

Grutas del Palacio
UNESCO Global Geopark
Uruguay

Section for Earth Sciences and Geoparks

31 May 2023

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Dear Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Global Geopark Team,

I have the pleasure to inform you that the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council convened its seventh meeting over two sessions. The first session was organised in Thailand's Satun UNESCO Global Geopark, as well as remotely, on 4 – 5 September 2022. The second session was held virtually on 7 – 9 December 2022. As a result of this comprehensive evaluation, **Grutas del Palacio UNESCO Global Geopark** has been awarded a "green card" for a further four-year period (01/01/2022 – 31/12/2025) with the following recommendations:

- 1. Increase the number of geological sites and introduce more geological explanations on the panels understandable for different publics. For example, include a generic context of the geological process that are represented with simple and clear graphics and a description of the different geological sites and their relevance.*
- 2. Improve management structure, strengthen the participation of the UGGp staff in the Specific Advisory Commission of the Grutas del Palacio and Chamangá Protected Areas and, vice versa, the representation of the Ministry (General Directorate of the Environment) in the UGGp Advisory Council, so that there is co-management involving the conservation and monitoring of geological and other natural aspects.*
- 3. Improve Geological heritage promotion and conservation, particularly ensuring the conservation of the geological heritage of international interest. Make every effort to make Chamangá an accessible area that can be easily visited.*
- 4. Consider the construction of an interpretation centre for the UGGp, which could also house its administrative headquarters.*
- 5. Improve the infrastructure, consider building a parking lot at the Zoologico Sculptoric Park.*
- 6. Extend the educational programme on geology and UGGps to all schools in Flores and other Uruguayan departments, starting with Soriano.*
- 7. Enhance Management Plan, including the administration and strategic plans required for the current stage of development of the UGGp. Include the definition of governance duties and functions.*
- 8. Explore the possibility to include the history of Indigenous peoples, their myths and legends in the UGGp storytelling. For example, try to recover the*

traditional name by which the geological sites were originally known, such as the Cueva del Palacio de los indios (Cave of the Palace of the Indians).

9. *Collaborate with UGGps from other continents to create new learning and experiences.*

With many thanks for contributing to UNESCO's aims and looking forward to a continued fruitful cooperation.

Yours sincerely,



Kristof Vandenberghe
Chief, Section for Earth Sciences and Geoparks

Cc: Permanent Delegation of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay to UNESCO
National Commission of Uruguay for UNESCO