



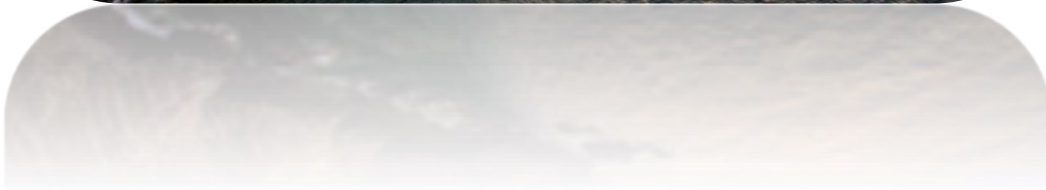
# Asia Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN)

CELEBRATING EARTH HERITAGE – SUSTAINING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

## Annual Report 2020

by

JIN Xiaochi, Ibrahim KOMOO, Setsuya NAKADA



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As most part of the world experienced, APGN had a hard time in 2020, due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. However, APGN didn't passively suffer, but conducted and supported a serious activities/ events, to demonstrate the resilience of UNESCO Global Geoparks, to boost the confidence of local communities and to advance sustainable development. Thanks to the enthusiasms and active participation of our member geoparks, we achieved quite encouraging results, which are instrumental for the healthy development of APGN

Here we report 9 major activities and achievements in roughly a temporal order. Activities initiated and accomplished by different members are not repeated here. They will be described in detail in annual reports of various geoparks to the GGN. We express sincere thanks to our members.

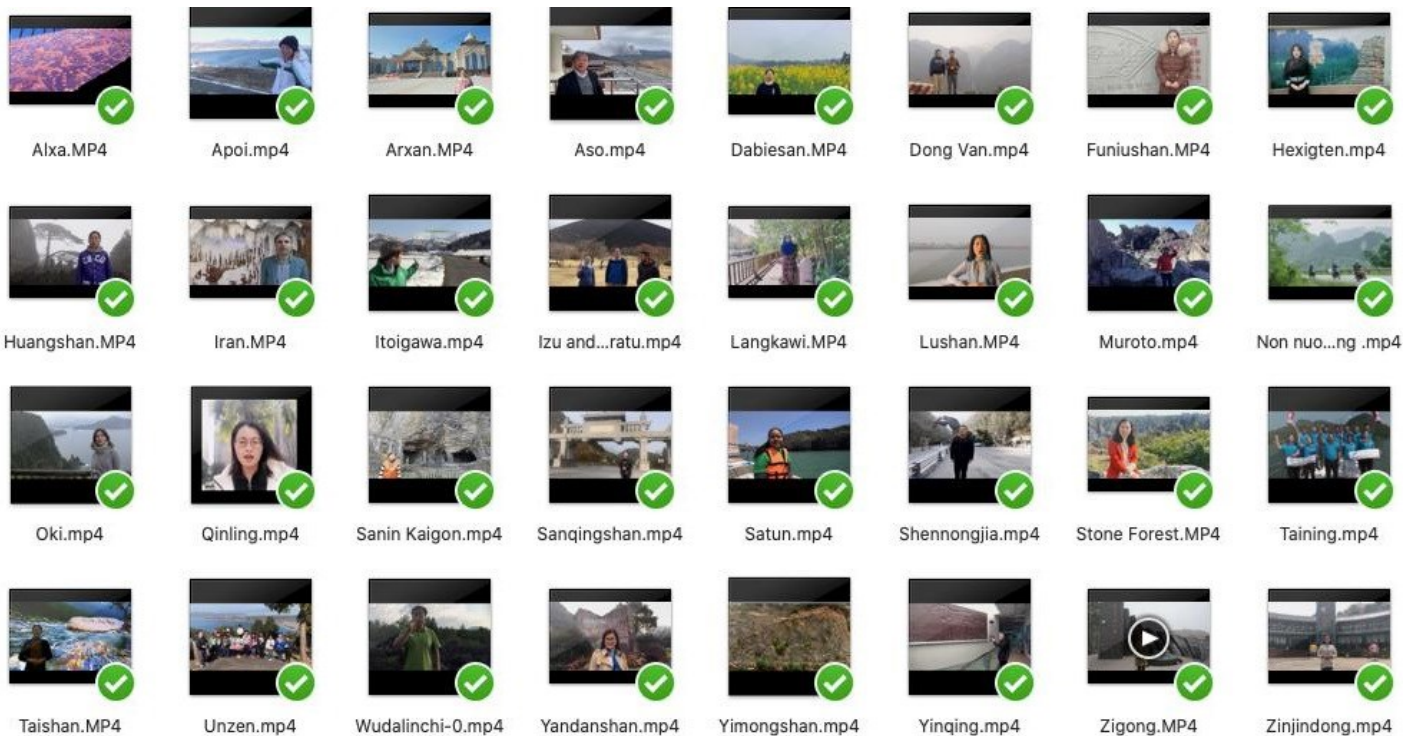
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# 1. APGN for ITB2020

