

Muroto Geopark -a frontier of the birth of a new habitable land-

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1. Location and Area

Muroto Geopark includes the whole region of Muroto City of Kochi Prefecture with an area of 248.25 km² and is located in the southern part of the Muroto Peninsula of Shikoku Island

2. Outline of Geology and Geomorphology

Muroto Geopark area is overlain by the rocks and strata of the Shimanto Belt which is one of the best-documented onland accretionary complexes in the world. The west coast of the area is characterized by Pleistocene to Holocene marine terraces formed by sea level changes during the Pleistocene glacial and interglacial periods and coseismic uplifting.

3. Concept of Muroto Geopark

Muroto Geopark area is a frontier of the birth of a new habitable land through the subduction of oceanic plate and uplift by great earthquakes along the Nankai trough off Muroto. The area is one of the best places to understand the geodynamic processes and relationship between the geology and human activity.

4. Heritages of Muroto Geopark

In Muroto Geopark, there are many geological, geomorphological, ecological, cultural and historical heritages of national and international importance as follows.

Geology and Geomorphology

Accretionary complexes of the Shimanto Belt, 2) Pleistocene to Holocene marine terraces, 3) Emergent shoreline

Ecology

Subtropical forest, 2) Seashore vegetation, 3) Whale

History and Culture

1) Muroto Lighthouse (110 years old lighthouse awarded as a Heritage of Industrial Modernization in Japan in 2009), 2) Pilgrimage known as Shikoku Henro, 3) Kiragawa preserved historic buildings, 4) Legend of Kobo Daishi (Kukai),

(4) Industry

1) Products from Deep Sea Water, 2) Tosa Binchotan charcoal, 3) Local Sea Food

(5) Research and Education

1) Center for Advanced Marine Core Research, 2) Kochi Prefectural Deep Seawater Laboratory, 3) National Muroto Youth Outdoor Learning Center, 4) Whale Museum, 5) Aqua Farm

(6) Health and Therapy

1) Bade Haus Muroto, 2) UTOKO Deep Sea Therapy Center and Hotel, 3) Dolphin Therapy Center

Muroto Geopark Council aims to protect the geological and geomorphological heritage with outstanding quality, to deepen public understanding of our planet, and to use of various heritages to promote sustainable socio-economic development through geotourism in co-operation with the local communities.