

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2021

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Geopark name, country, regional Network: Oki Islands, Japan, Asia Pacific Geoparks Network

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2013 / 2017

Representative photos: Oki Islands Geopark Museum (left) and Geo Room Discover (right)



2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 13 staffs including 1 geoscientist

Number of visitors: 30 658

Number of Geopark events: 9

- Lectures and field work tours for local communities and institutions: 56

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:

- Oki High School: compulsory course for 1st and 2nd year, elective course for 3rd year students
- Lectures and field work tours at schools conducted by geopark lecturers: 41

Number of Geopark press release: 2

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2021:

- Oki Islands Geopark Museum was opened in April 2021 in Okinoshima Town. It serves as the main museum in the geopark. Guiding in the museum is provided by geopark staff.
- Hotel Entô was opened in July 2021. It serves as a base facility of the geopark. Geopark suboffice, geopark exhibition called Geo Room Discover and Geo Lounge are located inside.
- The management body of the geopark was registered as a Destination Management / Marketing Organization (DMO) in November 2021.
- The management body of the geopark continued to carry out talks about a merger with Oki Islands Tourism Association, a move aimed at increasing the geopark's presence in the local tourism industry. The merger is planned to take place in April 2022.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation:

- Participated in APGN Online Exchange Project "Let's Do It!" throughout the year.
- Participated in the 2nd Digital Forum of UNESCO Global Geoparks (23-24.02.2021)
- Participated in International Mother Earth Day Welcome Digital Event for the New UNESCO Global Geoparks (22.04.2021).
- Organized and facilitated an exchange between students from the local high schools and two schools from Hong Kong UGGp during the APGN Geopark Week (22-28.04.2021).
- Presented at the Geotourism Festival and International Conference 2021 in Rinjani-Lombok UGGp (05-07.08.2021)
- Participated in the 11th National Conference of Japanese Geoparks Network and served as facilitators and coordinators at one of the sessions (03-05.10.2021).
- Participated in the 9th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks organized by Jeju

Island UGGp and contributed with four presentations (11-17.12.2021).

Management and Financial Status

- The management body of the geopark was registered as a DMO in November 2021. The geopark operates its budget and financial management independently, with its main sources of funds being the prefectural government and the four local municipalities.

Geoconservation

- Continued the 'Subsidy for Oki Islands UGGp Academic Research' Project (seven studies were selected).
- Cooperated with the Ministry of Environment on removal of invasive species (24-25.05.2020).
- Organized a fabric dyeing event using an invasive plant species (19.06.2021).
- Co-organized a marine debris cleanup tournament to choose the prefectural representative for the national event (17.07.2021).
- Organized an exhibition about the marine debris problem prompted by the story of a sea turtle which was found by a resident in a weakened state entangled in marine debris, and supported a local group aiming to publish a children's book based on this story.
- Co-organized with the Japanese Geoparks Network a kick-off event for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (13.11.2021).

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Opened two new geopark exhibitions: Oki Islands Geopark Museum in Okinoshima Town and Geo Room Discover in Ama Town (04.2021, 07.2021).
- Carried out trainings for certified geopark guides and foreign language guides on the topics of flora and fauna, culture, and geology of the islands.
- Continued the training course for guides in foreign languages and certified two new participants.
- Granted subsidies for the development of two new geopark products and one packaging designs.
- Carried out trials of sightseeing routes on e-bikes (electric-assisted mountain bikes) which are a new addition to the tourism offer on the Oki Islands.

New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction:

- N/A

Strategic partnership:

- Oki Ranger Station (Ministry of Environment, Daisen-Oki National Park): joint activities related to invasive species of plants are carried out. MoE carries out infrastructure works within the geopark area overlapping with the National Park, which includes installing signboards and maintaining trails.

Promotional activities:

- Installed three new signboards and cooperated with the National Park on the contents of one signboard installed in the joint areas of the national park and the geopark.
- Began releasing a monthly nature newsletter called "Oki-tan," meaning "Oki Exploration." Each issue features information about various aspects of nature observed on the Oki Islands.
- Carried out promotional activities on social media (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram).
- Created a series of videos promoting the geopark sites and yoga.

4. CONTACTS

Manager: NOBE Kazuhiro, e-mail: nobe@oki-geopark.jp

Geologist: IKENAGA Ryosuke, e-mail: ikenaga@oki-geopark.jp