APGN attaches much importance to promoting UNESCO Global Geoparks at big international tourist fairs. At the beginning of 2020 we were busy preparing videos, brochures, books, souvenirs, etc. to be presented at ITB2020, which was scheduled in the period of 4-8 March 2020 in the fairgrounds of Messe Berlin.

Our members showed great enthusiasm for participating in the largest international tourism fair. It is especially worth to mention that Dr. KM Yeung and colleagues of HK UGGp devoted a lot of time and efforts in collecting and sorting all the materials, and communicating with the ITB organizers. Dr. Yeung also prepared PPT presentation of APGN with the title “Sustainable tourism destinations: examples from the Asia Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN)”. Even though the fair was finally called off, due to the Covid pandemic, the preparation served as a push and check of the promotion ability of our geoparks.



Promotion Videos from member geoparks



Some snaps of the promotion videos

## APGN Promotion Materials Checklist

### China

Yandangshan UNESCO Global Geopark	Tour Guide Handbook X 1, leaflet X 1
Wudalianchi UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 2, booklet X 1
Taishan UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1
Fangshan UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1, leaflet X 1
Zigong UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1, leaflet x 3
Yanqing UNESCO Global Geopark	Photo album X 1
Mt. Sanqingshan UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Dali Mount Cangshan UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1
Qinling Zhongnanshan UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1
Xingwen UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1
Stone Forest UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1
Alxa Desert UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Hong Kong UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1, leaflet X 1

### Japan

Muroto UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Toya Usu UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Sai'in Kaigan UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet x 1, leaflet X 1
Izu Peninsula UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Oki Islands UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 3
Aso UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 2, booklet x 3
Itoigawa UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Unzen Volcanic Area Global Geopark	Booklet X 1

### Indonesia

Rinjani-Lombok UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 1, pocket map X 1
Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark	Booklet X 2, leaflet X 1

### Korea, Republic of

Mudeungsan Area UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1
Jeju Island UNESCO Global Geopark	Leaflet X 1

## 2. First APGN Geoparks Week

The idea of initiating the APGN Geoparks Week was approved at the AC Meeting on 06 September 2019. It was also decided that the APGN Geoparks Week starts from 22 April, the International Earth Day. 2020 was the year to realize the first APGN Geoparks Week. In April, the Covid pandemic had already caused great damage to our society and strongly hit the lifeline of our member geoparks. We, therefore, decided that the first APGN Geoparks Week should demonstrate the resilience of geoparks and boost the confidence of local communities.

We encouraged our member geoparks to organize possible activities/events that suitable for their specific situations at that hard time.



22-28 April 2020, Starting with Celebrating Earth Day

### First APGN Geoparks Week

*Celebrating earth heritage, showing resilience of Geoparks, boosting confidence of local communities*

The idea of APGN Geoparks Week was

- to increase the visibility of Global Geoparks
- to demonstrate the synergy of celebrating geological, cultural, historical and intangible heritage of Global Geoparks
- to make local people more proud of their hometown
- to increase the momentum of sustainable development of local communities

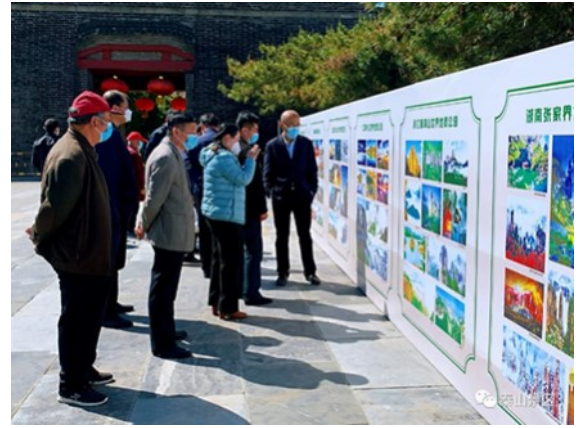
Activities could be but are not limited to

