Sustainable development of the rural area in geoparks in Japan and other Asian nations

Mahito Watanabe
Geological Survey of Japan, AIST
Who am I?

* Geologist working for the Geological Survey of Japan
* Have been involved in Geopark project since 2006
* Member of the UNESCO Geopark Council
* Member of the Executive board of the Global Geoparks Network
* Member of the Asia Pacific Geoparks Network
* Former secretariat of the Japan Geopark Committee
Tsunami in 2011

- Geological Research revealed until 2009 that huge tsunami hit same area as the devastated area in 2011
- But,
  - This result had not effectively disseminated to wider public
  - Communication between scientists and people, decision maker, politician is crucial
International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme

**Geosciences Bureau**
- **5 members:** Chair, Vice-Chair, Rapporteur of the IGCP Scientific Council
- **+ ex-officio:** DG-UNESCO, Sec. General-IUGS
- **role:** decide on approved projects

**Scientific Council**
- **6 ord. members:** Chair + 5 Theme Leaders
- **role:** meet annually in Paris to recommend on IGCP projects and proposals
- **Ex officio:** DG-UNESCO, Sec. General-IUGS + observers

**Scientific Board**
- **50 members review electronically projects & proposals + recommend to the Council**

**Geoparks Bureau**
- **5 members:** Chair, Vice-Chair, Rapporteur of the Geoparks Council
- **+ ex-officio:** DG-UNESCO, President GGNa
- **role:** advising/coordinating, prepare necessary documentation for the UNESCO ExBd

**Geoparks Council**
- **12 ord. members:** regionally representative experts
- **role:** meet annually, assesses and decides on new Global Geopark members and forwards to UNESCO ExBd for endorsement
- **Ex officio:** DG-UNESCO, President-GGNa, Sec. General-IUGS, IUCN + observers

**Global Geopark Evaluation Team,**
Field and desktop reviews
Today’s Topic

* What is UNESCO Global Geopark?
  * What is NOT UNESCO Global Geopark?
* Examples of activity
  * Education
    * Disaster risk reduction
  * Tourism
  * Conservation
  * Networking
According to the UNESCO Global Geopark Guideline...

“the mechanism of international cooperation by which areas of geological heritage of international value, through a bottom-up approach to conserving that heritage, support each other to engage with local communities to promote awareness of that heritage and adopt a sustainable approach to the development of the area”
In more plain expression

* A GEOPARK is an area with....
  * a particular geological heritage of international significance
* but also with....
  * a sustainable development strategy or plan involving local communities.
Keywords

* Geological heritage of international value
* Conservation of natural and cultural heritages
* Promote awareness on the heritages
  * Education on local natural and cultural heritages
  * Education for disaster risk reduction using geoheritages
  * By strong cooperation between scientists and geoparks
* Activate local economy in sustainable way
* Bottom-up approach with strong management body
* International cooperation through networking
  * GGN, EGN, APGN, national networks
* Evaluation and revalidation (every four years)
Geopark are people

* Geopark is not just about geology
  * Geopark is not just “open-air museum” of geology
* Geopark enhance connection between people and geology
  * In geoparks, geoheritages are told with plain words and interesting stories, which includes tradition, tales, local knowledge etc.
  * Sense of pride for the area
* Geoparks cooperates each other under global, regional and national network
Distribution of UGGs

* 33 member countries, 120 areas.
Example of the Itoigawa UGG
Popularization

- Lecture on demand

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>2,640</td>
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Preparation for Tourism

- Info Panels
- Guidebooks
Preparation for Tourism

Guide Training

Guide Certification

Training Seminars
Use in Education

5th and 6th Year Geopark Textbook

3rd and 4th Year Geopark Textbook
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Times</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
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<td>760 students</td>
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Use in Education

Study Support (including disaster readiness)
Leaflet about Hands-on Experience Opportunities

Use in Education

- Visiting School
  - Kansai JHS: 17
  - Urawa Daiichi Girls’ SHS: 65
  - Keio Shonan Fujisawa SHS: 87
  - Nagano Nihon Univ. SHS: 258
  - Keio Shiki Boys’ SHS: 237

- # of School Field Trips Guided by Curators
  - 2008: 5
  - 2012: 32
Other Examples

* Toya-Usu UGG in Japan
  * DRR and educational tourism
* San’in Kaigan UGG in Japan
  * Geo-tourism and conservation
* Qeshm aspiring UGG in Iran
  * Revalidation and its effect
* Networking
  * National, regional, global level
* 19:00 ～ 20:00 まで 緊急的な調整が必要です
   20:00 ～ 21:00 まで 作業の準備が整います
   21:00 ～ 22:00 まで 作業を行います

* 作業完了後は 緊急調整を行い、準備が整った後
   22:00 ～ 23:00 まで 作業を行います

* 作業を完了した後は 作業を確認し、確認が終了しました
   23:00 ～ 0:00 まで 作業を行います

* 作業を完了した後は 作業を確認し、確認が終了しました
   0:00 ～ 1:00 まで 作業を行います

San’in Kaigan Global Geopark

Photo and Graph by Dr. Matsubara, San’in Kaigan Geopark

Number of visitors

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GEOPARKS: Conserving & Protecting our Geodiversity
Qeshm Geopark in Iran

- 2006: Global geopark
- 2010: Yellow card
  - No interpretation panel
  - No local people involvement
- 2012: Red card
  - Progress is so slow
- 2015: Re-apply
  - Under evaluation
JGN Annual Conference

700 registered participants at 2016 Conference
Exchange good practices
Executive committee member,
Leaders of Working groups
Summary 1

* Geoparks enhance
  * Understanding of local people on heritages
  * Sense of pride for the area
  * Conservation activity of heritages by local people
  * Tourism activity by using geoheritages

* Geoparks connect
  * People, decision makers and geology
  * Various kinds of heritages including natural, cultural and intangible heritages
Geoparks help

- Better decision making by using geological knowledge
- Better preparation for disaster by understanding earth’s history and its mechanism
- Geoparks contribute to achieve SDG goals through above mentioned functions