

Nioaque Core Area building skills for locals, Bodoquena-Pantanal Geopark, Brazil

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Bodoquena-Pantanal Geopark is located in centre west of Brazil in the state of Mato Grosso do Sul. Nioaque is a municipality, in the south of the Geopark, with 14,338 inhabitants and 3,923 km², that every year loses population, with low source of income, with 7 landless settlements (from the agrarian reform) and 3 indigenous settlements.

It was established as a bottom-up partnership between Nioaque municipality and the Geopark whose main actors are local people. There is a Statement of Cooperation and a Work Plan and the municipality delivers financial resources to the Geopark that is returned to Nioaque Core Area in material and actions. These resources return to the municipality in a decentralized way, once the bureaucracy hinders its use. Nioaque Core Area has its own blog with the information of their activities. The staff has been preparing didactical material and they organized the Meeting of the Nioaque Core Area – Bodoquena-Pantanal Geopark in December 2013. The local team got a Parliamentary Amendment of R\$20,000 to equip the project.

The Geopark provides scientific and technical advisory and monitoring and is permanently capacitating the local team with a specific Training Course but also with actions in other municipalities and states (II Brazilian Symposium on Geological Heritage); there are also technical meetings and joint fieldwork. The Geopark promoted Scholarships for Junior Scientific Initiation, including indigenous students. The new Visitors Centre will be open in few months, where local rangers will welcome students, tourists and local habitants, and will make presentations about Geosciences.

When the first studies were made a single geosite in Nioaque with dinosaur footprints from the Jurassic was inventoried. Nowadays due to the dynamic of this Core Area more studies are being made to find more geosites such as the evidences of the break-up of the African and South American continents.

Presented in Theme 2