

Summary of the 5th
Future Tourism Leaders Workshop



*Co-organized with Kobe University Graduate School of Intercultural Studies,
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
UN Tourism Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific
and Miyama Tourism Association (Miyama DMO)*

*Miyama, Nantan City, Kyoto Prefecture
March 23 to 24, 2024*

1. Background

The Future Tourism Leaders Workshop (FTLW) is designed for tourism leaders across Asia and the Pacific region who are currently enrolled in a tourism program (undergraduate to postgraduate), have recently completed their tourism studies, or are about to join the tourism workforce and have demonstrated outstanding leadership, entrepreneurial, and innovative skills throughout their studies and previous work experience. In addition, the workshop aims to serve as a platform for these aspiring leaders to expand their knowledge and share ideas with similar-minded professionals from the region.

2. Overview

The 5th Future Tourism Leaders Workshop, co-organized with Kobe University Graduate School of Intercultural Studies, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Miyama Tourism Association (Miyama DMO), was held in Miyama, Kyoto, one of the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism (BTV). The BTV initiative recognizes outstanding examples of rural destinations that sustainably implement tourism as a key driver for rural development and community well-being. In this two-day workshop, participants learned about sustainable tourism measures in one of the recognized BTVs in Japan — Miyama village and saw the village first-hand through a technical visit. Invited speakers from Taiwan and Thailand also spoke about the contribution of tourism to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Under the theme of Sustainable Tourism in the Best Tourism Villages by UN Tourism, the following sub-topics were also discussed during the workshop: how International Institutions and Certifications work on tourism development and how Sustainable Development Goals are achieved through tourism.

An online workshop session was held on March 9th to provide participants with an initial encounter before their visit to Miyama from March 23 to 24. This session was also conducted to facilitate ease of communication during the technical visit. To provide ample introduction to the March 23 to 24 workshop in Miyama, on-demand lectures were also provided by UN Tourism and JICA.

3. Technical Tour

The technical tour in Miyama was held on March 23, Saturday. The tour was held in Miyama's *Kayabuki-no-Sato*. The thatched-roof houses of Miyama were declared important cultural property in 1993. The walk around the village highlights how the thatched roofs are maintained and built and their unique features. The tour enabled the guides from Miyama to share knowledge on the traditional roof and the challenges it faces.

Photos in Kayabuki no Sato, Miyama:



4. Summary of Symposium

An online pre-workshop session was organized in the afternoon of March 9th to introduce the participants to each other and present a video lecture about Oku-Matsushima, here is the summary of the March 9th online pre-workshop session:

Mr. Masanori Kudo
Chief Operating and Marketing Officer
In-Outbound Tohoku (as of April 2024)

UN Tourism Best Tourism Villages 2023
Oku-Matsushima: From a Practitioner’s Viewpoint

Mr. Kudo introduced Oku-Matsushima which was recently recognized as the Best Tourism Village in 2023. Oku-Matsushima is a seaside community located in Matsushima Bay. It is home to the Jomon period culture and the Miyagi prefecture has also enacted rules to protect these landscapes from any unpermitted changes.

The village also takes on a people-centered approach to finding solutions to their challenges. After the 2011 tsunami, the village took a “storytelling” program through the path leading from the former train station that was damaged in March 2011 to “Osatoyama Hill”, a hill that became an evacuation spot for residents during the tsunami. This educational route provides an opportunity to learn about the disaster from the “storytellers” or the survivors themselves.

As the DMO for Oku-Matsushima, they are also promoting the “Mori-Sato-Umi Miyagi” or 7-day tour of the ocean and forest and more so for the promotion of sustainable tourism in the destination. Oku-Matsushima mostly receives educational trips and day trip visitors coming from Sendai.

Mr. Kudo also shares that the local lifestyle is quite sustainable (following a philosophy of using what people already have) but that keeping these practices alive is where the work lies. He also shares that the locals are highly aware of the need for resilience as climate change is continuously affecting the fishermen’s main source of living.



Tourism is also being used as a “relationship builder” for the locals to appreciate the connection with international tourists. As such, big events such as the open day showcase of the Air Defense Force are also driving visitors to Matsushima area.

