



1. Progress report 2022 - 2025

2.

Name of UNESCO Global Geopark (UGGp): **Izu Peninsula**

Country: **Japan**

Person(s) responsible for the report: **Shigeya Kanezashi**

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Surface area in km ²	2,027 km ²
Population	643,248 (as of 2020)
Year of acceptance as UNESCO Global Geopark	2018
GGN Year of membership in the Global Geoparks Network (before the establishment of the UGGp label in 2015)	
Previous revalidation date(s) and name(s) of previous evaluator(s)	10-14 October 2022 Kristin Rangnes, Rasanubari Asmah Rahmah binti Abd Hamid
Contact person (name, position, e-mail)	Shigeya Kanezashi, Manager, info@izugeopark.org
Website (please provide URL)	https://izugeopark.org/
Social media (please provide list of all channels used)	X, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram (EN)

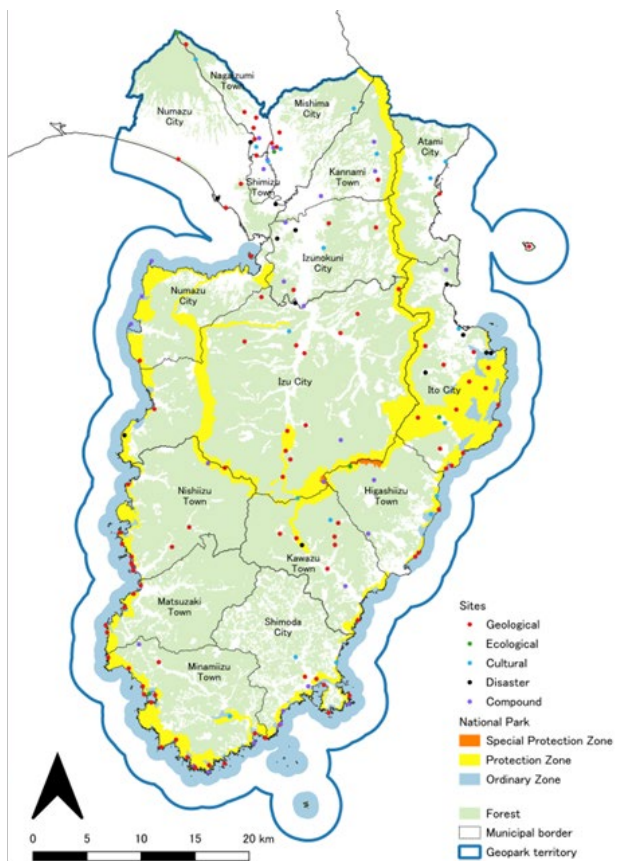
B. LIST OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE UGGp

- 01 Progress Report 2022-2025
- 02 Document A
- 03 Document B
- 04 Appendix
- 05 GGN-Geopark Annual Report (2022, 2023)

C. MAP OF THE AREA



This map is based on a standard UN map downloaded from the UN website and does not represent the position of the Government of Japan.



D. IMPROVEMENTS MADE ON PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

UGGp revalidation assessment 2022: Green

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation a

Geopark management: Ensure that local communities are directly involved in the decision making and programme of the Geopark.

1. We appointed representatives of civil society who are engaged in citizen activities and social entrepreneurs to the Geopark Council. This organization has the authority to deliberate on project proposals of the UGGp.
2. We launched a working group with invited experts and formulated a midterm strategy for education in 2022 to realize the empowerment of the local community, especially of young people. The experts included a member of the UNESCO Future Co-Creation Platform and a member of the hub organization of the Ministry of the Environment's promotion network for Education for Sustainable Development. The strategy reflects UNESCO's vision strongly.
3. Based on this midterm strategy, we worked on the following to ensure that local communities are involved in the decision making and programs of the UGGp, including the delegation of authority to the community.
 - a. We held a Youth Summit on inquiry-based learning to create opportunities for young people working on sustainable development to be involved in the formulation of the UGGp's project design. At the workshop, they could submit project proposals to the Secretariat Office and discuss plans together with the Secretariat.
 - b. We held small-scale dialogue meetings in various areas of the peninsula at which the Secretariat Office, guides, and the local community could engage in direct dialogue. Guides and local communities are able to express their opinions on the Secretariat's operations and make project proposals.
 - c. We published a book that systematically addresses the governance of Geoparks based

on cooperation with citizens and the empowerment of the community through Geopark activities. The book was published in August 2024 and was used as a textbook in the national training meeting of the Japanese Geoparks Network in winter 2024.

- d. We recruited citizen representatives from the public and appointed them to the working groups for the formulation of the next-term "Master Plan and Action Plan." This plan has binding force on projects that the Secretariat Office shall work on, with the mayors of the cities and towns of the Izu Peninsula committing to it once it is adopted by the Executive Board. We prioritized young people and ensured gender to be balanced in the public recruitment.
4. Atagawa Onsen, or the Atagawa Hot Springs, was registered as a new Geopark site. This was a case where the local community actively approached the Secretariat Office to discover new values of the local resource in the modern world. This is a good example of how the Geopark's core concept "bottom-up approach" has taken root in the local community.
5. We worked on improvement of the social inclusion of Geopark programs. Training programs for guides were implemented to develop a tour that allows people with a physical disability to participate. Further, a project "Izu holidays that anybody can enjoy" has started. We appointed an expert on welfare to the Geopark Council to build an inclusive society.

Recommendation b

Visibility: Improve the visibility of some of the sites, especially along some of the guided tours accompanied, for example the Geoguide and the association provide very interesting experience with the visit of the cultural trail in the neighborhood of writers Yasushi Inoue and Yasunari Kawabata, but Geopark team may consider installing a sign to show the start of the trail with further indications to fully improve this visit.

1. We started on the development of three culture trails in cooperation with the UGGp's constituent local governments to increase site visibility and to promote awareness of Geopark stories of those places. Budgets for the installation of multilingual interpretation panels as well as of signs on the trails at their start points and branch points are secured.
2. An intangible cultural heritage database has been built, and more than 100 items can be viewed online. Some rituals have been recorded as a digital archive. Development of database on ecological heritage has also started.
3. A digital map of Geopark sites has been made public to improve site visibility. The trail routes and some contents of the digital archive were integrated into the digital map.

Recommendation c

Improve communication related to the connections between geological, natural and cultural heritage. Provide more information about the biodiversity connected to the geosites to enhance the interest in and understanding of these sites. Consider adding this information also on the panels.

1. A researcher specializing in ecology was newly hired. The UGGp is successful in establishing a system where researchers are assigned to each of the fields of study (i.e. geology, ecology, and culture) and hence are able to contribute to improving communication related to the links between the three types of heritage.
2. A comprehensive agreement was concluded with Kokugakuin University, one of the most influential institutions in Japan in research and education on Japan's traditional beliefs and history. We co-hosted an exhibition and events "The Saga of the Mishima in Izu Province," which was themed on the links between geological heritage and intangible cultural heritage. These programs not only obtained a good response from the local community, but also raised the presence of the UGGp in the metropolitan area Tokyo.
3. Atagawa Onsen (the Atagawa Hot Springs) was registered as a cultural site. This registration recognized the unique interaction between humans and nature. This was the first site in the UGGp for which intangible cultural heritage was the main reason for designation.
4. Our geological researcher makes a contribution to local newspapers by submitting articles on the relationship between the geological and topographical features of the UGGp and the historical sites of the region.

5. We invited guest speakers at talk events to promote awareness of the relationship between the three types of heritage in the general public including children. The topics included hot springs and literature, volcanoes and beliefs, and biodiversity and contemporary poetry.

Recommendation d

Management body: Continue striving for gender balance in the management structure.

1. We appointed female delegates to the Geopark Council, which deliberates on proposals from the Secretariat Office, to consider for a balanced ratio of gender in the management structure. We have also requested the constituent local governments to dispatch a female staff to the Geopark Council. As a result, the proportion of female delegates has increased from 11% (as of the previous validation year) to 45%.
2. We carried out recruitment for positions that have a certain degree of influence over the UGGp's program development. The arrival of a female researcher as well as the achievement of an equal gender ratio of working group members are the outcomes of these initiatives.
3. The Council of Mayors is the parent body of the Executive Board that makes decisions. Since the mayors of the constituent cities and towns are chosen through elections, there are limits on the scope of what the Secretariat Office can do. We continue to strive for gender balance in the management body by appointing women to the remaining civilian positions on the board.
4. Two staff members of the Secretariat Office took paternity leave. These cases ensured equal opportunity and treatment between men and women in employment.

Recommendation e

Partnerships: Develop further the cooperation and partnerships with local producers of food (seaweed and -algae for example) and handicrafts.

