



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

2010/SOM3/GOS-TWG/CON/007

Session: Opening

Ecotourism Promotion Policy in Japan

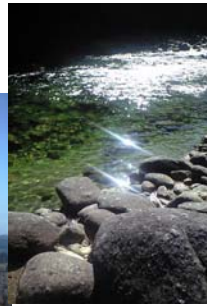
Submitted by: Japan



JAPAN 2010

**APEC Ecotourism Conference
Sendai, Japan
16 September 2010**

Ecotourism Promotion Policy in Japan



MASARU HORIKAMI
 Director, Office of Communication with Nature,
 Nature Conservation Bureau,
 The Ministry of the Environment

What is Ecotourism?

- **Ecotourism is...**

“Responsible travel that offers visitors an opportunity to experience and learn about the natural environment, history, and culture of a region.”
 (Ecotourism Promotion Council)

- **Ecotourism is...**

“Tours conducted for the purpose of putting the concept of ecotourism into practice.”
 (Ecotourism Promotion Council)

The Definition of Ecotourism

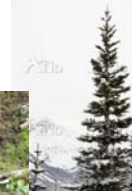
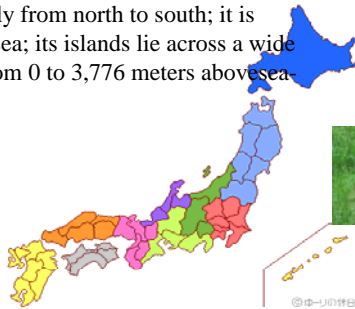
- **Ecotourism is...**

“The act of informing or advising travelers about nature tourism resources by knowledgeable persons with the aim of increasing knowledge and understanding of such resources, and in consideration of preserving and coming into contact with such resources.” (Ecotourism Promotion Council)

Japanese Nature

Japan has a diverse natural environment, even though it is not a large economy.

This is mainly due to the fact that: the archipelago extends considerably from north to south; it is surrounded by the sea; its islands lie across a wide range of latitude from 0 to 3,776 meters above sea-level.



	LAND AREA (Km ²)	SPECIES	
		Well-known	Unknown
JAPAN	380,000	90,000	300,000
WORLD	150,000,000	2,000,000	30,000,000

3

Trends in Ecotourism

- **Recognition of ecotourism**
1982: At the World Conference on National Parks, the the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) states that ecotourism is “an effective fund-raising tool for national conservation.”
- **Development of ecotourism**
1993: The Shirakami Mountain Range and Yakushima Island are registered as World Natural Heritage sites, and private businesses implementing ecotourism begin tours to those sites.
- **Establishment of promotional organizations**
1998: The Japan Ecotourism Promotional Council (currently, the Japan Ecotourism Society) is established. Around this time, promotional organizations are established in various regions (Iriomote Island, Yakushima Island, Higashi Village in Okinawa, etc.).
- **Domestic policies**
2003: The Ecotourism Promotion Council is convened, and the promotion of ecotourism is made a domestic policy.
2007: The Law for the Promotion of Ecotourism is established and takes effect the following year.

4

Approaches to Promoting Eco Tourism

Basic Eco Tourism Promotion Policy (June 6, 2008)

- (1) Residents, administration and parties involved in tourism, natural conservation, and agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries gather in one place to discuss.
↳ Establish Eco Tourism Promotion Council
- (2) Seeking and reviewing appealing points (treasure) of the area,
↳ Conduct resource and use surveys
- (3) Treasuring and polishing the appealing points,
↳ Conservation measures, rules for use, foster human resources
- (4) Introducing them to tourists,
↳ Create programs, PR, guided tours
- (5) And further polishing driven by the thrill felt by tourists
↳ Monitoring, evaluation, fostering human resources
- (6) To activate the local economy, and spread ripple effects, such as collaboration with other industries
↳ Foster tourism industry, sustainable regional development

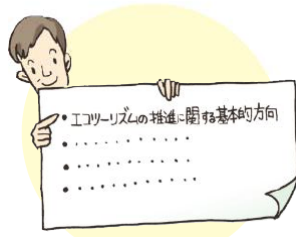
Basic Eco Tourism Promotion Policy (June 6, 2008)

Basic Stance on Initiatives

Initiatives are based on the following perspectives.

- ① **Value the objects of ecotourism.**
(Utilize natural tourism resources in a sustainable manner while simultaneously preserving them.)
- ② **Enjoy the objects of ecotourism.**
(Ecotourism is based on the premise of enjoying the resources while demonstrating hospitality.)
- ③ **The community is the primary agent of action.**
(All relevant persons in the community cooperate. They think and act on their own.)

