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## **Landscape assessment for Penghu Geopark, Taiwan**

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Penghu is situated on the southwestern coast of Taiwan, in the middle of Taiwan Strait. It is officially composed of 64 islets, whereas a recent survey in 2009 came up with a number of 100 islets. Penghu is famous for its columnar basalt landscape and marine ecology. However, it is yet to come up with the most suitable plan to protect and manage its natural resources. It has been proposed as a marine geopark, a nature reserve, and a national park.

This paper will designate a methodology for landscape assessment for the establishment of Penghu marine national park. Protecting and conserving the ecological environment of Penghu islets is essential. According to National Park Act of Taiwan, the assessment of local resources and environment for a potential national park is a must. Thus, it is important to review landscapes and resources with systematic methods before assessment. It is important as well to compare the potential site with global cases.

The uniqueness of landscapes, scale and geodiversity of the potential site should fit for conservation purpose. Through comparison and assessment, Penghu basaltic landscape is uniquely beautiful and a good management plan is needed for a sustainable geopark. In the meantime, without local support, such a geopark project will not succeed. The management plan for the geopark will need to add a strong dimension for human society, as human activities and settlements are involved in the planned site. Zoning and various management plans will be needed for Penghu Marine Geopark to be successful.