1. We have promoted a project aimed at creating "Geopark stories" of local speciality based on interviews with producers from the perspective of the UGGp's geological heritage, the climate, history, and production methods to increase the added value of local products.
2. The selection standards for the local products, which the Secretariat Office promotes particularly, were clarified. The new standards were based on strong awareness of the mission of UNESCO Global Geoparks as the front line of sustainable development through production and consumption. Under these standards, in addition to being produced on the Izu Peninsula, products are required to have social impacts such as the conservation of biodiversity and landscapes, responsible water use or the invigoration of cultural traditions.
3. We cooperate with local producers of food and handicrafts and held a series of talk events by inviting them as guest speakers. The "Geo-Paku (munching in the UGGp)" series started in partnership with a local gas company.

E. VERIFICATION OF UGGp CRITERIA

E.1 TERRITORY

E.1.1 GEOLOGICAL HERITAGE AND CONSERVATION

Geological features and value

The geological features of the UGGp are characterized by the collision of the submarine volcanoes and volcanic islands on the Philippine Sea Plate against the Japanese Archipelago, and by the diverse volcanic activities and crustal deformation related to that. The territory is positioned as the only place in the world where two active volcanic arcs are colliding. This is an area where one can trace the transitions of diverse volcanic activities such as the uplift of the submarine volcanoes, the subsequent large terrestrial volcanoes, and the activity of the monogenetic volcano group that continues even now. The excellent exposure of the submarine volcanoes' ejecta in the west and south have attracted global research on submarine volcanism (e.g. Dogashima). The crustal deformation associated with the collision created much tectonic relief, leading to the discovery of large strike-slip faults and the foundations of active fault research (e.g. Tanna Fault).

Site conservation measures

Most sites are protected by national laws such as the Natural Parks Law, the Law for the Protection of Cultural Properties and related ordinances, the Basic Policy for Coastal Conservation,

and regional forestry plans. Nevertheless, some sites are not subject to these laws and ordinances, and their protection is an issue. For this reason, the Secretariat Office formulated an “overall concept for promoting Ecotourism” covering the whole UGGp territory based on the Ecotourism Promotion Act. We expect this to be certified by the competent ministers in fiscal year 2024. Under this concept, if there is a danger of damage to a site by tourists, it will be possible to protect the site by designating it as a “special natural tourism resource” and by taking legal action by local governments such as restrictions on entry. Monitoring methods and the role of various stakeholders are stated clearly. This overall concept serves as a guideline for the protection and use of sites by the authorities, tour providers, and residents.

In addition to Ecotourism initiatives, we have promoted site conservation based on the policy presented in the “Izu Peninsula UNESCO Global Geopark Master Plan and Action Plan 2021-2025 (hereafter referred to as MA plan).” The MA plan clearly states that Geopark activities contribute to SDGs while sharing the basic philosophy of UNESCO Global Geoparks with people and groups involved with the UGGp. Conservation activities are carried out by citizen groups, while conservation and patrol activities are done by the constituent local governments.

We started formulating the next-term MA plan (2026-2030). A working group (hereafter referred to as WG) themed on conservation was established. Currently, academic experts specializing in geological conservation and nature conservation and citizen representatives carry out intensive deliberation toward the conservation of geological, natural, and cultural heritage. Proposals from the WG will be reflected in the next-term MA plan as a comprehensive strategy for conservation.

Newly added sites

○ Atagawa Onsen (the Atagawa Hot Springs)

Atagawa Onsen was registered as a cultural site in 2023. This was a case where the local community actively approached the Secretariat Office to discover new values of the local resource in the modern world. The registration evaluated positively the outstanding interaction between humans and nature based on the history of transforming this place unsuited to habitation or agriculture, where hot water gushes out of the slopes, into an attractive tourism location through the unique traditional knowledge accumulated over many generations. This was the first site in the UGGp for which intangible cultural heritage was the main reason for designation.



Atagawa Onsen site

E.1.2 BOUNDARIES

The UGGp is composed of 15 local governments (Numazu City, Atami City, Mishima City, Ito City, Shimoda City, Izu City, Izunokuni City, Higashiizu Town, Kawazu Town, Minamiizu Town, Matsuzaki Town, Nishiizu Town, Kannami Town, Shimizu Town, and Nagaizumi Town). The boundary of the UGGp is set by 3 km from the coastline and by the outer border of the five constituent municipalities in the north where land does not face the sea (Numazu City, Mishima City, Nagaizumi Town, Kannami Town, and Atami City). Land area and sea area are 1,585 km² and 442 km², respectively.

E.1.3 VISIBILITY

Installation of Interpretation Panels

The UGGp's interpretation panels are in both Japanese and English, and were devised using photos, illustrations, and maps effectively. The amount of writing is limited so they would be easy to understand. 145 interpretation panels have been installed. They can also be viewed on the website. Initiatives related to the updating of signs are being conducted at all times, including the logo marks and aged panels.

Development of trails

We have been developing culture trails with themes and stories in cooperation with the UGGp's constituent local governments to improve visibility of cultural sites. The trails being developed are

the “Literature Trail” concerning the setting for the representative work of Yasunari Kawabata, winner of the Nobel prize for literature, the “History Trail” centred on historic places from the 11th to the 19th century that concentrate in the middle of the UGGp, and the “Faith Trail,” which reconstructs the pilgrimage route taken by medieval mystics. Budgets for the installation of multilingual interpretation panels as well as of signs on the trails at their start points and branch points are secured.

Digital map

A digital map covering Geopark sites has been published on the website. This digital map is the portal to access the above trail maps and contents of the digital archive (E.2.3 Intangible cultural heritage). Emphasizing grassroots participation, the digital map was designed with awareness of being developed together with citizens. A volunteer group of university students within the prefecture have started on the preparation of contents.



The appearance of the digital map

Website and SNS

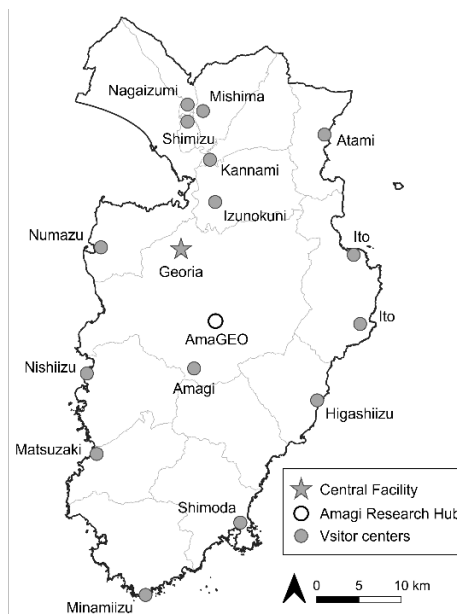
The website has the basic information on the UGGp and its highlights, introductions to activities, event information, and a basic function for downloading various materials. Information is published in five languages: Japanese; English; simplified Chinese; traditional Chinese; and Korean. In addition to contents aligned closely with the interests of viewers, pages with documents related to certification as a UNESCO Global Geopark, the MA plans up to now, and various other data were made public. We have started on the improvement of the website to increase the visibility of the UGGp and the transparency of operational management and Geopark activities.

The website is visited by an average of 1,250 users a day, which is leading to the popularization of the UGGp and the attraction of visitors. For SNS, we manage accounts on X, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, and provide more timely and familiar topics than the website such as commentary on events and current affairs. We send out information in English on Instagram.

E.1.4 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUTURE

The UGGp's museum “Georia” was established in 2016 as the central facility for Geopark activities. It is used to provide visitors with information on the UGGp and to support educational activities. Many of the exhibits at Georia have been arranged so that they can be touched directly and can be viewed freely with microscopes. We also hold special exhibitions regularly and provide new information to repeat visitors. Workshops for the public, including children, are held from time to time, contributing to the spread of Geopark activities. The annual number of visitors in 2023 was 12,937 people, and we have held 14 workshops since 2022. Several guides are stationed at this central facility, which contributes to the creation of local employment opportunities.

There are multiple entry points for visitors to the UGGp's territory, and Geopark sites and accommodation facilities are distributed widely within the area. In principle, because of such circumstances, we have established a visitor center in each of the constituent municipalities (15 cities and towns) to increase visibility of the UGGp to visitors. Visitor centers have been established in 15 places by now, and they are managed by each municipality. At visitor centers where guides are stationed, apart from providing explanations, guides also lead tours, which contributes to sustainable tourism and



The distribution of visitor centers in the UGGp (2025)

regional development in the UGGp.

The Amagi Research Hub “AmaGEO” was established as a research facility. Apart from research rooms for our researchers, it has a sample storage room and an exhibition room for research outcomes. This facility is also used by Shizuoka University, with whom we have concluded a comprehensive agreement.

E.1.5 INFORMATION, EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Materials prepared or supervised by the Secretariat Office

The Secretariat Office has prepared a map called “Izu Geo Map” for visitors and residents that introduces the origins of the Izu Peninsula and its major Geoparks sites along with the nature, food, and history in five languages (Japanese; English; simplified Chinese; traditional Chinese; and Korean). We have also published “Driving Maps” for visitors for each of the eastern, western, southern, and northern areas. These maps are updated constantly in cooperation with certified guides, and are distributed at visitor centers, roadside stations, and tourism and accommodation facilities. They have become a powerful tool for increasing recognition of the UGGp.

