

## Geoconservation in Japan

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A term, geodiversity, was first introduced in Japan in 2004, and then some scientists have gathered to discuss geodiversity including geoconservation since 2011. Meanwhile, the first academic paper on geoparks was published in 2005, and a notion of geoparks was widespread then. Discussion among the community of geoparks in Japan seems to be somehow weak, mainly because the community has a variety of tasks to commit. A special issue on geodiversity in an English journal published in Tokyo in 2005 carries a few papers dealing with geoconservation, and another special issue on geodiversity of Hokkaido, northern Japan published in Sapporo in 2009 contains a few papers on geoconservation issues in Hokkaido. Besides these efforts, actual in-depth research on geoconservation is likely to be minimal in Japan so far. Balancing research on geoconservation and research on geoparks would be one of the issues found in Japan. Japanese academic arena should pay more attentions to emphasize the necessity in lectures at a university level. At the same time, a responsible ministry (most probably, the Ministry of the Environment) should be convinced of the merits of developing a notion of geodiversity conservation in Japan, as they have been addressing biodiversity conservation as a national strategy.

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