

Formation of the Land in the Shibetsu Region



A great variety of rocks and minerals from a wide range of periods have been observed in the area around Shibetsu which has long gained its attention from researchers as a place of geological significance. The diverse geology of the area shows that the Shibetsu region is one that has experienced much crustal movement and various environments over time.

The greatest geological feature of the area is the presence of special geological bodies only found at the boundaries between tectonic plates such as accretionary prisms and ophiolite. Ophiolite is a section of the Earth's oceanic crust and the underlying upper mantle that has been uplifted and exposed due to a past collision of two plates. Ophiolite has been observed in the Onnebetsu area of Shibetsu City with many rare rocks also discovered. Judging from the distributions of Mesozoic marine deposits to the west of the region (in the Ezo Formation) and deep-sea accretionary prism deposits to the east (in the Hidaka Supergroup), it is presumed that Shibetsu City once existed on the seafloor near an ocean trench. The region is one with much in the way of interesting geological observations, including strata from its Cenozoic geology showing indications of global warming.

