



The Nordic Countries invite you to The 33rd IGC

INTERNATIONAL GEOLOGICAL CONGRESS OSLO 2008

August 6 - 14th

StatoilHydro
Main sponsor

[Home](#)

[Search Abstracts](#)

[Author Index](#)

[Symposia Programmes](#)

[Sponsors](#)

[Help](#)

[IES-04 Geoparks and geotourism](#)

How to build a successful Geopark (almost) from nothing?

[Carlos Neto de Carvalho](#), *Idanha-a-Nova Municipality/Naturtejo Geopark (Portugal)*

Armindo Jacinto, *Idanha-a-Nova Municipality/Naturtejo Geopark (Portugal)*

Rafael André, *Abilis - Enterprise Consulting (Portugal)*

Rui Tomás Marques, *Blueearth Consulting - Europe (Portugal)*

Cristina Preguiça, *Naturtejo Geopark (Portugal)*

Pedro Martins, *Idanha-a-Nova Municipality (Portugal)*

Eddy Chambino, *Idanha-a-Nova Municipality (Portugal)*

Geopark Naturtejo Meseta Meridional is an ongoing case study to demonstrate that, independently of sociological and economic conjectures, but controlled by political and scientific circumstances, a solid European Geopark level can be achieved through the common work of visionary politicians, broad skilled young scientists, dynamic local communities, fascinating geosites and culture, with a very tight budget. The Naturtejo Geopark has four years. A seminar on the paleontological heritage of Penha Garcia was a starting point to develop a higher ambitious project of tourism development for 6 municipalities occupying 4617km². Portugal has no laws concerning geoconservation and geosites are almost forgotten in the natural protected areas excepting almost abandoned natural monuments. But for Naturtejo geological heritage would be the umbrella for nature tourism development and differentiation in Portugal tourism panorama. During almost two years, a compulsory work of inventorying, divulgation and promotion of natural richness and geosciences, both to local society and national publics, was developed in an almost perfect symbiosis between few but entrepreneur politics, geoscientists, local institutions and associations. Naturtejo intermunicipal company was created to manage the Geopark in a happy association of municipalities and local privates. The results were an action plan for sustainable development, several projects on communication, interpretation and tourist use for 16 geomonuments, 5 protected geosites, two geoconservation awards from ProGEO-Portugal & National Geographic-Portugal and the Honor Prize for Nature category in Tourism of Portugal 2007, as well as hundreds of reports in regional to international media. A territory with absolutely no tradition in geology and geological interpretation, in a country of sun & beach tourism was born for geotourism in the broad sense. The investments made in interpretation, leaflets and books, exhibitions, thematic meetings and visits, as well as tourism fairs participation were fully supported by municipalities and Naturtejo own short budgets. Naturtejo Geopark belongs to European and Global Geopark networks of UNESCO since September 2006 with the support of Tourism and Environment Ministries and National Commission for UNESCO. More than 300000 visitors discovered the Naturtejo Geopark in 2007. This territory is now included in the government regional management plan that is being concluded by Naturtejo and cooperation was started with Institute for Nature Conservation. Many geoprospects have now new opportunities to be developed by finding access to EU funding programs and a fundamental communication project is being implemented thanks to full sponsorship of Institute for Tourism of Portugal. Soon Naturtejo Geopark will be the first nature destination to be ISO certificated in Portugal and all its private partners will perform the same Geopark requisites for quality.

CD-ROM Produced by [X-CD Technologies](#)