We also distribute “Footpath Maps,” which allow people to explore nature, including geology and ecosystems, and literature on self-guided hiking tours. In addition, in collaboration with marine activity providers, we have produced the “Izu Geo Map of Sea,” which introduces the geological features of the sea. These two activity maps are available in two languages, Japanese and English, so that visitors from overseas can enjoy activities in Izu as well.

We have created a comic, “Secrets of the Izu Peninsula,” for children as educational material and distribute it every year to all fifth-grade elementary school children within the UGGp’s territory. It is used in educational activities that utilizes the UGGp. Also, a book about the role of UNESCO Global Geoparks in sustainable regional development and the capacity building of its actors was published in 2024. For this book, we targeted readers not only people engaged in Geopark management, but everybody involved in regional development in Japan.

Cooperation with the mass media

We issue press releases strategically to news media (90 places by e-mail, 46 places by FAX; as of 2024). During the three-year period from fiscal year 2022 to fiscal year 2024, we issued a total of 98 press releases. We also receive requests to appear on the media. For example, we introduced the Izu Peninsula on a popular television program on the national broadcaster and on a science program on a commercial broadcaster. We aim to improve recognition of the UGGp when holding own events by advertising and having articles published in local newspapers. In addition, a series of articles by our geological researcher about the relationships of the geological and topographical features of the UGGp and its historical sites is published in a local newspaper (94 articles as of December 2024). Researchers and staff members provided information on themes related to the UGGp on a local radio station.

The Mishima exhibition

We concluded a comprehensive agreement with Kokugakuin University, one of the most influential institutions in Japan in research and education on Japan’s traditional beliefs and history. We co-hosted an exhibition and events “The Saga of the Mishima in Izu Province - From the deity of volcanic islands to the guardian of samurai,” which was themed on the links between geological heritage (volcanic activities) and intangible cultural heritage (beliefs and rituals). Specifically, we held an exhibition at each other’s museum that looked at the Izu-Mishima belief system from different angles such as the perspectives of natural science, archaeological facts, and Shintoism. During the period of the special exhibition, we invited experts from Kokugakuin University and conducted a talk event together with the UGGp’s researchers. At the event, the Izu Peninsula was discussed from both the religious belief and geological perspectives.



A guided tour at the Shirahama Shrine

We also held a guided tour following the event where participants visited the Shirahama Shrine and Mishima City center, both of which are related to the Mishima belief, to understand the beliefs rooted in the region. In line with the recommendation c, we were able to elucidate the interaction between geological heritage and cultural heritage.

GeoCafe

GeoCafe is a series of talk events that highlights various features of the UGGp as an eye opener of local communities. It was first held in 2017 aimed at having people know about Geoparks around the world. It has been held about once every two months at various locations across the peninsula since then. Small groups of people together with an expert or two discuss several topics each time, including literature, ecology, geology, and folk customs, and share information with participants. Some topics have become regular series, such as the “Literati” series, which looks at the relationship between the nature and literature in Izu, and the “Hot Springs are Hectic!” series in cooperation with the Shizuoka Hot Springs Association, which looks at the science and management of hot spring resorts. Based on questionnaire results, about half of the participants are new or second timers, and more than 80% of participants inhabit within the UGGp’s territory.

Geo-Paku (munching in the UGGp)

Geo-Paku is a series of events held about four to six times a year based on the comprehensive agreement with the Shizuoka Gas Group. We hold talk events and cooking workshops by inviting experts and local producers of food and handicrafts as guest speakers. The purpose of the series is to increase understanding of the natural environment of the UGGp as well as of goods and services that ecosystems provide, to promote local production and consumption, to spread environmental awareness and disaster prevention, and to improve the local economy. The content considers various perspectives. In 2021, the first year these events were held, the theme was wasabi, a specialty product of Izu. In 2022, the theme was game meat, and in 2023 and 2024, the theme was the sea. We have also held outdoor events where participants go out into the field and visit places of wasabi production, Mount Amagi, rocky coasts, fishing ports, etc. There are a lot of people, including women and families, who participate in these events after seeing information sent out by the Shizuoka Gas Group. Obtaining access to the fan base of the Shizuoka Gas Group has contributed to the promotion of the UGGp toward new groups of people.



Posters summarizing each of the Geo-Paku series (from left: wasabi, game meat, the sea)

Cooperation with public transportation

In 2022, in cooperation with Izukyu Co., Ltd., we started a “SDGs Train” that carries posters introducing targets of the SDGs to which the UGGp aims to contribute and good practices that local groups do in line with the SDGs philosophy. This is a scheme that visualizes SDGs initiatives taken by citizens living on the Izu Peninsula as a moving gallery for the local residents and tourists riding the train. Similarly, we put up posters introducing the Geopark story of the *kinmedai* (splendid

alfonsino) on the “*Kinmedai Train*” themed on that fish, a specialty product of the UGGp. This is an initiative related to the regional product brand strategy described in detail in E.7.2.

The Izu Hakone Railway Group has been running GeoTrains in cooperation with secondary schools within the UGGp every year since 2018. Information curated by school students themed on Geopark sites is posted on these trains, with wide-ranging content such as introductions to sites, Izu's specialty products and recipes that use them, and introductions to school club activities.



A poster hung in the SDGs Train (left) and the GeoTrain nameplate (right)

Rogaining competitions

Rogaining is an outdoor sport in which participants carrying a map and compass go around determined checkpoints within a given time and compete over total points gained. These competitions are aimed at spreading information on the UGGp widely by having competitors go around various sites on foot or using public transportation. The constituent municipalities of the UGGp take turns at hosting a competition, and there have been eight competitions held to this point. From 200 to 300 participants gather for each. Participants from neighbouring prefectures, including the Tokyo metropolitan area, account for about half of the participants, and many residents living within the UGGp also participate. Economic effects are also obtained for the region from accommodation and eating and drinking, as the competition is a day-long event.



A checkpoint at a Geopark site (left) and the award ceremony (right)

The Cliff Edge Project

We support the “Cliff Edge Project,” a contemporary art exhibition held by artists in diverse fields (art, music, film, writers, dance, etc.) who got deep inspiration from the UGGp. This art project is themed on the rediscovery of the region's geological heritage and the collective memory of the community with regard to natural disasters. This is one of the most refined movements themed on the UGGp and is a unique opportunity to transmit the presence of the UGGp to art lovers.

Research grant program

We have run a program of research grants since 2015, with the aim of raising the level of academic research on the Izu Peninsula. We encourage global level research and provide grants that support the publication of peer-reviewed papers in international journals. By publicizing the scheme widely to institutional researchers aiming at increasing the number of cutting edge-level applications, we have been able to convert the grants into competitive research funds. Grant

recipients present their research results to the general public. A budget of 1.8 million yen is secured each year, including research costs distributed to the three full-time researchers of the UGGp. The grants contribute to the world-leading scientific research and improving understanding of the UGGp.

	Earth sciences	Biological sciences	Human and social sciences	Budgets for the research grant program in the last three years.
FY2022	1	-	-	
FY2023	1	1	-	
FY2024	-	2	1	

The three researchers of the UGGp have become visiting associate professors at Shizuoka University since April 2024, with which the Secretariat Office concluded a comprehensive agreement. They conduct research in the following three fields:

- Geology (a study on geological features in the southern part of Izu)
- Ecology (biodiversity: database construction and communication)
- Culture (intangible cultural heritage: database construction and communication)

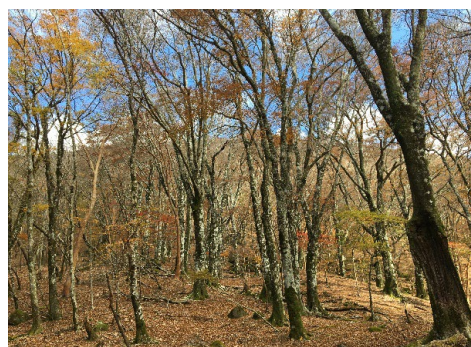
In addition, five graduation theses, three master's theses, one doctoral thesis, and 28 academic papers (22 of which are international papers) have been published by domestic and international researchers in the past four years. Furthermore, seven of the academic papers (four of which are international papers) were published as the results of the research grant program provided by the UGGp.

E.2 OTHER HERITAGE

E.2.1 NATURAL HERITAGE

Of the natural monuments registered in the UGGp, 11 cases of ecosystems and plants and animals are designated at the national level, 32 at the prefectural level, and 63 at the municipal level.

The Kuroshio Current flows along the coast of the Pacific Coast, so the Izu Peninsula is blessed with a warm climate for its latitude at 35° north. For example, the average annual temperature at the southern tip of the peninsula is 16.9°C (average for 1991 to 2020, Cape Iro meteorological station). The Izu Peninsula is considered as the northernmost limit of fauna and flora, which often distribute in the southern part of the warm temperate zone in Japan.