The Role of the Government



Fundamental objectives
devised by the government



**become the basis for the
general framework
determined by regions**



Participation in regional committees,
technical advice, information
gathering, PR activities, etc.

7

The Role of the Municipal Government

**Organizes councils in each region, creates a general framework, and
manages councils.**



Based on the
fundamental
objectives,
creates

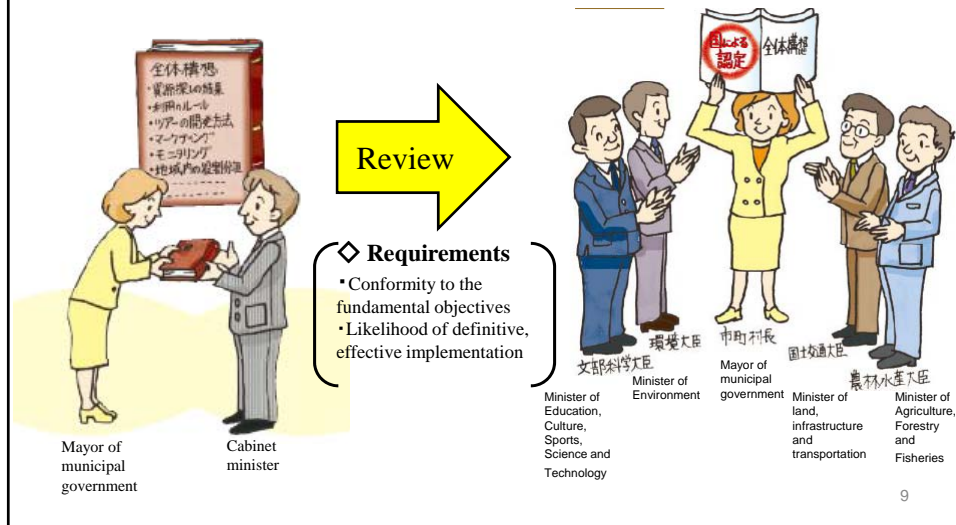
a general
framework

- Promptly discloses to public
- Presents to the cabinet minister

* Also is responsible for
liaison and coordination
related to ecotourism
promotion.

8

Municipalities can apply for government approval of the general framework



When the general framework is approved...

- 1 Protection of the regional resources:** by designating nature tourism resources as “specified nature tourism resources” which have not been ensured by protective measure in the law, we are able to take the measures to prohibit behaviors such as contamination, damage, and elimination that causes tourists a big inconvenience.
- 2 Restriction on access:** As necessary, we are able to restrict the number of people to access to the area which includes specified nature tourism resources.
- 3 Publicity:** the economy promotes activities in certified areas nationwide.



Eco Tourism in Japan

Eco Tourism Model Project (2004-2006) 13 locations

Tourism in the rich nature (Proper execution of typical Eco Tourism)

- Shiretoko Area: Shiretoko Peninsula, including the ocean
- Shirakami Area: Area in and around the World Heritage site
- Ogasawara Area: The entire Ogasawara area including the ocean
- Yakushima Area: All of Yakushima Island

Tourism at tourist spots with many visitors (Eco Tourism in a mass)

- Urabandai Area: The entire Urabandai area
- Northern foot of Mt. Fuji: 8 municipalities at the northern foot of Mt. Fuji
- Sasebo Area: All of Sasebo City

Natural Tourism in mountainous areas utilizing the life, culture and industries of the locales (Creation of conservation-based Eco Tourism)

- Tajiri Area: All of Tajiri Town
- Hanno-Naguri Area: All of Hanno City and Naguri Village
- Iida Area: All of Iida City
- Kosai Area: Kosai area near Lake Biwa
- Nanki-Kumano Area: Kumano area in Mie and Nanki area in Wakayama

Example of Eco Tourism (Yakushima)



Example of Eco Tourism (Hanno City)



13

Example of Eco Tourism (Hanno City)

- 2.28 million tourists come and go annually without interacting with the community
- Lowered vitality in the city center
- Concerns about negative impact on the natural environment by tourists
- Business stagnation in forestry and the deterioration of forest

- Rediscover the appealing aspect of the area
- Need to promote the area using local resources