- Earth Day celebration
- Promotion of Geoparks and the UGGp philosophy
- Interaction among sister Geoparks
- Interaction among Geoparks with similar/same kinds of geoheritage
- school/community in Geoparks
- Geohazards mitigation education/demonstration
- Geoheritage interpretation; E-classroom
- Cultural and intangible heritage demonstration/performance
- SDGs and Asia Pacific UGGps

For the First APGN Geoparks Week, 12 Geoparks in China, namely, Yandangshan, Danxiashan, Huangshan, Lushan, Taishan, Zhangjiajie, Sanqingshan, Leiqiong, Leye-Fengshan and Jiuhuashan UGGps, and Xiangxi and Longyan aUGGps, lunched the event “*Sister Geoparks Mutual Exhibition and Interaction 2020*”. That is, every geopark would show the pictures and videos of all the other geoparks. The launching ceremony on 22 April with speeches and performances in these geoparks attracted nearly 10,000 people.

The exquisite pictures and videos showing the geoheritage of 12 geoparks, plus on-site explanations about the diversified attractions of these geoparks fascinated the visitors. Moreover, visitors were provided the chance to complete quiz sheets to win souvenirs and tickets to the 12 Geoparks. More than 6,000 tickets and 100,000 information and science popularization materials were given out. This event also conveyed the idea of Harmonious Coexistence of Human and Nature.

The event was initiated by Danxiashan and Yandangshan UGGps and received the support of GGN, APGN and CGN. It continued to 28 April. Apart from attending the exhibition, visitors could get from the websites and social media of these geoparks more information and details about various activities.



### 3. Geotourism Festival 2020



# Geotourism Festival 2020

15-16 July 2020

In Indonesia Covid-19 pandemic severely affected tourism industry, where twenty million people work in it. Many tourism players of the local communities and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) lost their job or experienced significant income decrease. In order to support Geotourism development in Lombok and Indonesia, offering a chance to MSMEs to promote their geoproducts and facilitate community in tourism industry to earn income in pandemic time through virtual event, Rinjani-Lombok UGGP initiated and organized the Geotourism Festival 2020, a virtual event in July 2020. The main support of the event came from Indonesia Ministry of Tourism & Creative Economy, and support also from Indonesian Geoparks Network, Geoparks Japan and APGN. This event was also backed up by 20 local student as volunteers.



The event included Webinars, Cultural Performances, Online Exhibition and Virtual Geotours. There were 511 registered participants from Indonesia & abroad, 56 virtual exhibition partners and 15 local tour guides.

The 3 webinars' topics were: Development of Geotourism in Asia Pacific (Speaker: Prof. JIN Xiaochi), Success Story of Geotourism development in Japan (Speakers: Dr. Atsuko

Niina & Ms. Yoshie Nakada) and How to Create A Geotour Package (Speaker: Prof. Noel Scott from University of the Sunshine Coast).

The cultural performance at the Opening Ceremony was 'Reading of Samalas Story combined with Earth Song Jazz Music', to signify that the volcanic eruption brought disaster, but also produced beautiful landscape and fertile land for human life. The Earth Song reinforces the message of conservation in the development of geoparks. Lombok Traditional Stick Fighting Sport performances called 'Peresean' are presented during the break of sessions. The production of these cultural performances engaged 50 local people including local music bands, composers, Peresean art groups, cultural experts & kids theatre club.



The online exhibition showcasing geoproducts, geosouvenirs and geotour packages were followed by various participants, including MSMEs, tour operators and partners.

The 7 Virtual Geotours packages were 5 geotrails from Rinjani-Lombok Geopark, 1 geotrail from Tambora National Geopark and 1 geotrail from Poso Lake community.





As the first Geotourism virtual event in Indonesia, Geotourism Festival 2020 gained some appreciations from UNESCO Office Jakarta, Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of Republic of Indonesia, Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment of Indonesia, and communities in geoparks as a sign of Geopark resilience in pandemic situation.



