

## 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of Tourism Working Group between Thailand and Japan

Date and Time: 7<sup>th</sup> May (Tuesday) 2024, 01:30 PM (Bangkok Time) - 03:30 (JST)  
Venue: 2nd Floor Conference Room, Ministry of Tourism and Sports  
(Hybrid meeting Onsite/Online)

Theme: National and Local Identities: Key Driver to Attract Tourists to Destinations  
~Tourism strategic measures and best practice in Thailand and Japan~

Attendees:

(Thai Side)【Core Member】

**Ministry of Tourism and Sports(MOTS):** Mr. Mongkon, Deputy Permanent Secretary 【Co-chair】、Mrs. Patthanasiri, Director of Tourism Professional, Development Division (DOT)、Mrs. Preeyapa, 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. Wanvipa, Director of Strategy Management of DASTA (Online)、**Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB)**: Mr. Supanich, Director of Meetings and Incentives Department of TCEB、**Thailand Science Research and Innovation (TSRI)**: Assistant Prof. Supawadee, Senior Specialist

【Guest】

- Mr.Suriyon, Senior Plan and Policy Advisor of National Economic and Social Development Council: NESDC
- Assistant Prof. Supawadee, Senior Specialist of Thailand Science Research and Innovation: TSRI

(Japanese Side)【Core Member】

**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

【Guest】

- Mr. KAWADA, Director of Strategy Planning Division for Japan Tourism Agency, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism: MLIT
- Mr. SAWANOBORI, Director of Jalan Research Center, Recruit Co.,Ltd.



## Meeting Overview

### 1. Opening Remarks

#### (1) Mr. Mongkon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, MOTS

- This WG is a good opportunity to promote tourism between Thailand and Japan by utilizing national and regional identities.
- Tourism and identity are closely related. Both countries have the potential to leverage their unique identities and create high quality tourism.

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

- It is timely to discuss the key driver to attract tourists to local regions after Songkran in Thailand and major holidays in Japan.
- In today's WG, the Japanese side will make presentations on specific examples of how to improve local tourism resources and the DMOs that will be the main actors in this process.

### 2. Attendee Introductions

- Both sides introduced the members of the Thailand-Japan Tourism Working Group.

### 3. Presentation and Q and A by Guest Speakers

#### (1) Japan Tourism Agency : Mr. KAWADA, Director of Strategy Planning Division

Presentation title: Strategic initiatives by the government to attract tourists to local regions ~Tourism policy in Japan~

Mr. Kawada explained the specific measures and the positioning of "attracting tourists to local regions" in the The New Tourism Nation Promotion, the role of DMOs and specific efforts to create contents utilizing local tourism resources.

He emphasized the importance of the government's support for DMOs and other efforts to attract tourists to local regions, thereby contributing to local economies.

#### (2) Jalan Research Center, Recruit Co.,Ltd : Mr. SAWANOBORI, Director

Presentation title: Strategic initiatives by local regions to attract visitors ~The Three Ms Needed to Attract Tourists to the Regions~

Mr. Sawanobori explained the issues that should be addressed by regional (local) communities (i.e., DMOs) to attract tourists to their area and the 3Ms that are necessary for DMOs to solve these issues: Marketing (Kesennuma City), Management (Hakone Town), and Monetize (Atami City and Kesennuma City), showing example.

He emphasized the importance of ongoing customer management, needs assessment, and marketing under a flexible DMO.

#### (3) National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) : Mr. SURIYON, Senior Plan and Policy Advisor Office

Presentation title: National Identities Key Driver to Attract Tourists to Destinations

Mr. SURIYON presented on the government's policy to promote its identity. Currently, the government has established a Soft Power Committee, which emphasizes promoting identity which emphasized that the promotion of 11 industrial sectors namely (1) food (2)

sports (3) festivals (4) tourism (5) music (6) literature (7) film (8) games (9) art (10) design and (11) fashion. The key policy driving Soft Power includes and One Family One Soft Power (OFOS) policy will play a key role in attracting tourists and promoting the Thai economy. Thailand government will promote 11 industrial sectors by utilizing Thailand's culture and soft power and One Family One Soft Power (OFOS) policy aims to provide high value-added products and services. In terms of tourism policy, he also introduced the 5Fs concepts as the country's identity and the Ignite Thailand strategy to further accelerate the tourism business in Thailand, as well as the promotion of tourism.

(4) Thailand Science Research and Innovation: TSRI: Assistant Prof. SUPAWADEE, Senior Specialist

Presentation title: Development of Thai Tourism Identity

Assistant Prof. SUPAWADEE emphasized that Thailand will focus on sustainable high value tourism and the promotion of secondary city tourism by utilizing Thailand culture and soft power. She explained about TSRI's tourism business indicators, including one of the KPI items "Creative Economy" then introduced examples of projects in which industry, government, and academia have collaborated, such as the overseas spread of Muay Thai using the Metaverse and the Chiang Mai Festival.

