

The appealing points and challenges of Japanese geoparks, as seen from a foreigner' s point of view.

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It has been almost three years since I started my work as a Coordinator of International Relations at the Oki Islands UNESCO Global Geopark Promotion Committee. Before coming here, I did not even know that organizations like geoparks existed. Therefore, at the beginning, Japanese geoparks became my model for geoparks. During my presentation I will talk about the appealing points of geoparks in Japan from an amateur' s point of view.

Geopark Promotion Committees in Japan have the necessary resources to gather information about not only the local geology, but also the local nature, history and culture. Therefore, they can function as a hub for human resource development projects and high-quality tourism product creation.

I wish to look at the challenges that geopark promotion committees face in Japan, as well as talk about the differences between Japanese and European geoparks. Focusing on the differences resulting from the different starting points of the networks, differences in geopark office organization style and culture differences in working style, I will touch upon what I believe the networks can learn from each other.

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