



CAP/CSA/29/5d_Activities of Regional Support Office

**UNWTO COMMISSION FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR SOUTH ASIA
Twenty-ninth Joint Meeting
Chittagong, Bangladesh
17 May 2017**

**Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda
GENERAL PROGRAMME OF WORK 2016-2017 AND 2018-2019 AND REGIONAL
ACTIVITIES**

Activities of UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General submits to the Joint Meeting of the two Commissions a report on the activities that have been undertaken by the UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific since the 28th CAP-CSA Joint meeting which was held in Nara, Japan in June 2016.

UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia-Pacific (RSOAP) July 2016 – April 2017

Introduction

UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP) was established in 1995 in Osaka, Japan to assist with the substantial tourism growth in the region. In 2012, the office relocated to Nara. RSOAP supports the mission and activities of UNWTO Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific (RPAP). Through seminars, events and research, RSOAP aims to contribute to UNWTO priorities:

1. Mainstreaming tourism in the global agenda,
2. Improving tourism competitiveness,
3. Promoting sustainable tourism development,
4. Advancing tourism's contribution to poverty reduction and development,
5. Fostering knowledge, education and capacity, and
6. Building partnerships.

RSOAP 2016-2017 Activities

- Publication: *Benchmarking Methodology for the Development of Sustainable Cruise Tourism in South-East Asia*
- ASEAN Meetings
- Tourism Expo Japan, Tokyo, Japan
- National Tourism Week, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
- ASEAN Tourism Forum, Singapore
- Sustainable Tourism Forum, Akita, Japan
- Japan-Pacific Islands Tourism Senior Officials' Meeting, Okinawa
- International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development Lecture, Tokyo, Japan

Research on Sustainable Cruise Tourism Development

RSOAP completed the second cruise tourism report titled *Benchmarking Methodology for the Development of Sustainable Cruise Tourism in South-East Asia* as a follow up to the first cruise tourism report published in 2016.

The second study presents a methodology to pilot one of the eight strategies presented on the first report *Sustainable Cruise Tourism Development Strategies – Tackling the Challenges in Itinerary Design in South-East Asia*, and assess the impacts of cruise tourism at a destination level. A total of 16 South-East Asia destination ports in addition to Kobe City Port, participated in the survey, four of which also participated in an on-site assessment. The report summarizes the results collected from the pilot exercise and provides recommendations for data-driven collaboration and further implementation of benchmarking practices related to sustainable tourism.

ASEAN NTOs Meetings

RSOAP conducted two main presentations about this study: 1) status update on survey and on-site assessments at the 44th Meeting for ASEAN NTOs and Related Meetings in Bangkok, Thailand on 28 July 2016, and 2) summary of findings, recommendations and opportunities at the 45th Meeting of ASEAN NTOs in Singapore on 17 January 2017.

Tourism Expo Japan

Tokyo, Japan
22-25 September 2016

RSOAP served as member of the selection committee and jury for the second “Japan Tourism Award for Responsible Tourism in Collaboration with UNWTO” which aims to expand and deepen the understanding of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in the Japanese government, tourism industry and local communities. In addition, RSOAP took part in the Asian Tourism Leaders’ Forum Tokyo Declaration 2016 where participants acknowledged the importance of sustainable tourism development in Asia with Japan leading the efforts.

Lastly, UNWTO participated in the Opening Ceremony and Global Tourism Seminar, the Asian Tourism Leader’s Forum and the Domestic Tourism Symposium: Gastronomy Tourism in Regional Communities in Japan.

National Tourism Week

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
23 September 2016

RSOAP attended the National Tourism Week in Papua New Guinea on behalf of UNWTO Secretary General, Taleb Rifai. RSOAP provided opening remarks and emphasized the importance of tourism as a major socio-economic sector which resided strongly among the audience. In addition, RSOAP met with PNG Tourism Promotion Authority to discuss ways to increase collaboration between PNG and UNWTO.

ASEAN Tourism Forum

Singapore, Singapore
19 January 2017

RSOAP presented at the *20th Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers and International Organizations/Associations*. Highlights included main events and publications related to the Asia Pacific region such as the World Tourism Day celebration in Bangkok, Thailand, the First World Conference on Tourism for Development in Beijing and the World Tourism Conference in Malaysia among many others. In addition, RSOAP informed attendees of upcoming events and promotions around the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development celebrations. Attending Ministers shared their feedback and gratitude toward UNWTO for its efforts in the region.

Sustainable Tourism Forum

Akita, Japan
6-7 February 2017

RSOAP presented at the 3rd Sustainable Tourism Forum in Senboku City, Akita, Japan. The Forum was organized by Asian Ecotourism Network in collaboration with Ecotourism Japan, and attended by over 80 national and local, tourism stakeholders. Speakers included representatives from the Indonesia Ministry of Tourism, Japan Tourism Agency and Japan Travel and Tourism Association (JTTA). RSOAP’s presentation covered topics such as: UNWTO recent tourism data and priorities; International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development activities and objectives; summary of GSTC criteria and collaboration with UNWTO, and a snapshot of UNWTO’s publications related to destination management and quality.

Japan-Pacific Islands Tourism Senior Officials Meeting

Okinawa, Japan
10 February 2017

RSOAP presented at the Japan-Pacific Islands Tourism Senior Officials' Meeting which was attended by representatives of 13 Pacific Islands' countries as well as members of the South Pacific Tourism Organization. Presentation included information on UNWTO's work in the Asia Pacific Region, research areas such as the sustainable cruise tourism project. In addition, RSOAP promoted UNWTO upcoming events related to the IYSTD 2017 celebrations, particularly the UNWTO International Conference on Tourism Statistics to be held in Manila, Philippines on June.

International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development Lecture

Tokyo, Japan
15 March 2017

RSOAP organized a special lecture under the theme "International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development" at the United Nations University Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. The event was attended by 377 guests from UN organizations, national and local governments, embassies, tourism stakeholders, academia, and media. Guest speakers included Mr. Toshihiro Nikai, Secretary-General of Liberal Democratic Party of Japan who shared remarks on Japan's experience with crisis management and disaster preparedness; UNWTO Secretary General, Taleb Rifai spoke about UNWTO's priorities: safe and seamless, the role of technology in tourism, and the promotion of sustainable tourism for development and international year celebrations; and, Mr. David Atkinson, CEO of Konishi Decorative Arts, who highlighted Japan's recent tourism growth and the potential to highlight its unknown cultural resources to the world.

Resilient Cultural Heritage: World Bank Technical Deep Dive Training

Kyoto, Japan
13 April 2017

RSOAP presented at the Resilient Cultural Heritage: Learning from the Japanese Experience in Disaster Risk Management for Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Training organized by the World Bank Group. Presentation included a summary of UNWTO research related to cultural heritage and tourism, as well as an introduction to the UNWTO *Toolbox for Crisis Communication in Tourism* publication. The training was attended by representatives of 10 UNWTO Member States from the municipal, public sector.

Other activities:

- Continued dissemination of Global Code of Ethics in Tourism via lectures and presentations.
- Promoted UNWTO Affiliate Membership to Japanese entities through the implementation of a quarterly newsletter to APTEC members.
- Conducted 7 presentations for universities, JICA groups and high schools about overall UNWTO initiatives and activities, tourism as a tool for sustainable development, and the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.
- Contributed to the UNWTO Asia Pacific Newsletter.