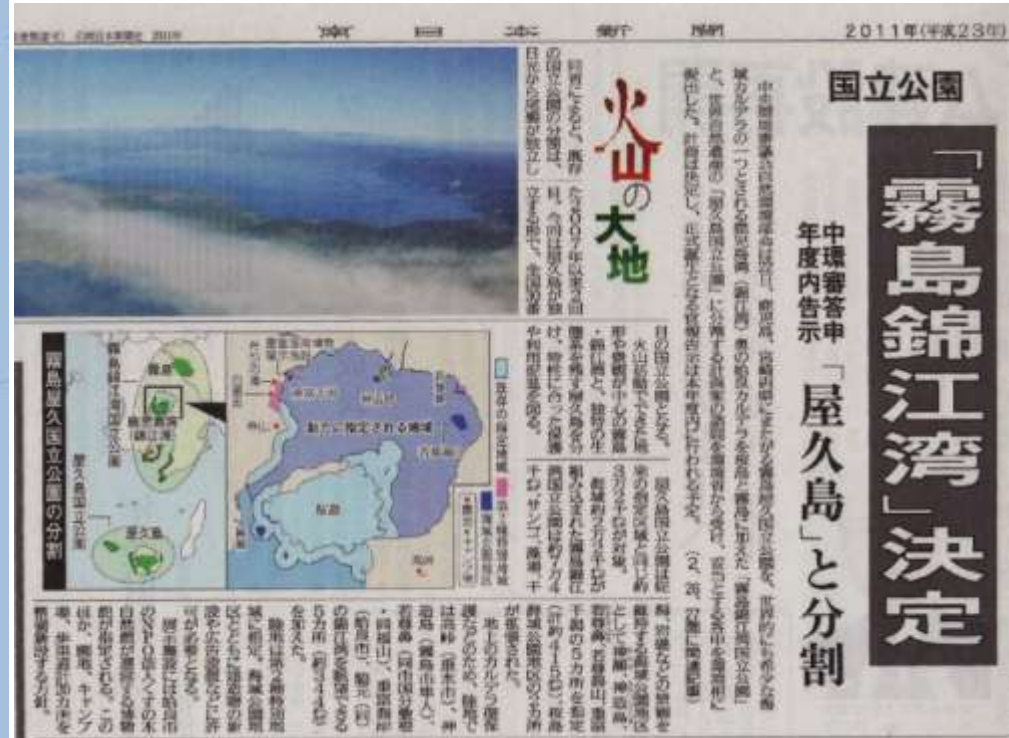


**Shigetomi-higata tidal flat:  
an example of a National Park  
which resulted from local activities**

**Takahiro Okano**  
Kagoshima University Education Center

The Shigetomi-higata tidal flat was designated as part of Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park in 2012



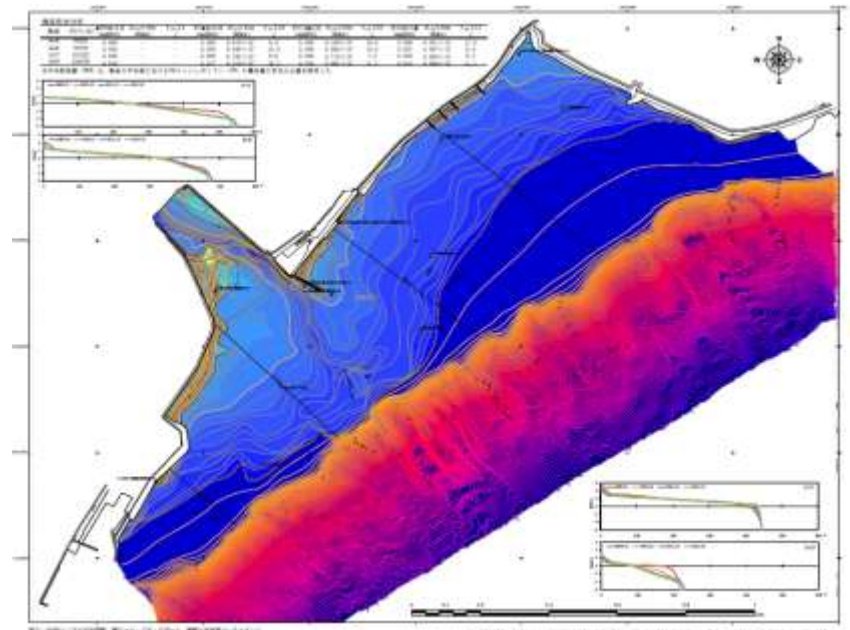
出典: 南日本新聞2011年12月23日

In 2012, Kirishima-Yaku National Park was divided into two national parks.