A beech forest on Mount Amagi

Vegetation changes along with elevation. Coastal vegetation distributes facing the sea. With the border at an elevation of around 700-800 m, laurel forest composed of evergreen broadleaf oak trees spreads out below that level, and temperate deciduous forest spreads out above. Among the temperate deciduous forest, primeval beech forest can be found on Mount Amagi in the central mountains and in parts in the northern part of the UGGp. The distribution of beech forests is limited on the Pacific Ocean side. Although it is an important vegetation for which a special protection area has been established within the National Park, the structure of the forest has significantly been altered by damage due to feeding by deer. Izu City, one of the constituent municipalities of the UGGp, is conducting capture activities based on proper population management with the goal of restoring a healthy ecosystem. Captured deer are then processed under strict management and sold to customers both within and outside the municipality, including large cities. Their activities contribute to ethical consumption.

Marine ecosystems also display the distinctive features of geology and ecology of the Izu Peninsula. The northwest part of the peninsula is the northernmost limit of hermatypic coral population in Japan. A wide variety of deep-sea fish and the world's largest arthropod (the Japanese spider crab) inhabit Suruga Bay, which is the deepest bay in Japan due to the plate subduction zone. The UGGp holds events for the general public regularly to communicate such regional ecosystems to work on the improvement of understanding of natural heritage and to gain

momentum for conservation.

The area along the coastline and the mountain ridge including the Mount Amagi has been designated as part of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park (22,439 ha). The wasabi cultivation system using a plentiful supply of spring water from Mount Amagi has been designated a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System as “Traditional Wasabi Cultivation in Shizuoka” by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

E.2.2 CULTURAL HERITAGE

There are 669 registered cultural heritage on the Izu Peninsula. Except for one World Heritage Site, they are designated at the national, prefectural, or municipal levels. The Secretariat Office has prepared an inventory covering all of these and published it as a database on the website.

Evidence for human occupation of the Izu Peninsula dates back 37,000 years to the middle Paleolithic. There is also evidence of trade based on obsidian found from the prehistoric period.

The Izu Peninsula was an extremely important place in the history of eastern Japan during the medieval period from the 11th to 16th centuries, the era when warriors (samurai) grasped political power in Japan. Historic sites such as a temple associated with a leader who was the first to establish the independent political power of warriors (Ganjoju-in Temple), castle ruins that symbolize the era of civil war in eastern Japan in the 16th century (Nirayama Castle), and the Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces where cannon were manufactured in the 19th century – the age when the warrior government of the time confronted the West – are concentrated in the central part of the Izu Peninsula currently known as Izunokuni City. The Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces are part of the World Cultural Heritage-registered “Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining” (described in detail in E.4).

Looking at the interaction between geological heritage and cultural heritage, the largest and most prestigious shrine on the Izu Peninsula has its origins in island building activities by volcanoes (Mishima Taisha Shrine), while the monastery of the mystic mountain asceticism known as Shugendo have theirs in the supernatural power ancient people felt in the gushing of hot springs (Izusan Shrine). The UGGp is increasing the visibility of these cultural heritage and working on interpretations incorporating the unique perspective of Geoparks through initiatives such as special exhibitions, talk events with experts in geology and the humanities, and the development of a thematic trail.

Moreover, many quarry ruins of Izu stone remain on the Izu Peninsula. The stone materials referred to collectively as Izu stone have played a significant role in Japan's cultural landscape, having been used in the stone walls of early modern Japanese castles and in the Western-style buildings of the start of the modern era. Apart from making the public aware of the cultural value of Izu stone through talk events and other initiatives, the Secretariat Office has started the preparation for a registration of Izu stone as IUGS Heritage Stone in cooperation with a NGO.

E.2.3 INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

There are 58 items of intangible cultural heritage on the Izu Peninsula, of which one is designated at the national level, ten at the prefectural level, and 46 at the municipal level. One is designated by both the nation and the prefecture. These intangible cultural heritage items, which are mainly annual events, Shinto rituals, and the performing arts, have legal protection. The Secretariat Office has prepared an inventory covering these items and published it as a database on the website.

Izu is a land that has its roots in volcanoes. This geological feature had a strong impact on ancient spiritual culture. As stated above, the largest and most prestigious shrine on the Izu Peninsula has their origins in island building activities by volcanoes (Mishima Taisha Shrine), while



The Egawa House, a cultural property designated at the national level.



Kawakanjo (Izunokuni City)

the monastery of the mystic mountain asceticism known as Shugendo have theirs in the supernatural power ancient people felt in the gushing of hot springs (Izusan Shrine). In order to promote research on these cultural assets and their use, the Secretariat Office has concluded a comprehensive agreement with Kokugakuin University, one of the most influential institutions in Japan in research on Japan's traditional beliefs. As a first step of the cooperation, we held a special exhibition on belief in volcano deities in both Tokyo and Izu and published pictorial records in both Japanese and English. Talk events and guided tours were held together with experts invited from Kokugakuin University. A guide book to the ancient paths walked by the mystical ascetics was published in 2024.

Next, of the intangible cultural heritage of the Izu Peninsula, we documented ten rituals and traditional performing arts in film, including the regional performing art indigenized from Bunraku (Puppet-Sanbaso), which is registered on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage. In addition, with the cooperation of a local history museum within the region, we recorded several of disappearing folk tales in the form of animation and picture books. The Secretariat Office is advancing the preparation of a digital archive gathering this content together. It is possible to access some contents of this archive from the digital map on the UGGp's website.

Further, we also pay deep attention to the relationship between tangible and intangible heritage. For example, the hot spring inns and villas of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century are significant in that they illustrate the "Japanese hot spring culture" that the Japanese government has applied to register on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage. The Secretariat Office, together with the constituent municipalities and local operators, holds talk events regularly so that interest is aroused in the deep connection between geological heritage and hot spring culture.

A major issue in the handling of intangible cultural heritage in various countries of Asia, including Japan, is that the 2003 Convention, which presents UNESCO's basic vision of intangible cultural heritage and cultural diversity, is founded on a different philosophy to existing cultural heritage law, and the understanding of citizens has not yet deepened. The Secretariat Office is fully aware of this problem and continues to call for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in line with UNESCO's philosophy through lectures and publications. Further, in accordance with the spirit of the 2003 Convention, we have granted editing rights to some guides to aim for a bottom-up approach of creating an archive, where citizens are entitled to pick up their own heritage and make inventories.

○ Authors and Izu

Izu, blessed with hot springs, is a region where authors have often stayed to write their works, and Izu appears frequently in major Japanese literature of the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century. The Secretariat Office has completed a database covering literary monuments in 325 places where traces of those works remain.

We also hold "GeoCafe" talk events regularly, themed on the relationship between nature and creativity, including literature.

Moreover, in 2023, Shizuoka Prefecture took the opportunity to host the Culture City of East Asia, and the Secretariat Office co-hosted a pioneering symposium with the Japan P.E.N. Club on Japanese literary writers who have foreign roots. This project was aimed at making Japanese society, which tends to be closed, more open and socially inclusive, advancing mutual understanding at the citizen level among the three countries of East Asia, where political tension is ongoing, and at helping to relieve tension and build peace. In this way, the Secretariat Office, in cooperation with stakeholders within and outside the region, continues its unwavering commitment to UNESCO's global philosophy using the literary assets of the region



The Amagi Tunnel of "The Dancing Girl of Izu"

E.2.4 INVOLVEMENT IN TOPICS RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATURAL HAZARDS

Efforts on climate change

People can learn about the origins of land through Geopark activities. In that process, they are also able to obtain knowledge of past disasters and prepare for disasters that could occur in the

future. The regional disaster prevention plans of Shizuoka Prefecture, Ito City and Izu City clearly state that they are “striving for the diffusion of knowledge about geological disasters (landslide disasters, earthquake disasters, volcanic disasters, etc.) through initiatives (based on Geopark activities) in cooperation with the Izu Peninsula Geopark and Tourism Bureau.” The remains and records are registered as the UGGp’s disaster sites. Disaster prevention walks using these sites are conducted by guides to improve the disaster prevention awareness of residents. Disaster sites are also used in inspections of school staff within the region. In addition, the Secretariat Office participates as a member of the Izu-Tobu Volcano Group Volcanic Disaster Prevention Council and a study group of Shizuoka University’s Natural Disaster Research Division.

The Izu Peninsula Geopark and Tourism Bureau, to which the Secretariat Office and the Tourism Section belong, invited an expert on tourism and disaster prevention as a lecturer in 2023 and held a lecture on disaster prevention and preparedness for tourism. It was done for groups of people engaged in tourism (e.g. government tourism officers, disaster prevention officers, and tourism associations) and the general public, with about 60 people participating. In 2024, a “Disaster Prevention Symposium on the 50th Anniversary of the Izu Peninsula Earthquake” was held jointly with the Shizuoka University Center for Integrated Research and Education of Natural Hazards. We made this an opportunity to reflect on the learning from the earthquake, and to improve mindsets and preparedness for the next earthquake that will eventually come.

