

‘ELIGE un LIG’. A project for promotion and conservation of geoheritage

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Context: The Environmental Education Programme “Segovia educa en verde”

The Environment Department of Segovia Municipality, through “Segovia educa en verde” project, since 2016, offers a programme of environmental education activities based on the natural heritage of the city of Segovia, including its geoheritage. These activities are free and are intended for the general public, families, students and associations (Segovia educa en verde, 2020).

As a novelty of this school year, the programme offers to the educational centers of the city, research projects to be developed in its facilities and in the nearby environment. This new proposal aims to intensify the involvement of the school groups towards a specific environmental issue, and to increase the knowledge and conservation of the environment, creating engagement and a sense of satisfaction about the city. The participants in these projects provide experimental data, raise new questions and acquire new skills, as well as a deeper and more attractive understanding of the scientific work. As a first project, several schools of Segovia have participated in the project ‘ELIGE un LIG’ (‘Choose a Geosite’) between the months of October 2019 and February 2020.

‘ELIGE un LIG’ project

The geoheritage tells the most remote past of our city, dating back to 600 million years, while allowing us to get to know the origin of our landscapes. Segovia was one of the first places to make an inventory of its geoheritage. And today its capital city has more than 100 geosites (Díez-Herrero et al., 2019). These geosites are not randomly scattered, but grouped in specific areas. Therefore, at the end of 2018, the Municipality of Segovia presented a project to assess and select the 10 ELIGES, areas with geosites for environmental education in Segovia (EducaPatriGeo, 2018; Vegas & Díez-Herrero, 2018).

‘ELIGE un LIG’ project offers the possibility to discover the relevant geoheritage of the city of Segovia. In addition, it engages participants in the conservation, enhancement and dissemination of an ELIGES or a geosite.

The project consists of three sessions. In the theoretical session, the educator of “Segovia educa en verde” visited the participating educational centers in order to make an introduction about geoheritage, its importance and its management in the city of Segovia, emphasizing the volunteer initiative for geoconservation “Apadrina una roca”, and the municipal project of ELIGES. During the practical session, participants visited an ELIGES or geosite of choice. Its value was highlighted from the different educational and environmental criteria, offering them to sponsor the geosite and work on the proposal of actions to enhance its value, to disseminate, protect and preserve it. The different groups carried out their work with total freedom and chose the presentation format. As a final session, a meeting was held between all the groups involved in the project, to present their results and exchange opinions and experiences.

Results, conclusions and future actions

Nine groups of students belonging to six educational centers took part in the ‘ELIGE un LIG’ project, making a total of 235 students aged between 12 and 16 years. The groups have made suggestions for the enhancement and conservation of five ELIGES and ten geosites cataloged in Segovia.

The most original ideas presented at the final session were a model, a video and a musical theme about the ELIGES 01 (Lago Alonso); a video and an edible model about the ELIGES 02 (Plaza de Día Sanz); a newspaper article, a radio interview and a television report about the ELIGES 05 (Puerta de San

Cebrián); a slide show about the ELIGES 06 (Calle San Juan) and the geosite of Calle Gascos; a musical theme with lyrics about the ELIGES 09 (Cuevas de Tejadilla); a model, a make-up and some images with a message about the geosite of Miocene Conglomerates of Nueva Segovia; and two mini video games about the geosites around the Graveyard Park and around the school Carlos de Lecea.

With this project, participants have been able to learn part of the city's rich geological heritage. Knowing its value, they have been involved in their dissemination through original projects where they suggested measures for their protection and conservation. One of the groups has already sent their proposals to the local newspaper, television and radio (Adelantado de Segovia, 2020). The Environment Department will take into account the proposals for future municipal actions. Moreover, "Segovia educa en verde" programme intends to continue with the project in the successive school years with a double objective: to involve more students in the enhancement and conservation of geoheritage of Segovia. Further geosites and ELIGES excluded from this edition will also have proposals implemented soon.

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