

Global circumstance on Geopark

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The concept of Geopark is getting to be known to wide range of people in many countries including Japan, such as researchers, citizens and officials in both municipal and central governments. Every people has every point of view on Geoparks. This situation will contribute to improve the concept of Geopark through the discussion of wide range of people.

Global Geoparks Network (GGN) and UNESCO are discussing about the formal link between them in the working group composed of member country and GGN hosted by Ecology and Earth Science division of UNESCO. When the formalization of Geopark in UNESCO is achieved the present style of evaluating Geopark by GGN may change. As a UNESCO program, support to the least developing countries that try to establish Geopark is important and necessary. The discussion between member countries and GGN is good opportunity to review the activity of Geopark until present with the point of view from outside.

In Japan, on-site evaluation by scientists and manager within Geoparks as well as members of Japan Geopark Committee (JGC) has started in 2012. It was a start of the peer review process between geoparks. Discussion on the policy to evaluate geoparks and candidate areas is getting more active since last May when first meeting on the evaluation policy between evaluators from JGC and geoparks. In those discussion they actively discuss on where Japanese geoparks go and how to promote geopark activity.

The author will present the situation around Geopark as mentioned above and propose issues that should be discussed in the Japanese geopark community.

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