History

- 2004: Applied for Eco Tourism Promotion Model Area to the Ministry of the Environment and established Promotion Council
- 2005: 10 tours and 481 participants → 2007: 68 tours and more than 2,000 participants
- Preliminary Discussion System: Tour operators and the council discuss tour content in advance of the actual tour
- Open College: A system to provide training to local people to serve as guides to the area in the local language
- 2009: National government approved the Eco Tourism Promotion Concept

Future issues

- Listing natural tourism resources that need protection and establishing a monitoring system
- Use as a place for environmental education
- Organizing NPOs and private organizations

14

Support Measures by the Ministry of the Environment

Support to areas with Eco Tourism projects

- Conduct resource surveys and investigate the status of use
- Hosting lectures and workshops
- Rules for use, advice for system establishment for overall concepts based on law, information provision, etc.



Training guides

- With the cooperation of private nature schools, etc., accept trainees and provide field workshops for periods of five months.
- During the 3 years from 2007 to 2009, approximately 240 trainees have completed the training



Dissemination / Enlightenment

- Activities of the organization for which the concept has been approved are disseminated nationwide. Information related to eco tourism is collected and provided to expand the activities in Japan.



15

Support for Eco Tourism Areas

[Major Areas]

(1) National parks



Daisetsuzan



Shikotsu-Toya

(3) Areas with statutory council



Hanno City



Kerama

(2) World Heritage



Shiretoko



Shirakami Sanchi



Yakushima

[Main Supports]

- (1) Resource surveys, investigation of the status of use
- (2) Hosting lectures and workshops
- (3) Rules for use, advice for system establishment for overall concepts based on law, information provision, etc.

Training Guides

- With the cooperation of private nature schools, etc., accepted trainees and provide field workshops for periods of five months.
- Provided field workshop, group workshops, home study programs, and field training
- During the 3 years from 2007 to 2009, approximately 240 trainees were scheduled to complete the training



Dissemination and Enlightenment of Eco Tourism

(1) Hosting Seminars and forums

Host panel discussions and reporting on eco tourism cases targeting operators, organizations and concerned parties in municipalities



(2) Eco Tourism Awards (The Environment Minister's Award)

Awards are presented to regions and operators with outstanding eco tourism projects and their efforts are widely introduced throughout Japan.



17

Information Provision

Website managed and operated by the Ministry of the Environment “Ecotour Comprehensive” <http://ecotourism.jp/>

- Provision of information on Eco Tours and lodging facilities

[FY2008]

Registered operators: Apprx. 600

Access per year: Approx. 1.28 million
(Monthly average: 110,000)



18

Status of Approval of the Eco Tourism Concept

- Hanno City, Saitama (Approved September 8, 2009)

- Goal for the Hanno City Concept
 - “To offer travel experiences that enhance rich minds and the thrill of protecting local nature and inheriting the culture fostered by its people and nature, and to make effective use of the areas.”



- Measures taken by Hanno City
 - Approximately 70 eco tours are planned and implemented by the residents and NPOs
 - The council conducts a preliminary study of the tour content and ensures the quality of the eco tour
 - Aim to improve skill and foster human resources though guide training classes

- Currently Kerama district (Zamami Village and Tokashiki Village in Okinawa) and Yakushima district are considering applying for approval

19

The Ministry of the Environment Website <http://www.env.go.jp/nature/ecotourism/try-ecotourism/index.html>



20

FY2010 Eco Tourism Promotion Measures by the Ministry of the Environment (126 million yen)

Cost of Promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cost of implementation of laws by the Ministry and regional offices ○ Support for top-runner regions
Support for regional vitalization in collaboration with other ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaboration and fusion with Green Tourism ○ Tourism measures and collaboration with other industries
Proper Execution of Eco Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measures for the dispersion of World Heritage site use ○ Controlling use in the areas with concentrations of visitors
Study on the status of Eco Tourism, analysis and propagation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Study and analysis of the status of Eco Tourism ○ Dispatching of advisers ○ Ecotour Comprehensive website ○ Hosting seminars and forums nationwide ○ Eco Tourism Award ○ Website management

Measures for the Support of Eco Tourism by the Ministry of the Environment

< Future Efforts >

- (1) Measures for the prevention of excessive use and the control of visitors to major sightseeing spots and spots with a concentration of users such as World Heritage sites
- (2) Effective use of natural tourism resources in the surrounding areas to balance the use of the concentrated sightseeing spots
- (3) Fostering tour guides and regional tour coordinators
- (4) Strengthening collaboration with other tourism measures and with Green Tourism