



IGCP 726 GEOfood for sustainable development in UNESCO Global Geoparks

YEAR II Research

METHODOLOGIES on GEOfood assessment, implementation and results

Introduction

Based on the scientific results of objective 1, objective 2 creates the guidelines for further practical actions. This takes the form of a set of methodologies, not only in the sense of formal documents, but also through innovative methods such as online assessment quizzes and checklists, all gathered in the toolkit. The information marked with an orange background will be part of the toolkit.

Methodology is viewed here as a systems of procedures which simplify and uniformise the way we do things (who does what in which order)

The methodology was created with a broad participation of all the scientists involved in the project. Following preliminary talks with Tuscan Mining, Las Loras and LH Finland, who are more advanced in the GEOfood implementation, several interviews and focus groups have been conducted. The final document was drafted during three online meetings with the project participants. The methodology is fully a group work and a common result.

The methodology consists in three parts, which are also three stages in the brand implementation process:

1. Assessment methodology

Creating an assessment methodology for the GEOfood potential of a particular area,

2. Implementation methodology

Creating an implementation methodology by offering a step by step guide for the implementation of GEOfood, including handbooks,

3. Evaluation methodology

Creating an evaluation methodology for quality assurance and standardised results which can be further compared between territories.

1. ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY - The preparation

It's addressed to the UGG's team and to the producers/providers

(Nonbureaucratic, simple, flexible!)

Actions

1. Read the **Manifesto¹ and Criteria and webpage** (documents and/or checklists)
2. Look into the **Baseline database (suggestions)** (document - database)
3. Have a clear view of the **local situation (mapping)** (examples)
 - a. networks of producers, restaurants, distributors, accommodations, schools
 - a. other local (program) labels
 - b. needs and opportunities

2. Discuss with the local actors (individual or groups)

Tip: use situations (events) when locals meet anyway, or organise special events for that, markets, special holidays etc.

3. Decide if GEOfood is useful for the geopark / the local actors

IF YES:

2. IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY - The cultivation

It's addressed to the UGG's team

Flexibility is very important!

A. Application to geofoodinternational@gmail.com and evaluation procedures-
www.geofood.no

1. Translate the **Manifesto and Criteria² and the Manual for the use of the brand** in your own language and make it available (website, social media) (texts)
2. Translate the flyers and make them available if it is not already, check here:
<https://geofood.no/about/our-values/> (website, social media) (editable templates)

Tip: simplify the interaction with the documents

3. Include a section about GEOfood and the LOGO in your webpage in both languages (GEOfood products and restaurants must be displayed in your Geopark webpage)

¹ Clearly laid out benefits / advantages (social, economic and environmental) would be helpful to discuss this opportunity with partners. Also good if those benefits are same/similar across of GEOfood Geoparks for consistency

² The texts of the Manifesto and Criteria need to be adjusted! <https://docs.google.com/document/d/15zLTTB8aNngN3Zqw6eMs-OldB9myxvnaFfajSls2uEA/edit>

4. Have a clear message about GEOfood and communicate it in a correct way³
5. Application procedure: personal contact, respect the national legal framework, visits, commitment (written or not) (procedure, flow chart)
6. Internal Evaluation of Applications for the local GEOfood members:
Model 1 - Geopark staff
Model 2 - Experts
Model 3 - Council of GEOfood member
Model 4 - mixed
Have a clear evaluation process (checklist)
7. Written agreement (model)

B. Product development

- introducing the geopark and geoh heritage to the GEOfood members - lectures, tours, presentations
- create the story: work closely together with the producers (staff members, geoscientists), use the examples from other GEOfood members. Checklist to help creating a story
- create the label, including GEOfood and Geopark logo, see Manual for the use of the brand
- update the local GEOfood partner related material: webpage, menus, etc.

