

Discussion regarding the implementation of "Geopark Specialist Exchange Project" between Yuzawa Geopark and MikasaGeopark

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Ten years has passed since the Japanese geoparks started their networking activities. Japanese Geopark Network member regions have carried out various activities centered around protecting and preserving geological resources, education regarding those resources, and using these resources in sustainable regional development. At the same time, in order to improve the quality of these activities, each region has been interacting with each other and exchanging information through conventions organized by the JGN and various scientific conferences. However, the length of time for such exchanges is usually only three or four days at most, making it difficult for each geopark to develop a deep understanding of other geoparks' practices. Under these circumstances, as part of a new initiative by the JGN, the authors participated in a geopark specialist exchange program between Yuzawa Geopark and MikasaGeopark.

This program lasted for a month at each site, for a total of two months. We were able to dedicate a significant amount of time to understanding the unique characteristics, resources of each region, and its relationships with other regions. With this in mind, we learned in depth about each geopark's background and best practices. In addition, we were able to exchange opinions and deepen the discussion about each region's practices. As a result, we learned a lot about guide training, tour narratives, tour and event operations, outreach and education. We were also able to make crucial proposals to improve both geoparks' practices. This was a direct result of this month-long exchange period.

In this presentation, we will explain the content of the two-month program, and discuss the results and future topics of interest.

Keywords: geopark, networking activity, Geopark Specialist, exchange, regional characteristics