

Assigning Geosites' management to local communities in Qeshm Geopark

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The aim of a Geopark is to conserve and promote geological heritages through empowering and participating locals. Our experience is that this conservation method is wiser and the results are more reliable in comparison with other methods.

Local communities' participation in Qeshm Geopark is satisfying so that the locals established eight vernacular inns and restaurants, five handicraft corporations, four boatman corporations, six local travel and tour agencies under the encouragements of Geopark. These projects have made more than 1740 direct and non-direct job vacancies. However, it is predicted that the quantities rise more than two times until the end of this year which would create about 1300 new jobs. Focusing on the power of local communities and experiences, we strongly believe that we should go ahead and persuade local communities to participate in geosite management very soon. It means that Geopark management should only play the role of a legislator.

By changing this management attitude, we will yield these results in near future: (1) The responsibility of locals for geological heritages will be increased. Thereupon they would work hard for utilizing, promoting and protecting the heritages, self-movingly; (2) Local community's participatory management and Geopark management in geosites would result in synergies and increased efficiency that would finally reduce the expenditures; and (3) Local community practices the skill of management, or we can say it will be empowered in both aspects of management and economy. Three geosites were chosen for tentative assignment and we begin to negotiate with inhabitants of the related villages. The result was as unbelievably willingness and we decided to establish rural Cooperatives Corporation for each geosite in advance. We understand that some obstacles can be expected with approaching the goals in practice, but we believe that we can overcome them all by good cooperation.

Presented in Theme 2