In addition to the natural disasters related to land formation (e.g. the Nankai Trough, the Sagami Trough, active faults, volcanoes, and tsunamis), threats arising from climate change also cannot be ignored. This is not limited to torrential rain disasters, which are becoming more severe, but also includes changes in habitat due to global warming. In response to such trends, the UGGp has started initiatives to deliberate upon responses to climate change under a newly established working group. We also transmit information on SNS when typhoons and other natural disasters occur, conduct on-site surveys and make an interview to the constituent local governments after disasters occur, and grasp the state of damage at Geopark sites. We report information on the website and elsewhere as required. In recovery work after damage occurs, we cooperate with the local governments implementing the work and try to ensure the value of sites is not lost.

E.3 MANAGEMENT

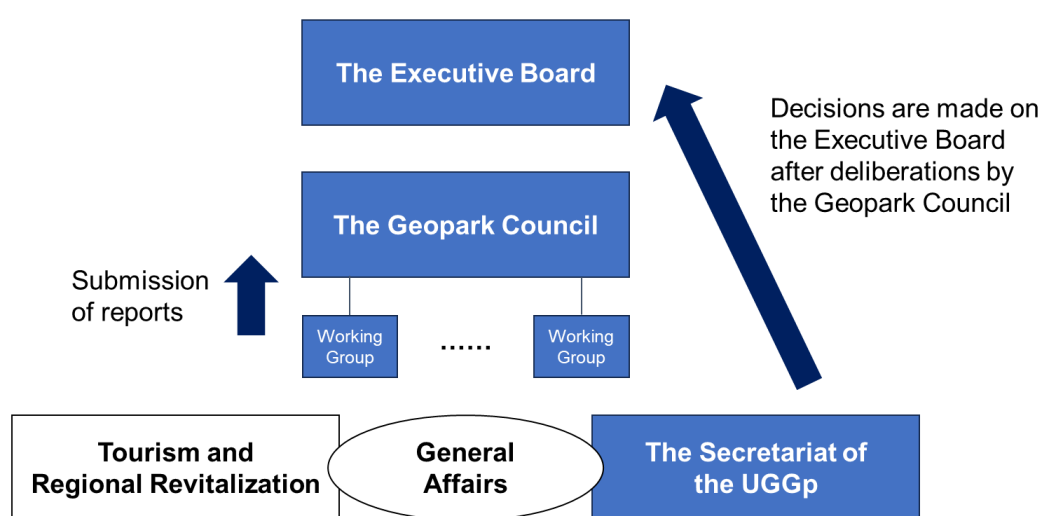
The entity that manages the Izu Peninsula UGGp is a general incorporated association called “the Izu Peninsula Geopark and Tourism Bureau.” It has a juridical personality under the domestic legal system. Prior to 2022, the Izu Peninsula UGGp was operated by a loose network called the Promotion Council. However, this network was not granted official juridical personality. In 2022, to deal with this problem, the Promotion Council was merged with the Tourism Bureau that was also owned by the constituent local governments of the Izu Peninsula. The UGGp is successful in being managed under a completely consistent policy after the merger because 1) decision-making for both of the previous entities was the responsibility of the Executive Board comprised of the Council of Mayors, and 2) separate accounting was introduced for the UGGp.

In addition to the 15 constituent local governments in the UGGp territory, chambers of commerce, tourism associations, and local companies such as public transportation companies and regional financial institutions have joined this corporation as members. These members have the right to vote at the policyholder meeting. The entity was established and is being managed based on regional support and participation.

Authority over the strategy-level decision-making of the corporation rests with the Executive Board, which is comprised of the Council of Mayors representing the constituent local governments, in addition to the representatives of local companies and the university.

The body that deliberates upon project proposals related to the UGGp ahead of the Executive Board is the Geopark Council. The Council includes not only the representatives of the local governments and companies, but also representatives from the education sector, guide groups, those engaged in citizen activities, and social entrepreneurs. Citizen participation in decision making has been strengthened since the previous revalidation, as the composition of council delegates reflects the first recommendation strongly. Gender balance has also been improved in accordance with the recommendation. Under the Geopark Council, working groups are established as needed to carry out intensive deliberations with the participation of academic experts and citizen representatives.

With regard to management plans, the “Izu Peninsula Grand Design” and “Izu Peninsula UNESCO Global Geopark Master Plan and Action Plan” used by the two previous entities prior to the merger have been succeeded to by the new corporation successfully. They are being executed steadily. Both documents cover matters such as the organization and functions of the UGGp, the fulfilment of the social and economic needs of residents, the conservation of landscapes and geological, ecological and cultural heritage, governance, sustainable development (the promotion of tourism and the specialty goods of the region), communication, education, financial planning, and partnerships. Further, the preparation of the next-term master plan started in 2025, increasing the linkage with the UNESCO and GGN strategies, and incorporating firmly citizen participation in the preparation process. Intensive deliberations are carried out on the three pillars of Geopark activities, namely conservation, education, and sustainable development, in the respective working groups. Each group submits a report to the Geopark Council as an outcome.



Structure of the Izu Peninsula Geopark and Tourism Bureau

Because most of the corporation's revenue is covered by public funds contributed by the constituent local governments, it is not influenced by economic fluctuations easily. Also, separate accounting has been established within the corporation for the UGGp. As shown in the table below, the size of the budget trends stably. In addition to this, expenses for items such as the dispatch of full-time staff to the corporation, the operation of the visitor centers, and the establishment and management of interpretation panels and trails are accounted for and borne by the 15 constituent local governments within the UGGp. Considered in combination with this generous support, the financial foundations of the UGGp are strong and stable.

Trend in the budget of the Secretariat Office

Fiscal year	General accounting budget	Remarks
FY 2022	60,594,000 yen	Personnel costs: Expenditure from other management budget (after the organizational merger)
FY 2023	61,949,000 yen	Personnel costs: Expenditure from other management budget (after the organizational merger)
FY 2024	TBC	

There are 23 full-time staff at the corporation overall. Of these, eight people are dedicated to the management of the UGGp as the Secretariat Office. The Secretariat Office includes three full-time researchers who hold a Master's degree or higher qualification. The Secretariat Office is in charge of the core areas of the Geopark management, namely, strategy formulation, conservation, education, networking, and research. In addition, an expert with several decades of experience at a large tourism company is working full-time as the Chief Marketing Officer and is involved actively

in the promotion of the UGGp.

Other than this, there are also a General Affairs Section and Tourism Section at the corporation. The General Affairs Section, which has four staff, is responsible for the legal and financial affairs of the corporation including the Secretariat Office, and contributes to stable operations. The Tourism Section, which has eight staff, builds strong connections and good relationships with business operators in Japan and overseas, and contributes to the economic activities of the UGGp, such as promotions and tourism campaigns.

Izu Peninsula UGGp staff list

No	Name	Employment	Function	Skill	%time	Gender
1	Kazuo Uematsu	Full-time	CEO		30	M
2	Mitsuru Hayashida	Full-time, from a tourism company	CMO		30	M
3	Masayuki Iida	Full-time, from Shizuoka Pref.	CFO		30	M
4	Shigeya Kanezashi	Full-time	Geopark manager		100	M
5	Koichi Ishida	Full-time, from Nishiizu Town	Deputy Geopark manager		100	M
6	Shyuji Tsuji	Full-time	Researcher, Regional revitalization	Cultural heritage	100	M
7	Daisuke Endo	Full-time	Researcher, education	Geology	100	M
8	Keiko Sasaki	Full-time	Researcher, international relations	Ecology	100	F
9	Tetsuya Ota	Full-time, from Matsuzaki Town	Corporate cooperation, events, Georgia		100	M
10	Haruna Tsukamoto	Full-time, from Minamiizu Town	Events, regional cooperation		100	F
11	Shoma Matsuda	Full-time, from Shimizu Town	Education, public information		100	M
12	Takumi Watanabe	Full-time, from Numazu City	Education, tourism		50	M

E.4 OVERLAPPING

World Cultural Heritage

Within the territory are the Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces, one of the constituent assets of the World Cultural Heritage "Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining (registered in 2015)." The Secretariat Office has concluded a comprehensive agreement with Izunokuni City, which manages this heritage. We have also strengthened cooperation to increase its value as heritage complementarily, such as registration as a cultural site of the UGGp, joint holding of special exhibitions and workshops, and inviting the curator of the Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces to the training course for guides. In addition, we have started on the development of a cultural trail on the theme of samurai history, establishing this heritage and historic buildings related to the warrior administration of this area on the trail route.



Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces

Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park

The area along the coastline of the Izu Peninsula and the mountain ridge including the Mount Amagi is designated as part of Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park. Based on the Natural Parks Act, strong regulations apply, such as restrictions on development, construction work, and felling, which

contribute to site conservation and utilization of natural resources for tourism. The formulation of “the overall concept for promoting Ecotourism” and the arrangement of information on natural resources available for this were carried out in cooperation with the Kanto Regional Environment Office and the Shimoda Ranger Station of the Ministry of the Environment.

E.5 EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Formulation of a midterm strategy and action plan

We reorganized the Education Committee of the former Izu Peninsula Geopark Promotion Council and established two working groups: one on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Strategy and the other on promotion of Geopark education. As outcomes, a midterm strategy was formulated by the former and an action plan by the latter in 2023.

