



## ***Indonesia Diplomacy for Achieving UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) Status***

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### **ARTICLE INFO**

#### **Keywords:**

*Indonesia, Diplomacy, UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG).*

### **ABSTRACT**

*This study analyzes Indonesia diplomatic efforts to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status for geopark tourism sites in Indonesia. Through qualitative descriptive research with secondary data sources derived from literature study, this study aims to determine the steps related to development and management carried out by the Indonesian government to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status. To achieve this status, Indonesia is practicing diplomacy through the government track in accordance with the Diplomacy concept. The success of Indonesia's government efforts in obtaining UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status for geopark tourism sites are in collaboration with stakeholders in tourism sector.*



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### **1. Introduction**

Indonesia is known as the largest archipelagic country in the world. There are approximately 16,771 islands in Indonesia and their locations are spread from the western tip of Sabang to the eastern tip of Merauke ([Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan, 2020](#)). Indonesia's location can also be said to be very strategic, because Indonesia is located right above the equator which then makes Indonesia a country that has various natural beauties that are able to attract the international community, one of which is the beauty of the geopark tourism area.

Geopark is an area with geological heritage of international value. Geopark is an abbreviation of Geological Park or when translated into Indonesian it means "Taman Bumi". A geopark area is an area with certain boundaries which requires the role of local participants

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to be involved in managing the geological, ecological, archaeological, historical and cultural heritage of the area.

Geopark site development is an effort to protect world heritage. The development process for geopark sites is based on a concept of conservation, community empowerment, education, as well as welfare and economic improvement for local communities which are useful as an effort to protect the world heritage that exists around the area.

The geopark determination scale is divided into two, namely National Geopark and Global Geopark. By granting geopark status to a geological area, making the area has great potential in attracting tourists to make the area a choice of tourist destinations. The determination of the Global Geopark scale was officially given by UNESCO based on 4 important geopark aspects, namely aspects of Geodiversity (Geological Diversity), Geoheritage (Geological Heritage), Biodiversity (Biological Diversity), and Cultural Diversity (Cultural Diversity) ([UNESCO Global Geopark, n.d.](#)).

Achieving UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status for a geopark site can help promote and develop the tourism sector. From the natural wealth and advantages that Indonesia has in the tourism sector, especially in geopark tourism sites, Indonesia has made various efforts to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status as an effort to preserve and develop potential related to geopark tourism destinations in Indonesia.

This provides an interesting picture for researchers to find out more about what strategies are carried out in terms of using diplomacy in order to see how much effort Indonesia has made as an actor in diplomacy in achieving the goal of granting UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status, as a form of promotion and preservation of geopark tourism sites in the Indonesian region. From the efforts taken by the Indonesian side, the researcher sees that if a geopark tourism site's status is not recognized by UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG), then the purpose of site preservation and tourism promotion to increase the interest of foreign tourists to visit the site will not be easily achieved. Thus, this study will discuss how Indonesia's diplomacy efforts to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status.

## 2. Research Methodology

Diplomacy is an important instrument for a country in the implementation of national interests. Diplomacy can be said as a main tool that is directly related to the relationship between countries and the relationship of a country with international organizations that are commonly used in the practice of achieving a country's national interest. According to Sir Ernest Satow, a diplomacy is a description of the relationship carried out between countries with all other actors involved in the process of international relations carried out peacefully and using negotiation techniques ([Djelantik, 2008](#)).

Diplomacy is used as a vehicle to achieve national goals or interests that the country wants to achieve. Diplomacy is a peaceful way carried out by an actor to achieve a country's national interest. Diplomacy is basically a political activity with good and skilled resources, which is a major element of power. The main purpose of a diplomacy practice is to enable countries to secure their foreign policy objectives without resorting to force, propaganda, or law ([Berridge, 2015](#)).

In the era of globalization, the interaction of international relations between countries is becoming more widespread. It also makes activities that occur in the practice of diplomacy not only carried out by the government, but also requires the role of non-state actors, both individuals and organizations capable of informal diplomacy. Barry Fulton also said that diplomacy carried out by the public or can also be said as informal diplomacy can help communication between countries to be more optimal, because the dissemination of information carried out will be able to help the country in an effort to protect the interests of its country ([Fulton, 1998](#)). So that the role of non-state actors has a major contribution, because

the state's goal to launch diplomacy is not only limited to formal interactions between governments in a country, but can also come from non-state actors who can help introduce important aspects of the country that you want to show to the public. internationally through informal diplomacy.