Ms. Tomomi Sato
Associate Expert, Team 2
Mr. Tsuda Yuya
Team 1
Private Sector Development Group, Economic Development Department
JICA: Achieving Sustainable Development Goals through Tourism – Toolkit of Indicators for Projects

JICA first introduces its cooperation and collaboration strategy, along with their tourism-related endeavors in Peru and Uzbekistan.

While tourism has positive impacts, mismanagement can yield adverse effects such as economic leakage, and environmental and cultural degradation. To counteract these, a framework for sustainable development is imperative from both the private and public sectors. JICA's projects aims for this approach, such as in their Sustainable Development of Cultural Landscape project in Peru. The project focuses on fostering eco-museums as versatile tourism assets. In 2023, JICA conducted familiarization trips to introduce the Discovery trail to tourism operators and they have also successfully introduced the developed site during the Tourism Expo Japan together with the Peruvian tourism promotions agency (PROMPERU).

Another project is their initiative to support capacity building with the Tourism Committee of Uzbekistan to promote Silk Road Tourism and offer technical training to five Central Asia countries (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan). JICA also conducted technical training that drew insights from Japan's Kumano Kodo pilgrimage route, which are registered as UNESCO World Heritage sacred sites and properties.



Why We Support Tourism?

- It is important to maximize positive impacts and mitigate negative impacts.
- The role of public sector in tourism development is important since those government agencies provide necessary supports to private sector who are the major players of tourism industry.
- In order to maximize the positive impact of tourism and minimize its negative impacts, JICA supports tourism administration to make foundation for sustainable tourism development, taking into consideration the new trends of the industry.

Positive points

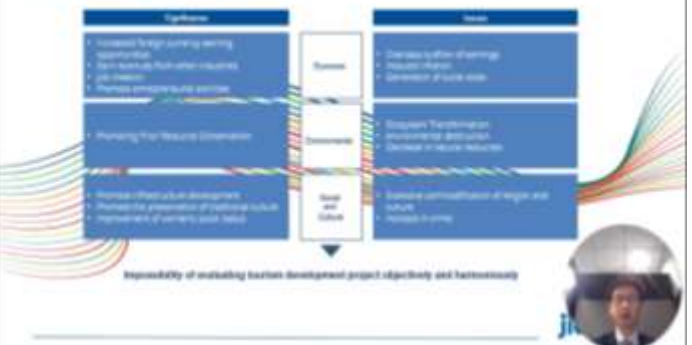
- Opportunities for earning foreign currencies
- Job creation
- Promotion of local activities
- Promotion of infrastructure development
- Promotion of the advancement of women in society

Negative points

- Over-tourism
- Tourism leakage
- Degradation of cultural and natural heritage
- Traffic congestion
- Waste management



TIPs creation - a background



TIPs proposes a standardized approach to measure the impact of tourism on SDGs. Tailored for diverse users involved in planning, implementing and evaluating tourism projects, the toolkit underscores the

linkage between potential tourism endeavors and each SDG, offering a comprehensive understanding of their contribution.

TIPs were developed to be simple, realistic, measurable, verifiable, and referable within the scope and framework of any kind of tourism project. It is supposed to be enough to monitor and measure output, outcomes, and impacts of projects through time and connected with connected SDGs.

Considering this framework in the case of Miyama town where local community guides narrate community stories, provides a blueprint for identifying and preserving cultural heritage sites, thereby aligning with SDGs.

Relevant link: JICA and UN Tourism partnership:

https://www.jica.go.jp/activities/issues/private_sec/cooperation.html

The second day of the workshop in Miyama showcased lectures from invited speakers from Taiwan and Thailand. Below is a summary of their lectures:

Ms. Monique Chen

Co-founder and Chairwoman, Sustainable Taiwan Travel

“Experiences of Implementing Global Sustainable Tourism Standard in Taiwan”

Sustainable Travel Taiwan (STT) is an NGO that was established in 2008 and was officially registered as an organization in 2011. STT has been dedicated to supporting DMOs, local community governments, and the private sector in Taiwan to be able to be certified under the GSTC criteria. STT cooperates with Green Destinations, Travelife, and Control Union in promoting sustainable practices. Currently, there are three (3) certified Green Destinations in Taiwan that go with different strategies for sustainability. Ms. Chen points out that Taiwan understands sustainability in terms of certification. The GSTC training that STT conducts aims to explain and show case studies to understand the GSTC criteria.



