



Various scenes from the first day of the event (1: ribbon cutting at the opening ceremony, 2: Browsing through the Osaka-Kansai Future Zone, 3: commemorative photo at the welcome reception, 4: former Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and Diet member Toshihiro Nikai standing at the welcome reception, 6: Hyogo Prefecture Governor Motohiko Saito and Osaka Governor Hirofumi Yoshimura promoting Expo 2025, 7: Live performance commemorating the 100th anniversary of jazz)



Above) Prime Minister Fumio Kishida sent a video message.
Bottom) A signing ceremony for the World Tourism Ethics Charter in the private sector was also held.

Rethink New Landscape of Tourism in the Post-Pandemic World SDGs and Resilience Are the Key to the Future

“Tourism Expo Japan 2023 Osaka/Kansai (TEJ 2023)” officially kicked off on October 26th at INTEX Osaka. The 4-day event, themed “Open the Door to the Future” has gathered industry leaders from over 70 countries to explore the evolving landscape of the travel industry in the post-COVID world. As the global travel industry rebounds, it faces the challenges of adapting new traveler demands and changes world environment, and building a resilient industry.

“TEJ 2023” returns to Osaka for the first time in four years, in anticipation of the Expo 2025 scheduled for 2025. In his keynote speech, Masaru Ishikawa, EXPO Site Operation Producer, Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition stressed the importance of Expo 2025 as a platform to showcase Japan to the world, and stimulate travel demand both within and outside Japan.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)’s data, the global tourism is expected to recover up to 95% of its pre-pandemic levels by the year end. Japan is also experiencing a robust

resurgence of the demand of inbound travel, although outbound travel has not fully recovered. In his video message during the opening ceremony, Japan’s Prime Minister Fumio Kishida expressed his commitment to the tourism industry, noting the newly approved “Tourism National Promotion Basic Plan” as a key driver to Japan’s tourism future. Tomoyuki Ishizuka, Vice Commissioner of Japan Tourism Agency outlined three areas to implement the plan: creating sustainable destinations, developing inbound tourism, expanding domestic interactions. With many representatives from overseas travel destinations participating TEJ 2023, Hiroyuki Takahashi, Chairperson of Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) hopes that TEJ 2023 will rekindle Japanese interest in the outbound travel. “We hope the outbound travel will rebound to 2019 level by early next year.” He also emphasized the importance of developing SDGs-related products tailored to the post-pandemic tourism demand.

The pandemic has exposed the travel sector’s volatility, testing its resilience and

sustainability. During the 6th TEJ Ministerial Round Table titled “Rethinking Tourism for a Better Future,” nine government representatives including Ryusho Kato, Japan’s Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism joined five top executives from international organizations to discuss their respective strategy focuses. They reached a consensus that enhancing travel quality with a focus on SDGs initiatives and the preservation of cultural heritage is crucial for the new tourism.

In the exhibition area, 1442 booths showcase travel destinations and related products. To stimulate demand for travel among the Generation Z, complementary access to the exhibition is provided to college and vocational school students for the first time. Visit Japan Travel & MICE Mart has scheduled over 6000 meetings between Japanese and overseas companies. In the evening during the welcome reception, participants enjoyed unique Kansai entertainment and cuisine.

Keynote Speech

Creating EXPO for Future Generations with “People” as Its Legacy



Mr. Masaru Ishikawa

EXPO Site Operation Producer, Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition

Masaru Ishikawa, Expo Site Operation Producer, Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition, a special keynote speaker this year, addressed Thursday's opening ceremony of the “Tourism Expo Japan 2023”.

Ishikawa opened the speech by introducing the history of the world exposition, dividing its development since the first Expo held in London in 1851 to today into three generations: the first generation, when major expositions were held in major cities to present the prosperity of countries; the second generation since the 1960's after the world wars when numerous corporations participated and presented abundant lifestyles and bright future through advanced technologies; and the third generation since the 2000s which served as the starting point in making global efforts to solve various common issues.

Ishikawa highlighted that Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan (EXPO 2025) will also make the best use of technologies to address common challenges faced by the past events; cutting-edge technologies showcased in the expositions were not being applied at their very operations, resulting in huge congestions and long queues for their admission. The EXPO 2025 will adopt “Expo DX,” an electronic admission ticket and admission reservation system to reduce the burden both on visitors and operators and make the event more comfortable and enjoyable. The Expo will also work on a “virtual Expo” that can be enjoyed without being at the actual venue, and cashless payment systems.

Ishikawa also talked about the showcasing of the future society, which will be a new element in the structure of world expositions. The EXPO 2025 will demonstrate six showcasing projects including smart mobility, digital, virtual, art, green, and future life. The EXPO 2025 will also inherit the “theme week” concept from the Dubai EXPO 2020 with global challenges being jointly considered and addressed throughout the 6-month period.

Ishikawa concluded the speech by emphasizing that the legacy of EXPO is “people.” Just like Eiichi Shibusawa, the father of modernization for Japanese economy, who participated in the Paris Expo in 1867 as the first mission from Japan as a country and brought back various ideas to modernize Japanese economy after that, and like people who had visited the Osaka Expo in 1970 who are now playing the central roles in the Japanese society, EXPO2025 will leave a significant impact on young people who will be leading the future generations.