Diplomacy provides various contributions in conveying interests and a certain goal to be achieved by the state. And to achieve this is not only done by the government but also requires collaboration that comes from the involvement of non-state actors of a country through various channels in diplomacy. Milton Cummings stated that diplomacy requires involvement not only from state actors but also from non-state actors, this is very necessary for promotional efforts and efforts to support the state in creating good relations between parties ([Cummings, 2009](#)). Therefore, the role of actors in diplomacy is useful in creating an image enhancement for the national interest of a country, so that the cooperative relationship between actors in diplomatic efforts towards the tourism sector becomes important, especially in various decision-making and strategies for the development and preservation of tourism destination areas.

This study uses a qualitative method that aims to describe clearly and in detail about events, situations or activities that occur in a phenomenon through secondary data that has been obtained. Furthermore, the data was analyzed using descriptive-qualitative data analysis techniques in order to form a strong and relevant analysis. This study aims to determine the steps related to the development and management carried out by the Indonesian side to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status in Indonesia's diplomatic efforts for geopark sites.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### Criteria for Granting UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) Status

A geopark area that will be proposed as a global geopark must have geological characteristics of international value according to the guidelines for the official UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) document and consist of 8 (eight) criteria points, including ([UNESCO Global Geoparks, n.d.](#)):

1. The geopark area must have clear boundaries, the size of the area must be adequate, and the geopark site must meet the aspects of geodiversity, aspects of geoh heritage, aspects of biodiversity, and aspects of cultural diversity with international value and has been verified by scientific professionals independently;
2. The development of each UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) area must utilize the earth's heritage and continue to campaign for awareness of environmental issues;
3. Every UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) area must have a Management Agency with the existence of law, and obtain recognition from the state under the National Law;
4. Areas with UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status must promote the importance of protecting geopark areas by involving local communities;
5. The UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) area must continue to actively involve the role of local communities and other stakeholders around the geopark area;
6. Every UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) area must join the Global Geopark Network (GGN) membership;
7. All UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) areas must respect local and national laws relating to the protection of the area's geological heritage;
8. All requirements and criteria that have been met must go through the verification stage using the checklist provided by the UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) for further evaluation and re-validation of geopark tourism sites.

The criteria given by UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) are indicators of granting global geopark status. These 8 (eight) points of criteria must be met by areas that want to achieve global geopark status and become recommendations for related parties in efforts to develop



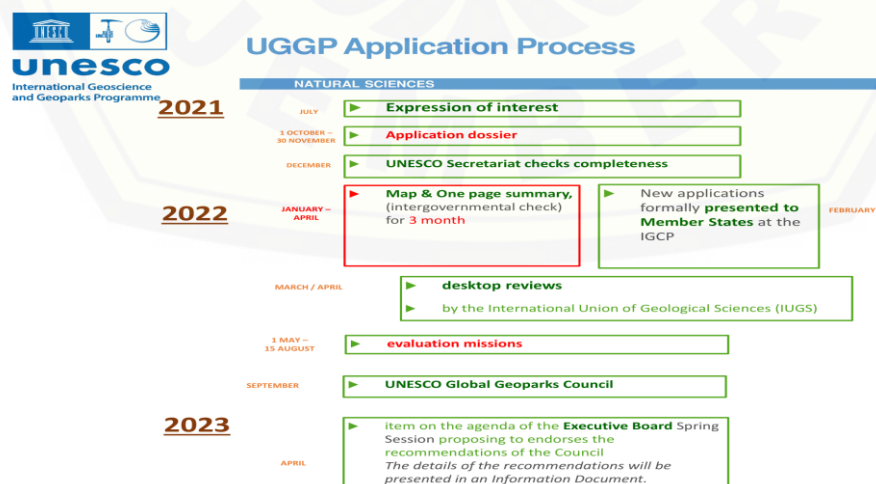
and preserve geopark sites. If an area has met the criteria given by UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG), then the area is given the opportunity to proceed to the stage of filling out the application form found on the official UNESCO website. All the steps taken in the effort to fill out the application form for submitting the UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) area in more detail will be explained in the discussion below.

### UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) Application Filling Procedure

Determination of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status for geopark tourism sites through several stages such as the nomination stage, evaluation stage, application review stage, recommendation and decision stage, and the stage of the re-validation process (UNESCO Global Geoparks, n.d.).

