

Future vision of Aso Geopark and its role in Geoparks Network

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Majority of areas of Japanese Geoparks Network take government-led system. Represented local municipality take a role of its bureau. Temp staff from related municipalities within a geopark area and full-time geopark staff work together in the bureau, and it is operated by burden charge from the related municipalities.

Aso Global Geopark has different management structure from the most of Japanese Geopark areas, Aso Geopark Promotion Council is operated by part of management gains of the Aso Local Development Design Centre Foundation (ASODC), a public interest incorporated foundation. ASODC was jointly established by eight municipalities with an endowment in 1990. This structure contribute sustainable activity to Aso region.

However, staff in ASODC has also temporally contract from their each municipalities. For that reason, staff changes in period of time. Moreover full-time geopark staff has also temporally contract from the council. Therefore the issue may affect for future sustainable operation.

To tackle the issue, turning the council to an incorporated organization from ASODC can be one of the solutions. The ideal incorporation organization may promote efficient geotourism by collaborated with Aso Geopark Guides Association and other related bodies by taking travel agency license. We are now researching on establishing the new structure to take a role as destination management organization for more sustainable and globalized Aso region.