

Customer Satisfaction and Perception Survey-based on Qingling Zhongnanshan UNESCO Global Geopark, China

*Liang Chang¹, Teiji Watanabe²

1. Graduate School of Environmental Science, Hokkaido University, 2. Faculty of Environmental Science, Hokkaido University

A global geopark as a unified and unitary geographical area plays an essential role in managing geological heritage and landscape which bear international importance through integrated protection, education and sustainable development. Qingling Zhongnanshan UNESCO Global Geopark, the first global geopark in northwest China, is attracting a great number of tourists every year. To find out if there exists a difference between the users' and management officials' perception and understanding of this geopark, the present study employed a questionnaire survey with tourists, Xi'an city's residents and local residents, and interview with the management officials. To find out if there is difference existing between the tourists' perception and understanding of the geopark and the real happenings, this research adopted remote sensing approach to detect the vegetation cover change. The analysis of 1,152 questionnaires showed that most visitors are satisfied with the geopark or hold a "Fair" attitude; features of a scenic spot destination can exert a crucial influence on visitors' destination decision and tourists' perception can be different from the real happenings regarding the role a geopark plays in protecting the nature. The study area has experienced a decrease in the vegetation cover since 2009, the year in which the geopark was established.

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