the Geopark in the context of bilateral cooperation accomanied them, providing useful information and knowledge about geology,biodiversity and the rich history of the Geopark as part of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Network.




VANS







The Workshop on “GLOBAL UNESCO Geoparks» organized by the Region of Epirus in cooperation with the Vikos – Aoos Geopark and Epirus S.A was completed

ΔΕΛΤΙΟ ΤΥΠΟΥ

Completed Conference:

“Global Geoparks Unesco», organized by the Region of Epirus in cooperation with the Geopark Vikos – Aoos and Epirus SA

Ioannina 6.14.16 – With great success the conference organized by the Region of Epirus in cooperation with the Geopark Vikos – Aoos and Epirus SA entitled “Global Geoparks Unesco». The event was held Friday, June 10, 2016 at Hotel Du Lac Ioannina.

The event, which was attended by many people and several representatives of local and regional bodies, short speeches were given as follows: the Zagoria Mayor. Spiros, Deputy Mayor Konitsa Mr. Kallinteri, the Head of the Regional Unit Epirus IGME Mr. Nicholas and President Management Agency National Parks of Vikos – Aoos and Pindos, Mr. pullover.

Followed by the President of the Greek National Commission for UNESCO greetings, Ms Catherine Marias- Papachristopoulou-Tzitzikosta and the Region of Epirus, Mr. Kachrimanis.

The first part of the event was sealed with the signing of a Memorandum of Mutual Understanding and Cooperation between the Region of Epirus and the Greek National Commission for UNESCO. The signing of the Memorandum was made by the Regional Director Mr. Alexander Kachrimanis and the President of the Greek National Commission for UNESCO Ms. Maria- Catherine Papachristopoulou- Tzitzikosta.

The purpose of the MoU is to strengthen the conditions for promotion of the region as politistikou- tourist destination through the projection-promoting Geopark Vikos-Aoos and all cultural monuments and features of Epirus. The Region of Epirus, is the second region, after Attica, signed a memorandum of cooperation with Unesco.

Followed by a speech by Mr. Zourou, Professor of the Aegean University and President of Geoparks Global Network on the European and Global Geoparks Network and the new «Unesco Global Geoparks» program, which are introduced from November 2015 all existing Geoparks are members of over Network.

The second part of the event began with the presentation of the unique geological features and designated geotopes of Vikos Aoos Geopark by IGME geologist Mr. Easter. The speech by Mr. Peraki for the fledgling Geopark Sitia, Ms Koumoutsou for Geopark Chelmou- Vouraikos and Mr. Zourou for Geopark of Lesvos. The event ended with the presentation of actions for the promotion of Vikos Aoos Geopark, which took place in recent years through the development of thematic routes of executives Epirus SA- Mr. And Mrs. Papaioannou Kitsakis followed by constructive discussion active public participation.

At the end of the event-tour visited Mr. Zourou, escort representatives of the Geopark in the Vikos-Aoos Geopark Information Center of Papigo and in selected thematic routes, in order to learn about the recent promotion actions of the Geopark area.

Paleoseli – mountain Refuge-Drakolimni (Dragonlake)of Smolikas-Agia Paraskevi (Kerasovo)

Starting Point: Paleoseli.

End: Agia Paraskevi (Kerasovo).

Trail distance: 17 km.

Duration: 8 hours.

Altitude scale: 1.000 m. – 2.200 m.

– 1050 m.

Route type: path (partly dirt road).

Signage: good.

Degree of difficulty: high.

Points of interest: the Drakolimni of Smolikas, the view to the northern cliffs of Timfi mt, the view to the high peak of Smolikas (2.637 m), the subalpine plateaus, the Bosnian pine forests.

Remarks: A path leads to the highest peak (2.637 m) of Smolikas mt in 1 hour and 30 minutes hike from the Drakolimni. A mountain refuge is located along the path (alt. 1.800 m). A similar trail starts form the nearby village of Pades.

Konitsa-Trapezitsa

Starting Point: Konitsa (Agios Athanasios chapel).

End: Trapezitsa peak.

Trail distance: 5 km.

Duration: 4 hours.

Altitude scale: 900 m. – 2.022 m.

Route type: path.

Signage: rough.

Degree of difficulty: very high.

Points of interest: the view to the Aoos gorge as well as to Konitsa plain and to Timfi, Smolikas, Grammos and Nemertsika mts.

Vrisohori-Holy Monastery of Agia Triada

Starting Point: Vrisohori.

End: Holy Monastery of Agia Triada.

Trail distance: 6,5 km.

Duration: 3 hours.

Altitude scale: 990 m. – 940 m.

Route type: path (forest path in some parts).

Signage: rough.

Degree of difficulty: medium.

Points of interest: Vrisohori village (churches and bridges), Holy Monastery of Agia Triada (1667), the view of the northeastern part of Timfi mt.