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## **A national geopark in the republic of tatarstan (Russia): A feasibility study**

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### **Abstract**

The area, which occupies the right bank of the Volga River from the mouth of its tributary, Sviyaga River, to the southern border of Tatarstan, and the right bank of the Kama River from its mouth to the northeastern border of Tatarstan, is considered to warrant the possible creation of a national geopark. The area is characterized by well-defined limits, and it occupies 2,080 km<sup>2</sup> that is commensurate with an area of many successfully functioning geoparks. It has more than 150 years of history of comprehensive geological studies carried out by prominent Russian and foreign geologists. A significant number of geosites (29) of different types and significance levels accessible to visitors are revealed there. The majority of the geosites are of interest first of all in terms of stratigraphy and palaeontology as well as geomorphology, tectonics, petrology, hydrogeology, and history of geology and mining. These geosites allow study of the history of the Earth's organic world in the Middle-Upper Permian, geological events, and processes that occurred in this region, as well as landform evolution. This area is of aesthetic value owing to the variety and beauty of its natural landscapes. It also contains abundant nongeological natural, historical, and cultural heritage sites attractive for tourists. It is also characterized by a high level of economic development, well-developed infrastructure, and the existence of officially protected sites that occupy a fifth of the territory. The area is of high educational significance as well. It has, for a long time, been used as a geological training ground for students of the Kazan State University, Russia. Moreover, the scientific and methodical basis for seven educational-excursion routes including visiting particularly interesting geological, historical, and cultural sites of the planned geopark has been already developed. The comprehensive evaluation of this area shows that it meets all necessary criteria for geopark creation. © 2010 Springer-Verlag.

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### **Keywords**

Geopark, Geosites, Republic of Tatarstan, Russia