C. Resources

- designated staff member (dedicated time) (can be an intern). Each Geopark must have one person who is in charge to pass information to the all team and coordinate the local GEOfood implementation.
- financial resources (printed materials, labels, plaques, meetings, seminars, follow up)
- use the brand to actively raise funds

³Clear message:

- GEOfood is not a quality brand alone, GEOfood is a quality brand thanks to the existence of UNESCO Global Geopark and all the values around it, the quality come from the check quality of UNESCO on the territory
- GEOfood is nothing to do with European quality brand, or organic labels, they are complementary and not in competition
- GEOfood main idea is to explain to people geological phenomena through food stories which can include culture, history, nature, but the main core is making geology close to people in a sustainable approach.
- GEOfood can be combined with already existing local-national labels
- GEOfood can be used in territories which are Biosphere and World Heritage AND UGG (if multide destination)

3. EVALUATION OF RESULTS METHODOLOGY - The feedback

To be created in Year 3 of the project

COMMENTS AND OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Developing the story (technics, models, styles)

- Meeting with potential partners and the Geopark geologist
- Eventual participation in a guided course to better understand the Geopark's main features.
- How do we develop the story? This could be nice to have inputs about it. several examples can be provided, the Geopark must have a key role in this within workshop for local producers, restaurants and expert in different field, good inspiration is the database developed
- Specialised workshops in storytelling -building must be planned by the Geopark across the year, while meeting the partners.
- Develop the story collecting knowledge from the potential partners and set up interpretation which combine geology, culture, landscape and food raw material in a simply understandable manner (understanding from 7 years old kid as reference)
- Implement the story on both webpages of the producers and of the Geopark
- Add the QR code or reference to the story ON the product and ON the menu in the restaurant.
- Labelling of the product- GEOfood visual identity

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1zZlygFC8eaW8O2YYixh4okDVTV_3HJp5

3. (When all the previous points have been achieved) Add-send the information of new partners on the GEOfood website

Form

https://docs.google.com/forms/u/3/d/1iec8GzMHOUwCYbJBIVeKXGvg3QvqZsuPts0DDSdVIQ0/edit?usp=drive_web

- Detailed explanation about the Company and about the product-menu
- Register by Company NOT by product
- Register only after the brand and storytelling is ready and visible.
- From the product-menu consumers must be able to get to the story, or read those on the package, it can be chosen but must be there
- Restaurants must have GEOfood brand on the menu with explanation about the use of the local sourced food OR in the menu OR , again, on the webpage, but then link or QR code must be on the menu,
- GEOfood brand must be visible on the wall of the producer or restaurant normally in connection with the Geopark logo

Comments from Niagara Aspiring Geopark:

1. Students at Niagara College in the Food Consumer Analytics course have designed a survey tool to understand the dynamics of GEOfood in the agrifood value chain. The survey tool is designed to identify and prioritise food and tourism industry tool development for successful implementation of GEOfood. We are doing this as part of our commitment to the research and academic collaboration partnerships for Geoparks. The link for the survey is here, and we welcome people at global Geoparks to share the link in their social media feeds to increase data collection: <https://forms.gle/3b81zGysGyS4gn2b6>
2. As we get closer to Geopark certification in Niagara, we are investigating our own agrifood branding scenario with relation to GEOfood. Our Geopark zone is already covered by six culinary tourism and local food branding initiatives. Culinary and agricultural tourism is a dominant economic activity in the Niagara region attracting upwards of 13 million visitors each year.

Great Taste of Ontario Passports - <https://ontarioculinary.com/great-taste/>

Foodland Ontario - <https://www.ontario.ca/foodland/page/about-us>

Wine Country Ontario - <https://winecountryontario.ca/>

Ontario Wine Appellation Authority VQA - <https://vqaontario.ca/>

FeastON Sustainable Local Restaurant Certification - <https://ontarioculinary.com/feast-on/about/>

Interviews with Niagara based food producers and food service operators indicate that for successful GEOfood brand integration, it will require a strong branding USP and marketing toolkit, strong corporate visual identity that differentiates and does not compete with existing branding, collaborative media development, and assistance for certification and brand adoption from a centralised authority. Existing historical brands have government incentives and funding vouchers for brand adoption, hiring of consultants for certification and centralised professional marketing media development.

TOWS situational analysis suggests in Niagara that GEOfood would require a WT mini-mini strategy, focused on bolstering professionalism and quality of marketing tools and USP for GEOfood, and focusing on Geopark brand identity, rather than local and sustainable as dominant marketing messages to differentiate and align with existing brands.