ESD should be at the core of Geoparks' educational activities in light of UNESCO Global Geoparks' mission on the front lines of sustainable development. However, educational activities at the UGGp until now have been limited to the provision of opportunities for outdoor activities and aid for geological education. Renewing this approach, we work toward the realization of educational programs more closely aligned with UNESCO's educational strategy of “social and behaviour change for sustainability transitions.” In particular, the Secretariat Office has carried out projects that cultivates the competencies of systems thinking and comprehensive problem-solving capabilities (key qualities and capabilities), encourages behavioural change by individuals, and contributes to transforming the society into a more sustainable one through behavioural change in individuals who have acquired these competencies working together with heterogeneous actors.

From 2022 to 2023, deliberations were held by experts including a member of the UNESCO Future Co-Creation Platform, a member of the hub organization of the Ministry of the Environment's ESD promotion network, and academic experts. We formulated the four following basic policies for the three-year period to 2025. This midterm strategy reflects UNESCO's vision strongly, and we have conducted specific but comprehensive initiatives in accordance with these respective basic policies (described in detail below in E.5 Educational activities; the creation of a system for citizen participation is described in detail in E.7.3).

Basic policies for the UGGp's educational activities:

1. *Make the overarching aim of educational activities “the development of the leaders of sustainable society.”*
2. *Based on “learning that relates individual change and societal change” and “the key qualities and capabilities of sustainable society” presented by UNESCO, implement and develop ESD in accordance with the present state of society and its needs.*
3. *Valuing dialogue and cooperation, implement projects that encourage education that is not limited to children of school age, and create places that encourage dialogue and cooperation across generations.*
4. *Create systems that link ESD, sustainable regional development, and citizen participation in the operation of the UGGp.*

We are also working toward the promotion of the educational programs that we have implemented for school children within the territory. These aim at cultivating pride and attachment to their hometowns through educating them on the UGGp's nature, history, and culture, as well as at realizing a sustainable society. In parallel with the working group on ESD strategy, a working group for the promotion of Geopark education was organized by representatives of schoolteachers and guides who are involved in Geopark education. This working group discussed how to make Geopark education more evenly distributed among the region and promote it into secondary education, and incorporated the results into the action plan on which the Secretariat Office shall work. Items such as handling that takes into account the features and circumstances of each subregion and the handling of the inquiry-based learning that the new educational guidelines refer to have also been incorporated. We implemented measures in line with the action plan to develop Geopark education in a more comprehensive manner (described in detail in E.5 Educational activities – School education and Inquiry-based learning).

Educational activities

○ ESD

We launched a project on the concept of ESD to promote the “development of the leaders of a sustainable society,” which is the overarching aim of educational activities that the UGGp aims for (listed as the first basic policy of the UGGp’s ESD midterm strategy). The project takes lifelong learning into account, not just school education.

The initiatives that we have executed within the ESD project included the provision of lectures on that first basic policy in the guide training course and at own Youth Summit on inquiry-based learning. The latter case was implemented jointly with Shizuoka University (E.7.3 Full and effective participation of local communities and indigenous people), and was featured heavily at the annual meeting held by the Ministry of the Environment’s Partnership Office as an advanced example of ESD education in Japan.

In addition, we published a book in August 2024, whose main writers were the members of the working group on ESD strategy, which systematically addresses the governance of Geoparks based on cooperation with citizens and the empowerment of the community through Geopark activities. This book was used as a textbook at the Japanese Geoparks Network’s nationwide training meeting held by the Secretariat Office in December 2024. Forty-two people from all over Japan participated in this meeting. The lectures and workshops were conducted by the authors in accordance with the structure of the book, while the excursions provided training on the pioneering educational programs that are implemented in the UGGp.

○ School education

Geopark education in schools is commonly offered as Integrated Studies, which handles the origins of the land, history, and the features of nature as regional study. It is also done in science subjects that deal with the observation of geological strata and volcanic ash, as well as in disaster prevention studies. Fieldwork is also often included. Teaching duties are shared by the UGGp’s researchers and guides of the Izu Peninsula Geo Guide Association. In fiscal year 2022, the Secretariat Office and guides implemented classes at 32 schools and in fiscal year 2023 at 22 schools.

We are working towards making Geopark education more evenly distributed among the region. Based on the abovementioned action plan, we made arrangements such as dispatching lecturers to municipalities from neighbouring areas where Geopark education had not yet advanced due to a shortage of guides in those municipalities. As a result of this initiative, 13 schools newly participated in Geopark education. We are also implementing a free-of-charge lecturer-dispatch project for schools that are new to Geopark education. We have also added several Boards of Education within the region to the members of the Geopark Council so that information on Geopark education is directly delivered to education-related organizations.

We promote Geopark education in secondary education. In Nishiizu Town and Matsuzaki Town, Geopark education is being implemented in a way that learning deepens gradually from elementary school to secondary school. At another secondary school, we give students assignments who take geology as part of their subject “Project Study” and get them to work on research. The results of this were put together for a poster presentation at meetings of Japan Geoscience Union. Inquiry-based learning using the UGGp has been carried out at another secondary school (described in detail under Inquiry-based learning).

Aiming for the further diffusion of Geopark education, we have created a comic called “Secrets of the Izu Peninsula,” for children and distribute it every year to all fifth-grade elementary school children within the region. It is also used in education that uses the UGGp. In 2022, a “guideline for guides who are involved in Geopark education in schools” was developed by several guides who have extensive experience as teachers. This initiative contributed greatly to the development of the educational capabilities of guides overall.

○ Inquiry-based learning

Although the inquiry-based learning established in the new curriculum of Japan puts ESD education into practice and is thought to be compatible with Geopark education, there is no clear image of its actual implementation in school education. To fill in this gap, the Secretariat Office has started on a project where the Secretariat selects a small number of model schools and gets involved in publicizing the outcomes of inquiry-based learning. At these schools, the Secretariat Office, together with guides, cooperates with their group activities. For example, students from Numazu Commercial High School conducted a fieldwork with a help of guides. Students considered independently what they could do to improve awareness of the UGGp and, after a certain period of preparation, provided a guided tour to their schoolmates at a Geopark site. A tourism course, which is themed on the UGGp, was launched at the school from 2024 in cooperation with the Izu Peninsula Geo Guide Association.



A tour held by secondary school students

Other educational activities

○ Educational tours

A study notebook for educational tours, “Izu x Inquiry - Connecting its Beauty and the SDGs -,” created jointly by the corporation’s Tourism Section and a Tokyo-based educational materials publisher, was released in 2023. The Secretariat Office provided advice on the content. The tool utilizes inquiry-based learning and assists students in perceiving the UGGp’s nature, community, and their interactions from the SDG’s point of view through a series of studies (fieldwork and learning prior and posterior to the fieldwork). We are currently advancing the development of tours using this study notebook in cooperation with the Izu Peninsula Geo Guide Association. In addition, apart from sending out the study notebook to UNESCO-associated schools and schools in the region and neighbouring prefectures that hold geology classes, we make a promotion for the notebook using the Tourism Section’s strong network of travel agents. We received the first educational tour in September 2023, with 398 junior secondary school students visiting from three prefectures.

○ Children’s Picture Contest on the Izu Peninsula Geopark

Each summer, we hold an UGGp-themed picture contest for elementary and junior secondary school students who either live on the Izu Peninsula or go to school here. The aim of this contest is to get children to visit Geopark sites with their families, learn more about the area, and nurture pride in their hometown. The contest started in 2017, and 303 entries were submitted in the three years from 2022 to 2024. Apart from the central museum Georia, we hold an exhibition at visitor centers and the galleries of companies in support for the UGGp.

○ Izu Geopark Tests

We hold the Izu Geopark Tests every year. For the 3rd level Izu Geo Test, the purpose is to get people interested in the UGGp. We make it entertaining and promote test takers to answer questions using a wide variety of information such as printed and published materials and the website. The average annual number of test takers during the three-year period to 2024 exceeded 600 people. There are also tests taken at schools and companies, so the level of recognition of the Izu Geo Tests is increasing. Moreover, we also conduct the 1st and 2nd level Izu Geo Tests for those who have passed the 3rd level. These high-level Izu Geo Tests are taken at a test center. There were 25 test takers in 2023. The questions are easier to answer if they have actually visited sites. Test takers who score 45 points or higher out of 50 pass the 1st level, and those who score 35 points or higher pass the 2nd level. This is a difficult test with about one or two people passing the

1st level each year. Some people challenge the 1st level every year.

○ Environmental education

Based on the comprehensive agreement with Shizuoka Gas Group, outdoor events have been conducted toward the public to improve understanding of the UGGp's nature and raise awareness of conservation. Examples include nature observation held at Mount Amagi, spring water groups, and the shore, which are deeply related to the origins of the land. Nature observation was also done to examine deep-sea fish, young fish, and seaweed that live in Suruga Bay. Geopark education in schools has also diversified. It includes inquiry-based learning using semi-natural grassland (9 participants) and environmental problems caused by microplastics (3 people). In addition, we support activities of a local group that conducts environmental education and SDGs education for local children (15 people).

