

ZONGULDAK COAL GEOPARK

Zonguldak Coal Geopark is a designated area that spans 3,502 km², encompassing the administrative borders of Zonguldak and a two-kilometer section on the sea side. The main goal of the Geopark is to introduce and promote the geological, natural, cultural, and industrial heritage values of the region, while also raising awareness about the importance of protecting and preserving these values for future generations.

Zonguldak Coal Geopark, whose first studies date back to 2018, was institutionalized in 2021 under the organization of Zonguldak Tourism Infrastructure Service Union (ZONTAB). In 2022, an application was made to the UNESCO Global Geopark Network and the title of “global aspiring geopark” and “national geopark” was obtained in the same year.

The Zonguldak Coal Geopark actively pursues its mission to promote regional and sustainable development through scientific research, educational initiatives and a range of other activities, all towards the ultimate goal of becoming a member of the UNESCO Global Geopark Network, supported by the presence of 50 actual and 59 potential geosites across the Geopark’s extensive territory.

The establishment of Zonguldak Coal Geopark provides a significant platform for raising awareness about the geological, natural, cultural, and industrial heritage values of the region, thereby enhancing their reputation and affording them the deserved recognition both nationally and internationally level. This increased awareness will play a vital role in effectively preserving these critical elements for future generations.

The Zonguldak Coal Geopark represents a prestigious and respected initiative that is expected to make a significant contribution to the economic and social development as well as sustainable development of Zonguldak at the national level. Furthermore, the Geopark will significantly enhance Turkey’s reputation, provide dynamism and support international integration.

Our Strategic Priorities

The strategic priorities of Zonguldak Coal Geopark are as follows;

- To ensure the promotion and branding of Zonguldak
- To ensure local people love the world and the region they live in
- To raise awareness and take necessary measures for combating disasters and climate change.
- To foster a collaborative and collective approach
- To ensure sustainable development

Our Goals

The priority objectives of Zonguldak Coal Geopark are as follows;

- **Branding:** To become a member of the UNESCO Global Geopark Network
- **Scientific Studies:** To reveal the important values of the region through scientific studies
- **Education:** Helping all members of society get to know the earth
- **Conservation:** Instilling in people an awareness of protecting the earth
- **Local Unity:** Ensuring local unity within the scope of Zonguldak Coal Geopark and developing a culture of joint action

- **Awareness:** Creating awareness and consciousness in the community about the world and the region they live in, disasters and climate change
- **Sustainable Development:** Supporting local production, women’s participation in economic activities and tourism development
- **Entrepreneurship:** Inspiring local people and producers, diversifying jobs and sources of income



Mevreni Rocks (Devonian)

UNESCO Global Geoparks

UNESCO Global Geoparks have become increasingly recognized worldwide for their significant contributions to protecting the earth, promoting sustainable development, and engaging communities in social participation. The geoparks are defined as unified geographic areas with clear boundaries that are managed using an integrated approach to promote the region to the rest of the world while supporting local development.

Currently, the UNESCO Global Geopark Network includes 177 geoparks from 46 countries. Kula-Salihli UNESCO Global Geopark, located in the Manisa region, is the Türkiye's first and only geopark to receive this prestigious designation.

Zonguldak Coal Geopark

The Zonguldak Coal Geopark boasts numerous geological, natural, cultural, and industrial heritage sites that hold significant value both nationally and internationally. Some of the prominent features of the Zonguldak Coal Geopark include:

- 500 million years of geological records.
- 350- 325 million years old hard

coal and the rocks in which it was deposited, which are found in very few places in Europe and Asia.

- Home to Sofular Cave, which preserves the climate records of Turkey and the Middle East for the last 700 thousand years.
- Due to its karstic structure, it has dozens of large and small caves and living ecosystems such as bats live in the caves.
- Home to the world's and Turkey's oldest yew tree community.
- Natural old-growth forests and a rich habitat.
- Boasts a 200-year history of hard coal mining and a significant industrial heritage.
- Home to Türkiye's first mining school and the first interconnected power plant
- Home to Turkey's only "Mining Museum" and "Experience Pit of Coal" where visitors can experience mining.
- Zonguldak Mining Museum is part of the European Industrial Heritage Route (ERIH) and offer a unique glimpse into the region's mining history.
- Ancient settlements dating back to 6,500 years ago from today.
- Many gastronomic values and geographically indicated products.

Geosites

A geosite is a location with unique geological features that is of significant scientific, educational, or cultural value. Geosites can include areas with important fossil beds, unique rock formations, geological formations resulting from volcanoes, earthquake faults, or other natural geological phenomena. They can also include sites that are important for scientific research, such as those that provide evidence for past climate change or plate tectonic movements. Many geosites are also popular tourist destinations, as they offer a window into the natural history and geology of a region.



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