

## Geopark Visitor Code of Ethics

Among the primary responsibilities of all geoparks is the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, with a particular emphasis on the preservation of significant geological phenomena. Managers strive to educate visitors about the value of geological sites and to raise awareness about the importance of geodiversity protection by taking appropriate measures.

To ensure their own safety and to minimise their impact on the natural environment, all visitors to the geopark must follow a list of permitted activities and restrictions, as well as a simple code of conduct.

### RESPECT NATURE.

#### **Learn about inanimate nature and help to preserve it by following geoethics rules.**

Find information about geological and geomorphological values and protected areas. Do not damage or collect rocks, minerals, or fossils. In caves, never break, damage, or remove a flowstone (stalactites, crystals, cave pearls) or other cave inventory. Only collect geological material where permitted and regulated. Inform the Visitor Centre if you believe you have discovered something of geological significance.

**Learn about living nature and how you can help to preserve it.** Find information on protected animals, plants, and habitats. Don't pick plants, chase animals, or collect them. Do not interfere with dens, nests, nesting grounds, or animal feeding areas. Do not introduce any non-native plants or animals. Only gather plants, mushrooms, and wild fruits where it is legal and appropriate to do so.

**Don't disturb the animals.** By talking, you can alert the animals to your presence and allow them to flee. Stay away from any domestic or wild animals and do not feed them. Dogs must be kept on a leash or under strict supervision. Don't make noise.

**Walk on the designated paths.** Stick to hiking trails to reduce your impact on nature while also ensuring your safety. Respect the no-trespassing policy. If you must cross cultivated land, walk along the edge.

**Enter the caves in accordance with the rules.** Enter only freely accessible, open caves, and do not endanger the cave, its inventory, or the animals that live there. Enter tourist caves or caves with controlled entry only with an official and qualified guide.

**Do not leave any traces.** Take all of your rubbish with you and dispose of it in designated bins or local collection centres. Start a fire only in a properly marked area for burning and completely extinguish it before leaving. If there is a major fire hazard, follow the prohibition and do not start a fire.

### RESPECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

**Always be aware of your capabilities.** Plan your visit in advance and adapt it to the weather conditions, your capabilities, and knowledge. Make sure you have the proper footwear, clothing, and other equipment. Check that you have enough food and drink, as well as some extras.

**Respect the other visitors.** On the trails, give priority to those who are weaker than you. Hikers have priority over cyclists, and cyclists have priority over motorists.

**Take care of security.** Take care of your own safety and the safety of others around you. Keep a safe distance from the rock walls. Try to help others to the best of your ability, given your knowledge, judgement of the situation, and reaction to it, without compromising your own safety. In the event of an accident, call 112 and follow the instructions.

**Only drive and cycle on designated roads.** When driving or riding a bicycle, always stay on designated roads or paths. Remember that driving in a natural environment is subject to restrictions.

**Park in the parking lots.** Always park in designated areas, taking care not to obstruct paths or crossings. Set a good example for others.

## **RESPECT PROPERTY.**

**Make sure you don't violate property rights.** Avoid walking through cultivated fields, crops, vineyards, orchards, or close to apiaries. Without the owner's permission, do not harvest fruit, agricultural produce, or wood. Close the gate to the grazing fences in case you need to open it.

**Avoid construction sites.** Avoid areas where forestry work is being done. A visit to a working quarry or mine (during or after hours of operation) is only permitted with the permission of the managers and is subject to the conditions they specify.

## **RESPECT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.**

**Get to know and respect local customs.** During your visit, learn about local customs. Take them into consideration and respect them; support the local community by purchasing local products and using local services. In this way, you are helping to preserve the cultural landscape and nature.

In short, there are two simple rules to follow: don't take anything out of the geopark except your impressions and photos, and don't leave any traces.