- Kirishima-Kinkowan National Park
- Yakushima National Park

# About Shigetomi-higata tidal flat

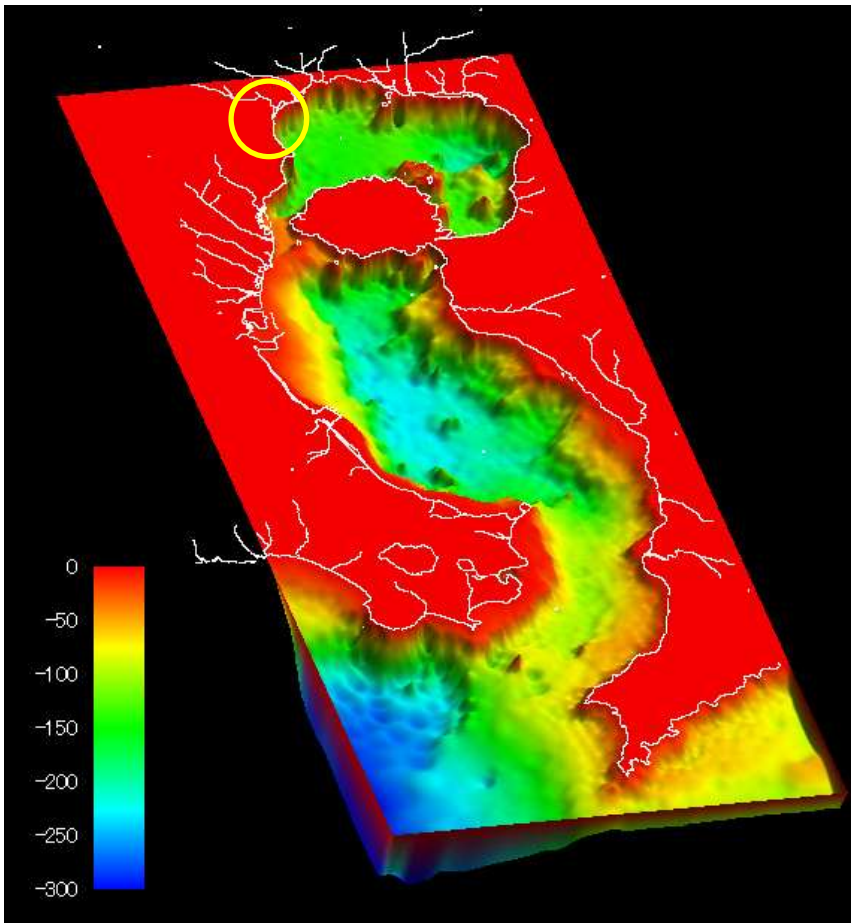
- The Shigetomi-higata tidal flat is the largest tidal flat in Kinko Bay, Kagoshima Prefecture.
- The area of this tidal flat is 53 hectares.



