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M’Goun UNESCO Geopark (Central High Atlas, Morocco), a lever for sustainable and integrated territorial development: What approach to adopt?

Yahia El Khalki, Fabien Hobléa, Khalid Benzidiya, Achbal Driss, Salah Eddine Kottabi

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**10th International Conference
Of
UNESCO Global Geoparks**

4 - 11 September 2023

Marrakesh - M'Goun Global Geopark Unesco

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M'GOUN UNESCO GEOPARKS (CENTRAL HIGH ATLAS, MOROCCO), A LEVER FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INTEGRATED TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT: WHAT APPROACH TO ADOPT?

Yahia El Khalki (1), Hobléa Fabien (2), Khalid Benzidia (1), Driss Achbal (1) and Salah Eddine Kottabi (1) (2)

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The diversity of Morocco's geology and its geomorphology constitutes a fundamental element in the diversity of its mineral landscapes. This geodiversity, coupled with a wide range of bioclimatic domains, explains the geoheritage diversity seen in all regions of the country, which can also constitute territories where the concept of the geopark can be applied and developed. The different geological and geomorphological landscapes of the country testify to a very ancient and remarkable evolution of the Earth and the climate. An evolution that goes from the Archean to the Quaternary, 2.7 billion years of geological history of the country. Morocco is indeed a veritable geological and geomorphological museum.

This diversity and richness of geoheritages creates for our country an opportunity to foster geoparks which can contribute to the promotion of geotourism and environmental education and thereby to the socioeconomic development of the territories.

Geoparks, as an innovative idea for the protection of natural and geological heritage, play an important role in the development of geotourism. While developing geotourism, the creation of geoparks can generate new job opportunities, new economic activities, and additional sources of income, especially in rural and mountain areas. It encourages the production of local products and local crafts involved in geo-tourism and geoproducts (Gray, 2004, Neda Torabi Farsani et al, 2011).

This conference aims to show i) the experience of the UNESCO Geopark of M'Goun, the first geopark labeled in Africa and the Arab world, as a new philosophy of territorial development, ii) the approach to be adopted for sustainable and integrated development.

***M'Goun UNESCO Geopark (Central High Atlas, Morocco), a lever for sustainable and integrated territorial development :
What approach to adopt?***

Yahia El Khalki (1), Hobléa Fabien (2), Khalid Benzidia (1), Driss Achbal (1) and Salah Eddine Kottabi (1)

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***10 th international conference of Unesco Global Geoparks
from 5 to 12 september 2023
Marrakech and Azilal, Morocco.***