## 4. APGN AC & CC Meetings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNESCO Global Geoparks Conference 2020 was postponed to 2021. Consequently, APGN Advisory Committee (AC) and Coordination Committee (CC) meetings, which were scheduled to take place during the Conference, could not be realized as planned. However, APGN is a network of resilience. We held the 2020 APGN AC and CC meetings online, using the GGN online meeting platform GoToMeeting. The agendas of the two meetings are as follows.

### Agenda of AC meeting on 19 October 2020

- Welcome and adoption of the agenda
- Business report by Coordinators
- Postponement of 2020's events of GGN to 2021, and consequently the postponement of APGN Symposium and related activities from 2021 to 2022.
- Measures for sustainable development in a prolonged period of Covid pandemic
- Any other businesses

### Agenda of CC Meeting on 20 October 2020

- Welcome and adoption of the agenda
- Business report by Coordinators.
- Postponement of 2020's events of GGN to 2021, and consequently the postponement of APGN Symposium and related activities from 2021 to 2022.
- Report about APGN social media (by Hong Kong UGGp), 15 minutes Share screen
- Sharing good practices of APGN members, especially on those showing the resilience of UGGps; each country\* gives a 15-minutes presentation (in alphabetic order: China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea R., Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam; altogether 120 minutes) Share screen
- Measures for sustainable development in a prolonged period of Covid pandemic
- Any other businesses. Thai colleagues presenting the preparation of APGN Symposium Share screen

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 \* It is recommended that each country choose one (or two if necessary) speaker(s) to give the presentation with ppt.

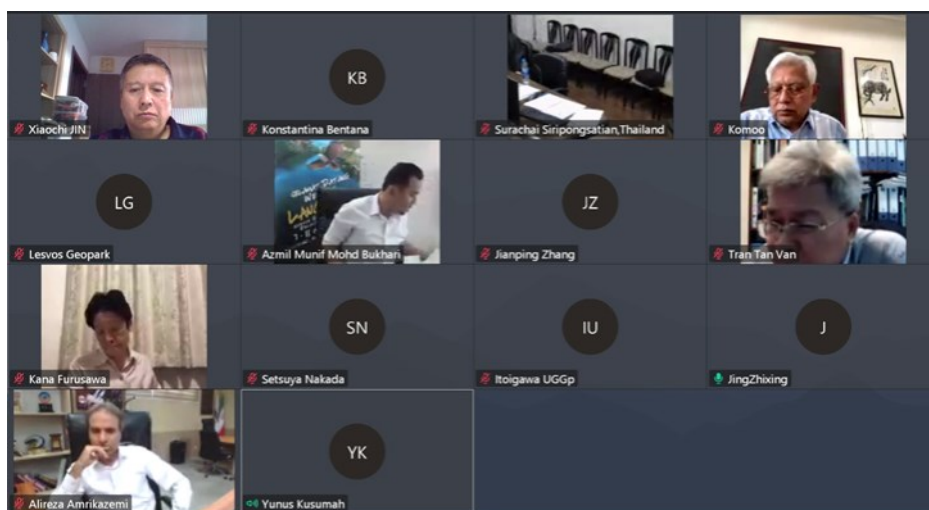
APGN coordinator X. Jin presented the “APGN Business Report – Activities, Initiatives and Promotional Tools” at AC and CC meetings. GGN President N. Zouros explained at AC and CC meetings the reasons and decision for the Postponement of 2020's events of GGN to 2021, and consequently the postponement of APGN Symposium and related activities from 2021 to 2022.

Ms. Y.N. Chan of Hong Kong UGGp talked at the CC meeting about the construction and maintaining of APGN social media (Twitter and Instagram), and how to make them effective communication platforms within and outside the network.

Also at the CC meeting colleagues from China, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea R., Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam shared their good practices, especially those showing the resilience of UGGps. These presentations also summarized activities of the respect countries since the last CC meeting in 2019.

Thai colleagues introduced the situation of preparing the next APGN Symposium, which is to be held in 2022 in Satun UGGp, Thailand.

This was the first time for APGN to hold online meetings with so many participants. The results of the meetings were satisfactory to most participants, although some people were not yet used to online meeting.



