

# GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2019

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

**Geopark name, country, regional Network:** Aso UNESCO Global Geopark, Japan, APGN

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2014 / 2018

**Representative Photo:**



Specimens of rocks distributed in Aso UGGp area were collected and exhibited in Aso Volcano Museum; one of the main facilities of Aso UGGp and offices of 8 municipalities which consist of Aso UGGp. The purpose of the exhibitions was to help people understanding geology, topography and geo-stories of Aso UGGp.

## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staffs:** 6 staffs including 2 geoscientists

**Number of visitors:** Estimated to be 11.5million

**Number of Geopark events:** 45

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programs:** 58

**Number of Geopark press release:** 15 and Web news 20

## 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

**Major achievements in 2019:**

- Specimens of rocks distributed in Aso area were collected and exhibited in Aso Volcano Museum and offices of municipalities which consist of Aso UGGp.
- Aso regional guide-interpreter education course was held and 11 guide-interpreters were registered.
- 75 geo-tours were conducted and 1,909 people participated.
- Optional tours for cruise train "Nanatu-boshi" was consigned by JR Kyushu Co. Ltd. 637 people participated the tours.

**Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation:**

- Poster presentations in JpGU 2019 meeting
- Participation in APGN capacity building workshop

- Host the Geo-school from Hong-Kong UNESCO Geopark
- Participation in the 6th Symposium of APGN

#### **Management and Financial Status:**

- The labor costs and other office expense are covered by an operational profit of the fund of Aso Design Center has and budgets provided from the municipalities. The project expenses are covered by subsidies from national and prefectural governments.

#### **Geoconservation:**

- A monitoring study of natural tourist resources was conducted based on the Aso Ecotourism Overall Concept.
- Geosite database was created by the monitoring study.

#### **Sustainable tourism (Geotourism):**

- Evaluation of all geosites in Aso UGGp for safety, accessibility, installation of explanation signboards, etc. were conducted.
- Information sharing meetings sharing public construction plans were held with national and prefectural government.

#### **New education programs on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction:**

- We pointed out some problems of antidisaster drill organized by the Aso Volcano Disaster Prevention Council, and proposed improvement plans to solve the problems.
- We supported secretariat work of Aso guide training course 2019 which was organized by Aso Ecotourism Society.
- We held seminars and foreign language lectures to improve ability of guides.
- We held Aso regional guide-interpreter education course and registered 11 guide-interpreters.
- We contributed academic research of universities by provision of research grant and materials.

#### **Strategic partnership:**

- We hosted the Geo-school from Hong-Kong UNESCO Geopark.
- Our representative visited Cheongsong UGGp in Korea and hold an exchange meeting.
- Aso-Tateno Gorge Tourism Promotion Council was established to tourist development and regional development of Tateno gorge. Our representative participated in the council.
- We held meetings to promote information sharing and business promotion with municipals.
- We concluded a partnership agreement with Oshidoishi-no-oka (NPO).
- We strengthened partnership with Aso Geopark Guide Association by providing subsidy and cooperation on educational programs and many events.
- We cooperated on following projects and strengthened partnership with national and local governments; "Project to Fully Enjoy Aso Kuju National Park" – Ministry of Environment, "Kumamoto earthquake earthquake disaster museum basic plan" – Kumamoto Prefecture, Aso Mountain Tourism Reconstruction Council – Aso City.

#### **Promotional activities:**

- We exhibited geopark promotion booths at events held inside and outside of Aso.
- We hosted lectures regarding calderas and earthquakes.
- We provided information and articles for various magazines.
- We conducted promotion through our website and SNS.

## **4. CONTACTS**

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