

# GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2022

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

**Geopark name, country, regional Network:** San'in Kaigan UNESCO Global Geopark, (Japan, APGN)

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2010 / 2022 (Yellow Card)



San'in Kaigan Geopark Trail Promotion Project



Experience cruising on a high school training ship

## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staffs:** 17 staffs (including 2 geologists and 3 academic experts)

**Number of visitors:** 1,556,323 (20 core facilities and others, from January to December 2022)

**Number of Geopark events:** 12 events held by the San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council; 43 events held by local municipality governments

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational program:** 113 classes at elementary school, 21 classes at junior high school, 15 classes at high school, 18 classes at university and 49 times for other organizations.

**Number of Geopark press release:** 23 times held by the Promotion Council; 46 times held by nine constituting municipality governments.

## 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

### Major achievements in 2022

- i) Acquired a subsidy from the Ministry of the Environment, "Regional Reconstruction Promotion Expenses for Creating Attraction of Bases Facilities for National and Quasi-National Parks," and proceeded with improving the environment for accepting visitors, such as improving the safety of the San'in Kaigan Geopark Trail and disseminating its appeal. In this way, we worked to attract domestic customers and prepared for after-corona visitors.
- ii) In July 2022, a hands-on cruise was organized for the first time in order to offer to people an experience of the charm of the San'in Kaigan UNESCO Global Geopark by cruising the coast of the Geopark on

the training ship owned by Hyogo Prefectural Kasumi High School. About 200 people applied for the quota of 30, showing the high level of interest in overlooking the geopark from the sea.

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

- i) Three people participated online in the 7th APGN Symposium held in Satun, Thailand from September 6 to 10, 2022. In the symposium, the director of this council made an oral presentation on the theme of "GEO - Activity Project in San'in Kaigan UNESCO Global Geopark."
- ii) One of the geologists of our council participated in the 3rd "Digital Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks 2022" co-hosted by UNESCO and the Global Geoparks Network, held online from November 15 to 25, 2022. During the Digital Course a presentation concerning promotion of the San'in Kaigan Geopark and case studies was conducted.
- iii) The 9th International Conference on Geoscience Education was held in Matsue City, Shimane Prefecture from August 21st to 24th, 2022. In the session of the international symposium on disaster prevention education, the geologist from our council made a presentation on earthquake disaster prevention learning which has been being given in elementary school science field studies. One person from the council was sent to the international symposium for interpretation (English-Japanese) work. We also cooperated with the Pre-Conference Field Excursions held in conjunction with this event.
- iv) At the Congress celebrating the 60th anniversary of the International Union of Geological Sciences (held on the Basque coast of Spain), October 25-28, 2022, one of the geosite of the San'in Kaigan Geopark, Genbudo Cave, submitted by the Council, was selected as one of "The First 100 IUGS Geological Heritage Sites".

### **Management and Financial Status**

- i) Annual Budget of Fiscal Year 2022 (April 2022 to March 2023): 56,683,000 yen, increased by 10,000,000 yen from the previous fiscal year
- ii) Separately from above, geopark-related budget (143,446,000 yen in FY2022) for conducting activities was secured in the nine constituent local municipalities of prefectures, city and town for Fiscal Year 2022 (from April 2022 to March 2023).

### **Geoconservation**

- i) At the guide training course held in March 2022, a lecture was given by an academic expert of the Council on the sale of geological materials and its background.
- ii) In response to the results of "Conditional Revalidation (Yellow Card)" given to the San'in Kaigan Geopark at the 7th Session of UNESCO Geoparks Council held on December 9, 2022, the following discussions and meetings for countermeasures for the results were immediately conducted by the relevant parties, regional representatives, national committees, and national ministries and agencies.

These are still in progress.

