

Sustainable tourism and environmental protection

Challenges and prospects for sustainable ecotourism at Shiretoko National Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site)

Participatory approach for value creation

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The development of sustainable cruise industry in the Pacific Arctic:

Past developments and future prospects In Cooperation with 12th J-ARC Net Open Seminar

The aim of this presentation

- To share the big picture of Shiretoko world natural heritage site and its feature
- To show the current status of nature conservation and sea-borne tourism activity in Shiretoko WNHS
- To describe the participatory approach for sustainable tourism management

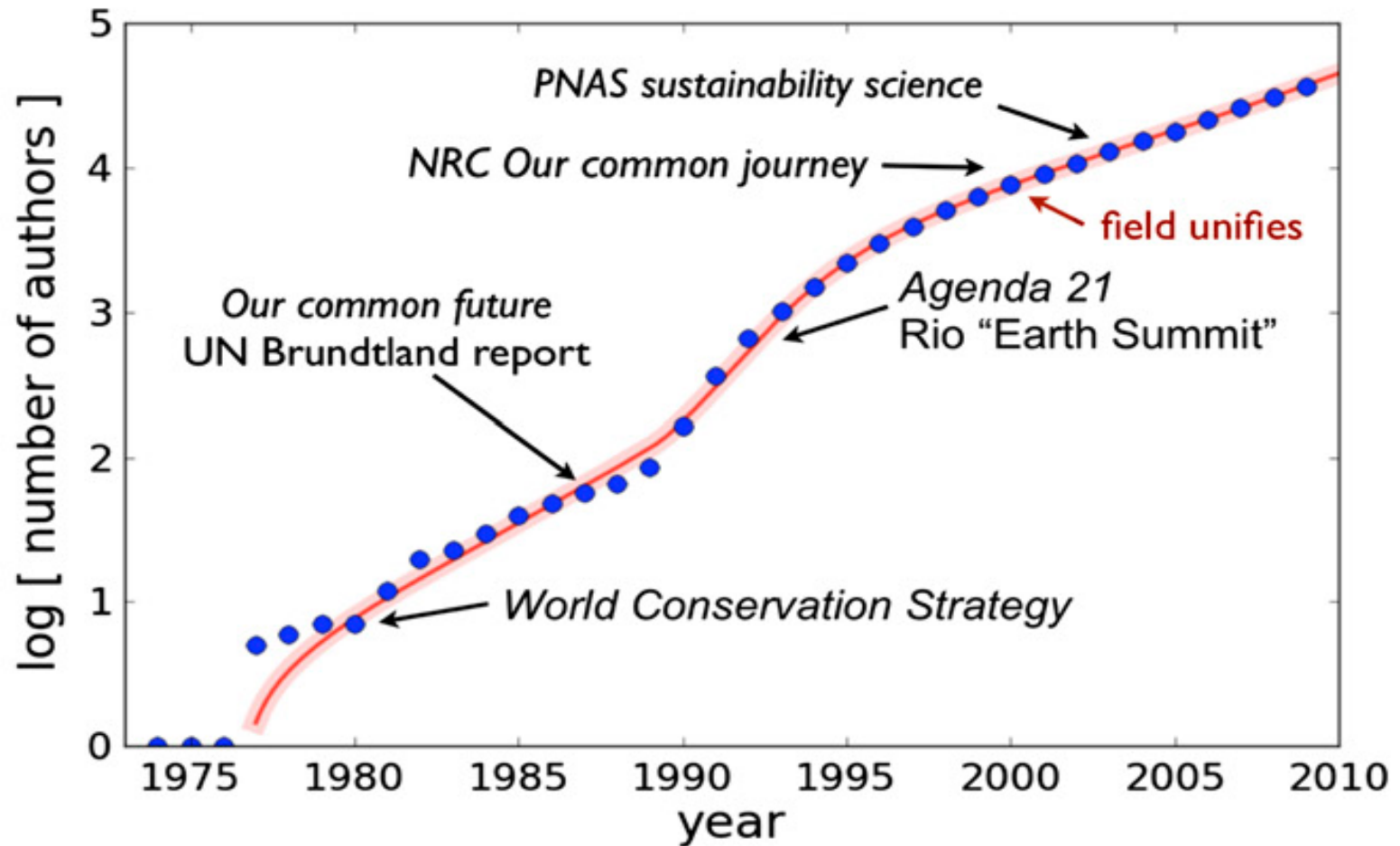


Why sustainable tourism is crucial?

