

Glocalization in Global Geoparks of Japan

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In Japan, a wide range of regional promotion policies have been tackled towards the so-called "regional revitalization" because of population concentration in Tokyo and population decline in the other parts of Japan. There are also strong interests in the potential of geoparks as a regional policy. They consider that geoparks are useful and powerful to make the alternative regional action plan with local community. As of February 2016, the Japanese Geopark Network (JGN) owns 39 domestic geoparks including 8 global geoparks (Mt. Apoi, Toya-Utsu, Itoigawa, San'in Kaigan, Oki, Muroto, Aso, and Shimabara) belong to, and the number is increasing.

Geoparks are a holistic approach. The International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP) gives geoparks a more important role as the place connecting Earth science with society and as the frontrunner of "glocalization" in the world. Networking geoparks implies the process of horizontal integration among regions as "glocalization" in comparison with an industrialized and urbanized process involving vertical economic integration by multinational corporations.

The JGN International Working Group, which organized at the 5th JGN Kirishima symposium in 2015, is a platform for discussing international contributions and taking actions accordingly. This group consists of staff members of geoparks in Japan who work in cooperation with local communities. Knowledge, experience, and current issues shared by JGN, Asia-Pacific Geoparks Network (APGN), European Geoparks Network (EGN) and Global Geoparks Network (GGN) provide good examples for the development of Japanese geoparks. For sustainable development, glocalization will be achieved in not only eight UNESCO global geoparks but also other domestic geoparks gradually.

The purpose of the presentation is to report on the development of "glocalization" and future prospects in Japanese geoparks, taking the UNESCO Global Geoparks in Japan and the International Working Group as examples.

Keywords: glocalization, UNESCO Global Geopark, Japan