

Earth's history is embodied in the land making Amakusa Island a unique museum in the sea

The Amakusa Islands, consisting of about 120 islands are located in the southwest area of Kumamoto Prefecture: a beautiful archipelago with geologic and geographic characteristic landscapes and a 100 million year history, not to mention a treasure of ancient fossils offering its visitors a fantastic glimpse into times gone by. A unique culture has been carved out of life on these islands by its inhabitants adding to the many breath-taking sightseeing opportunities. The plan of the Amakusa Geopark is to show off the diversity of geology, geography, history, culture, industry and ecology in Amakusa with a mind of ecologic conservation and economic growth.



What is a Geopark?

Geology and geography are earth sciences and from these words Geo has been coined meaning earth and land. Park means a field for playing and amusement. Thus, Geopark includes not only the physical aspects of geology and geography, but also those of creatures and the history and culture concerning them. A Geopark is also a place authorized to promote conservationism and remain available for local use.



Theme for Amakusa Geopark plan

The physical and biologic history of the Earth over 100 million years

Amakusa; a diverse paradise of dinosaurs and dolphins with a characteristic stone culture.

The Amakusa Islands bask in a long history bringing to the present a sense of fantasy regarding times gone by. The five elements comprising the main core of the Amakusa Geopark plan include geology, geography, viewing points, culture and industry which are shown at the geosites throughout the islands.

1

Record of the earth over 100 million years

In the Amakusa Islands, the geologic and geographic evidence of layers consisting of sedimentary and igneous rock brought forth by magma over a long period of time can be seen.

2

An abundant variety of fossils

In Amakusa, fossils such as abundant and various marine shellfish from Cretaceous formations and Paleogene layers exist, along with those of dinosaurs of 100 million years ago and large-sized mammals of 50 million years.

3

A vision of scenic islands

The geographic folding of the land that appears in the archipelago and other features such as cuesta created by erosion create the beautiful scenery that Amakusa is well known for.

4

A rich ecosystem

Due to Amakusa's unique ecosystem and the equally unique bottom topography of the west coastal sea region, Wild Minamihando dolphins reside permanently.

5

Underground resources and stone culture

The rich underground resources of Amakusa gave rise to a deeply rooted "stone" culture spawning the production of pottery, stone bridges and whetstones which remains evident today.

Basic philosophy of the Amakusa Geopark concept

Residents and officials alike collaborate to preserve the geologic inheritance of Amakusa with an educational perspective. Exposing the unique beauty of this inheritance as a tourist attraction in conjunction with the history and culture of the area, an attractive geo-tourism will be founded aimed at the promotion of the Amakusa area.