2022, Dec.13	The secretariat of the San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council, the Japan Geopark Committee, and officials from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology held an online meeting to discuss immediate measures.
2022, Dec.21	San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council Steering Committee meeting was held to first identify issues and confirm that efforts will be made to resolve them.
2022, Dec.22	The president of the San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council and the three prefectural governors, who are advisors, hold an emergency online meeting and express their intention to continue to support geopark activities.
2022, Dec.23	An online meeting was held between the San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council Secretariat, the Japan Geopark Committee, and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and it was confirmed that they will continue to share and discuss information among the parties concerned.
2022, Dec.27	The mayors of the constituent municipalities and the heads of prefectural departments confirmed that they would start an online meeting and confirmed their intention to continue to support geopark activities, and agreed to set up a countermeasure study team.
2023, Jan.19	Hold a countermeasure review meeting and discuss possible recommended items.
2023, Feb.16	Hold a countermeasure review meeting to discuss the current status of possible recommendations
2023.Mar.17	Hold a countermeasure review meeting and discuss what the local government should do.
2023.Mar.23	Held a steering committee meeting of the San'in Kaigan Geopark Promotion Council to discuss future response policies.

iii) On February 5, 2023, a discussion was held on the theme of conservation of geological, cultural and natural heritage. This event was attended by local residents, members of the council, academic expert, and staff of other geoparks in Japan, and presentations on commentary on UNESCO guidelines and example of efforts to protect geological heritage in other geopark were given.

iv) Six expert subcommittees of the Council are discussing what can be done to protect geological heritage from the perspective of their respective fields.

v) From June to November 2022, a total of 7 monitoring surveys (8 days work) were conducted on 50 of the 208 geosites. Issues and improvement plans found in the survey were shared with constituent municipalities and related parties. The monitoring survey is planned to be continued next year.

### **Sustainable Tourism (Geotourism)**

i) In cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment, we conducted interviews with related organizations (8 organizations) targeting Kami Town in the area, clarified the current situation and issues, received advice from experts, and formulated an "Increasing Attractiveness Plan".

- ii) A support was given for tourism-related businesses to implement "The Regional Cloud Exchange Meeting" for the purpose of introducing new geopark-related businesses and promoting cooperation among tourism-related businesses in the area. In 2021 it was held online due to the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic, but this year it was well received as it was held on-site.
- iii) On-site lectures were given for marine activity operators to deepen their understanding of the topography, geology, and organisms of the San'in Kaigan Geopark, and to further improve the quality of guides.
- iv) In order to disseminate information on the appeal of the San'in Kaigan Geopark from various perspectives, an initiative has been started collaboration with art events such as the "Bird Theater Festival" and the "Toyooka Theater Festival" for the first time, working on co-creation by art and the Geopark.

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

Workshops were held for science teachers at elementary schools throughout Hyogo Prefecture, and a geologist of the Council was in charge of training in the field of earth science. During the training, participants learned about the history and characteristics of the earth in the Geopark area while touching rock samples, and learned about the blessings of rivers and people's lives, as well as flood damage and disaster prevention, through virtual geotours around nearby rivers.

#### **Strategic partnership**

- i) In cooperation with the three DMOs of the San'in Kaigan Geopark area, a promotion of wide-area excursion tourism, such as creating an information dissemination website and creating a tour for urban residents to tour the Geopark area, was worked on.
- ii) Subsidies were provided for new businesses conducted by two of the three companies that signed a partnership agreement in 2021. As a result, increasing efforts could be made to impress tourists visiting the San'in Kaigan Geopark.

#### **Promotional activities**

- i) In order to inform local residents about the philosophy and activities of UNESCO Global Geoparks, four articles with the same contents were serialized intensively in the same monthly issue of public relations magazines of the constituent municipalities.
- ii) The renewal of the English version of the official website, started in 2021, has been completed. A special page on the official website for sweets using local ingredients of the area and photo spots were prepared.
- iii) The Promotion Council set up booths at two regional events, developed a new hands-on program using scoria, and provided the program to about 500 people.

iv) A photo contest (Fantagio) was held for the first-time using Instagram as a platform, and more than 700 photos were posted with the hashtag of the event. Some of the posts received many “Heart Mark” from users in Japan and overseas.

#### **4. CONTACTS**

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