

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2020

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

Oki Islands UNESCO Global Geopark, Japan, Asia Pacific Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2013 / 2017



Oki Islands Geopark Visitor Center, newly opened in Okinoshima Town in October 2020

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 13 staffs including 1 geoscientist

Number of visitors: 28,604

Number of Geopark events:

- Nature observation and outdoor events organized by the Ministry of the Environment: 4
- Lectures and field work tours for local communities and institutions: 9

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:

- Oki High School: compulsory course for 1st and 2nd year students, elective course for 3rd year students
- Lectures and field work tours at schools conducted by geopark lecturers: 64

Number of Geopark press release: 3

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2020

- Oki Islands Geopark Visitor Center was opened in October 2020 in Okinoshima Town. It serves as the core facility of the geopark. The geopark office, tourism information center and geopark museum are located inside it.
- A new promotional video was created and used in digital promotion of the Oki Islands.
Link: (<https://youtu.be/pMTFyNo3GfQ>).
- The geopark signed agreements with large corporations such as NTT Docomo Inc. as well

as Sony Corporation and Hokkaido-Chizu Co., Ltd. The latter two resulted in a joint research project which utilises information and communications technologies in order to improve the education environment in the remote islands area.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Participated in conference of geoparks and aspiring geoparks from the Chugoku-Shikoku-Kinki areas of Japan (22-24.01.2020).
- Participated in the International Digital Course on UNESCO Global Geoparks 2020 (10-26.06.2020).
- Participated in APGN Coordinators' Meeting (20.10.2020).
- Participated in the 1st GGN Digital Forum (17-18.11.2020).
- Participated in APGN Online Exchange Project "Let's Do It!" (10 meetings throughout the year).
- Participated in "Our Planet Earth Project" which aims at creating a video database of geological heritage and bringing the natural scenery into people's houses during the difficult time of lockdowns, and travel restrictions.

Link: <https://sites.google.com/view/ourplanetearthproject/>

Management and Financial Status

- The management body of the geopark gained legal entity in April 2020 by registering as a General Incorporated Association. As of April 2021, it is composed of 51 regular member organizations, 3 supporting member organizations, and 17 individual supporting members, for a total of 71 members.
- The geopark operates its budget and financial management independently, with its main sources of funds being Shimane Prefectural Government and the four local municipalities - Okinoshima Town, Nishinoshima Town, Ama Town, and Chibu Village.

Geoconservation

- 'Subsidy for Oki Islands UGGp Academic Research' Project (6 studies were selected in 2020).
- Planned and commissioned a survey on the distribution of dandelions in the geopark area.
- Planned and commissioned a survey on the distribution of nagoran orchids (*Sedirea japonica*).
- Cooperated with the Ministry of Environment on removal of invasive species, carried out a lecture in a local junior high school (05.02.2020).
- Cooperated with the Ministry of Environment on a joint booth during a local environment-related event (23.02.2020).

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- Continued the training course for guides in foreign languages and certified 10 participants.
- 'Oki Adventure Islands Programme' 2020: Due to the novel coronavirus, the 2020 program was held at a smaller scale, with separate Dōzen and Dōgo Island courses each held 5 times. Each course had 6 participants, for a total of 60 elementary students participating from within Shimane

Prefecture.

- Carried out and supported online tours targeted at audiences from metropolitan areas.
- Carried out a trial tour around the geopark targeted at international tourists. (13-15.11.2020).

New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction

- Commissioned a series of educational videos about various geopark sites (completed in 2021).

Strategic partnership

- Oki Ranger Station (Ministry of Environment, Daisen-Oki National Park) is a member of the committee. Joint activities related to invasive species of plants and nature observation are carried out. Ministry of Environment carries out infrastructure works within the geopark area overlapping with the National Park, which includes installing signboards and maintaining trails.
- Oki Nature Museum (partner until October 2020; under reconstruction in October-March; re-opened in April 2021 with the geopark staff in charge of it since then).
- Shimane Nature Museum of Mt. Sanbe (continued partnership, cooperated on exhibition about the Oki Islands, is a member of the promotion committee working group).
- Shimane University (university researchers are advisors to the committee and provide check of scientific information presented on signboards or the geopark website).

Promotional activities

- Carried out a series of lectures and certified geopark supporters (02.2020).
- Participated in a fair organized by a regional radio station BSS Radio and TV (13.03.2020).
- Participated in an online promotional event “Montbell Friend Fair” organized by a Japanese outdoor goods manufacturer Montbell, with which the Oki Islands are linked as a Montbell Friend Area (07.2020).
- Published a quarterly newspaper *Oki Times* that is distributed widely within the geopark area.
- Carried out digital marketing using the newly created geopark promotional video.
- Carried out promotional activities on social media (Facebook, YouTube).

4. CONTACTS

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