

## **LINKING AP GEOPARKS WITH ASIAN ECOTOURISM NETWORK ::: SUSTAINABILITY AND MARKETING ADVANTAGES**

Masaru TAKAYAMA

Asian Ecotourism Network <E-mail: takayama@eco-tourism.jp >

There are many forms of tourism that appreciate the natural elements integrating the communities and conservation efforts yet there seem to be some redundancies in reinventing the wheel. Masaru Takayama, the founding chair of Asian Ecotourism Network and the former vice chair of The International Ecotourism Society walks the audience through the latest trends and developments on ecotourism in Asia and affected regions with emphasis on the importance of working in collaboration with international agencies and associations that promote sustainable tourism. Masaru also shares how geotourism products can effectively penetrate the tourism supply chain as he is an on-site evaluation judge for the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards celebrated by World Travel and Tourism Council and the president of the pioneer ecotravel agency, Spirit of Japan Travel, in the ancient city of Kyoto, Japan. The audience will recognize the importance of delivering the best practices in sustainable tourism within the industry globally, based upon the principles of environmentally friendly operations; support for the protection of cultural and natural heritage; and direct benefits to the social and economic well-being of local people in travel destinations around the world. The insider's introduction of Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria for the hotels, operators, and the destinations are not to be missed.