Plan

** Introduction*

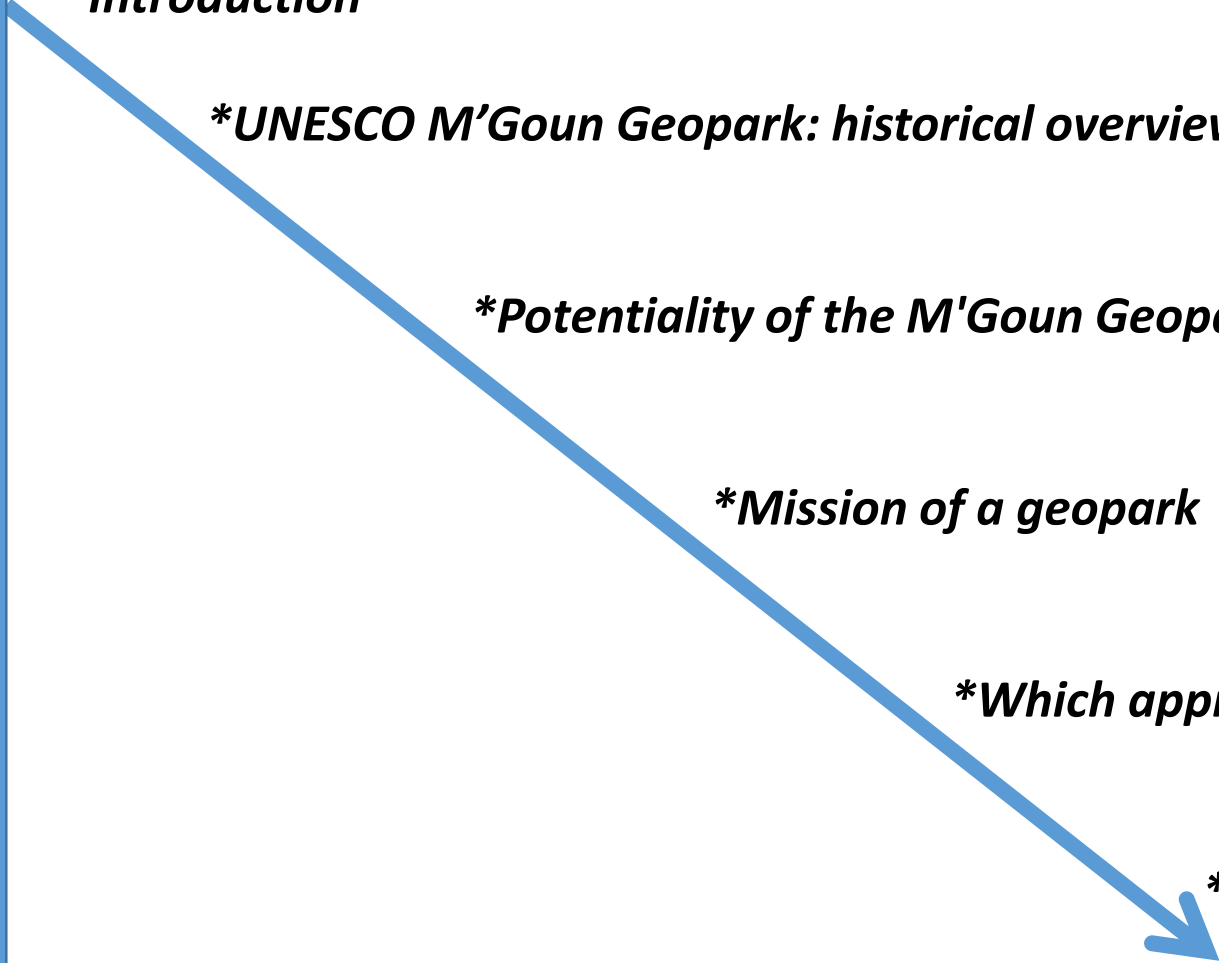
**UNESCO M'Goun Geopark: historical overview*

**Potentiality of the M'Goun Geopark*

**Mission of a geopark*

**Which approach?*

** Conclusion*



Introduction

→ Worldwide: 195 geoparks in 48 countries

→ Mainly in Europe and China

→ Two in Africa and total absence in Arab-Muslim countries

→ Hence the importance of the creation of the UGAN

→ Raising awareness and supporting Arab-Muslim and African countries for the creation of geoparks



unesco

Global Geoparks

UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARKS 2023



See country codes in brackets with the map for site names.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