- Impacts on the environment and society and economy in destinations can not be ignored.
- We experience over-tourism before COVID-19
- Sustainable Tourism
 - It is sustainable practices of the tourism industry and activity.
 - Our tourism activity needs to minimize the negative impacts and maximize the positive ones.
 - Alternative to mass-scale conventional tourism



Concerns in Sustainability



Articles of sustainability doubled in every 8.3 Years
The increase in publication started in late 1980

The fact of Shiretoko WNHS

- Listed: July 17, 2005
- Location:
located at 43 degrees North latitude and 144 degrees East longitude
- Area: approx. 71,100 ha
Land area: approx. 48,700 ha
Marine area: approx. 22,400 ha
Marine area extends up to 3km from the coast line



Shiretoko WNHS : Ecosystem and Biodiversity



Example of complex ecosystem featuring land-marine continuity, whereby drift ice appearing at the lowest latitude in the northern hemisphere can be seen.

Ⅸ生態系：北半球で最も低緯度に位置する季節海氷域である。この影響を受け、特異な生態系を形成。海洋生態系と陸上生態系の相互関係の見本。

Characterized by diverse natural environment and wildlife of both southern and northern origins. Important for the conservation of international rare species

Ⅹ生物多様性：海洋性及び陸上性の多くの種にとって重要な地域。シマフクロウ、シレットコスミレなどの希少種、海鳥、渡り鳥、サケ科魚類、鯨類を含む海棲哺乳類にとって世界的に重要な地域である。

The brief history of management in SWHS

- 1999 **Shari and Rausu Town mayors started to apply to World Heritage**
- 2004 **Establishment of Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Candidate Scientific Council**
- 2005 **Inscription on World Natural Heritage decided by IUCN**
- 2008 **On-site inspection by the UNESCO World Heritage Center and IUCN**
- 2009 **Management Plan for the Shiretoko World Natural Heritage Site**
- 2012 **Joint Ecotourism Committee formed**
- 2012 **Agreement on Ecotourism Strategy at Joint Ecotourism Committee**



Tourism boost local economy in Shiretoko

- Untouched nature setting is attracting tourists
- More than 1.8million tourists visit Shiretoko
 - 50,000 international tourists in 2019
- Tourism Industry is important sector for local economy generating 12 billion yen of tourism consumption
 - In Shari alone, tourism generate 1/3 of total regional production



Tourism activity in Shiretoko WNHS

Shari (Utoro)