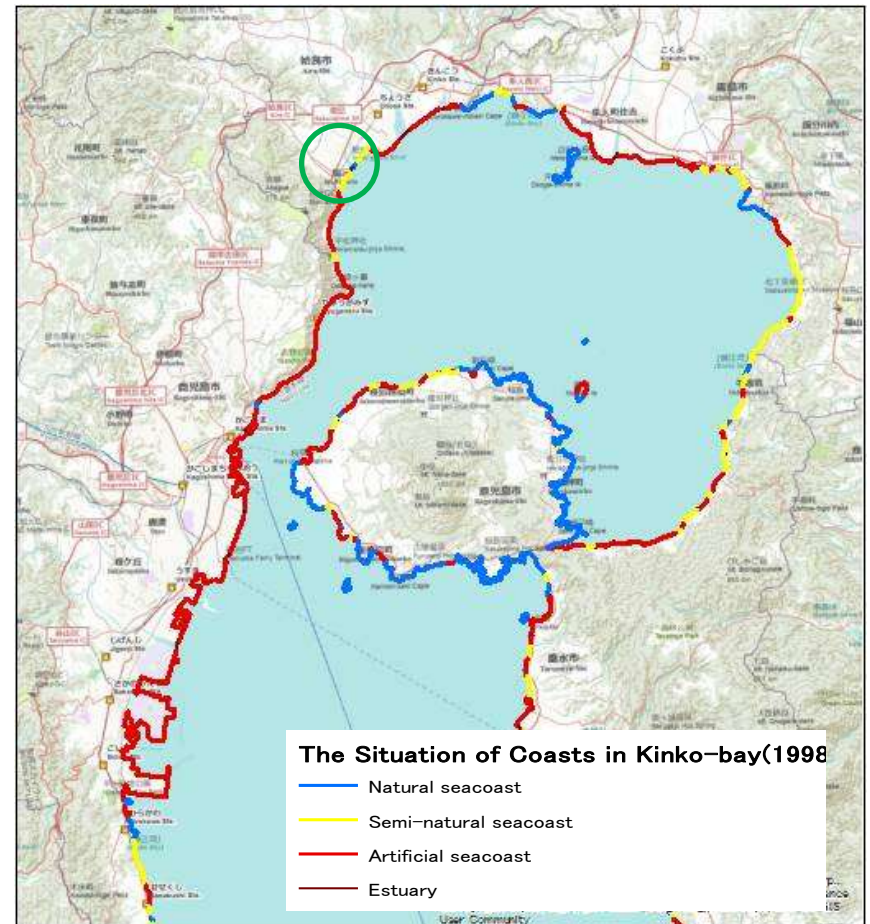
source: Kagoshima Construction College  
Coastal Environment lab., Faculty of Fisheries, Kagoshima University  
Kusunokishizenkan

# Shigetomi-higata tidal flat and Kinkowan

- This is a precious tidal flat in Kinko Bay.



source: Kagoshima Construction College  
Coastal Environment lab., Faculty of Fisheries, Kagoshima University  
Kusunokishizenkan



source: Ministry of the Environment

# Biodiversity



Plovers



Black-faced spoon bill



*Uca lactea lactea*



Sand bubbler crab

Good landscape



Photo:Kusunokishizenkan

# Former Shigetomi tidal flat

- Around 1960 this tidal flat was a popular place for swimming and gathering shellfish.



山野海水浴場  
Sanya beach



# The memory of Shigetomi tidal flat

- I went to the tidal flat to gather shellfish after agricultural work. I **harvested a bucketful of clams in about 30 minutes**. After that, We continued eating clams at every meal; I eventually got sick of eating shellfish. (50 years ago)
- I lived in Kagoshima as a child. Although this beach was somewhat far, it was a **beautiful and pleasurable place** which we visited on excursions, class reunions, etc. ( 45 ~ 50 years ago )



# The changing Shigetomi tidal flat



1948



1975



2010

# The changing Shigetomi tidal flat

- I have lived here for 30 years, and the environment has continued **deteriorating due to drainage** from the household. It is expected that the beautiful sand which is familiar to citizens will soon revive again. (20~30 years ago)
- My parents moved here 30 years ago. We gathered shellfish in the evenings and had clam miso soup the next morning. Then, **the dirt of the seashore became worse, so we stopped going to the sea**, and now have only the lasting impression of the shore as dirty. (20~30 years ago)

# Reclamation plan , and cancellation of the plan

- In 1994, Aira-town announced a plan to reclaim land from the Shigetomi tidal flat and to build a sewer system and leisure facilities.
- In response, the local community held study meetings about Shigetomi tidal flat inviting researchers and interpreters.