- 1) Nomination stage, is the initial process of sending application files for geopark areas in a country to UNESCO. Prior to submission of files, each candidate area must have been designated as a national geopark of a country and have been published through official channels determined by the National Commission for UNESCO (National Commission for UNESCO);
- 2) Evaluation stage, is an inspection process related to the completeness of the geopark application file. The Secretariat of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) will conduct an inspection regarding the completeness of the data in each new application file submitted;
- 3) Application Review Stage, the application file that has been made will be immediately reviewed and submitted to the UNESCO Global Geopark Secretariat (UGG) by considering whether the country submitting the file is a UNESCO member country or not, if the geopark site is in the area of a UNESCO member country then the application file will enter the next stage of the process;
- 4) Recommendation and Decision Stage, giving recommendations and decisions made by the UNESCO Global Geopark Council (UGG). In this process, the task of the UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) Council is to review all application files, desktop assessment results on the area's geological heritage, as well as report on the results of field evaluations;
- 5) Re-validation Process Stage, the process is carried out to maintain the quality of the geopark site in a sustainable manner. In an effort to ensure the quality of management of the area is maintained, all areas that have the status of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) must carry out a thorough revalidation which is carried out regularly every 4 (four) years.

Picture. 1



Source: UNESCO Global Geoparks. (n.d.). *Statutes and Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks.*

From the picture above, information can be drawn that all areas that wish to apply as UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) areas must send a letter of application to fill in the application in the first year with an ideal time of July 1st. Furthermore, on October 1 – November 30, each area must send a geopark application file to UNESCO. The next step is to verify the completeness of the geopark documents in December in the first year. Then, in the second year, an evaluation will be carried out until April 30 by the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS), the field evaluation mission will be carried out starting on May 1, and in September it will enter the application recommendation stage. Then in the third year a decision is made by the UNESCO Executive Council which is carried out during the spring.

### **Indonesia's Diplomacy to Achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) Status in Indonesia**

The process of implementing a diplomacy for the development of geopark areas in Indonesia is an effort made and an important part in achieving the country's goals. Through various collaborations carried out by stakeholders in the geopark tourism area, the collaboration carried out will form a commitment and build mutual understanding, and have a sense of responsibility or a sense of responsibility in efforts to manage sustainable development and efforts to develop a geopark tourism site area ([Bakti et al., 2018](#)). The diplomatic process carried out can also encourage the achievement of various forms of cooperation in efforts to develop and manage geopark sites through the involvement of various actors, including the role of local communities around the geopark area in an effort to meet the criteria given by UNESCO.

In 2012–2020 the Indonesian side showed seriousness in efforts to manage and develop Indonesia's geopark areas through various promotions and implementation of Indonesia's diplomatic strategy. The year 2012 was the beginning of Indonesia's success in upgrading the national geopark status of “Gunung Batur” to a global geopark status. Then in 2013, the geopark of “Gunung Sewu” was proposed to be the second global geopark area and in that year the 3rd APGN Symposium was also held which became a place for Indonesian parties to exchange ideas regarding regional development efforts. Furthermore, in 2014, the evaluation stage and application review by UNESCO for the “Gunung Sewu” area were carried out. Then in the following year, 2015 the “Gunung Sewu” was successfully designated as a global geopark area and became the year the 4th APGN Symposium was held. In 2016, Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark and Rinjani Geopark were nominated to be the next recipient of global geopark status, so that year Indonesia also attended the International Conference held by the Global Geopark Network (UGG) to promote and seek support from other geopark member countries. In that same year, Indonesian academics, namely from Padjadjaran University, built a Pusat Penelitian Geopark dan Kebencanaan Geologi (Puslit GKG) to help geopark areas meet the criteria given by UNESCO in terms of education and research.

In 2017, the two geoparks, namely the Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark and the Rinjani Geopark, entered the application evaluation and review stage. So that in that year, the Indonesian side was also more active in promoting the improvement of the management of the Indonesian geopark area at the 5th APGN Symposium as well as to get support from other geopark member countries and was successfully appointed as the host for the 6th APGN Symposium. Furthermore, in 2018, the Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark and Rinjani Geopark managed to get UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status, which made Indonesia more serious about managing geopark areas. In that year, the Indonesian side also submitted a nomination stage for the Lake Toba Geopark area and promoted the GGN International Conference by explaining the efforts and activities carried out by the Indonesian side in developing the geopark area.

