

Selecting potential geosites in the eastern Kii Peninsula, SW Japan

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The geologic structure formed by plate subduction along trenches is well preserved in Southwest Japan. Formed from Jurassic to Paleogene eastward trending belts of accretionary complexes with metamorphic rocks characterize the geology of the Kii Peninsula.

The eastern Kii Peninsula presents varied geological features, such as rocks exposures and fossils, which displays the history of formation of the Japanese Islands. The aim of this work is to identify significant geological sites in the region and set the basis for establishing geosites in future. A geo-site, in the field of geo-tourism, is a geological attraction with the highest value rank, which identification would play the essential role in development of geo-tourism in this region.

Scientifically important geosites has been picked up together with the sites of unique history and culture within the study area including Ise, Toba and Shima City in eastern Kii Peninsula. The valorization of selected objects, from the aspect of geo-tourism development in the region, is based on field studies and detailed petrographic analyzes by using samples from rock exposures on the surface. The thin sections analyze provides information about more precise surface trace of the Median Tectonic Line (MTL) in the eastern Kii peninsula, which can be use as the most attractive point of geological trips in the region.

This work also focus on the lack of geo-touristic infrastructure that would make available all their advantages for educational and tourism purposes. Though several MTL outcrops are visible among local roads in relatively close distance to popular touristic spots, most visitors do not notice this fact. Sufficient information about geosites, as well as the access facility, is the most important for visitors. Establishing a tentative geo-touristic course in the study area would increase public awareness of geoscience education, protection and conservation important landscapes for future generation and help tourists with better understanding the geology of visited area.

Keywords: MTL, geo-site, geo-tourism, Kii Peninsula