Post-Pandemic Recovery in Tourism Gaining Velocity Towards Better Future

The 6th TEJ Ministerial Round Table themed “Rethinking Tourism for a Better Future” that gathered ministers of nine countries and five top executives of international tourism organizations was kick-started with a welcome message by the United Nations World Tourism Organization Executive Director Zoritsa Urosevic, who addressed in her speech that tourism sector has the potential to contribute to all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The speakers shared the current state of post-pandemic recovery in the tourism sector and insights into a growing potential in fields such as sustainable and regenerative tourism to ensure that tourism serves as a driver for peace and a better future.



Ms. Zoritsa Urosevic

Executive Director, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Platforms to Assess SDGs Engagement of Tourism Activities

The travel industry has witnessed a strong recovery from the pandemic's impact. However, the emphasis of post-pandemic development should not be the increase in numbers but enhancing the quality of the travel sector. UNWTO, in collaboration with other government leaders and organizations, has developed tools and platforms to assess the SDGs engagement of tourism activities. These tools evaluate inclusiveness, resilience, and economic diversification. Both private sector and the government should leverage these tools. Education, investment, and innovation is essential to the evolution of the new travel industry. UNWTO will remain supportive of these efforts.



Ms. Tutitaty Abdul Wahab

Permanent Secretary Ministry of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam

Prioritizing Responsible Tourism for the Mutual Benefit of the Industry

In the post-Covid tourism, Brunei, with abundant travel resources including wildlife and lush rainforests, and rich cultural heritage, is committed to the environmental sustainability and the preservation of cultural heritage. A new platform Tourism Industry Roadmap is introduced to serve as a guideline in developing Brunei into a peaceful and tranquil travel destination. The collaboration between the public and private sectors, local communities' engagement, and the promotion of responsible tourism, are essential to distribute the benefits of growth across all the sectors of the industry.



Mr. Roshan M. Thomas

Director, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Republic of India

Tourism Opens Minds, Benefits Communities and Spurs Technological Advancement

Tourism is a key feature in the economic strategy of India and it has multiple benefits to the communities. Especially, the impact of tourism on microeconomy is immense as seen in examples of slum tourism and agriculture tourism. India is also promoting remote and metaverse technologies that allow people to experience the joy of travels without physically moving from one place to another. Tourism opens minds and offers new ways of meeting people, which will help the world inch closer to peace.



H.E. Dr. H. Sandiaga Salahuddin Uno

Minister of Tourism & Creative Economy / Head of the Tourism & Creative Economy Agency, Republic of Indonesia

Offering Serenity, Sustainability and Spirituality through Post-Pandemic Tourism

Indonesian tourism industry, both inbound and domestic, has been recovering at a rapid pace. The growth of domestic travels is even stronger than the pre-pandemic levels. In the post-pandemic era, people are seeking serenity, sustainability and spirituality in tourism and placing more importance on experiences and personalized elements in travels. At the same time, regenerative tourism is gaining momentum. We aim to capture growing opportunities in tourism with greater emphasis on the quality, safety and experiences through innovative initiatives, strategic adaptations and fruitful collaborations.



Datuk Mohd Zamri bin Mat Zain (Mr.)

Deputy Secretary-General, Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia

Sustainable and Responsible Tourism for Recovery and Resilience for Future

Malaysia promotes its tourism aligned with the SDGs and agendas in its three pillars of competitiveness, inclusiveness, and sustainability. We practice sustainable and responsible tourism for recovery and resilience to encourage innovative development and response to new trends, focusing on specific segments and medical and wellness packages to add high spending tourists. We also identify nature-based products, open air activities, and rural tourism will continue to drive innovation. We have a good model, the Miso Walai Homestay, offering such experiences as well as generates economic impact.

The 6th TEJ Ministerial Round Table



H.E. Ms. Sudawan Wangsuphakhjosol
Minister of Tourism and Sports,
Kingdom of Thailand

Efforts Made by Thailand amid and after Pandemic

The latest pandemic gave us an opportunity to rethink tourism for a better future. Amid the pandemic, Thailand remained open to inbound tourists while other countries in lockdown. After the pandemic, we drove the nation's recovery through tourism agendas, focusing on safety, security and environment challenges and its Bio-Circular-Green Economy Model in line with SDGs. We also promote a market strategy plan to pursue sustainable tourism, raise our tourism standards through a new tourism ecosystem, and enhance our competitiveness.



Mr. Mukhsinkhuja ABDURAKHMONOV
His Excellency, Republic
of Uzbekistan

Enhancing Tourism for Economic Growth and Heritage Preservation for Future

Tourism industry is a strategic sector for Uzbekistan, growing its economy and creating new jobs. The sector is also an important tool for enhancing international cooperation, cultural exchange, and the well-being as well as strengthening humanitarian ties in the society.

Meanwhile, we have responsibility for how the sector will interact with environment and sustainable development amid its rapid growth, attracting inbound tourists by improving tourism quality. At the same time, it is crucial to restore and preserve tangible and intangible heritages for our future generations.