In 2019 in fulfilling the criteria given by UNESCO so that each geopark area has a special law or regulation regarding geopark areas, the Indonesian government has ratified “Peraturan

Presiden Nomor 9 Tahun 2019” which contains rules and procedures for managing Indonesian geopark areas. In that year the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism also made a direct visit to the UNESCO headquarters and the Lake Toba Geopark area entered the evaluation and review stage of regional applications. In 2019, Indonesia also hosted the 6th APGN Symposium held in the Mount Rinjani Geopark area. Furthermore, in 2020, the Indonesian side succeeded in obtaining the fifth UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status, namely the Lake Toba Geopark area. In order to increase the understanding of the discussion related to the diplomatic strategy carried out by the Indonesian side to achieve the status of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) further and in more detail will be discussed in the discussion below:

### 1) Promotion and Efforts to Fulfill the Global Geopark Criteria by the Government of Indonesia towards UNESCO

The Indonesian government is promoting geoparks abroad. As part of its diplomatic efforts, the Indonesian side also carried out promotions. One of the promotions carried out by the Government of Indonesia was carried out by representatives of the Ministry of Tourism (Kemenpar) in 2019 making a special visit to Paris, France to be precise at the UNESCO headquarters. The visit was carried out in order to directly promote the potential of geoparks owned by Indonesia to UNESCO officials ([Kumparan Travel, 2019](#)).

Indonesia is also actively promoting in official activities created by the Global Geopark Network (GGN) and the Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN). This can be seen in the Global Geopark Network (GGN) International Conference which was held in Italy on 8-14 September 2018, Indonesia promoted and explained the implementations carried out in sustainable development efforts for geopark areas with national status to global status in Indonesia ([Biro Komunikasi Kemenko Marves, 2018](#)). In addition, at the 5th Symposium held at Zhijindong Cave UNESCO Global Geopark on 19-21 September 2017, the Indonesian side promoted the wealth and uniqueness of geopark areas of international value to gain support for the Ciletuh – Palabuhanratu Geopark and Gunung Rinjani – Lombok Geopark which at that time it was in the recommendation stage to get UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status ([Batur UNESCO Global Geopark, 2017](#)).

Efforts made by Indonesia in fulfilling the UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) criteria, one of which is through the establishment of legal rules. Legal rules relating to the management of geopark tourism sites in Indonesia in general have been compiled and regulated in a “Peraturan Presiden Nomor 9 Tahun 2019” concerning the development and management of the Earth Park tourism area which is intended to be a guideline in carrying out various governance of geopark area development.

“Peraturan Presiden Nomor 9 Tahun 2019” also provides a mandate regarding the formation of the Komite Nasional *Geopark* Indonesia (KNGI). In accordance with the criteria for achieving UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status, namely each geopark area must have a Management Agency protected under the National Law, in this case Indonesia has a Geopark Management Agency and Komite Nasional *Geopark* Indonesia (KNGI) which has the authority as responsible for all communication processes related to the development of geopark area assessment in Indonesia with the UNESCO Global Geopark Secretariat (UGG).

Then, the Geopark Management Agency is a governing body that is responsible for the daily management and management of a geopark area and was formed by the government by involving the Indonesian people in order to assist the management and management of each geopark area, so that each area has a management body that specifically handles the area.

### 2) Strengthening Regional and International Geopark Networks

Strengthening Regional and International Geopark Networks carried out by Indonesia is an effort to get support from UNESCO geopark member countries. At the regional level,



geopark partners that can be invited to collaborate are all geopark areas in the Asia Pacific Region according to the similarity factor based on the geopark theme raised by an area known as the Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) ([Samodra, 1997](#))

With the election of Indonesia as the host of the 6th APGN Symposium, Indonesia has an advantage in efforts to further introduce various natural potentials, cultural potentials, economic activities in local communities, and the wealth of geopark areas in Indonesia to the international community. This is also an opportunity to increase Global Geopark recommendations for Indonesian geopark tourism sites to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status.

At the international level, through the Indonesian National Geopark Committee (KNGI), Indonesia joins the membership of the Global Geopark Network (GGN) which is carried out to strengthen relations with other geopark members. This has become one of the promotional media for the Indonesian side which is carried out by attending various events and making presentations related to geopark tourism sites at various conferences held at the international level on a regular basis such as on the agenda of Exhibitions and International Conferences held by the Global Geopark Network (GGN), on 27-29 September 2016 in Torquay, England.