Screenshot of AC meeting



Screenshots of CC meeting

## 5. Forum of Geoparks in Volcanic Areas

The “2020 Forum on Volcanic Rocks and Geoparks in Volcanic Areas” was held in Yandangshan UNESCO Global Geopark from 17 to 20 November, 2020. Over 60 delegates attended the forum. They were from Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chinese Academy of Geological Sciences, Nanjing University, Zhejiang University, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Chang'an University, Capital Normal University, Nanjing and Wuhan Branches of China Geological Survey, Leiqiong UGGp, Wudalianchi UGGp, Ningde UGGp, Jingpohu UGGp, Hexigten UGGp, Taining UGGp, Leye-Fengshan UGGp, and Jiuhuashan UGGp. APGN was one of the supporters of the forum, and APGN Coordinator Prof. JIN Xiaochi, amongst others, addressed the forum at the opening ceremony.

This forum brought together professionals of magmatic rock studies and experts of geoparks in volcanic areas. Presentations from academic institutions demonstrated their recent results of studying late Mesozoic magmatic developments along the east Asian continent margin,



JIN Xiaochi addressing the forum at opening ceremony

where the Yandangshan and several other UGGps are located. These presentations provided the newest data for interpreting the genesis of the geoh heritage sites and related landscapes in these geoparks. Presentations of Leiqiong UGGp, Wudalianchi UGGp, Ningde UGGp, Jingpohu UGGp, and Hexigten UGGp showed their achievements in geoh heritage protection and geopark management, and sustainable development of communities in volcanic areas. Scientific studies on geology and geomorphology of volcanic areas provided an excellent opportunity for integrating science with local culture and history for the promotion of



Questions from the audience

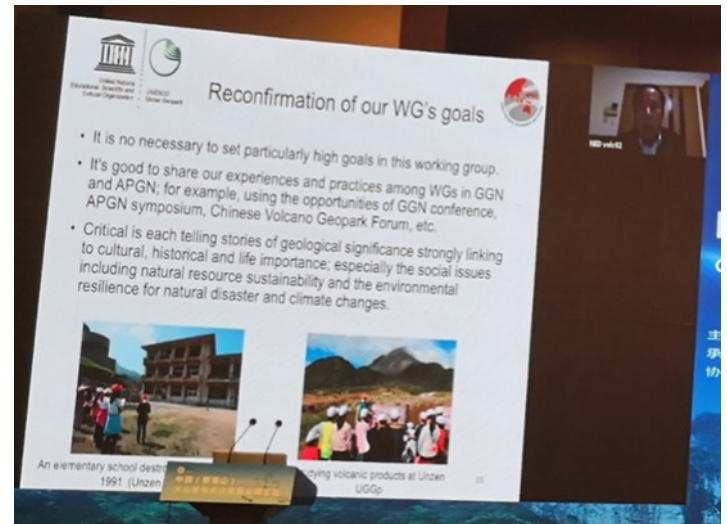
geotourism. Participants exchanged views on magmatic evolution, its petrogenesis, mantle and crustal processes, tectonic setting, and mineralization in the southeast coast of China, as well as the volcanic geology, landscape, and management of China's global geoparks in volcanic area. Online presentations were also given by Professor Setsuya Nakada of Japan

Volcano Research Promotion Centre and Professor Joao Carlos Nunes of Azores University of Portugal. Both of them are leaders of GGN Working Group on Geoparks in Volcanic Areas .

Post-forum excursion in the geopark let attendees to visit the major geosites such as Lingfeng, Fangdong, Changyu Dongtian and Nanxijiang, and gave participants a better understanding of the volcano struc-



Field excursion in Yandangshan UGGp



Online presentations of J.C. Nunes and S. Nakada

ture and geomorphology of Yandangshan UGGp.

During the forum, Hexigten Global Geopark submitted a membership application to the Secretariat of the Chinese Alliance of Geoparks in Volcanic Area, and was accepted as a member. In the meantime, it was decided that Wudalianchi UNESCO Global Geopark host of the next forum.

Professor Wu Fuyuan of the Institute of Geology and Geophysics, CAS made conclusive remarks, who spoke highly of the achievements of the Forum and affirmed that it was a great initiative to bring together scholars of magmatic rock studies and geopark experts to share their ideas and experiences. Yandangshan will certainly continue to play a leading role in connecting geoparks in volcanic area, as well as encouraging and promoting researches on volcanos and volcanic rocks.