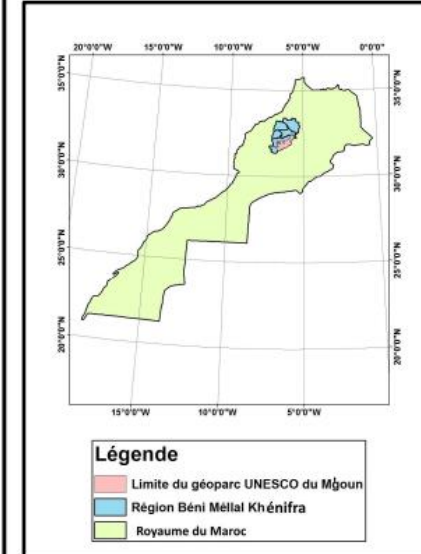
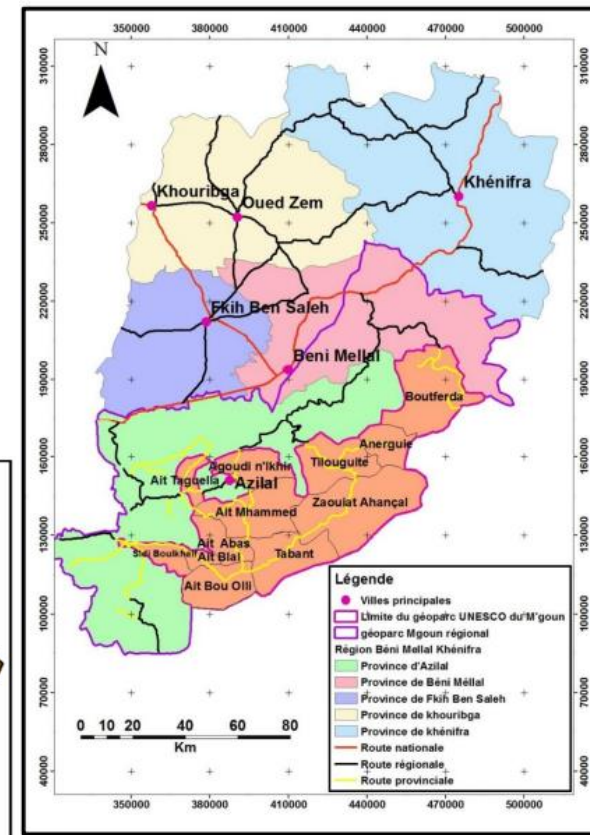
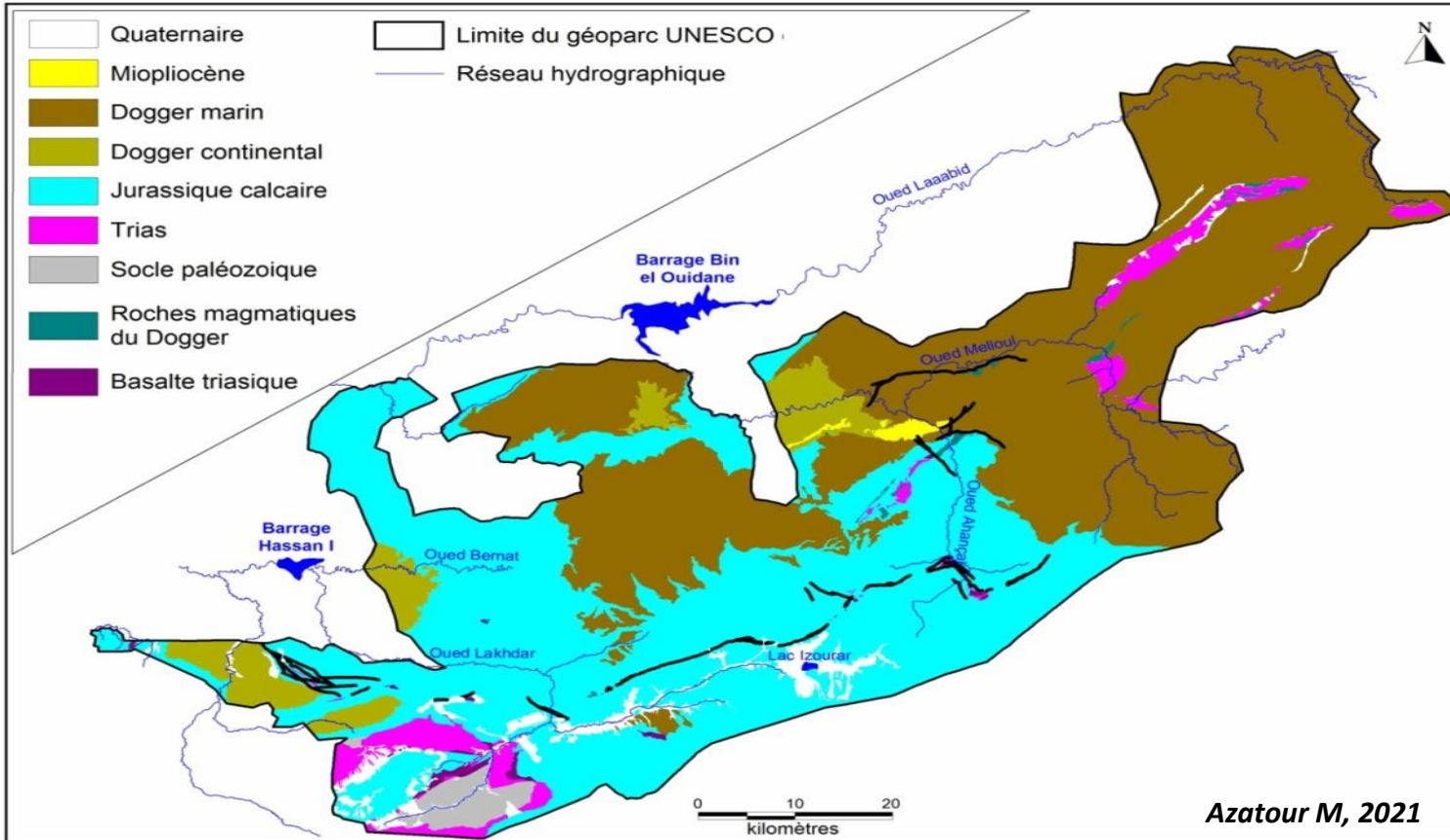
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The reduced scale of the map and the cartographic projection have resulted in approximate locations of some sites.