Mëllerdall Geopark:

- We have different links to regional producers and farmers by giving them advice e.g. in nature protection matters and by realising different projects with them on their properties e.g. building dry stone walls or restoring and planting traditional fruit orchards. And we try to promote their products by different opportunities. We hope that these co-operations will help to develop the idea of GEOfood in the Mëllerdall area.
- The idea of GEOfood is important to us, as it helps to develop a way of promoting food products which are relevant to our geopark and to link these products via storytelling to our geology, landscape, culture and traditions.
- In autumn we will have first meetings with different producers to discuss the idea of GEOfood and to find ideas for story telling.

Aspiring Geopark Schelde Delta:

Isn't the difference and the distinction of GEOfood also in the fact that, in contrast to regional products (with or without a regional label), which often have a static character based on past and tradition, GEOfood has its basis in the physical (geological, geomorphological, soil and hydrological) characteristics. As a result, GEOfood can/may also be flexible and change over time due to different food preferences resulting from generational differences, transitions in food (e.g. the protein transition) and new designs of food or dishes. As long as this really is done on the basis of factors from the area itself (and therefore not mixed with things from other areas/contents), you are working with food in a sustainable manner within your own area, from a short chain, with honest products that are still linked to the uniqueness of the Geopark. However, these products may be temporary. New products may emerge and others may disappear. In the Scheldt Delta, for example, we see that asparagus, which is very typical of the region, is no longer eaten by younger generations. You can go to a lot of trouble to focus attention on asparagus and come up with all kinds of fancy dishes with asparagus that will make young people eat them again. But are you doing the right thing? At the same time, we see an enormous interest in beans among young people. These also belong in the Scheldt Delta, but we had almost forgotten about them. They are enormously important in the protein transition and are worth paying attention to. However, it could just be that in 20 years' time, the bean will also disappear into the background, because something else will receive much more attention. So be flexible, move with the times and don't stick rigidly to certain products. They may come and go. But only on condition that it is part of the uniqueness and identity of the area.

Comments from Charnwood Forest aUGGp

- As we are not yet a UGGp, we cannot use GEOfood branding, so we are in the process of creating our own brand to use until GEOfood is allowed.
- We have begun by forming a small group of producers to get our brand up and running, this includes 2 honey producers, a venison producer, and a vineyard.
- We hoMDPI's Resources to launch our chosen brand this winter. It will directly mirror the rules of GEOfood. Once our 4 initial producers have the branding in place, other producers will be invited to join. We are hopeful that by the time of UGGp application, we will have more than 10 producers registered.

- We do find some of the rules (as written in English) vague or potentially misleading. We wonder if there is an opportunity to clarify and modify the GEOfood rules to provide better guidance to all involved. This would also decrease the time burden on the GEOfood leadership as there would be fewer questions.
- We are happy to help and share our experiences with other aUGGps hoping to implement GEOfood in advance of UGGp status.

Comments from Estrela UGGp:

The Estrela Geopark has already joined the brand in 2020, having at this moment several partners, producers and restaurants.

However, taking into account that the territory has more than 2216km² it is difficult to meet with partners and monitor in a more assertive way this adhesion to the GEOfood brand.

In Portugal, we have already translated all the graphic documents and carried out some promotional activities for GEOfood. In the future we will produce a set of promotional videos, where it is possible to understand the history of the producer and its relationship with Geology and the Geopark.

Project Canastra UGGp (Brazil)

We're collecting data for an article in which we developed a framework for geopark and GEOfood approaches aiming at mining landscapes. We updated the current situation of all Geoparks (projects, aspiring and new ones) in the State of Minas Gerais (Brazil) and assessed the possible producers and products they can invest and promote in GEOfood initiatives (abstract was already published at the Oxford Geoheritage Conference '22 and full manuscript accepted on).

Secondly, there's a survey going on in the area of the Canastra Geopark Project in which we address the compatibility of the region in adherence to the GEOfood and Geopark initiatives (the results will be out in an article by the end of 2022). Also, how to address the consequences of COVID-19 pandemic and climate change in Geoparks' located in mining landscapes along with opportunities based on the previously cited framework.