## 6. 6th Beijing International Training Course

The 6<sup>th</sup> Beijing International Training Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks was conducted during the period from 07 to 12 December 2020 in the Yimengshan UGGp, Shandong, China, with the strong support of UNESCO Global Geoparks Secretariat, the Global Geoparks Network (GGN), the Asia Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN), Department of Protected Area Management of National Forestry and Grassland Administration (NFGA), and the Chinese Commission for UNESCO. This course was jointly organized by China University of Geosciences Beijing (CUGB), Yimengshan UGGp, Office of Chinese Geoparks Network, Chinese Academy of Geological Sciences (CAGS), with the contribution of University of the Aegean, Greece. More than 100 participants from UNESCO Global Geoparks, Aspiring UNESCO Global Geoparks, academic institutions, geopark developers and the press attended the course.



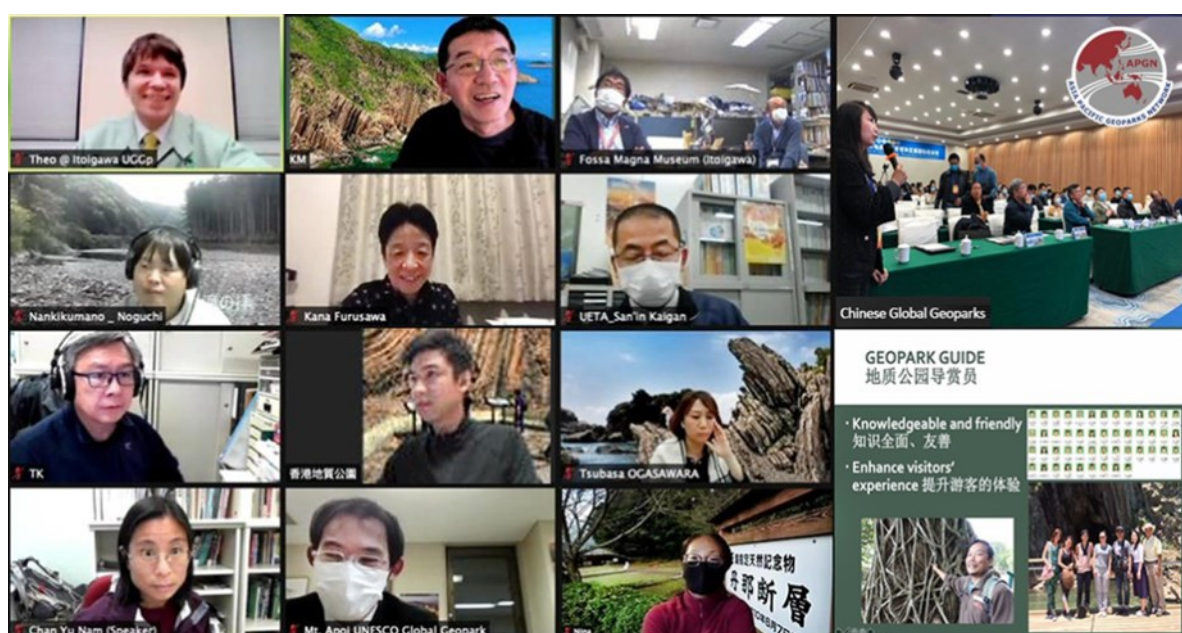
The Training Course had a lecturer team of Prof. Nikolaos ZOUROS (GGN president, UGGp Council member, Greece), Dr. Guy MARTINI (UGGp Council chair, GGN secretary-general, France), Prof. ZHANG Jianping (UGGp Council vice-chair, GGN ExB member, China), Prof. JIN Xiaochi (GGN vice-president, APGN coordinator, China), Prof. Ibrahim KOMOO (GGN vice-president, APGN vice-coordinator, Malaysia), Dr. Marie-Luise FREY (GGN ExB and UGGp Council member, Germany), Ms. YUAN Xiaohong (Division Chief, Department of Protected Area Management, NFGA), Mr. Yuanyuan Zheng (CGN coordinator, China), Prof. ZHAO Zhizhong (CAGS), Dr. KM YEUNG (Hong Kong UGGp), Prof. TIAN Mingzhong (CUGB), and Prof. WU Fadong (CUGB).

At the opening ceremony, Dr. Kristof VANDENBERGHE (UNESCO Global Geoparks Secretariat), Dr. Guy MARTINI, Prof. Nikolaos ZOUROS, Prof. JIN Xiaochi, Ms. YUAN Xiaohong, Mr. MA Yan (vice-president CAGS) and Mr. ZHENG Liansheng (Deputy Mayor of Linyi City) and Prof. MA Junjie (Chairman CUGB) delivered warm speeches.