E.6 GEOTOURISM

Sustainable tourism

In response to changes in the needs of diversifying visitors on the Izu Peninsula, we promote sustainable tourism in which the natural and cultural heritage is preserved and passed on. Thereby, local residents are proud of regional identity, while it gives visitors a feeling of joy. In order to establish a sustainable regional economy in the tourism industry, we have worked on the formulation of an “overall concept for promoting Ecotourism.” Under this concept, we encourage tour participants to use public transportation as a means of transport and implement community-based tourism with local tour operators who provide guided tours on natural and cultural heritage. We encourage guides and public transportation business operators to participate in this initiative. We intend to use the concept to attract visitors with environmentally-friendly tours.

We have created tours that contribute to sustainable tourism, including the use of E-bikes, in cooperation with related organizations. The “E-Bike Tour on Izu's Unexplored Wasabi Fields” received a special award in a contest in 2022 that was held by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. On this trip, participants went around the heritage recognized by both the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System and UNESCO Global Geoparks and enjoyed the gastronomy.

Guide training and development

Tours by guides are provided in all areas of the Izu Peninsula. The Secretariat Office offers various programs to develop and support guides.

○ Guide training course

Paid-for guide training course is held every other year, with participation conditional on passing the 3rd level Izu Geo Test. After a completion of the course made up of in-class and outdoor lectures over about five months and the passing of a practical test, the Secretariat Office certifies successful participants as certified guides. Certified guides are required to renew their certification after taking a lecture once every five years. The Secretariat Office is updated with activities conducted by individual guides through this renewal procedure. About 175 certified guides are active as of December 2024. The Izu Peninsula Geo Guide Association, the organization for certified guides, is the driving force for the implementation of Geopark activities and works on various activities based on strong cooperation with the Secretariat Office.

We established a “regional guide” system mainly for business operators whose activities are limited in a certain area, as it is tough for them to take the guide training course that covers the whole of the Izu Peninsula. “Geo Terrace Ito,” which conducts activities at a visitor center in the



The Wasabi Field E-Bike Tour received a special award in the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's Contest

eastern part of Izu, implemented a regional guide training course in 2023.

○ Skill-Up lectures

The Secretariat Office offers skill-up lectures every year so that guiding techniques of certified guides are improved. Skill-up lectures were offered in 2022 on outdoor learning observing the rocks and minerals of various origin on the coast, where the oldest geological strata of the UGGp can be seen, in 2023 on the implementation of universal tourism regardless of age or disability, and in 2024 on the warnings for a potential Nankai Trough earthquake. Apart from these, our researchers provide lectures upon request by the Izu Peninsula Geo Guide Association.

○ Next-generation guide leaders program

We run a next-generation guide leaders program aimed at the development of human resources to guarantee sustainability in the operational aspect of Geopark activities in the future. Six young to middle-aged guides participated on numerous occasions in conferences and meetings in a total of nine places, including national and regional conferences of the Japanese Geoparks Network. A guided tour and poster presentation were conducted by these next-generation guide leaders on the occasion of the event to mark the 5th anniversary of the certification of the Izu Peninsula UNESCO Global Geopark in 2024.



Program for next-generation guide leaders and the poster produced

E.7 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

E.7.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The “Izu Peninsula UNESCO Global Geopark Master Plan and Action Plan 2021-2025 (hereafter referred to as MA plan)” underlines our strong commitment to contribute to achievement of the SDGs. The MA plan is our blueprint to materialize the SDGs in this region. Linkage with the SDGs, action plans, and the final year goals are presented in the seven fields of topics including research and conservation, educational activities, tourism and local development, disaster risk reduction, strengthening management structures, networks and partnerships, and publicity and information strategy. Overall, initiatives related to these have been executed smoothly. This MA plan is positioned as the core strategic project of the “Izu Peninsula Grand Design” formulated by the former Tourism Bureau in 2020, which draws the future image of the region, including the local development, disaster prevention, and transportation infrastructure of the Izu Peninsula.

In the three-year action plan formulated by the new corporation after the organizational merger in 2022, the promotion of sustainable tourism using the UGGp was clearly stated once again, as the key strategy of the Izu Peninsula Grand Design. Together with the Tourism Section as a single integrated corporation, we have started on projects using the strengths of both the Geopark and tourism promotion that contribute to sustainable development. Examples include educational tours using the UGGp (E.5 Other educational activities) and the promotion of sales of the UGGp's specialty products (E.7.2 Regional product brand strategy). In addition, based on the midterm ESD strategy, we executed a project related to the development of the leaders of a sustainable society (E.5 Educational activities).

A working group was established that deliberates upon sustainable development at the time of

formulation of the next-term MA plan. Themes such as tourism promotion, social inclusion, and climate change are included in this. The UGGp contributes to the SDGs by prioritizing the empowerment of young people and ensuring gender balance in the public recruitment of the working groups, as well as by building a system for decision making based on citizen participation.

E.7.2 PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with various organizations

The UGGp defines partners as organizations that have concluded comprehensive agreements with the corporation. It is expected that new partnerships are increasingly formed in the future given that the scope of UNESCO Global Geoparks is expanding. With this in mind, we have started on the development of standards for forming partnerships. The currently concluded partnerships are as follows:

(1) We concluded a comprehensive agreement with Kokugakuin University Museum (May 2023 – March 2024) and Kokugakuin University (April 2024 –). Through exhibitions and related projects, we aim to promote interdisciplinary research on the Izu Peninsula. Based on this agreement, we held a series of exhibitions and events on the theme of Mishima belief in autumn 2023, and contributed to the deepening of understanding related to the links between the geological heritage and cultural heritage of the UGGp (E.1.5 Information, education and research).

(2) We concluded a comprehensive agreement with Shizuoka University in 2022. In accordance with the philosophy of UNESCO's Global Geoparks, this agreement is aimed at contributing to various areas such as the promotion of research concerning the Izu Peninsula, the building of a sustainable society through the conservation and use of the UGGp's heritage, and the improvement of the region's human resource development and disaster prevention capabilities. Three researchers were appointed Visiting Associate Professors of Shizuoka University from 2024.

(3) We concluded a comprehensive agreement with Izunokuni City in 2021, which manages the Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces. In accordance with UNESCO's philosophy, this agreement is aimed at contributing to the region's human resource development and regional development by promoting mutual cooperation linking Geopark sites and the city's rich regional resources including the Nirayama Reverberatory Furnaces, which are part of the constituent assets of World Cultural Heritage. We promote cooperation that increases both parties' value as heritage complementarily (E.4 Overlapping).

(4) We concluded a comprehensive agreement with Shizuoka Gas Group in 2020. This is a long-term partnership of ten years aimed at contributing to the promotion of the Izu Peninsula by conducting collaborative projects in line with the philosophy of UNESCO's Global Geopark, and at the achievement of the SDGs. Based on this agreement, we have held a total of 19 events so far (E.1.5 Information, education, and research).

(5) We concluded a comprehensive agreement under which Tokai Jidosha Co., Ltd. donates a portion of their annual liqueur sales to the UGGp, and the Secretariat Office gives permission to the company to use the UGGp's logo on its products. The New Summer Orange, a specialty product of the Izu Peninsula, is used in the liqueur. These donations serve as a funding source for the research grant program called "Conservation and Research Fund." Total donations since fiscal year 2016 have reached one million yen, so we presented the company a distinguished service award on the occasion of the event to mark the 5th anniversary of the certification of the UGGp held in fiscal year 2023. The company has also issued preferential bus passes to support guide activities.

(6) Agreements on cooperation concluded before 2019 include those with Izukyu Co., Ltd., and Mishima Shinkin Bank.

Supporter systems

The corporation has a group supporter system and an individual supporter system that support Geopark activities. These systems were established by the former Izu Peninsula Geopark Promotion Council and have been succeeded to by the new corporation.

Group supporters are groups that show support for the corporation's activities. They can display the Geopark logo and receive press releases from our corporation. As of 2024, there are 108 group supporters. Annual membership fees totaling approximately 1 million yen support various activities of the UGGp.

Individual supporters are individuals from within and outside the territory who show support for

or interest in the UGGp's activities. To these individual supporters, the Secretariat Office provides information on and invites participation in various Geopark events. We aim to invigorate the UGGp through their active participation in these events. As of December 2024, there are 245 individual supporters, and the number is increasing year by year.

Regional product brand strategy

We have promoted a project aimed at creating "Geopark stories" of local speciality based on interviews with producers from the perspective of the UGGp's geological heritage, the climate, history, and production methods to increase the added value of local products. An initiative to improve the visibility of added value has also started, including the opening of special websites and taking up products at various events. Cooperation with the Tourism Section in the new corporation after the merger has also advanced, and promotions through that network have been carried out.

