



“600 Million years of Nature wonders to discover...”

Report 3 November 2006

Olá/Hola/Ciao/Hello

It was a rainy November. After years facing dryness, now the dams are full and there is water running everywhere, creating beautiful waterfalls in every stream. Of course, with all this rain and storms there were no best conditions to do outdoor activities. Nevertheless, November was strong for promotion of the new Geopark outside and inside the territory. There were important tourism events taking place in Spain, one of our targets to promote the Portuguese Geopark. Moreover, training of tourism technicians from all municipalities continued in the field. The importance of deeply knowing the territory and become closer to local communities and authorities started a new project that continues through 2007: Open Geology. The project is simple: 1) create a geo-referenced database platform with all the tourism resources Geopark Naturtejo have; 2) continue to inventory and study the geosites in order to define development plans; 3) meet local authorities and exchange ideas with the communities to strength the Geopark concept in every municipalities creating tighter working relationships and new projects to supply Geopark problems and needs. “Always in action” is the motto of the Geopark team.

1) Activities



2, 9, 15, 23rd November – **Course on**

Implementation of a Tourist Quality Management System in Geopark Naturtejo – Field visits to Idanha-a-Nova, Proença-a-Nova, Castelo Branco and Oleiros municipalities. In an important course for the territory, Rui Tomás Marques prepares 20 technicians related with tourism offices of the six municipalities for this new age of the Geopark Naturtejo. The main purposes are to deeply understand the EGN concept, to exchange knowledge and working habits with visits to all the territory and to homogenise practises, promotional strategies and tourism offices. During this course started field visits to each municipality in order to understand the tourist resources, accommodation, handcraft and restaurant quality and programming performance. Carlos Neto de Carvalho presented the Geopark philosophy and geomonuments (natural and cultural tourism resources) in Idanha-a-Nova, Proença-a-Nova, Castelo Branco and Oleiros municipalities. Lots of rain during these days did not stop the enthusiasm of the participants.

10th – **Presentation of a CD collection about traditional music of Idanha with the support of Geopark Naturtejo.** In the Tourism office of Penha Garcia was presented the CD collection Song book “Lands of Idanha – a sonorous landscape”, the result of a deep search for traditional songs in the Idanha-a-Nova municipality. Armindo Jacinto and Geopark Naturtejo supported this project.



10-21st November – **Inventory of the**

Geological Heritage and Tourism Resources of Nisa. Now that Geopark Naturtejo is one of the EGN members it is even more urgent to understand deeply the tourist resources we have in the territory as well as all geosites and their characteristics in order to manage them in the benefit of local communities and geosciences. For 12 days Carlos Neto de Carvalho travelled all Nisa municipality making cartography of tourism resources with GPS and searching and studying geosites. 45 geosites were identified in Nisa using ProGEO - Portugal inventory criteria. In the beginning of December they will be presented to the public and authorities of Nisa, and send to ProGEO as proposal to integrate the Portuguese Geological Heritage.

12th November – **Environment train of the League for Protection of Nature.** With the support of CP, this year the Environment train came from Lisbon to Castelo Branco and to Geopark Naturtejo with the subject “Desertification”. With a strong impact in the main national media this event bring together scientists, politicians and children in the same train to discuss the problem of human exodus, land abandonment, fires and soil erosion. To finish the day all visit Gardunha mountain to overview Geopark Naturtejo beauties and problems.

14-16th November – **Road-show Extremadura in main Spanish cities close to the Geopark Naturtejo.** With the strong support of Geopark Naturtejo, Agency for Promotion of the Centre Region prepared several workshops in Spanish important cities bordering or close to the Geopark Naturtejo. Jesus Alarcon, delegate of Geopark Naturtejo for Spain, participated in those workshops prepared in Sevilla, Cáceres and Badajoz to promote tourism.

16th November - **Course on Implementation of a Tourist Quality Management System in Geopark Naturtejo – Seminar on Restaurants in the Geopark.** As an action for implementing a tourism management quality system for the Geopark territory, Rui Marques prepared a seminar about restaurants in Oleiros. Besides him participated also

Armindo Jacinto, the mayors of Oleiros and Nisa, José Marques and Gabriela Tsukamoto, as well as local investors.

17th November – **General meeting of the Association for Studies of High Tejo.** Carlos Neto de Carvalho participated in the management meeting of this local association, one of the most important ones in the Geopark Naturtejo. Since 30 years ago this youth and environmental association do activities in the area of Geopark Naturtejo mainly concerning archaeology. Besides, many of outdoor nature activities, cartography of endangered species and environmental workshops in Vila Velha de Ródão municipality are the result of a very dynamical and enthusiastic group of people. Carlos Neto de Carvalho was voted effective associate emphasizing the crucial importance of cooperation between Geopark Naturtejo and local associations for the development of the territory. Planning activities for 2007 of ASHT will have an important help from Geopark Naturtejo to promote them at national and international level.