The first part (Lectures and panel discussions, December 8-10) dedicated to the UNESCO Global Geoparks' philosophy, management, exchange and sustainable development; UGGp application, evaluation and revalidation processes. Lectures were on the keys to building a successful Geopark, UNESCO Global Geoparks philosophy, criteria of UNESCO Global Geoparks, Geoparks evaluation and revalidation procedures, operations of Global Geoparks Network, Regional and National Geopark networks, current situation and management of Chinese UGGps, experiences of the local community involvement, marketing and sustainable development, scientific research in geoparks, World Heritage Sites and UNESCO Global Geoparks, Geopark brand building and visibility promotion, etc.



The second part (On site exchange and case analysis, December 11-12) provided chances for participants to share their own experiences and concerns. Participants from Hong Kong, Yimengshan, Shilin, Huangshan, Tianzhushan, Yanqing, Xiangxi, and Zhangye UGGps and Longyan, Linxia aUGGps presented the challenges they faced. The lecturers and geopark colleagues commented and gave suggestions to these geoparks. The online presentation of KM Yeung (Hong Kong) was also attended by Japanese colleagues, and followed by a good discussion.



Online presentation of KM Yeung



Pictures of excursion in the Yimengshan UGGp



The International Mountain Day (December 11) happened to be within the period of the training course. An excursion to the top of Mengshan was specially organized. Participants celebrated the International Mountain Day by climbing the Mengshan, presenting prepared posters and banners at the top of the Mengshan.



## 7. Forum of Geoparks with Multiple Designations

It has become increasingly urgent for geoparks with multiple UNESCO designations to explore how to best develop the synergy of these brands, how to let them be complementary to each other. For this purpose, the Huangshan UGGp, in collaboration with Shennongjia UGGp and Jeju UGGp, organized a forum of geoparks with multiple designations on 13 December. These three geoparks all have three UNESCO designations. Mr. WU Wenda of Huangshan UGGp, Dr. JEON Yongmun of Jeju UGGp and Mr. CHEN Jinxin of Shennongjia UGGp shared their ideas and good practices. Officials from UNESCO Beijing office; National Forest and Grassland Administration, Anhui provincial government and experts of UGGp, MAB and Heritage attend the forum and shared their ideas.



Dr. Liu of China University of Geosciences (Wuhan) reported their research results of Synergetic management of UNESCO designations in Huangshan. He and colleagues carried out this project for years. Their work were much appreciated by the forum participants.



## 8. Let's Do it — APGN ZOOM Mini-Exchange

How to maintain exchange and collaboration with Network members under the COVID-19 pandemic, Hong Kong UGGp actively explored the possibility of online-exchange when face-to-face communication was not possible.

In the first quarter of 2020, Hong Kong UGGp launched “Let's Do It”, an online exchange meeting, which engages members of the APGN and invited speakers from other geoparks/networks. Exchange session of about 1 hour was held every month to share news, ideas and work progress, including approaches to combating the pandemic, and how to conduct geopark operations during this period.

There has been some challenges to make the online exchange platform work, such as, to find out a suitable web-conferencing software, to increase network stability, and data transmission and voice quality. The multiple languages involved are also a hurdle.



