

Tourists' awareness on Global Geoparks

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Since global environmental problems continue to be serious after the start of the 21st century, geoparks have caught attention as a place where people can enjoy activities in nature and enhance their knowledge about geology as a part of environmental education. This study focuses on tourists' awareness about nature, geology, environment, geopark, geotourism etc. when they visit geoparks. Fieldworks were conducted at Unzen Volcanic Area Global Geopark (Japan) and Funiushan Global Geopark (China) and the collected questionnaires were analyzed and some findings are presented in this article. For example, it is not possible to conclude that Japanese tourists are highly aware of geoparks. Likewise, although Chinese geoparks have longer history and attract many tourists, the geopark system is also not well understood and geotourism is regarded as similar to ecotourism. Thus, in order to achieve the three overall objectives of the Global Geoparks Network, both Japanese and Chinese geoparks should make more efforts to raise public awareness of the Geopark system.