In her presentation, Ms. Chen provided her experience with working with 3 different communities in Taiwan: (1) the coastal community of *Gang-kou*, (2) the indigenous, mountain community of *Bunun Village*, and (3) the cultural village of *Nanliao/Penghu*. These experiences focused on building sustainable community-based tourism and showcasing three keys to working with communities – (a) finding the patience to move towards a long-term commitment to sustainability, (b) providing training and coaching to local human resources, and (c) ensuring good communication with both local and international stakeholders, and the government.

Relevant link : Sustainable Travel Taiwan - <https://sustainabletravel.org.tw/stt-english/>

Mr. Natthawut Chaengkrachang (Mickey)

Designated Areas Development Officer

Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) Nan

“Sustainable and Community-based Tourism in Thailand: Best Tourism Village and DASTA”

Mr. Mickey started his lecture by explaining how DASTA is connected to the Ministry of Sports and Tourism in Thailand. DASTA is the mandated authority to develop sustainability in designated areas by the ministry. This is due to the view that tourism is one of the tools in developing communities and that local people can shape their future. For the Thai government, establishing the country as a sustainable tourism destination is one of the core strategy for growth. Currently, there are nine (9) designated areas in Thailand, located from north to south of Thailand.

DASTA has created several training and toolkit programs to help prepare communities for tourism activities. The CBT Thailand is a tool used to create a baseline to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the communities throughout the tourism development process so that the communities and coaching units can effectively identify areas for capacity-building and developing the community’s potential. This tool can also be further used to monitor the impacts of tourism in an area. The Sustainable Tourism Management Standard (STMS), a GSTC-recognized standard, was also introduced to local administrative organizations.



Mr. Mickey further introduces the goal of DASTA to help transform tourism into “creative tourism” or developing tourism through the active participation of communities. Through DASTA’s Creative Tourism Criteria measures a community’s quality of “stories” (stories from local cultural assets that have been researched, sequenced, designed, and presented), “senses” (activities that have sensory appeal), and “sophistication” (the activity can be presented in a certain timing to generate interest, impress and inspire). The criteria aim to discover and showcase a destination’s marketing potential.

Mr. Mickey also shared videos introducing Bo Suak, Thailand. He elaborated that gastronomy tourism is more complicated than regular tourist activities due to the focus on the flow of the tourists so that they can fully enjoy the experience. He also shared promotions for secondary cities in Thailand that the government use to showcase new destinations.

Relevant Link: DASTA Thailand - <https://www.dasta.or.th/en>

5. Summary of Workshop

During the workshop, the participants were placed in working groups. These groups are pre-assigned:

- Groups consisted of 7 - 8 members each;
- There were 3 groups including the recurrent students;
- Each group is assigned a “Facilitator” from the organizers.

On 24 March, the second day of the Future Tourism Leaders Workshop, each group had a 15-minute presentation on their research on the assigned Best Tourism Village. Each group presented sustainable tourism by examining the assigned BTV (Hakuba, Oku-Matsushima, or Niseko). The presentation should include:

- ① Basic information on the village (geography and basic data, and characteristics of the destination).
- ② Discuss the most “sustainable” elements (community, culture, economy, education, and resilience) in the village.
- ③ Analyze the BTV based on its advantages/disadvantages as well as its problems/potentials.

Output of group presentations:

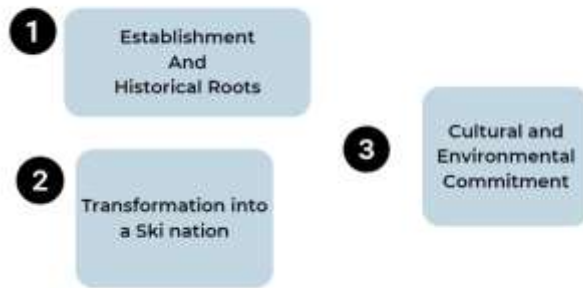
Group 1: Hakuba

- Used NVivo survey software to analyze commonly used words to describe Hakuba sourced from written reviews from Tripadvisor, to which the group highlighted the recurrence of: “snow”, “Australia”, “powder slopes”, “crowded” and “family”. Additionally, the group noted of increasing growth of tourism and of high-repeat guests.
- In terms of accessibility, the group noted Hakuba’s proximity to major cities. They have also noted Hakuba’s roots in “ancient salt routes” and gradually to sustainable ski resorts which made their cultural and environmental commitment.
- The group also presented “minshuku culture”: the cherished tradition of the mountain where residents warmly welcomed mountaineers and skiers into their homes offering local cuisine made of rice and vegetables.