Location data: Tom Robinson, IIG Regional Data System
 Map editing: Jayme and Angela, IIG Data System and Geoparks System
 Compiled and printed in the workshop of UNESCO
 Printed September 2023

IIG UNESCO World Geoparks and Geoparks System
 Map printer: Tom Robinson
 Scale: 1:10,000,000

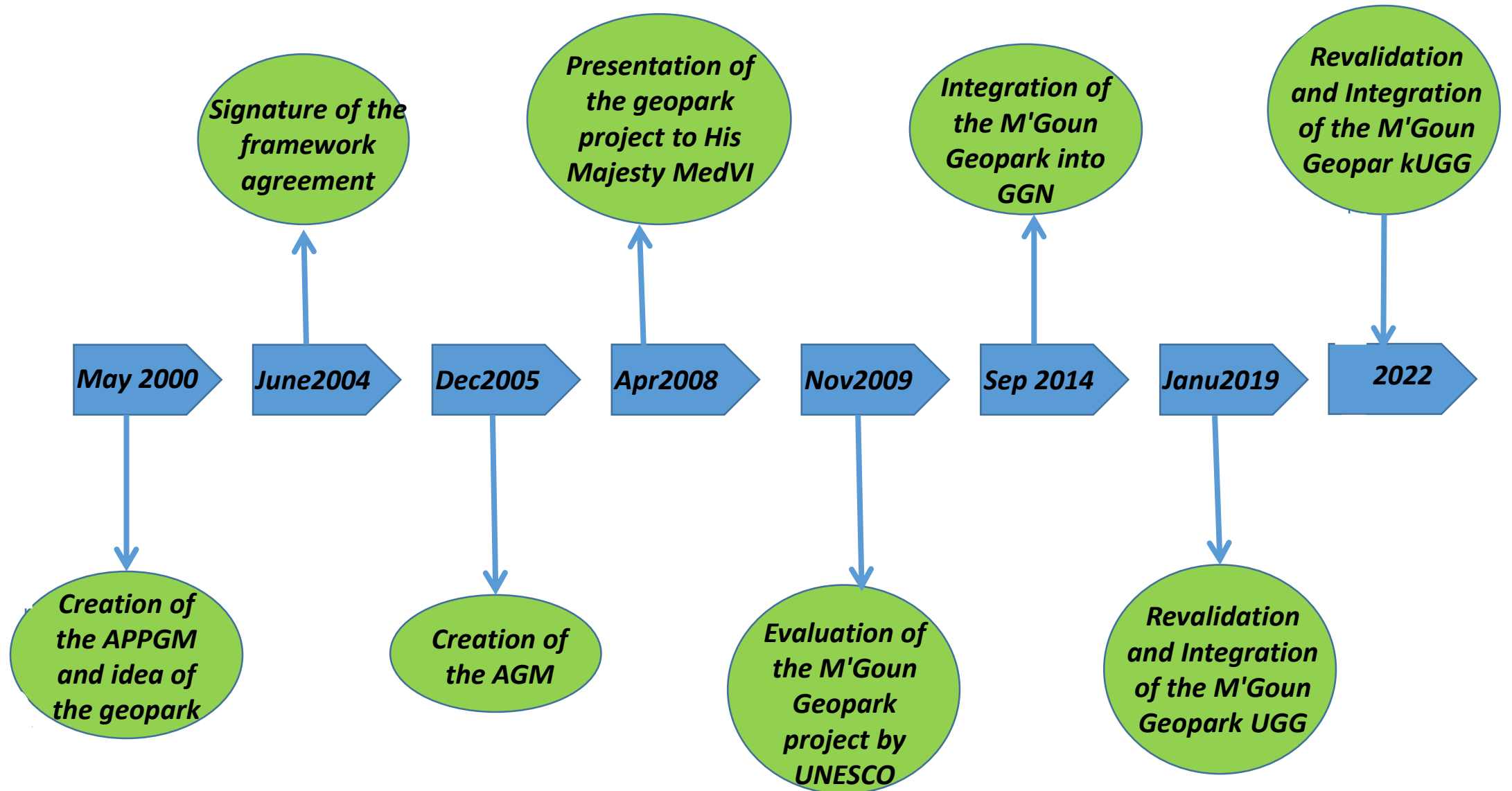
A diversity of geological formations with a predominance of carbonate rocks (limestone and dolomites)



