

Preservation of the Tottori Sand Dunes

Over the past 100 years, construction carried out on lower sections of the Sendai River for flood control, port expansion, and breakwaters has effectively stopped natural sand production while spurring coastal erosion. Since 2005, Tottori prefecture has been working to replenish the shoreline with sand dredged from the river mouth and elsewhere nearby. Still other conservation initiatives entail the protection of endangered or threatened flora and fauna, keeping invasive plant species in check, and effective management of the dunes as a tourist destination. Campaigns to halt littering and defacement by graffiti have continued since 2009. Today, rangers patrol the area daily and also provide guidance and assistance to visitors.

Efforts to preserve the scenic and biological integrity of the Tottori sand dunes continue, supported by citizen volunteers. In 2008 land centered on the San'in Kaigan National Park was designated a National Geopark, a status later certified in 2015 as a UNESCO Global Geopark. The Tottori Sand Dunes Visitor Center, established in October 2018, serves an important role in educational outreach, with exhibits and services designed to build awareness of and garner support for the ongoing preservation of this living coastal museum.