#### 4. Discussion

(1) Organizations responsible for regional tourism

- Japan

The Japanese government does not supervise DMOs under the legal system. The Japan Tourism Agency sets KPIs and checks their achievement status, and then each region is given discretion. Regional DMOs should be responsible for creating regional attractions and promoting them through SNS and other measures. However, it is necessary to further consider how the government and regional DMOs can work together in the future, including the involvement of JNTO.

- Thailand

Under the direction of the central government, provincial governors and chambers of commerce and industry have established WGs which are playing a DMO-like role. However, these organizations are not independent like DMOs in Japan because financial resources come from the central government. There are 35 TAT regional offices in prefectures where tourism development is especially needed. TAT regional offices mainly provide marketing support, but they are not divided into blocks by region as in Japan.

(2) Cooperation between regional tourism and industry, government, and academia

- Thailand

Thai side presented a model of DMOs, similar to the one recommended by the Japanese side, which is highly beneficial for the country. They highlighted the example of Carbon Neutral tourism as a new issue emerging in Thailand and gaining global importance. This initiative started in 2020 and has been implemented at the organizational level in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and the Ministry of Higher Education, Science, Research, and Innovation. A memorandum of understanding was established with nine other organizations, including the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization (Public

Organization), Tourism Authority of Thailand, the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau, the Thai Chamber of Commerce, the Board of Trade of Thailand, the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization), the Thai Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Association (operators), the Program Management Unit Competitiveness (PMUC), and the Thailand Research Fund (TRF).

Additionally, TSRI has a national network, including a network of researchers from 20 universities across the country, involving 200 researchers and covering 50 provinces. TSRI has been working with tourism operators and tourism associations to operate in the form of Destination Management Companies (DMCs) and Destination Management Organizations (DMOs). These efforts aim to promote Carbon Neutral tourism and extend towards achieving Net Zero Emissions in the future. The development focuses on research-based advancements, utilizing DMOs to drive sustainable economic growth.

- Japan

There is a possibility that knowledgeable people who have studied tourism at universities and other institutions, as well as research institutions, could become involved in DMOs. In order to involve educational institutions, it is necessary to create mid- to long-term posts, and both the national and regional governments need to discuss this issue.

### (3) Ensuring the quality of tourism services

- Thailand

The Thai side is concerned about the decline in the quality and creativity of tourism services and the shortage of operators due to the lower birth rate and the aging population (Based on the thought that Thailand will face the same challenges that Japan is facing in the future).

- Japan

In terms of the decline in the working population, Japan government is also implementing measures by utilizing DX. However, the experience and knowledge of the elderly will be useful and helpful for making the tourism product more valuable, especially in agricultural tourism such as farm stay and traditional craft experience. The shortage of human resources and the utilization of senior staff are issues to be considered in the future.

In terms of young people's creativity, Japan Tourism Agency is supporting companies that can provide new services in the digital field and is focusing on creating a system for tourism startups that can respond to an aging population.

It is necessary to both utilize the power of digital technology and improve the treatment of those working in the tourism industry. The working environment and low wages in the tourism industry need to be improved, and it is necessary to improve the treatment of workers by adding higher value to tourism.

### (4) Over tourism

- Japan

Overtourism has led to increased significant congestion and bad manner behavior of tourists in certain areas. Hence the Japanese government prepared the “Package of Measures to Prevent and Control Overtourism” in October 2023. As part of the package, in March 2024, the Japan Tourism Agency selected 20 locations throughout Japan and supported local efforts to disperse the use of public transportation and to notify information on congestion.

- Thailand

Thailand has the same problem as Japan. In order not to limit the number of tourists, measures against congestion were implemented for this year's Songkran Festival, by

holding the festival not only in Bangkok but also in provincial cities on different dates.

## 5. Closing Remarks

### (1) Mr. Mongkon, Deputy Permanent Secretary, MOTS

- Mr. Mongkon would like to appreciate Mr. Shukuri, Mr. Okuda, and JTTRI member for their support of Japan-Thailand cooperation in tourism sector.
- Mr. Mongkon sincerely hopes that the knowledge and opinions expressed in this WG on the promotion of Thailand-Japan identity will be utilized to further develop the tourism industry in our country.

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

- Mr. OKUDA believes that through today's lecture and discussion, we have deepened our understanding of each other's efforts, challenges, and solutions for attracting visitors to regional areas in both Japan and Thailand.
- JTTRI and MOTS would like to summarize the discussions in this WG and share them with the people concerned in both countries as well as ASEAN countries.