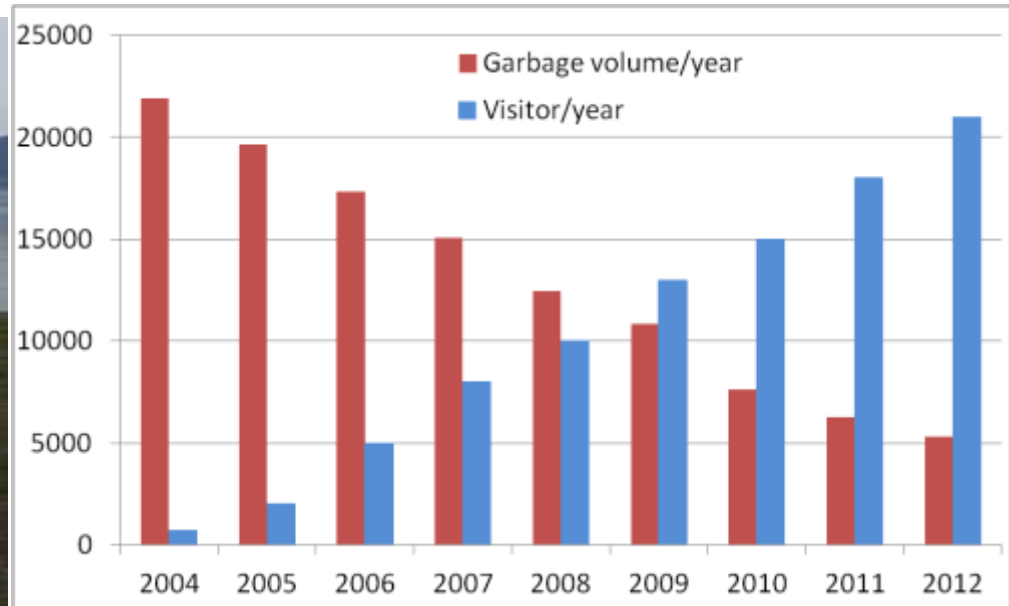
# Kusunokishizenkan

- Kusunokishizenkan is a local non-profit organization (NPO) for Environmental Education established in 2000.
- The predecessor of this NPO had been active since 1995, and they joined the study meeting about Shigetomi tidal flat as interpreter.
- This NPO set up an office near Shigetomi tidal flat in 2000.



# Clean up activities

- 2004 Started Shigetomi Clean up activities (daily)
- 2008 Local children began clean up activities
- 2010 Sanya Neighborhood Council began clean up activities



Source: Kusunokishizenkan

# Research and monitoring

- 2004 Started quantitative research of benthic living forms (every month)
- 2007 Scientific research on marine deposits and tideland sediments
- 2010 Began joint research projects with technical schools

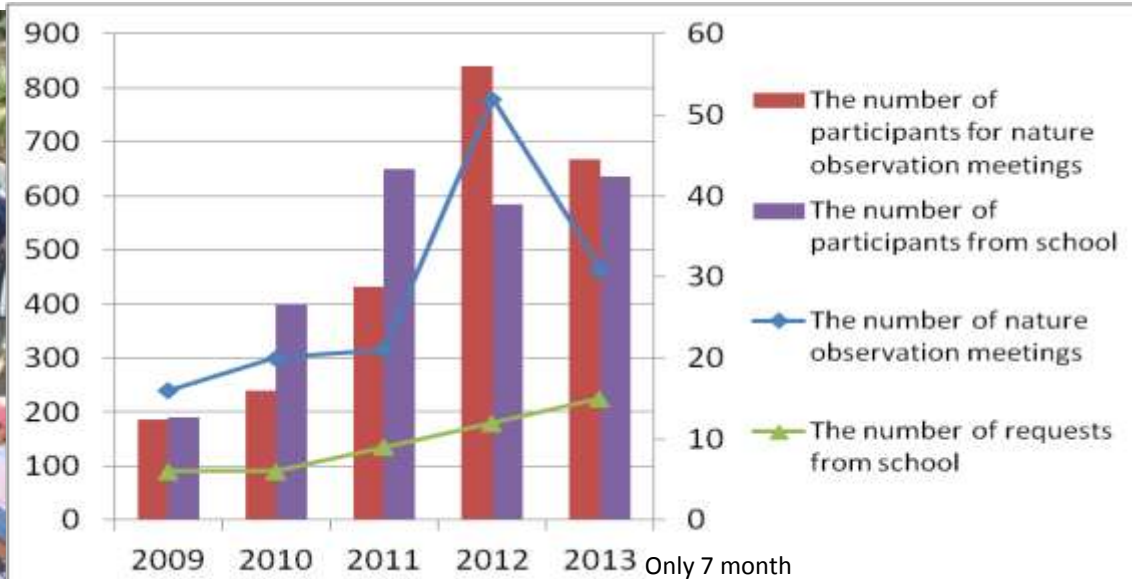


# Environmental education

2002 “Gatamori” training seminar started to develop “Gatamori”, the tidal flat ranger

2004 Observation and survey of sandworm swarming

2009 School excursions and school visits increasing





The rendezvous of sandworms



# Small Museum and Café

2006 “Little Museum on the Shigetomi tidal flat” opens. Handmade museum offering visitors information about the nature of this tidal flat and the results of biodiversity research.

