

1st meeting of Tourism Working Group between Thailand and Japan

Date and Time: 21st December (Thursday) 2023, 9:30 - 11:00 (Thailand Time)

Venue: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Ministry of Tourism and Sports
(Hybrid meeting Onsite/Online)

Attendees:

(Thai Side) **Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS)**: Mr. Mongkon, Assistant Permanent Secretary **【Co-chair】**、Mrs. Patthanasiri, Director of Tourism Professional, Development Division (DOT)、Mr. Panupak, Director of International Affairs Division、**Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT)**: Ms. Tharinee, Deputy Executive Director for East Asia Region、**Designated Areas for Sustainable Administration (DASTA)**: Mrs. Kesada, Chief of DASTA, International Relations Division、**Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB)**: Mr. Puripan, Senior Vice President (Online)、**Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI)**: Prof. Supawadee, Senior Specialist (Online)

(Japanese Side) **JTTRI-AIRO**: Mr. OKUDA, President for International Affairs of JTTRI and President of JTTRI ASEAN-India Regional Office **【Co-chair】**、Mr. TOMITA, Executive Director、**Japan Tourism Agency (JTA)**: Mr. KAWADA, Director of Strategy Planning Division (Online)、**Embassy of Japan in Thailand**: Mr. YAMAKAWA, First Secretary、**Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)**: Ms. KAWASAKI Etsuko, Executive Director, Japan Convention Bureau (Online) Ms. DOI, Executive director of JNTO Bangkok office



Meeting Overview

1. Opening Remarks

(1) Mr. Mongkon, Assistant Permanent Secretary, MOTS

- Since the establishment of AIRO, Thailand, by MOTS, and Japan, by JTTRI-AIRO, have strengthened their collaborative relationship and held a symposium in February 2023. In pursuit of realizing sustainable tourism, both sides have reached an agreement to establish a Tourism Working Group (WG) to discuss practical and academic challenges in the field of tourism.
- Mr. Mongkon suggested both parties contribute to each other in the field of tourism, showing the direction of cooperation and a deep understanding. Thailand and Japan both were significant markets for each other. It was an ultimate goal for both sides to enhance collaboration in the tourism sector as a part of the strategic partnership (Thailand- Japan Strategic Economic Partnership).

(2) Mr. OKUDA, President of JTTRI ASEAN-India Regional Office

- Mr. OKUDA hoped that the discussions in this WG towards the realization of sustainable tourism and multilayered and extensive human and cultural exchange would contribute to the promotion of tourism and exchange in both Japan and Thailand in the future.

2. Attendee Self-Introductions

3. Explanation about WG and Discussion

(1) Explanation about WG

- Background, objectives, agenda proposals for the 2nd-5th WG meetings, members, and schedule explained by the Japanese secretariat.

(2) Discussion

① Overall Theme

- TAT is studying “tourism income in rural areas” as well as in large cities and promoting “Meaningful Travel” for weekday trips and study tours. In addition, tourism that allows visitors to enjoy traditions in rural areas is promoted, even though transportation is not convenient in some rural areas.
- Regarding the theme of “Facilitation of travel”, TAT would like the secretariat to consider the addition of “Human resource development for tourism”. For instance, it is crucial to focus on training individuals engaged in the service industry, such as taxi and tuk-tuk drivers.
- With regard to “Realizing Sustainable Tourism”, TSRI are creating an application on carbon neutral tourism, whereby reduced carbon can be traded.
- Thai side would like to share insights on the theme of “Health and Wellness Tourism” in the WG.
- Regarding “tourism policy”, TSRI would like to discuss the topics of tourism tax, Thai tourism volunteers, and initiatives targeting long-stayers (The Japanese, The European, The American, etc.) in Thailand within the WG. (Explanation of high value

tourism for long-stay visitors, dissemination of high-quality tourism resources in accordance with the soft power policy, development of action research, etc.)

- CBT (Community Based Tourism) Thailand Standard is a standard for evaluating local tourism and is consistent with the GSTC. Thai Government is also working on Creative tourism.
- Concerning the MICE sector, Thailand wishes to collaborate with Japan. Currently, there are ten MICE cities (provinces), including both major cities and regional cities in Thailand.

② 2nd WG Meeting

- Thai side suggested the theme for the next meeting focus on "Soft Power." Coordination be carried out between the secretariats of Thai and Japan after the first WG meeting.
- Thai side informed the meeting that, in The Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Srettha mentioned the utilization of soft power to attracting investments from Japanese investors to Thailand. Therefore, it is highly recommended to further discuss the above-mentioned points within this WG.

③ Attendees of WG

- Experts or researchers related to the theme can be invited to attend this WG.

④ Implementation progress

- The theme for the next meeting would be decided through consultations between the secretariats of both organizations.

4. Closing Remarks

(1) Mr. Mongkon, Assistant Permanent Secretary, MOTS

- Mr. Mongkon expressed gratitude to the JTTRI Chairman and relevant officials for Japan's contributions to Thailand's tourism sector. MOTS expected that this WG would deepen and fortify Thai-Japan tourism cooperation.

(2) Mr. OKUDA, President of JTTRI ASEAN-India Regional Office

- Mr. OKUDA believed that the challenge for "Achieving Sustainable Tourism" was a common issue not only between Thailand and Japan, but also between ASEAN countries and the whole world. Therefore, JTTRI-AIRO would like to consider sharing the contents of this WG with relevant in ASEAN countries. JTTRI-AIRO would continue to consult with the parties concerned on how to share the contents of the WG.