

Geopark as a Nodal Nexus for Development: on enhancing community functioning and avoiding creative destruction

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As development has become a buzz word that implicates favorable changes for places, many cases have shown the creative destruction of communities with commodification and entrepreneurialism. In Taiwan's community-based geopark development, means for social and economic vitality are sought vigorously. The social networking seems to become a favorably strong link that maintains interest and vigor in the conservation of landscape and the natural environment. For safekeeping the environment, knowledge exchange and experience sharing are vital. However, the geopark development also points to the slightly short of economic success and means that serve to sustain community's long term prospective for networking and landscape conservation. As some communities are able to secure resources for proper functioning, some are either short of the knowledge or the means for fulfilling the core values of geoparks.

This paper will illustrate the social networking success and the substandard economic enhancement of Taiwan's geopark communities. Then, with first hand and participatory observation and qualitative interviews, this paper will develop a socio-cultural and economic framework/system for Taiwan's geopark community.

Finally, this paper will point out contextual solutions for improving or enhancing social and economic vitality of the geopark communities.

Keywords: community development, learning community, creative destruction, commodification, post-modern development, geopark community.