

BASQUE COAST

SPAIN

GEOLOGY

Comprising primarily of sedimentary rocks, the Basque Coast UNESCO Global Geopark bears witness to the geological evolution during the opening and closing of the Bay of Biscay with the 5,000-m thick coastal flysch deposits offering a layered record spanning approximately 60 million years of Earth's history, between the Triassic (215 Ma) and the Eocene (45 Ma). This geological open book unveils ancient global crises and catastrophes that have shaped our planet. Notably, one of the layers marks the final of the five mass extinctions that have occurred throughout Earth's history. Referred to as the K/Pg or P/E extinction event, it took place approximately 65.5 million years ago when a large asteroid struck the Earth near Chicxulub, Mexico, resulting in the extinction of the dinosaurs.

HIGHLIGHTS

1) Over 200 caves, along with pinnacle morphologies and poljes, bear witness to the relentless action of water over time. 2) A guided biology tour of the Abrasion Platform, provides a close look at the flysch and shows how such a variety of species have adapted to live in this complex ecosystem, including starfish, octopuses, sea cucumbers, hares, and more.

ABOUT THE PARK

Area: 89 km²

When to visit: All year round

Geopark since: 2010

(RIGHT) THE 5,000-M THICK FLYSCH DEPOSIT DISPLAYS THE TRACES OF SEVERAL ANCIENT GLOBAL CRISES AND CATASTROPHES.