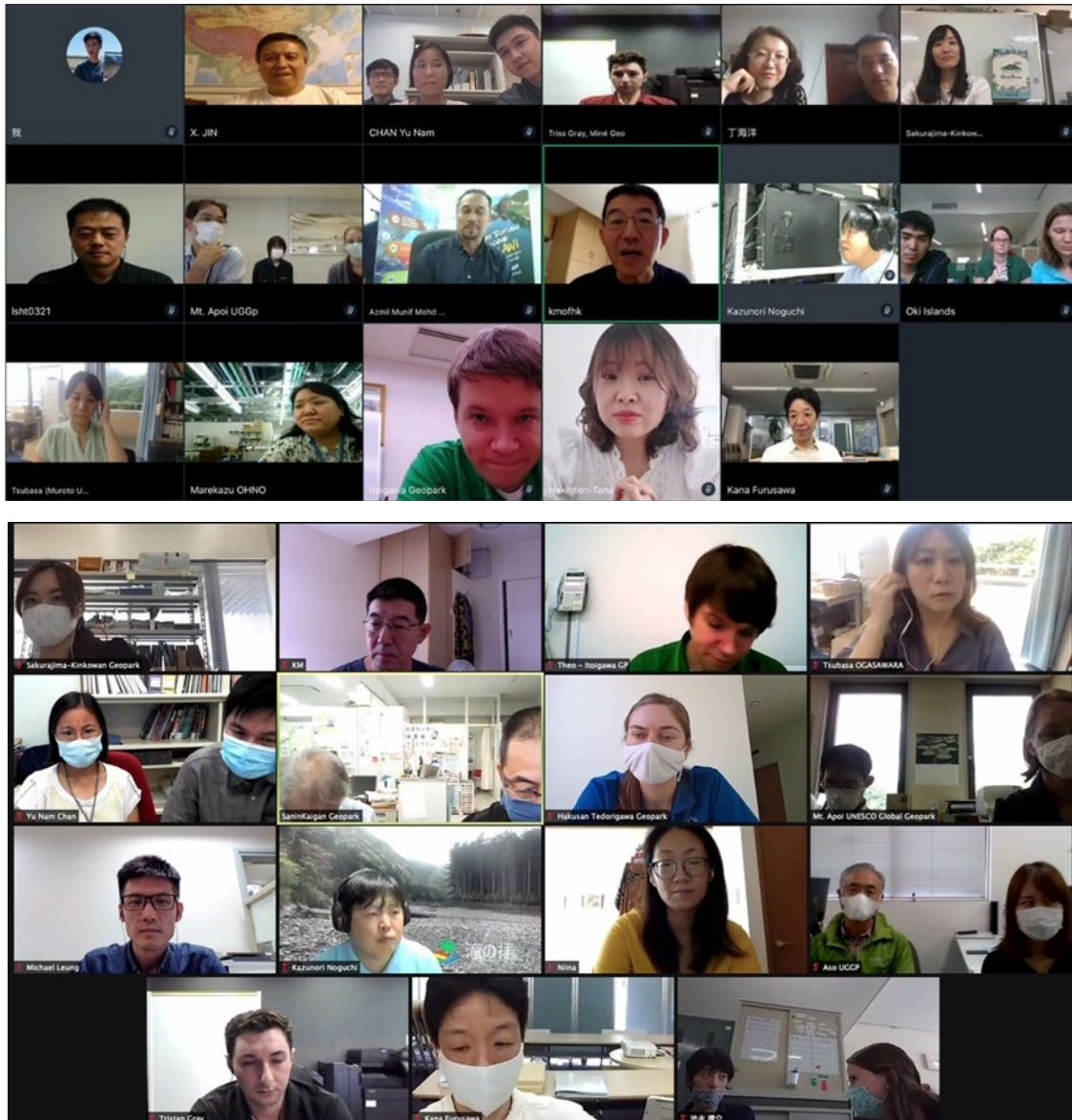
Screenshot of “Let's do it — APGN ZOOM Mini-Exchange”

After trying several applications/platforms the meeting chose Zoom, and has since been conducted regularly, and many APGN geoparks have participated with great enthusiasm. More than 10 online exchange meetings have been held.

During the meeting, volunteers from the various geoparks were on hand to provide simultaneous voice interpretation or translation of text-based exchanges in the chat room. After each meeting, valuable reference materials were uploaded to a cloud drive for sharing, and one-on-one chats were arranged to provide further details.

Now the meeting is conducted regularly using Zoom, many APGN geoparks have participated with great enthusiasm. “let's Do It” has played a very active role in networking and sharing good practices amongst APGN members. Exchange activities like this have become the new normal during the pandemic.

The experience of maintaining networking activities during the pandemic through social media and online meeting not only benefit us during this difficult period, but also strengthen our collaboration and solidarity which will continue in the future.



Screenshots of “Let’s do it —APGN ZOOM Mini-Exchange

## 9. Networking of Geoparks in Malaysia & Indonesia

In 2019, an informal Malaysia Indonesia Geoparks Network (MIGN) was established, aiming at providing better network between Geoparks in both countries. Since most of the geoparkian in both countries are not able to speak English, to make it effective, the official language for the networking is Malay (Bahasa Indonesia/ Malaysia). Up to now they have conducted two joint webinars. Including one to support the APGN Geoparks Week 2021.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Regional Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks in Langkawi which is postponed last year due to Covid-19 will be held in October 2021 on Webinar format.