Mr. Kato Ryusho
Parliamentary Vice-
Minister of Land,
Infrastructure, Transport
and Tourism, JAPAN

Enhancing Sustainability and Resilience of Tourism Industry

Japan's tourism industry is recovering steadily amid prolonged impact from the pandemic. Tourism is a pillar for its growth and a key for its regional revitalization. Japan enhances attractiveness and profitability of individual regions to make the industry and tourist destinations

sustainable by adding high value to them. Meanwhile, tourism is vulnerable to infective diseases like COVID-19 and disasters. We will hold an international conference next year in cooperation with the UNWTO to share knowledge and discuss measures for promoting the resilience of the industry.



Ms. Ivana Jelinic
CEO, ENIT - Italian State
Tourism Board, Italian Republic

Reviving Tourism Industry Post-Pandemic: Sustainability and Local Collaboration

Italy is reviving its post-pandemic tourism industry by investing in digital transformation, marketing campaigns, and financial support programs. Sustainability is a key focus, with eco-friendly practices and public transportation promoted. Collaboration with local authorities supports infrastructure development and promotes lesser-known regions to reduce overcrowding and stimulate economic growth. The government invests in training tourism professionals, improving transportation infrastructure, and enhancing connectivity to boost tourism recovery. Italy can enhance its tourist appeal by catering to changing traveler needs, promoting responsible tourism and fostering collaboration.



Ms. Maribel Rodriguez
Senior Vice President,
World Travel & Tourism
Council (WTTC)

WTTC is Driving Tourism Recovery and Resilience Post-Pandemic

Japan and the Asia Pacific region are experiencing recovery, with 11% of the growth of Japanese GDP contribution to travel and tourism. Global growth remains steady, creating employment opportunities and \$15.5 trillion in revenue in the next ten years. WTTC has significantly aided the tourism sector's recovery by fostering confidence, sharing information, addressing challenges, advocating for sector interest, and monitoring consumer trends. During the COVID-19 pandemic, our commitment to sustainability ensures responsible development, preservation of natural resources, and a more resilient future for the sector.



Mr. Eduardo Santander
Executive Director European
Travel Commission (ETC)

ETC's Sustainable Tourism Strategy: A Path to a Greener Future

ETC is shifting from a market-driven approach to a sustainable tourism growth strategy. This shift aims to revitalize natural environments, cultural heritage, and traditional practices. Stakeholders such as policymakers, NTOs, tourism operators, local communities, SMEs, and visitors are all involved in this process. ETC unveils Climate Action Plan, committed to reducing annual Green House Gas emissions and providing guidance on creating a net-zero roadmap through the Chapter Earth working group. Digital transition and making tourism an attractive industry are also key challenges for sustainable growth.



Gotsileene MORAKE
His Excellency Major
General (Ret.), Republic
of Botswana

Develop a Broad Tourism Product mix to remain competitive

Tourism is a great value proposition and source of income to Botswana as in other Southern African countries. In Botswana, the tourism industry is increasing its share of GDP from 6.3% in 2000 to 13.1% in 2019. The government is stepping up its efforts in developing a broad tourism product mix to remain competitive as a destination. To rethink tourism for a better future, developing consistent and harmonized protocols with decisions driven by data and made on a multilateral basis will be necessary.



Mr. Benjamin Liao
Vice Chair, Pacific Asia
Travel Association (PATA)

Harnessing the Power of Tourism to Be Responsible and Sustainable

PATA forecasts the number of international tourists returning to the pre-pandemic level in 2024 and exceeding by 2025. Global labor shortage and price-value adjustments would also impact tourism today. The international community needs to harness the power of tourism to fulfill its responsibility for sustainable tourism. PATA supports cross-regional dialogue and collaboration to promote initiatives, such as developing tools to reduce single use plastic under the TDR (Tourism Destination Resilience) program and supporting tourism in Thailand moving toward sustainability through a business-led supply chain approach.



Mr. Shannon Stowell
CEO, Adventure Travel
Trade Association (ATTA)

Gauge the Health of Destinations as a Measure of Success

After going through the COVID-19 pandemic, leisure travel has quickly come back, and so has the problem of over-tourism. We still face other issues such as climate impact, environmental degradation, and so on. The tourism industry needs to change its philosophy and shift focus from attracting more travelers to controlling the tourism to maintain the health of destinations. We need to develop a set of measurements to gauge the health of travel and tourism through the collaboration of governments, business communities and NGOs.

Moderator



Ms. Marjorie Dewey
President, Connect
Worldwide Japan Co., Ltd.

Inspiring Models and Insights for Better-Harnessing Power of Tourism

Tourism has enormous potential to spur economic growth, build communities, foster cultural understanding and bring joy and discoveries to travelers. The panel shared their efforts in harnessing the power of tourism while addressing pressing issues such as sustainability, impact on communities, over-tourism and generational changes, as well as their thoughts on how they are shaping the future of tourism. We hope that the insights gained from the session will be useful for businesses and organizations of the audience.