- The group reported on 5 key elements of sustainability in Hakuba: (a) multicultural experience offered by a foreigner-friendly website; (b) Hakuba’s circular vision project for reducing waste through smarter design of materials; (c) integration of resilience in the economy by shifting away from dependence on materials from external sources (resilience and self-sufficiency); (d) inclusion of sustainability concepts in education.

Hakuba Village: From Ancient Salt Routes to Sustainable Ski Resort



Group 2: Oku-Matsushima

- The group focused their presentation on Oku-Matsushima’s cultural and natural resources such as the: Suzaki wetland and Sagakei Gorge, Jomon History Museum and the Satohama Shell mounds. The group also briefly introduced the work of Nobiru-juku, a civic group that participates on government-led exchange activities. Oku-Matsushima also has a strong agricultural product – oyster, nori and rice industry that the destination is also equally known for.
- The group also identified accommodation establishments in Oku-Matsushima, with a total of 105 rooms, with a maximum capacity of 385 people a day. Along with accessibility options from trains to rental bicycles. Oku-Matsushima also developed a trail course with necessary visitor amenities in the trail and was well-planned for its users. The group notes however that public transport is far from the village and would require visitors to pay for or look for transport services for luggage.
- The group found that the city adopted the “All Higashi-Matsushima Style” which aims to create a multi-functional tourist area.
- The group identified three challenges faced by Oku-Matsushima: decline in local population, finding ways to renew tourism promotion methods to transition to digital marketing and rebuilding people’s confidence in tourism safety.



Group 3: Niseko

- The group highlighted Niseko as a “year-round” destination with activities during summer and winter. They have also noted that Niseko has actively rejected large-scale development and implemented “Niseko rules” which drive efforts toward environmental protection.
- The group highlighted the following sustainable elements found in Niseko: (1) a culture of self-governance that leads to programs such as the “Niseko Rules” on safeguarding the environment, public lectures where residents become part of the policy-making process and (2) a culture of thinking ones’ town as their own.
- The group listed the following as benefits of the recognition: (1) an increase in the quality of tourists, (2) improving Niseko in all aspects, (3) promotion of the city brand, and (4) pride for the hometown. The group also shared the perception of Niseko residents on receiving the Best Tourism Village recognition. Meanwhile, the residents also expect a downside to the recognition namely, worsening of traffic, increasing cost of living, delay in local communication, and highly specific recognition for one sector only (tourism).



02 Culture (autonomy self-government)

Think and Take action by oneself

Niseko local government also leads this vision & Putting this mind in education

example

- Niseko Rules
- Public lecture
- Education program for travel industry etc

For these listed disadvantages, the group recommended the following actions: improve the data collecting mechanism to receive the residents’ perspectives, integrate local life and tourism, and develop the local appreciation for the BTM recognition in Niseko.

The workshop ended with all three presentations concluded and with the presentation of completion certificates to the participants.

