

Activity on Geoparks in Japan -The past, present and future

Mahito Watanabe[1]

[1] GSJ, AIST

Japanese activities to promote Geopark started in 2005 when Geological Society of Japan established the promotion committee of Japanese Geoparks. Since then, symposiums on Geopark were held several times for public or academic people to raise awareness of the importance of the geological heritage in the Japanese Society. Eighty sites of the Selected Geosites of Japan was selected and published by the committee composed of researchers, government officials and persons from tourist industry in this May. On this July Geological Survey of Japan published a special issue of their monthly magazine on Geopark and distributed to local governments, concerned government ministers, media and academic community. Through these activities the concept of Geopark are becoming popular in Japanese Society. Now more than ten areas are planning to establish Geopark. Articles on their activities appeared in newspapers time and again. The promoters of Geopark in those areas set up a liaison council in Dec. 2007 to exchange information and know-how to establish Geopark of Japanese style. This council is expected to develop into Japanese Geopark Network in the near future.