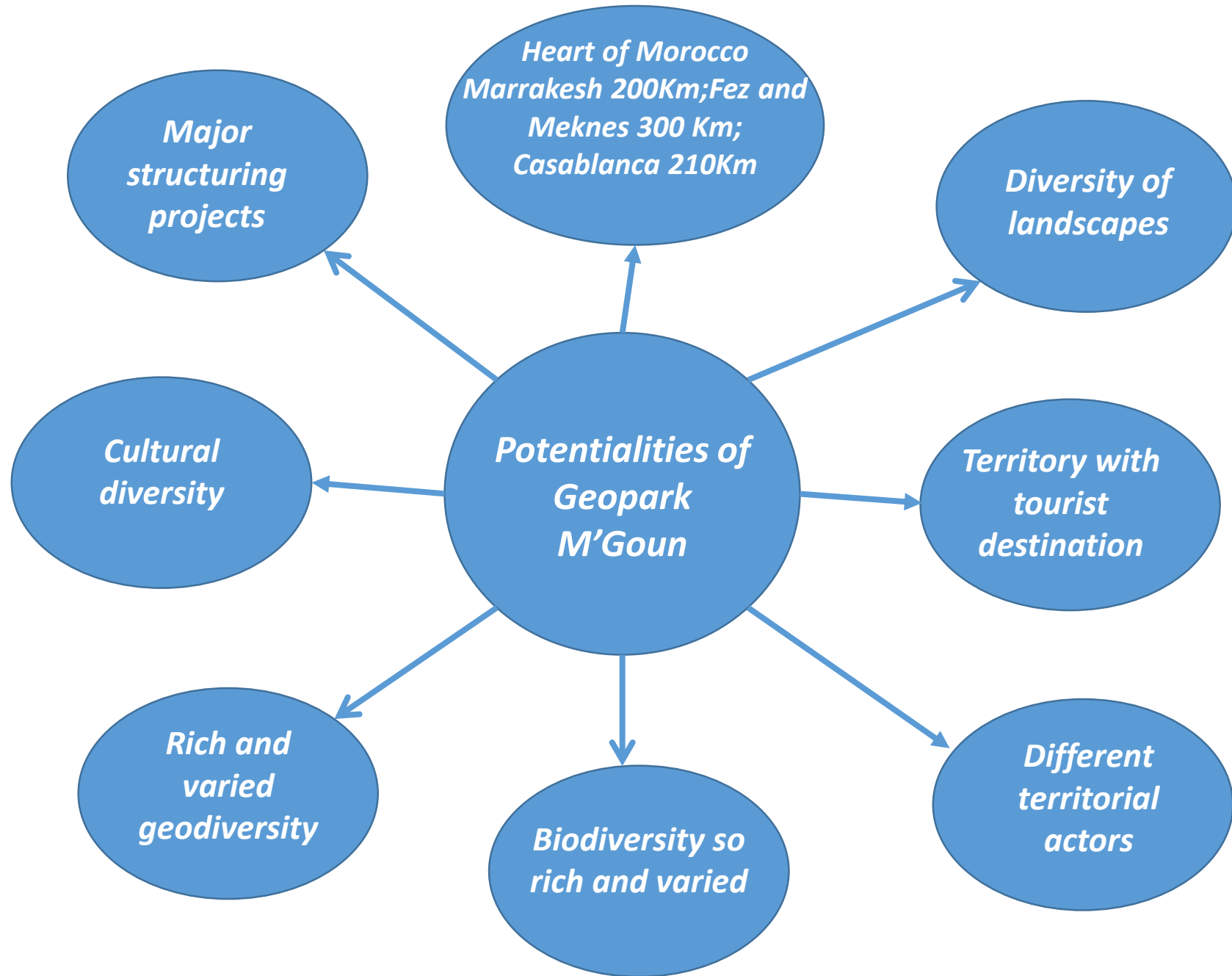
Carte : 1 : Situation du géoparc UNESCO du M'goun à l'échelle du Maroc et à l'échelle de la région de Beni Mellal-Khénifra.

