

Regional Sustainable Economic Development through Geotourism

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Mt. Asama North Geopark was certified as Japanese National Geopark in September 2016. Our Geopark's theme is "Advance to the future with Mt. Asama". People in the Asama area have a history of living with Mt. Asama. 38 geosites were selected at the Mt. Asama north geopark, and also a geostory of relationship between volcanoes and people's lives has been built there.

Mt. Asama Geopark Promotion Council has held many monitoring tours from the planning stage. In 2014, geo tour events that also served as guide training were held three times, and around 30 people attended each time. The main geosite of the Mt. Asama North geopark "Kambara Village" and Special National treasure "Mt. Asama volcanic lava tree", and the base facilities "Onioshidashi-park" and "Asama Garden" became the target place in the tour. In addition, we conducted a tour of mountain climbing Mt. Asama. In 2015 we conducted geotours five times. We organized a tour to get familiar with the geopark concept with parents and children, and a tour to explore cultural properties and regional resources of Naganohara Town. We have also conducted monitoring tours in 2016 as well. On the other hand, we have also implemented distinctive approaches like "Geo Yoga" events that do yoga at geosites.

We aimed to develop a sustainable regional economy and have been developing geotourism projects, but there are still issues. From now on, we will periodically carry out various geotours throughout the year and strengthen our public relations activities. Furthermore, it is necessary to make model courses based on themes and stories, and publish them on guide books and websites.

Regarding the training of guides, the guide their self deepens knowledge through activities such as making guide texts. In the future, we will consider structured guide training courses and nurture high-quality geo-guides. At the same time, in order to achieve sustainable economic development through geotourism, it is also necessary to introduce geotour participants to promote consumption within the region. We will try to improve the geopark brand, and we will further promote the development of "geo gourmets" and geopark related products.

Keywords: Geopark, Geotourism, Regional development, Mt. Asama