

Developing a Model of Conservation and Management of National Parks as Regional Resources in an Era of Co-production

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[Abstract]

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Regional participation and cooperation and visitors contribution to protect the resources are expected in national parks in Japan, and it is being questioned whether the parks could be used well and the multifunctional roll of the park could be fulfilled. Establishing a fund with high degree of flexibility is one way to connect the nature conservation with the region and visitors. From such perspective, we aimed to develop a model of conservation and management of national parks as regional resources. Specifically, this main theme was composed of 4 subthemes and each has own purpose of the study: 1) constructing a co-productive model utilizing the fund to manage resources, 2) developing a method to monitor the state of natural resources and the visitor impact, 3) developing a method to evaluate the characteristics of park resources and to draw up the park plan, and 4) developing a method to grasp the economic effects on the region caused by visitor use.

Toba and Shima region in Ise-Shima National Park and Aso region in Aso-Kuju National Park in Japan were selected as the collaborative study areas on which we focused. Various methods such as literature survey on environmental conservation funds both in Japan and abroad, questionnaire survey to grasp the awareness and behavior of visitors to the parks, interviews on businesses including tourism operators, trial of monitoring the state of natural resources and the visitor impact were employed in 2019-2021.

As a result, first, the ratio of approval for the environmental conservation fund of visitors to the parks was about 90%, and the willingness to pay of them, the desired money collection methods and uses of funds were identified. Second, the cost of monitoring was calculated, and the database and the guideline of monitoring management system were developed. Third, the park use plan using zoning techniques and the guideline of visitor management were proposed. Fourth, the simple method to grasp the economic effects and the economic input-output tabel of national parks were created. Finally, the results of each subtheme were integrated into a model of conservation and management of national parks using the fund, which shows the points to be examined when a region argue about the possibility of introduction of the fund for better park management.

[References]

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