Regional Geopark Networks such as the Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) or International Geopark Networks such as the Global Geopark Network (GGN), can be a space for Indonesia to collaborate with other members who also have geopark areas in their country so that Indonesia's opportunity to achieve UNESCO status Global Geopark (UGG) is also getting wider.

### 3) Promotion and Development of Geopark Areas by Academic Groups

One of the core concepts of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) is the education aspect for all levels. In accordance with this concept, the development and implementation of various educational activities for all age levels aims to spread awareness among humans about the entire geological heritage of the geopark tourism area.

Efforts to promote Indonesia's geopark area are carried out by a group of academics in the Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) Symposium. In such an activity, each region can send representatives of its country to conduct promotions and presentations related to geopark areas according to the theme given by the Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN). At the 5th Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN) Symposium in China (2017), Indonesian academics sent 5 (five) abstract papers which were later accepted and presented at the Symposium by raising the main topic of Geopark Mount Rinjani – Lombok which at that time was in the process of being submitted for UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status. This then also makes international audiences become interested in visiting and building collaborations to develop the Geopark area of Mount Rinjani – Lombok ([Rinjani Geopark, 2017](#)).

Collaboration with domestic academics is carried out to increase the potential contained in a geopark area. In addition to assisting in promotional activities abroad, increasing domestic cooperation with academics in educational institutions is also actively carried out by Indonesia to focus on increasing research in geopark areas, revitalizing culture and empowering local communities. One of the efforts made is in 2016, Padjadjaran University is committed to establishing a “Pusat Penelitian *Geopark* dan Kebencanaan Geologi (Puslit GKG)” in an effort to develop the geopark concept and become a reference for efforts to develop technology, science, and management of regional geological resources that produce several achievements as material in helping the Government to prepare the making of a “Geopark Master Plan” which is part of the prerequisites in the geopark area submission document to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status ([Universitas Padjadjaran, 2017](#)).

The university can also contribute to holding “Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN)” conducted by groups of students around the geopark area to strengthen and increase the international value

of a geopark area based on various elements such as elements of conservation, education, to the development and empowerment of the economy of the local community in the area. according to the criteria set by UNESCO

Furthermore, at the school level, the Indonesian side also actively participates in implementing educational programs created by UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG), namely the "Geopark Goes to School" program and the "School to Geopark" program. The two programs are carried out to support the development of regional education through various educational programs for schools at all levels, special activities given to children, to education provided for adults to the elderly which is carried out formally or informally in accordance with the focus of developing the given area by UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG).

#### **4) Promotion of Indonesian Geopark Communication Media**

The mass media are the leading promotional media for the Indonesian geopark tourism site area. In an effort to improve the quality of geoparks in various aspects, one of the processes carried out by the Indonesian side is to improve the quality of information through the official websites of each geopark. In addition to promoting through the official website, promotions can also be done through various social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Youtube. Through this promotion, public awareness related to various concepts owned by the geopark tourism site area will be easily formed and accepted by the wider community.

Promotional efforts can also be made through print media and the creation of information boards placed in the geopark area. In each geopark area, a geopark information center can be built by completing the manufacture of signboards and information boards in each geosite area using simple language that is easily understood by the general public.

In addition, the promotion and dissemination of information carried out by each geopark area in Indonesia is carried out by developing and constructing various regional supporting facilities and infrastructure such as museums, improving access to geopark areas, toilets, parking lots, to kiosks containing various regional geoproducts such as geoculinary aspects, geotours, geosouvenirs, to geohomestays which are part of a source of empowerment for local communities. In addition to development related to regional facilities and infrastructure, making information boards, and making signboards, the manufacture of printed media promotional materials such as leaflets, booklets and travel guide books for the geopark area is also needed as a reference for tourists to find out various information from a geopark area.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The efforts carried out by the Indonesian to achieve the status of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) can be seen from the diplomatic practices carried out by the Indonesian side in the tourism sector, which is needed an effort to meet the criteria given by UNESCO .All efforts made by Indonesian state and non-state actors to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status are a form of synergy in assisting the “Komite Nasional Geopark Indonesia” (KNGI) in fulfilling the criteria for UNESCO, and have achieved success. This is because until 2020, the diplomatic practice carried out by the Indonesian side as an effort to manage and develop Indonesian geopark tourism areas, has succeeded in bringing 5 (five) Indonesian geoparks to UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status. These efforts are still being carried out so that other National Geopark areas also succeed in obtaining UNESCO Global Geopark (UGG) status.



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