Situation of the Geopark M'Goun at national and regional level

Unesco Geopark M'Goun : historical overview



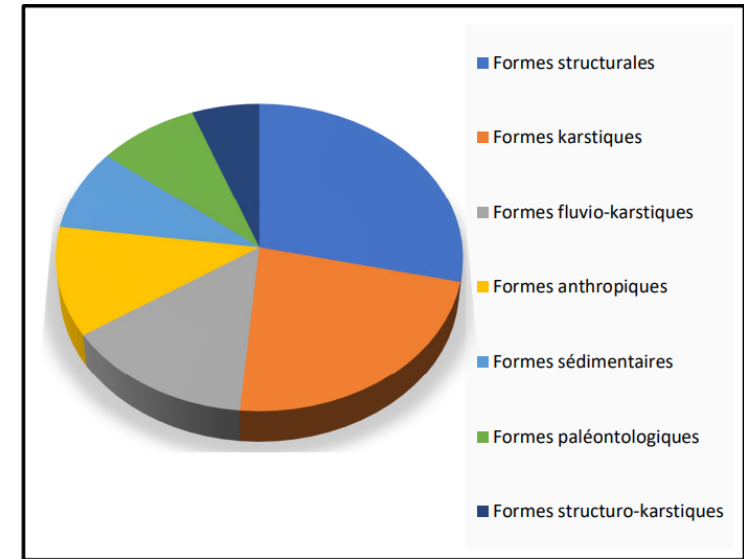
Potentialities of the M'Goun Geopark



Inventory results

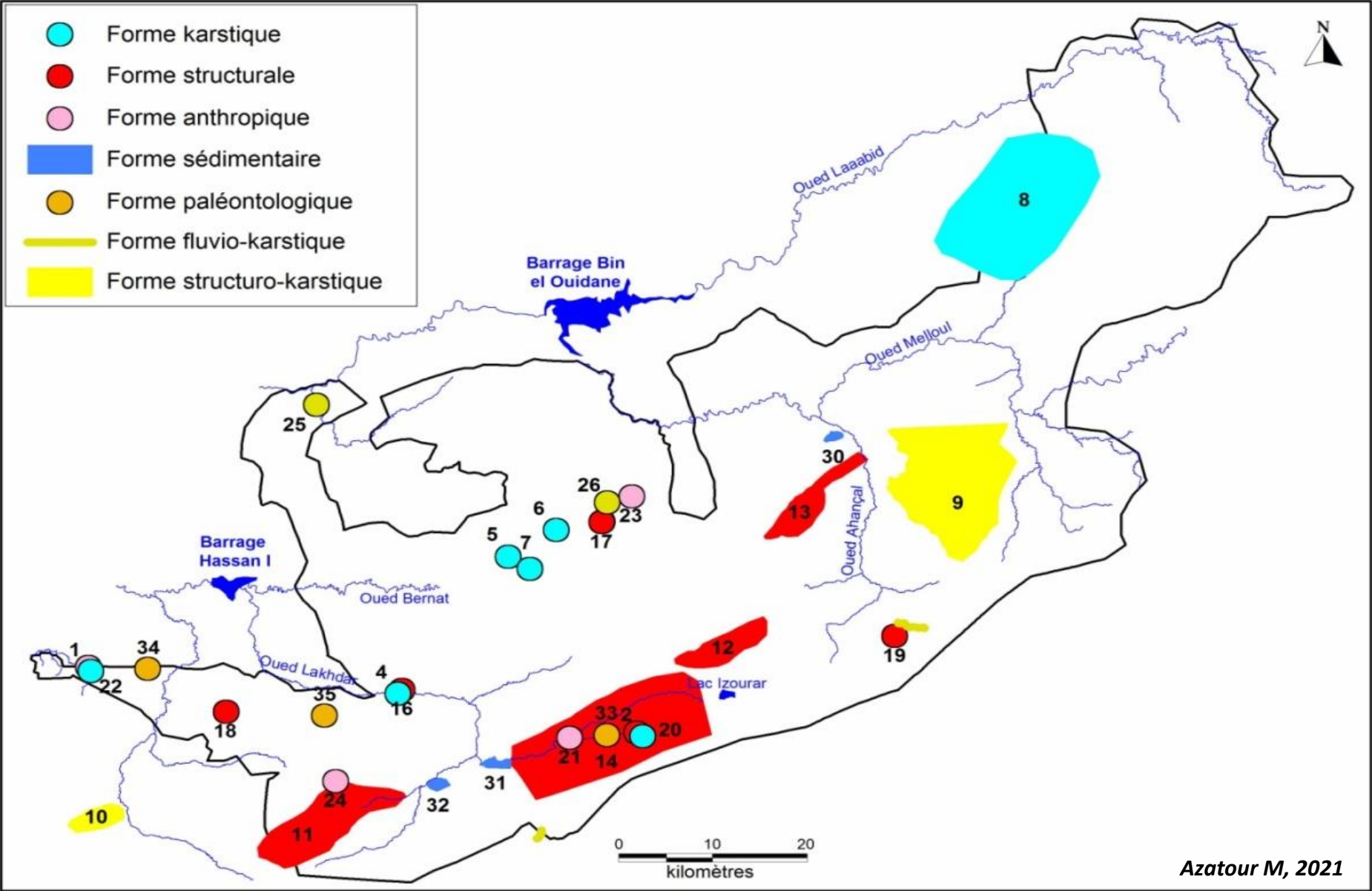
N°	Nom du géomorphosite	Code	Commune
1	Pont natureld'Imi n'Ifri	IMIkar001	Demnate
2	Gouffre de Tawaya	Rbakar002	Tabant
3	Lac d'Izourar	BOGkar003	Tabant
4	Ifri n'Awjal	IAZkar004	Ait Abas
5	Ifri n'Icaïd	BERkar005	Ait Mhammed
6	Ifri n'Touya	AMHkar006	Ait Mhammed
7	Ifri n'Tagaloust	TAGkar007	Ait Mhammed
8	Karst d'El Houanet	ANEkar008	Anergui
9	Plateau Ait Abdi	AABstr-kar009	Zaouiat Ahançal
10	Jbel Til	ALMstr-kar010	Tifni
11	Jbel Rat	ABAstr011	Ait Bou Oulli
12	Jbel Azourki	BOGST12	Tabant
13	Le dôme de Talmest	TALstr13	Tillouguit
14	Synclinal d'Ait Bouguemez	BOGstr14	Tabant
15	Faïlle inverse de Wabzaza	WABstr015	Ait Mhammed
16	Pli droit d'Iba'aziz	IBZstr 016	Ait Abas
17	Pli déjeté de Wabzaza	WABstr017	Ait Mhammed
18	Pli droit d'Ait Wakrim	AWAstr018	Sidi Boulkhalf
19	Pli de Taghia	TAGstr019	Zaouiat Ahançal
20	Le slump de Rbat	RBAstr020	Tabant
21	Ighrem n'Sidi Moussa	TIMant021	Tabant
22	Pont-sed d'Ait Ras	ARAant022	Demnate
23	Ighrem n'Açaman	AçAant023	Ait Mhammed
24	Les gravures rupestres de Tizi n'Tirghist	TZTant 024	Ait Bou Oulli
25	Cascades d'Ozoud	OZOflu-kar025	Ait Taguella