2008 Café Lactea Lactea opens

2011 UMIBE de MARCHE starts



Photo:Kusunokishizenkan

# The role of Kusunokishizenkan

## Administrative organ

- ✓ Ministry of the Environment
- ✓ Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- ✓ Kagoshima Prefecture
- ✓ Aira City

## Local community

- ✓ Sanya Neighborhood Council
- ✓ Residents
- ✓ Elementary school students
- ✓ Visitor

官行

**Kusunokishizenkan**

Coordinator for  
Cooperation and  
Collaboration

NPO

## Civic organization

- ✓ NPO
- ✓ Group for the protection of the beach

産

学

## Industrial circles

- ✓ Fishermen's cooperative
- ✓ Fuyo Shoji
- ✓ Sanikleen Kyushu
- ✓ Seven Eleven
- ✓ Japan Tobacco
- ✓ Minami-Nippon Shimbun and others

## Science

- ✓ Kagoshima University
- ✓ Prefectural Museum
- ✓ Technical School
- ✓ Related academic societies

# What NPO activity brought about

- I walk in the pine grove every day, **so I am deeply grateful to the NPO for cleaning up** this beach. This beach has become beautiful, and I can walk with comfort. Although the trash of fireworks and the negligent food leftovers, empty cans and bottles, were scattered till several years before, none of these are seen now.  
(age 70, living in the area for 40 years)



# What NPO activity brought about

- When I came to this beach for the first time, I was pleased with the **beautiful view** of Sakurajima and the pine groves. So, I moved to the sanya neighborhood near this beach. (age 30, living in the area for 3 years)
- I was **very impressed by the “rendezvous” of the sandworm observation program.**
- I also have a **relaxed time** with my friend at the café.  
(age 20, living in the area for 3 years)



**Q:Do you know that Shigetomi tidal flat has been designated as a National Park?**

**Yes=72(100%)**

Comments

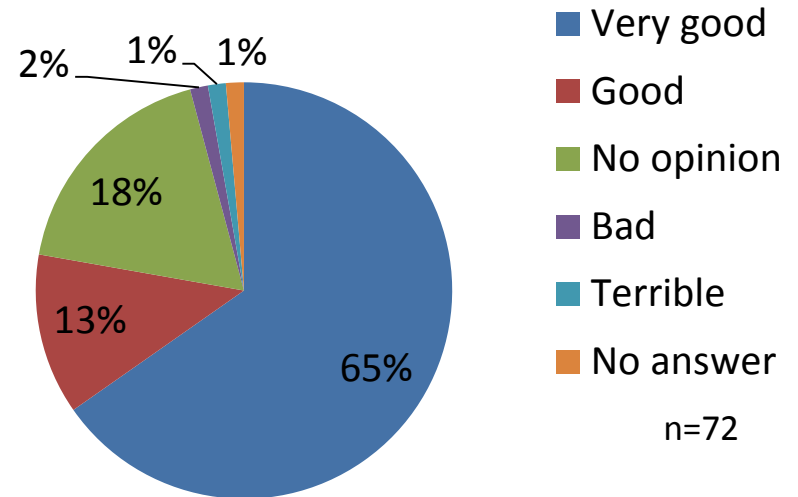
Very good or Good

- This beach has become beautiful. I think that the landscape in which Sakurajima rises high beyond the tidal flat is most beautiful. I am proud of living here.
- Because it will surely be kept beautiful also in the future
- I hope that the Sanya beach will become more popular just like the former beach. I also want facilities be more substantial.

Bad or Terrible

- Various structures will be made and this landscape is damaged.
- Although it is good that the number of visitors will increase, there is a little trouble for local people. Enforced rules may result in less freedom.
- I am worried that we will not be able to use this beach freely for local events.

**Q:What do you think about its designation as a National Park?**



# Conclusion

- Because the NPO started picking up litter, local people became interested in this tidal flat again and the beach became beautiful again.
- Holding nature observations and opening a little museum and café led the beach becoming a sociable place and the number of visitors increasing.
- One of the results of their activities is the local people taking a favorable view of the designation as a National park.
- This tidal flat is an example of a National Park which resulted from local activities, doing Collaborative Management with an NPO and the local people is important even after designation.



Photo:Kusunokishizenkan

# A future view and challenge

- The Ministry of the Environment is going to build a visitor center. The NPO is planning eco-tours in order to raise funds. It is expected that the visitor center will play the role as base.
- Longtime residents expect restoration of a tidal flat which has a rich biodiversity like shellfish overflows.
- The role of the local NGO which has a surveillance study function is very significant.