23-26th November – **Participation of the Geopark Naturtejo in Spanish Tourism fairs.** Jesús Alarcón, Fátima Rodrigues and Pedro Martins represented Geopark Naturtejo in two tourism fairs in Spain, the important Intur in the city of Valladolid, as well as Fehispor in Badajoz, a Spanish-Portuguese fair. This participation resulted from a strong cooperation between Naturtejo and the Promotional Agency of the Centre Region, a governmental tourism institution for promotion of tourism.

24th November – **Thermalism Meeting in Nisa.** Armindo Jacinto and Rui Marques were invited to participate in this meeting to show the importance of the thermal springs and hydrotherapy for health tourism in the Geopark Naturtejo. Notice that one week before Armindo Jacinto and Rui Marques presented the Geopark Naturtejo project to the hotel owners and managers from Monfortinho thermal springs, Idanha-a-Nova, the most relevant hotel density and tourism business in the Geopark Naturtejo.



26th November – **Trail of the olive oil.** This walking around the beautiful and ancient village of Proença-a-Velha closed the season of

trekking activities in Idanha-a-Nova. Always organized by Idanha's tourism office with the strong cooperation of Geopark Naturtejo through Armindo Jacinto and Carlos Neto de Carvalho, this year the program of trekking activities and thematic visits organized 21 events with more than 800 participants. This time, Carlos Neto de Carvalho was the responsible for the event that joined more than 90 people to talk about olive and to walk from the old olive tree fields to the local museum dedicated to olive press technologies. The parish mayor, Sr. Francisco was the guide for a visit inside this old village that once was municipality and has many important churches. At the end of the walking, there was for all traditional food with the rhythm of local musicians. As usual, Armindo Jacinto's speech spread the importance of our Geopark to all the participants coming from every country.

2) Geopark's Impact in Media

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7th November – Portugal Directo news in RTP1 (national TV) – A special interview of 30 minutes live from Tejo's Arts and Culture Manor at Vila Velha de Ródão, about the protection and promotion of the Portas do Ródão Natural Monument, with the main interventions of Carlos Neto de Carvalho for the Geopark Naturtejo, the president of Vila Velha de Ródão municipality, Maria do Carmo Sequeira and the responsible for Tourism and Environment of the Municipality of Nisa, Fátima Moura, Associação de Estudos do Alto Tejo environmental and youth association leaders and tourist companies.

Radio

4th November – Onda Cero daily program “Gente viajera” for Spain (national broadcast). Jesus Alarcón, Delegate for Spain of Geopark Naturtejo, talked during 30 minutes about the integration of GNMM in the GGN and EGN and its heritage relevance for the development of tourism in this region of Portugal.

24th November – Intur e la Onda broadcasting for Castilla-Léon. Jesus Alarcón, Delegate for Spain of Geopark Naturtejo, talked in a special radio talk-show directly from Valladolid tourism fair about Geopark Naturtejo potentialities for tourism.

Newspapers

October (Boletim Municipal de Nisa) – “Nisa in UNESCO Network”

October (Boletim Informativo da Associação de Estudos do Alto Tejo) – “Portas do Ródão Natural Monument”

October (Ensino Magazine) – “UNESCO integrates Naturtejo”

October (Boletim Informativo da Associação de Estudos do Alto Tejo) – “Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional – UNESCO European and Global Geopark”



Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional – UNESCO European and Global Geopark

October (Viajar Magazine) – “Geopark Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional classified by UNESCO”

18th October (Jornal de Nisa) – “Naturtejo belongs to UNESCO Global Network”

18th October (Jornal de Nisa) – “Geopark Naturtejo is a fine example of convergence of efforts”

November (O Concelho de Vila Velha de Ródão, 1st page) – “Geopark Naturtejo in the UNESCO Geoparks Network”

November (Viajar Magazine) – “Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional classified by UNESCO”

1st November (Gazeta do Interior) – “Penha Garcia celebrates 750 years of age”

2nd November (Reconquista) – “Penha Garcia makes 750 years of age”

2nd November (Jornal do Fundão) – “Penha Garcia celebrates 750 years of age”

23rd November (Reconquista) – “Restoration in Geopark”

3) Publications

Scientific

- NETO DE CARVALHO, C. – Roller coaster behavior in the *Cruziana rugosa* group from Penha Garcia (Portugal): implications for the feeding program of trilobites. *Ichnos*, **13(4)**: 255-265.

Promotional

- NETO DE CARVALHO, C. – Geopark Naturtejo da Meseta Meridional – UNESCO European and Global Geopark. *Boletim Informativo da Associação de Estudos do Alto Tejo*, **42/43**: 5-6.

- VIANA, C. & REGO, P. - *Terras de Idanha – Uma Paisagem Sonora*. Câmara Municipal de Idanha-a-Nova, package of 6 CD's.



Photo Geopark of the month – “The joy of living” (Mrs. Ana Maria Pinto from Proença-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, during a trekking activity “Trail of the olive oil”)