



PRESS RELEASE

The First 100 IUGS Geological Heritage Sites to be announced in October

Zumaia (Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark), home of one of the most impressive stratigraphic outcrops on Earth, will host in October the presentation of The First 100 IUGS Geological Heritage Sites

Zumaia /26.09.2022. The International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) is one of the World's largest scientific organizations with 121 national members representing over a million geoscientists. It is celebrating its 60th anniversary and the main IUGS 60th Anniversary Event will take place in Zumaia, Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark (Spain) with the presentation of *The First 100 IUGS Geological Heritage Sites* list. This announcement will kick off an endeavor to designate geological sites from around the world that are iconic, recognized by all geoscience community for their impact in understanding the Earth and its history.

The scientific community has long demanded the establishment of a global program with global standards for the recognition of geological heritage sites of high international importance. *The First 100 IUGS Geological Heritage Sites* is a great milestone that will inspire the work of this ambitious program.

An IUGS Geological Heritage Site is a key place with geological elements and/or processes of scientific international relevance, used as a reference, and/or with a substantial contribution to the development of geological sciences through history.

More than 200 specialists from almost 40 nations and ten international organisations, representing different disciplines of Earth Sciences, have participated in the definition of standards and the selection of candidates. 181 candidates from 56 countries were proposed and were evaluated by 33 international experts. The result of this challenging and collaborative

process is the list of the First 100 IUGS Geological Heritage Sites that will be presented by most of the authors in Zumaia. The final program of the event is available at <https://geoparkea.eus/iugs-globalgeosites>

IUGS recognition of Geological Heritage Sites gives visibility to those sites. It identifies them as being of the highest scientific value. They are sites that served to develop the science of geology, particularly its early history. They are the world's best demonstrations of geologic features and processes. They are the sites of fabulous discoveries of the Earth and its history. Their visibility is greatly enhanced by IUGS recognition. Some of the sites are classic and known to almost all geologists and general public, but few geologists know most of the sites because of their diverse types and geographic settings.

The announcement of the "First 100" and the attractive book and webpage will lead to many of the sites becoming known for the first time to large numbers of geologists and the public. Interest in individual sites will increase as will geo-visitors. Many of the "First 100" are well protected in national parks, geoparks, and natural reserves, but many are not. Recognition and visibility of the "First 100" IUGS Geological Heritage Sites can lead to their further appreciation, to their use as educational resources, and, most importantly, to their preservation.

The "First 100" aspires to be a memorable event that culminates in a spectacular celebration on October 25-28th in Zumaia, Basque Coast UGGp. Registration is available in www.geoparkea.eus/iugs-globalgeosites. We hope to see you soon. Save the dates!