35 geoheritages (geosites and geomorphosites) were selected according to their process. Importance of karstic and structural processes.



26	Cascades de Açaman	AçAflu-kar026	Ait Mhammed
27	Canyon de Taghia	TAGflu-kar027	Zaouiat Ahançal
28	Gorges de Arous	AROflu-kar028	Ait Bou Oulli
29	Gorges d'Aqqa n'Tamda	TAMflv029	Ait Mhammed
30	La cathédrale	TILsed030	Tilouguit
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34	Les traces des pas des dinosaures d'Iwariden	IWApal034	Sidi Boulkhalf
35	Les traces des pas des dinosaures d'Ait Blal	ABLpal035	Ait Blal

Geoheritages according to their processes



Missions Of Geoparc Unesco M'Goun

The protection and enhancement of the geological and geomorphological heritage (geoheritage)

Environmental and geoscience education

The development of geotourism in an Integrated Cultural Landscape perspective

Sustainable development

The trickiest question is:

What approach has been adopted to energize and boost the sustainable development of the territory of the M'Goun UNESCO Geopark?

04 essential steps for the development of the Geopark territory:

1) Inventory, evaluation of the territorial resource:

- *Geoheritages,*
- *Bioheritages,*
- *Cultural property,*
- *Local products (baskets of products and services according to the meaning of Pecqueur, 2001, 2008;*

2) Protection and enhancement of these resources:

- *Laws and regulations (types of level of protection (PN, SIBE, RN, RB, Ramsar, etc.),*
- *UGG label*
- *Label for local and artisanal products*

3) Mobilization of networks of actors at different scales:

- Researchers and experts,***
- Scientific mediators,***
- Local authorities***
- Associations,***
- The local population,***
- The decentralized State administrations***

4) Territorial governance:

- Presence of a management structure and coordination between these different actors territorial (the M'Goun UNESCO Geopark);***
- Creation of a synergy between these actors;***
- Network actors and resources territorial (promoting local products, geoheritages, bioheritages and cultural diversity);***
- Communication and marketing of the territory of the geopark at all scales, local, regional and national;***
- Promote a partnership approach;***
- Cooperation with UNESCO Geoparks***

Conclusion

The Unesco M'Goun Geopark is a territory rich in geoheritages with high heritage value. It is a relevant concept for developing countries because it can play a decisive role in :

I) the socio-economic development of populations in rural and mountainous areas,

ii) create synergy between the different territorial actors and finally,

iii) boost tourism in promoting geodiversity, biodiversity and cultural

diversity at the same time. All this, in a perspective of sustainable

development and in a spirit of consultation and coordination between the

various actors of the territories.

Thank you for your attention

