

## GGN Annual Report 2021

### 1. About the Geopark

Geopark Name: Mt. Aoi Geopark, Japan (Asia Pacific Area)

Year of designation: 2015



Samani Elementary School

Painting of Samani's scenic areas using paint made from peridotite rock.

### 2. Internal Structure of the Geopark

- Geopark Staff: 2 full-time staff, 2 geological experts (including 1 botanical curator), 1 Coordinator for International Relations
- Number of Visitors: 7,823 (recorded at the Geopark Visitor Center)
- Number of Geopark Events: 42 (including events organized by the administrative body and cooperative organizations)
- Number of Geopark Educational Programs: 32 (number of lessons conducted at local schools)
- Number of Geoparks Press Releases: 6 (town publications/geo-topics: 6)

### 3. Geopark Activities

#### Major Achievements in 2021

- Updated 11 signboards and 3 exhibit panels related to the indigenous Ainu people's oral traditions and the origins of Hokkaido
- Held routine presentations for residents and training courses for town workers.
- Opened a temporary special exhibit "The Amazing Flower, Hidakaso"
- Implementation and planning of 3 new geotourism programs
- Creation of a Geopark Guide Manual

#### Contribution towards GGN – Networking and Participation

- Participated in the following online courses:
  - Digital Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks 2021: UNESCO Global Geoparks and Sustainability (Lesvos Island, Greece – June 7-20)
  - Geotourism Fest & International Conference 2021 (Rinjani Lombok Geopark, Indonesia – August 5-7)
  - Online Thematic Seminar on Management Challenges of Internationally Designated Areas (Republic of Korea – September 29-October 1)
- Participated in the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks (Jeju, Korea – December 14-16)
- Participated in APGN's "Let's Do It" online meetings (7 meetings in 2021)
- Exchanged rock samples and guidebooks with other APGN territories (Hong Kong and Cheongsong, Republic of Korea)
- Promoted APGN territories on Mt. Apoi Geopark's Facebook page

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

- Stabilized budget and undergoing business development as planned. The 2021 budget: 4,058,000 JPY (fiscal year from April 2021 to March 2022)

#### **Geo-conservation Efforts**

- Scientific study of alpine plants preservation methods. Held and participated in regular study sessions
- Ongoing conservation initiatives to restore diminishing alpine flower field by removing the encroached Japanese white pine.
- Testing methods to collect alpine plant seeds and effectively germinate to increase the number of alpine plants while cooperating with the seeding company.
- Removing ocean trash along coastlines

#### **Sustainable Tourism**

- Planning and implementing sustainable geo-tours, in cooperation with local shops and restaurants.
- Formulating a tourism strategy

#### **New Education Programs on Geo-conservation, Sustainable Development and Disaster Risk Reduction**

- Continued support of the Samani Junior High School's "Mt. Apoi Dream Project" (preserving and raising alpine plants) and other Geo-study related educational programs.
- Starting a Sustainable Development curriculum series for the Elementary School and Junior

High School.

- Holding regular nature-walk events around the vicinity of the Mt. Aposi Geopark Visitor Center
- Creating a Mt. Aposi alpine plant conservation measures project plan
- Implementing special conservation measures for rocks along the coastline

### **Strategic Partnerships**

- Continued support for the comprehensive partnership agreement with the local bank, Hidaka Shinkin Bank, for community development.
- Partnership between the Visitor Center and Aposi Sanso (tourist hotel) which provides commemorative cards.
- Continued support for the comprehensive partnership agreement with Hokkaido University Field Science Center for Northern Biosphere to jointly investigate the condition of the ocean and the effect it has on the area.

### **Promotional Activities**

- Updated and reprinted the Geopark pamphlets and leaflets.
- Held several speeches and lectures promoting the Geopark during the previous year.
- TV and radio programs, newspaper and magazine articles used to promote the UNESCO status of the Geopark and the territory.
- Panel exhibit promoting APGN (Hong Kong UGGp) and joint panel exhibits in collaboration with the National Geopark, Hokkaido Government Office and Hokkaido University (Sapporo, Hokkaido)

### **4. Contacts**

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