

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2021

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Izu Peninsula UNESCO Global Geopark (Japan). A member of APGN

Year of Inscription/Year of the last revalidation: 2018/N.A.



Eco-friendly cycle trip to Global Important Agricultural Systems site: wasabi terrace

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of geopark staff: 10 staff, 2 geoscientists with advanced degrees

Number of visitors: 7,315 (visitors to the central facility)

Number of geopark events: 127

Number of educational programs for schools: 101

Number of press releases: 67

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major Achievements in 2021

We took major actions to address the recommendation for improvement given by UNESCO on the designation of the UNESCO Global Geopark. The progress was substantial.

- In response to item h, the promotion council set the Master Plan and Action Plan lasting until 2025. These plans inscribed key performance Indicators to be achieved during the period.
- To address items a, c and f, we codified a comprehensive database of natural and cultural heritage (including Intangible Heritages). Its English version will be available soon.

- In another attempt to tackle the items above, we organised a series of casual talk shows named 'Geo-café'. The talk events covered a wide range of topics to shed light on various aspects of the geopark such as the science of hot springs, contemporary fantasy novels in the Izu Peninsula, and the social preparations, which include a small-scale dialogue session with local residents, lobbying to city hall, to promote renewable energy.

In addition to the points above,

- Based on the comprehensive agreement on sustainable regional development between Shizuoka Gas Ltd. and our team, the two parties launched a holistic project to promote local gastronomy. This project includes the development of creative cuisine, cooking classes, and visits to the producers. The programme for FY 2021 culminated in a cycling trip to a production centre of genuine wasabi. This agreement will last for a decade.
- After a two-year interval, the council organised the 7th Izu UGGp Cup Roganining game in Shimoda city, a southern port town in the Peninsula. The event paved an avenue for 207 runners to learn various features of the area holistically.
- A powerful promotion of scientific research by our council resulted in the fruition of three diligent projects in the field of geology, volcanology, and genetics. The outcomes are expected to be published on referred international journals.

Contribution towards the GGN: Networking and Participation

- Reflecting the cordial relationship between the Ciletuh-Pelabuhanrartu as sister geoparks, we exchanged geological samples and other items to be exhibited at the museums and visitor centres.
- As a sign of our tireless commitment to GGN and APGN, our professional staff enthusiastically joined all the online conferences and digital events hosted by the mentioned networks.
- We also submitted a short article to be published in the GGN Newsletter and two brief communications for celebrations of the UN system and APGN.

Management and Financial Status

We received generous support from the Shizuoka Prefecture, 15 municipalities in the Peninsula, and the council was underpinned significantly by the public sector. The budget for Fiscal Year 2021 was JPY 84,651,249, which is approximately €73,500.

Geoconservation

- A professional from the council delivered a lecture on the occasion of the annual training programme of the public work divisions of the municipalities. Consequently, the local authorities occasionally consulted the council to initiate preventive measures against the potential damage to geo sites.
- These professionals of the council have served as advisors for the prefectural government, municipalities in the region, and, through the extended network, local authorities.
- The council extended its network to the prefectural government and municipalities.

Sustainable Tourism (Geotourism)

- Our certified geo guides launched new tours using small electric vehicles. The ‘Green-Slow’ vehicles not only significantly enhanced the connectivity among scattered geo sites but also symbolised our geopark’s commitment to low carbonisation.
- Given the prolonged pandemic, the council and its supporting companies actively promoted a ‘micro-tourism’ programme for schools in the region. To gear great demands, the partner companies relearned about local geo sites using our materials. Due to this new attempt, knowledge about the local geo sites spread to the private sector as well.

New Education Programmes on Geoconservation, Sustainable Development, and Disaster Risk Reduction

- In line with the global strategy of the UNESCO and GGN, our council launched educational programmes at schools: MaB programme (Hokuto City) and UGGp (Itoigawa). The classes deepened the understanding of the broader environmental contexts of the region and strengthened the ties among councils and schools.
- The geologist of the council organised workshops on disaster risk mitigation. These programmes also fostered a cordial relationship between our secretariat and the local community as these workshops targeted the immediate neighbours of our central hub.

Strategic Partnership

- The promotion council made a pact with Izunokuni City Hall who is managing the Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces, a property of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding, and Coal Mining (UNESCO World Heritage).
- The council signed a comprehensive agreement with Shizuoka University, a national university in the region. We expect to cooperate with them in fields such as ESD and the sustainable development of the region.

Promotional Activities

- The Council staff and certified geo guides published 13 serial essays in Shizuoka Shinbun, which is a widely subscribed local newspaper. This attempt enormously enhanced the presence of the geopark in Shizuoka Prefecture.
- Under collaboration with two railway companies in the region, the geopark council operated ‘Geo-trains’. The running museums demonstrated various landscapes of the geo sites and highlighted unique local products. In addition, the involvement of high school students in this project nurtured their affection towards the homeland and stimulated their talents.
- Significantly owing to the Izu Peninsula Tourism Bureau, our organisation could promote geo-tours in Tokyo metropolitan region.
- Under close collaboration with local radio stations, our institute offered a regular programme titled ‘Soundscapes of the Peninsula’. The professional staff of the council actively appeared on radio shows.

4. Contacts

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