

## Concept for the Tateyama Kurobe geopark:Feel the tales of dynamic time-space, 3800Ma history and 4000m topography !

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”4000 meters times 3.8 billion years”; this is how we could express the geological history and geography of the eastern part of Toyama Prefecture. Nature guides activities in each of 9 municipalities have made it a duty to transmit the scale of those numbers, protect the land and make good use of it. And this, in turn, has been the founding principle behind the Tateyama Kurobe geopark.

The region of the Tateyama Kurobe geopark is now located in the geologically very active region. The volcanic and tectonic activities that have been ongoing since the Mesozoic Era create the Toyama bay that is over 1000 meters deep, and the Tateyama Mountain Range that is over 3000 meters tall. Since they place in a very compact location, the eastern part of Toyama Prefecture has a dynamic and unique landscape and geology. Besides, the region has the youngest granite on Earth which is said to be around 800 thousand years old and it shows rapid tectonic activity. While the oldest mineral on Japan, Eoarchean?Paleoproterozoic zircon (over 3.8 billion years old), was also identified. This turns the region into a life-size ”encyclopedia of geology”. It encompasses various minerals and sings of the multiple events occurred during the long history of Earth, including rests of the collision that created the Asian continent during the Paleozoic. In the present time, large quantities of precipitation which comes from the Sea of Japan to the Tateyama Mountain Range return to the Sea of Japan through the mountain glaciers located in the southernmost in the Far East, rivers and numerous springs in the alluvial fans. This water circulation maintains unique natural environment in this region.

Since the earliest times, the people had come to understand the importance to protect the resources of the land and sea and the voluntary nature guides system was established in 1970s by Toyama prefecture. This is pioneer in nature guides system in our country. The nature guides activities become widespread throughout the northern Japanese Alps and the coastal plain by Toyama Bay. We cannot still say that many citizens and travelers in the region understand the whole story above. However, recently we have found that more people are aware of the importance of the land and began to grow a strong wish to know more about what makes their land special.

All of this above makes us think that ”that is on what our region and landscape is based”. We want to use the geopark activities as catalyzer to bring together all those actors in order to bring out the interest of the people about the region. However, we believe that we need an organization at the center of it all that is ”built by the people, for the people”. Therefore, instead of limiting ourselves to the various organizational forms in existence, we decided to pioneer an organization that would make this possible, having the local actors themselves create it, receiving support from both private and public sectors. This is because we believe that, in our region, the people and the governments should work as partners together for the management of the geopark.

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