A destination for conventional tourism

Onsen hot spring accommodations for tourists

Gateway to Shiretoko National Park

1.2 m visitors in 2019

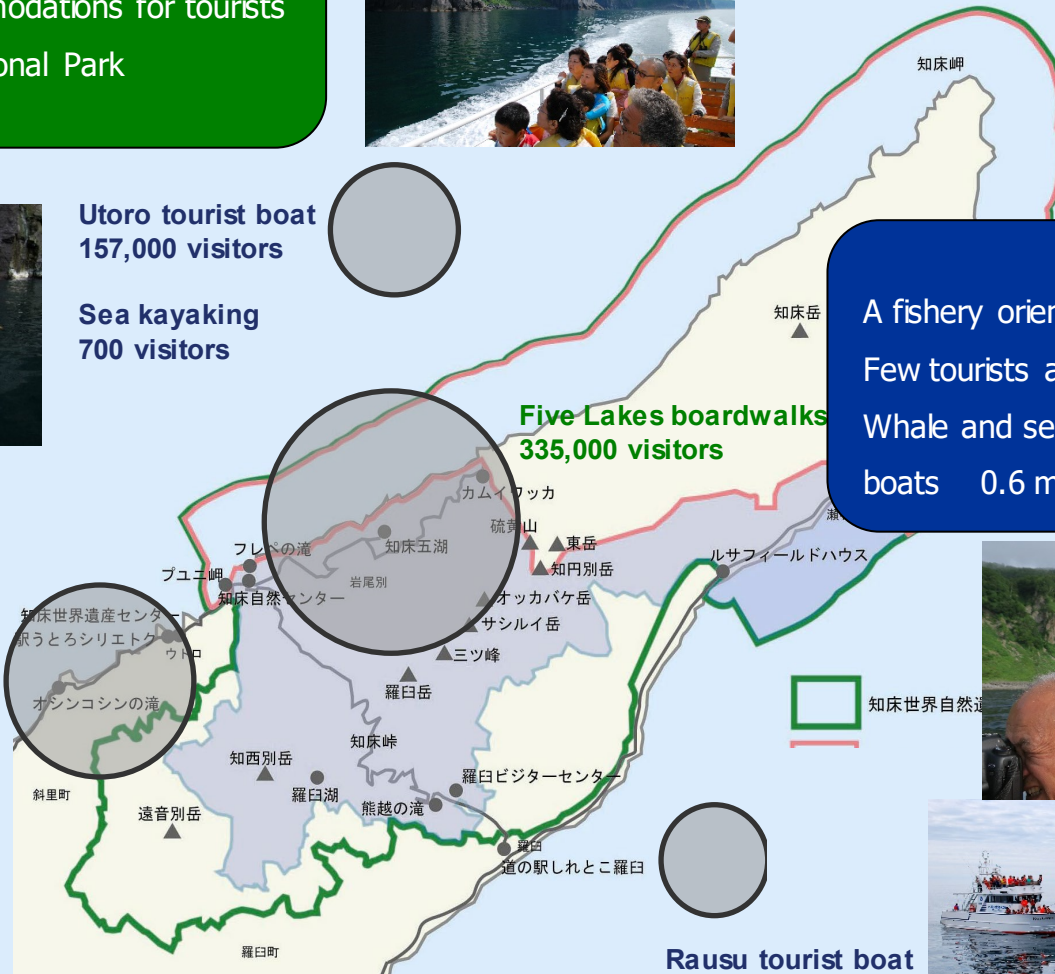


Utoro tourist boat
157,000 visitors

Sea kayaking
700 visitors



Shiretoko World Heritage
Conservation Center
105,000 visitors



Five Lakes boardwalks
335,000 visitors

Rausu

A fishery oriented community

Few tourists accommodation

Whale and sea bird watching cruise
boats 0.6 m visitors in 2019



Rausu tourist boat
30,000 visitors



Tourism impacts in Shiretoko WNH Site

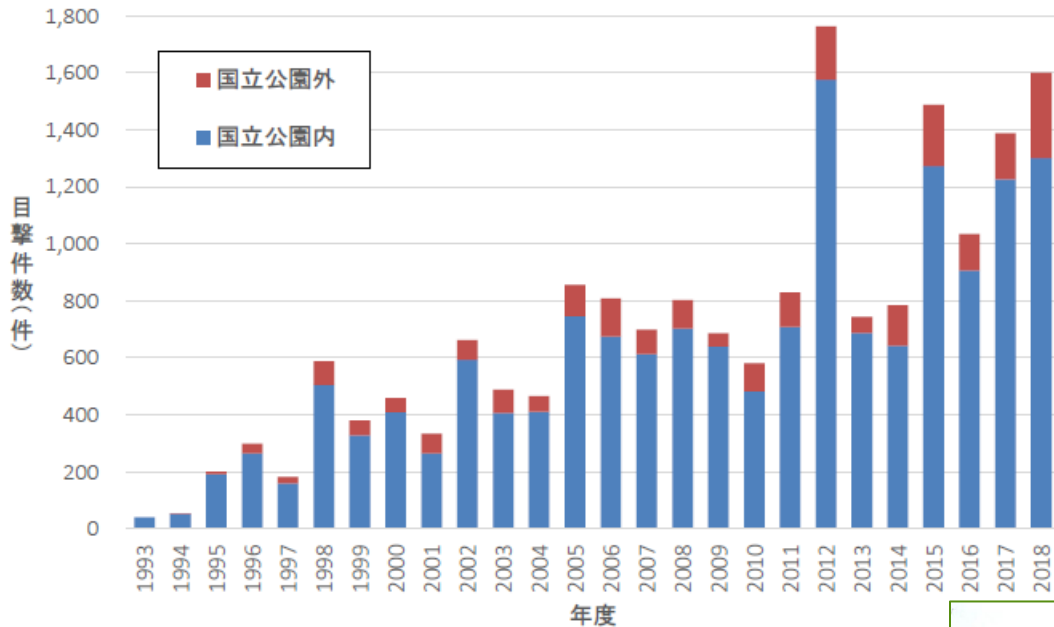
- About 1.8million tourists visit Shiretoko WNH Site
- Untouched nature setting is attracting tourists
- Tourism Industry is important sector for local economy
- Generating 12billion yen tourism consumption
- However about 50% of tourists are first time visitors
- Threats to the nature conservation by overuse

