

UEPG Sustainable Development Awards 2010

Company: GEOmontan GmbH

Location: Thallwitz, Germany

Geoportal Röcknitz, Germany

Nominated in the category Economic Contribution & Added Value to Society



The “Geoportal Röcknitz” – a concept for the sustainable development of geotourism in the region of Northern Saxony. The regional LEADER-Management suggested the idea to combine important geologic and mining sights with touristic attractions to further the sustainable development of tourism in Northern Saxony, which is a rural area with an almost monostructured economy mostly based on agriculture and mining industries. Members of local associations, companies and private individuals teamed up with municipals to create the Geopark Northern Saxony. In 2006 GEOmontan GmbH Freiberg, formwelt19/Wermsdorf und novamedia/Leipzig were commissioned with the planning and construction of the visitor centre “Geoportal Röcknitz”, including an indoor exhibition and an outdoor Geo-Garden intended to share knowledge of the regions geologic development and the use of its natural resources.

Geo-didactic Concept The geodidactic concept of the “Geoportal Röcknitz” is based on the connection of the geo-logic history with the evolution of landscape and with the anthropogenetic effects of the more recent past (especially the use of resources and their further utilization). It is not employing the method of presenting isolated objects and facts to illustrate the regions geologic history (e.g. collection of minerals or stones). The concept is focussing on those four geologic periods of the past 300 million years that are most significant and representative for the recent character of the northern saxon landscape and land use: “Permian Porphyritic Volcanism”, “Cretaceous/Tertiary Kaolinization”, “Tertiary Lignite Formation” and “Quaternary Glacial Influence”. Those four geologic periods are used as the geodidactic “golden thread” guiding the visitor through the exhibition and the Geo-Garden, being supported by a sophisticated design and visualization, textual explanations, four large geologic exhibits as well as a 3D animation film. The visitor centres scientific contents are particularly targeting non-professional visitors and families.

Construction In 2007 the exhibition was constructed in the 2nd story of the newly restored 15th century manor house of Röcknitz. A screenplay was written for the 3D animation film and the film created. The 3D animation film is to serve as an introduction to the exhibition. It tells the fiery and icy story of the four significant geologic eras that led to the genesis of the unique porphyry landscape of Northern Saxony, which, rich in natural resources, has been used and shaped by a traditional mining industry for almost 200 years. The geologic exhibition “Zeit-Wandel-Stein, bewegte Geologie einer Landschaft” opened on November 11th 2007. The Geo-Garden is currently being planned in full detail and is to be constructed in the outdoor area behind the manor house in 2010.