UNWTO COMMISSION FOR SOUTH ASIA
UNWTO COMMISSION FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
Twenty-third Joint Meeting
Colombo, Sri Lanka
25 March 2011

Item 5b/b of the Provisional Agenda

ACTIVITIES OF THE UNWTO REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General submits to the Joint Commission a report on the activities carried out during the period under review by the UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific, and those activities planned in the near future.
THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNWTO REGIONAL SUPPORT
OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The following details the major activities carried out by the UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific from April 2010 to March 2011, as well as those activities planned in the immediate future.

Activities carried out from April 2010 to March 2011

1. Japan MICE Year Commemorative Symposium

Date
14 July 2010
Venue
ATC Hall, Osaka, Japan
Organised by
Japan Tourism Agency (JTA)
Osaka City
With the cooperation of
UNWTO Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific
Asia Pacific Tourism Exchange Center (APTEC)
Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)
Osaka Convention and Tourism Bureau
Japan Congress Convention Bureau
Asia and Pacific Trade Center (ATC)
Participants
300 participants from travel agencies, hotels, local governments and convention bureaus.

The year 2010 was themed by the Japanese Government, and marketed as “Japan MICE Year” for the further promotion of MICE in Japan. MICE also falls under the “30 Million Foreign Visitors Program”, through which Japan plans to increase the annual number of visitors to Japan to 30 million.
This symposium was held to disseminate practical knowledge and know-how about MICE to the Japanese MICE industry and relevant stakeholders. This event was a cooperative effort between UNWTO’s Regional Support Office and JTA.
2. Indian Tourism Seminar “South India: Wellness Travel for Body and Soul”

Date
18 December 2010

Venue
ATC Ageless Center, Osaka, Japan

Organised by
UNWTO Regional support Office for Asia and the Pacific
Asia Pacific Tourism Exchange Center (APTEC)
ATC Ageless Center

With the cooperation of
Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA)
Air India
Sri Lankan Airlines

Participants
45 participants

South India is one of the major resort and Ayurveda destinations. Ayurveda, a traditional Indian medicinal therapy, has recently gained popularity among the young female Japanese tourist market. Ms. Miyata, a travel writer who visited South India after the “UNWTO-Japanese Symposium on Encouraging Tourism Exchange in India” on February 2010, discussed the South Indian nature and culture, and shared her experiences of Ayurveda.

3. UNWTO Regional Seminar TOURISM EXCHANGE FOR SMALL ISLANDS

Date
22-23 February 2011

Venue
World Bank Tokyo Development Learning Center, Tokyo, Japan
University of Udayana Distance Learning Center—GDLN, Denpasar, Indonesia
World Bank Dili Distance Learning Center, Dili, Timor-Leste
The University of the South Pacific (USP), Suva, Fiji
UNICEF Male Office, Maldives
Australian Embassy, Port Vila, Vanuatu

Organised by
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
Asia Pacific Tourism Exchange Center (APTEC)
The World Bank Tokyo Development Learning Center (TDLC)
Under the Auspices of
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)
Japan Tourism Agency (JTA)
With the cooperation of
The Nippon Foundation
Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA)
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
Participants
140 people per day from governments, tourism-related industries, and universities.

This seminar was held with the participation of 6 countries, namely Fiji, Indonesia, Maldives, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu and Japan, by using a video conference system of the World Bank. These island countries have rich natural, cultural, and historical resources which attract many international tourists, but the potential these resources are still not fully utilized.

Two keynote presenters from Japan gave their presentations in the Bali Studio. This was followed with reports from corresponding studios in Indonesia, Fiji, Maldives, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu on the tourism conditions and trends in their respective countries.
This seminar provided Island countries with the opportunity to identify strategies, and develop the necessary tools needed to attract more Japanese tourists. It was also an opportunity to exchange each country’s tourism experiences and assets, with the purpose of encouraging collaboration for future developments.

Activities planned from FY2011 (April – )

1. Full support for the promotion of Silk Road Programme
The Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific is dedicated to supporting the development of the Silk Road Programme, as demonstrated by Silk Road Initiatives within the region. To promote and enhance the Silk Road brand, the Regional Support Office proposes several approaches and practices, including explorations of potential sea routes, namely “Silk Road by Sea”. There is much potential for UNWTO members to benefit from the “Silk Road by Sea” initiative, more specifically, for CAP/CSA members with extensive coastlines. For countries which have already established routes by desert and by steppe, the marine routes can provide more opportunities to create various combinations of tour products.

The regional Support Office intends to work closely with UNWTO’s Silk Road Programme to establish the marine routes, and then materialize these as new tourism products.
The tourism planning team of Nara City will also be involved, with hopes of promoting Nara as the “Silk Road City”. The team aims to increase Nara's international visitation, and are keen to work collaboratively on the Silk Road Programme to achieve this.

2. Holding Webinar/Video-conferences with UNWTO Asia and the Pacific Member States
The UNWTO regional video-conference seminar, TOURISM EXCHANGE FOR SMALL ISLANDS, was facilitated with the technological support of the World Bank Tokyo Development Learning Center. The Regional Support Office plans to hold consecutive video-conferences with several countries, with the purpose and intention of enhancing the standard of tourism and hospitality products and services within participating countries.

3. Continuing Basic Study for Climate Change and Tourism
The Regional Support Office has been in communication with industry leaders and organizations on this topic. Future collaborations and efforts will focus on identifying clearer initiatives and long term solutions for this pressing issue.