Brown bear Tourist attraction





Accidental encounters are increasing



The number of accidental encounters

図5. 斜里町における国立公園内外のヒグマ目撃件数の推移
(データ：平成28年度知床半島ヒグマ保護管理方針に基づくゾーニング管理等推進業務報告書)

A Fed Bear is a Dead Bear

**DO NOT feed bears.
Stay away from bears.**



Once a bear has contact with people and is rewarded with food or trash, the bear will associate people with food and will break into vehicles and residences to obtain it. Unfortunately, such a bear must be killed for the safety of humans.



この事業は宝くじ収益金からの支援を受けて実施しています。

Feeding and excessive service for tourists



Current issues of tourism management

- Overuse of specific locations and underuse of less attractive locations
 - Conflicts between brown bear and tourists
 - Tourists are attracted large creatures and close to it
 - Increase in recreational tourists
- How to solve this wicked problem
 - Balancing the local economic interests and conservation of precious ecosystem while enhancing the experience of tourists

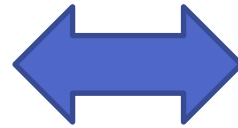
Establishment of JEMC in 2010

Site managers

Ministry of Environment
環境省

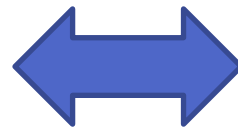
Forestry Agency
林野庁

State Government
Hokkaido
北海道庁



Expert team
scientific advisers

Joint Ecotourism
Management Committee



Local stakeholders

Tour operators municipalities, locals

Development of Ecotourism Strategies

Triggered by on-site inspection of the UNESCO World Heritage Center and IUCN in 2008 (IUCNのエコツアー戦略策定勧告)

Comprehensive ecotourism strategies shall be developed promptly. As basic concepts, strategies shall promote the conservation of the region, high-quality natural experience for tourists, and the development of the local economy.

- To respond the request, stakeholder meetings started from 2010
- Finally agreed by local stakeholders in 2012



The due process of ET strategy Chance to Propose management solution

Tentative solutions are proposed by a stakeholder
at Joint Ecotourism Management Committee(JEMC)



Formation of sub committee
with park managers, experts and local people



Evaluation of proposal by the special committee
Submission of recommendation to the JEMC



Creative agreement at JEMC with diverse stakeholders



Enactment of new management rules and actions

The case of sea bird nesting protection

- Sea bird Keimahuri (Spectacled Guillemot) was endangered species in Hokkaido
- In Shiretoko, high speed boats are steaming around sea bird nesting area
- Stakeholders are conflicting over its conservation

After Discussion at JEMC

- They finally agree creative solution because tour operators recognize the value of Keimahuri
- The key to this change is support for resoucification
- Park managers teach them how to use keimahuri as tourism attraction

Operators treat sea birds as precious birds



Observed effects of ET strategy

- Facilitate collaborative knowledge creation by the participation of diverse stakeholders
- Encouraging the Sense of Ownership for park management
- Knowledge transfer to the community from park managers and scientists

Implication of Shiretoko trial

- Facilitate collaborative and collective action with diverse stakeholders based on Sense of Ownership
- Enhancement of Responsible tourism by the active participation of stakeholders
- Creative governance for value creation in management process is productive





Thank you

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