The selection standards for the local products whose sale the Secretariat Office promotes in particular were clarified. The new standards were based on strong awareness of the mission of global Geoparks as the front line of sustainable development through production and consumption. Under these standards, in addition to being produced on the Izu Peninsula, products are required to have social impacts such as the conservation of biodiversity and landscapes, responsible water use or the invigoration of cultural traditions.

E.7.3 FULL AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

No indigenous people live in the UGGp as of now. Consequently, we report on this item limited to the improvement of community participation and social inclusion.

The Secretariat Office has worked sincerely on the realization of grassroots management that is rich in opportunities for citizen to participate in Geopark programs. We aim to overcome the highly hierarchical structure in Japanese local administration, in addition to the social structure within which the influence of older men is prominent. Initiatives over the past four years started in 2022 with the launching of a working group with invited experts who are most consonant and sympathetic with UNESCO's vision domestically, including a member of the UNESCO Future Co-Creation Platform and a member of the hub organization of the Ministry of the Environment's promotion network for ESD. The report submitted by this working group was approved by the Executive Board and obtained official standing as the basic policy for the operation of the UGGp.

Based on this submitted report, we have established a system in a way that local communities are able to participate not only in the project operation of the Secretariat Office, but also in the formulation of project plans and the next-term Master Plan and Action Plan. What we bore in mind when establishing the system was that the Secretariat Office and local communities share authority to decide on Geopark programs, rather than limiting it to formalistic approval of policies prepared by the Secretariat or to public hearings without authority. We made sure that plans formulated with community participation have sufficient binding force over the Secretariat after following appropriate procedures.

Firstly, in the project operations dimension, we held small-scale dialogue meetings in various areas of the peninsula at which the Secretariat Office, guides, and the local community could engage in direct dialogue. Guides and local communities are able to express their opinions on the Secretariat's operations and make project proposals. Next, in the project planning dimension, we held a Youth Summit on inquiry-based learning to create opportunities for young people working on sustainable development to be involved in the formulation of the UGGp's project development. At the workshop, they could submit project proposals to the Secretariat Office and discuss plans together with the Secretariat. These initiatives were executed by 2023.

In 2024, in order to deepen citizen participation as far as strategy and policy making, we appointed citizens representatives who are engaged in citizen activities and social entrepreneurs to the Geopark Council. This organization has the authority to deliberate on project proposals of the UGGp. Moreover, we recruited citizen representatives from the public and appointed them to the working groups for the formulation of the next-term "Master Plan and Action Plan." In designing this system, we referred to the citizen participation initiative known as the "Matsuzaki 2030 Project" carried out in the southwest of the Izu Peninsula by Shizuoka University, which is in a partnership relationship with the UGGp. This currently prepared MA plan has binding force on projects that the

Secretariat Office shall work on, with the mayors of the cities and towns of the Izu Peninsula committing to it once it is adopted by the Executive Board. We prioritized young people and ensured gender to be balanced in the public recruitment.

In addition, we worked on the improvement of social inclusion of Geopark programs as a critical issue. We implemented training programs for guides to develop a tour that allows people with a physical disability to participate. Further, a project for “Izu holidays that anybody can enjoy” considerate of people with a physical disability has started. We appointed an expert on welfare to the Geopark Council from 2024 to realize even deeper social inclusion.



A dialogue meeting (left) and a workshop on inquiry-based learning (right)

E.8 NETWORKING

Participation in international meetings

Since 2022, we have participated in the 10th International Conference on UNESCO Global Geoparks and the 7th and 8th APGN Symposium. We always make a positive contribution at these meetings, such as our researchers giving a talk on Geopark or research activities, as well as holding of a booth exhibition introducing the UGGp. We dispatched a four-person representative group including a mayor and the CEO to the 10th GGN Conference held in Marrakesh (Morocco) to show our support for, and deep commitment to, the GGN strategy of network expansion in Africa. Activities such as interaction between the UGGp's mayors and the management team of the Global Geoparks Network, reporting on the recent state of the UGGp to the members of the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council, meeting with our sister Geopark enabled us to contribute to the UGGp's future network activities. In 2022, we participated online in the International Intensive Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks. We sent a participant to this course in Lesbos in 2024.

Cooperation and exchange with UGGp and aUGGp

We concluded a comprehensive agreement with the Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark, which was recognized as a UNESCO Global Geopark at the same time as the UGGp. It is in Indonesia's West Java Province, which has a sister agreement with Shizuoka Prefecture where the UGGp is located. The two UGGps are now sister Geoparks. Based on this agreement, a permanent exhibition on the Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu Geopark has been established at the UGGp's museum “Georia.” In 2024, there was a visit from the West Java Provincial Delegation in charge of the Ciletuh-Palabuhanratu UGGp.

Preparations are advancing for a joint special exhibition with the domestic UGGp and aUGGp (Muroto and Nanki Kumano), aimed at raising the presence of Geoparks in Japan. In addition, we actively participated in network activities such as national conferences of the Japanese Geoparks Network, various regional conferences, national training meetings, and other events. We also dispatch researchers as lecturers to other Geoparks in Japan.

Geopark outreach activities to other regions

In 2023, we accepted a delegation (AYED: Africa Youth Entrepreneurship Day) from the Republic of Ghana, which aims for the establishment of the first Geopark in West Africa. We took it as an opportunity to contribute to the growth of the Global Geoparks Network, in particular the expansion of the network to Africa. During the visit, we shared experiences of the organizational

operation of the UGGp and cooperative activities with local communities as capacity building to overcome the operational vulnerabilities common to the Global South.

In 2024, to support the establishment of UNESCO Global Geoparks in the Kyrgyz Republic, we accepted a delegation at the UGGp and also sent staff to a training program held at the Oki Geopark. The training program held at the UGGp mainly focused on regional development in collaboration with guide organizations, schools, and companies.

Participation in joint activities and joint communications

We participate in the 20th anniversary of the Global Geoparks Network. We also actively contributed to publications including the GGN Newsletter (2022 ISSUE 1&2; 2024 ISSUE 1&2), Geoparks & Oceans (2022), and Geoparks Going Green (2024). Further, we submitted the SDGs Template 2023, which will associate the achievement of the SDGs with Geopark activities started from 2024. Apart from that, we respond as appropriate to requests from the GGN Working Groups.

Cooperation and exchange with Biosphere Reserve

We carried out a cooperative project with Biosphere Reserve, a program administered by UNESCO. The cooperation was done with the Minami-Alps Biosphere Reserve, which is located outside the UGGp's territory but has a geological connection with the UGGp. The collision of the Izu block (the Izu Peninsula and the surrounding seabed) into the arc of the mainland Japan resulted in the uplift of the Biosphere Reserve's territory. In 2024, the Secretariat Office and certified guides visited the Biosphere Reserve and conducted Geopark education toward two junior secondary schools (85 students). We explained how the UGGp and the Biosphere Reserve are related to each other. Their delegation visited the UGGp's museum Georia, and we discussed our future cooperation.

E.9 SELLING OF GEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

Neither the aforementioned management body and its partners are involved in any geological material trades.

F. CONCLUSION

The UGGp is supported by the strong support of the local governments and major companies in the region and has stable financial foundations. The Secretariat Office is blessed in terms of human resources too, with three researchers in different fields of study working full-time. The strong relationships of trust with the local governments are apparent in the UGGp's clear positioning in public disaster prevention plans. Its relationships of trust with local companies and Boards of Education are apparent in the implementation of active cooperation projects such as Geo-Paku and the train series (SDGs Train and GeoTrain). In addition, links with the tourism industry have also been strengthened due to the organizational merger with the Tourism Bureau in 2022. The UGGp will use these opportunities to continue being deeply committed to the strategies of UNESCO, the GGN, and the APGN. In addition to the consistent conservation of geological heritage, we will realize today's Geopark mission on the front lines of sustainable development.

The areas where notable progress was apparent by January 2025 were: (1) the realization of citizen participation respectful of the grassroots spirit; (2) the creation of programs that incorporate culture and creativity, clarifying the interaction between people and nature; and (3) cooperation with museums, publishing companies, and intermediary organizations that are based in the capital region, and the improvement of communication power in transmitting information to cities. Further, the areas where we have been aware of issues and started initiatives were: (1) using the adopted Ecotourism concept to guide the tourism industry in a sustainable direction; (2) the enhancement of the biological and ecological fields, which we had not started on previously, such as the development of a biodiversity database and conservation strategy; (3) the establishment of a mechanism to promote responsible production considerate of sustainability; and (4) the continuation of implementing reforms to improve gender balance. Furthermore, we aim to increase our involvement in the issue of climate change, which is a common concern of the Global Geoparks Network.

The potential threats foreseen in the long-term are risks attributable to demographics, such as

the expected halving of the population by 2050, particularly in the southern area of the UGGp. There are concerns that this change will result in the decline of local government financial power. Demographic risks are a structural issue common to the whole of the East Asian region, and it would not be appropriate for the UGGp to discuss their “resolution” or “mitigation” on its own. However, we will be mindful to continue searching for appropriate “adaptation,” including the selection of projects and the greater efficiency of operations.