

Profiling ecotourists from Daisetsuzan National Park, Japan and Taroko National Park, Taiwan

(大雪山国立公園および台湾, タロコ国立公園におけるエコツーリスト像の分析)

北海道大学大学院環境科学院
環境起学専攻 人間生態システムコース
沙 碩 (Shuo SHA)

Ecotourism is one of the growing varieties of travel practices. Ecotourists, who support ecotourism, greatly vary depending on the countries/regions of their origin. Hence, researchers have profiled ecotourists in some regions of the world, such as North America and Australia. However, little research has been conducted in Asia countries.

This study aims: (1) to compare visitors' understanding of the term "ecotourism" in Daisetsuzan National Park, Japan and Taroko National Park, Taiwan; (2) to develop a profile of DNP's ecotourists in terms of their demographic characteristics, motivations and behaviors; and (3) to assess whether ecotourists have positive influence towards sustainable development in the destination. For these aims, this study applied the self-definition approach.

The field surveys were conducted in the seasons of summer and autumn from 2018 to 2019. Field visits were done a total of 5 times in Kurodake and Asahidake of Daisetsuzan National Park, and a total of 14 days mainly in Tianxiang, Yanzikou, and Shakadang of Taroko National Park. About 1254 answers were accumulated from the domestic tourists who visited Daisetsuzan National Park and Taroko National Park. The collected data were analyzed by SPSS software.

This study found the total of 635 (51%) self-identified ecotourists. They have a good understanding of the essential characteristics of ecotourism. From their motivation, two types of self-defined ecotourists are analyzed in Daisetsuzan National Park, which are "self-configuration" and "affinity". The result has significant implications for sustainable tourism development as this finding can help to convince tourism operators who may see the potential benefits through being involved in a certification program proposed. Also, the result can be applied in the future to give benefits to the government, protected area managers, operators, and tourists themselves.