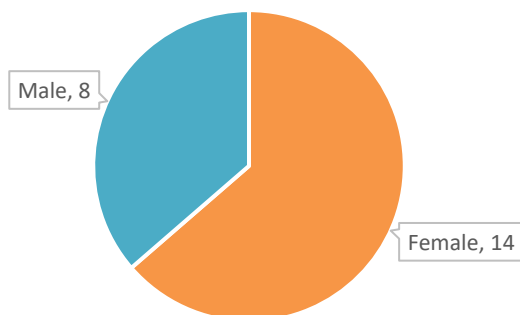


6. Overall Attendance

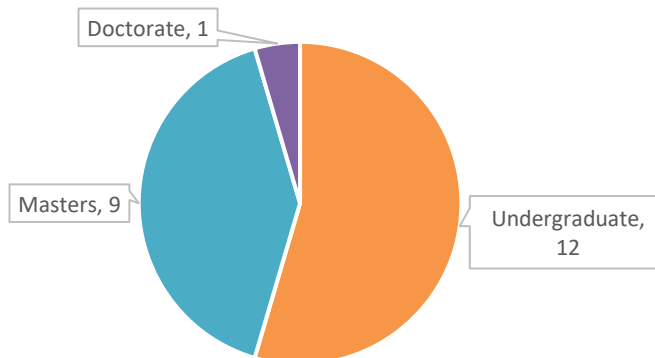
Total	
32	Symposium Attendees
10	• Staff
22	• Students (including recurrent students)
6	Symposium observers (Business-persons)
22	Workshop participants
3	Speakers
8	Universities
9	Companies / Government Offices
8	Countries

a. Workshop Participant Demographics:

Gender



Educational Background



b. Nationalities (Workshop Participants)

Countries	Number of Students
1. China	1
2. Argentina	1
3. Japan	14
4. Mexico	1
5. Myanmar	2
6. Peru	1
7. Chile	1
8. Indonesia	1
Total	22

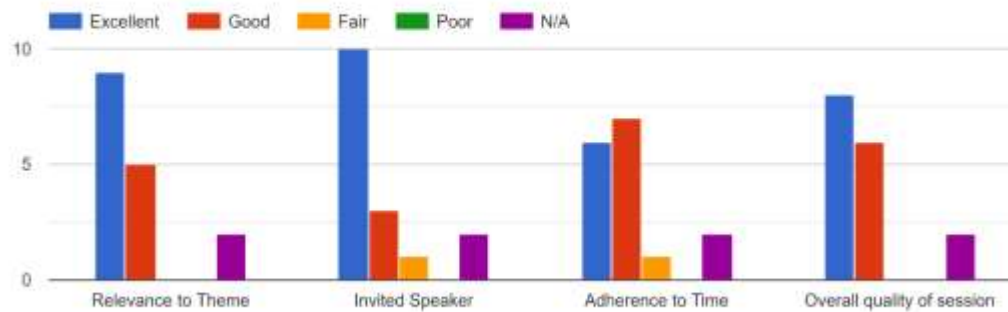
C. Participating Universities:

<i>University</i>	Doctorate	Master's Degree	Undergraduate	Grand Total
1. Bunkyo University		1		1
2. Kobe University		3	7	10
3. Kyoto University	1	1		2
4. Kyoto University of Advanced Science - Senior High school			1	1
5. Osaka Seikei University			2	2
6. Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University		3	1	4
7. Rissho University	1			1
8. Waseda University			1	1
Grand Total	2	7	12	22

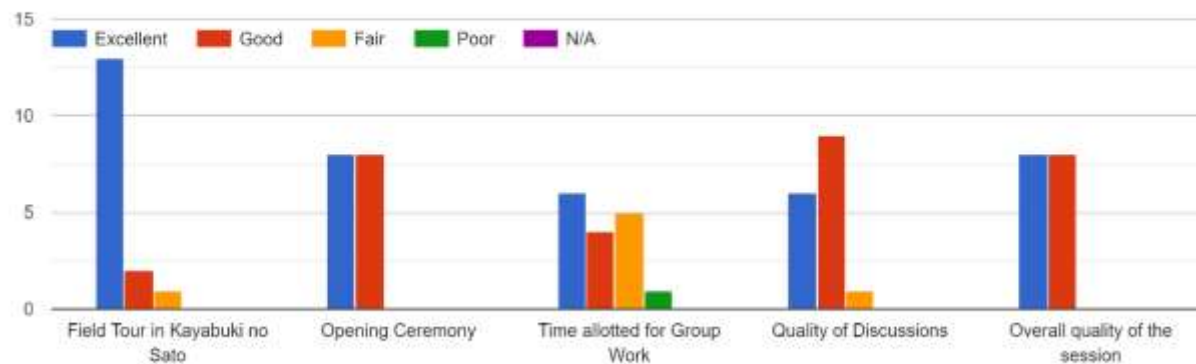
7. Evaluation of Workshop:

Overall ratings per session:

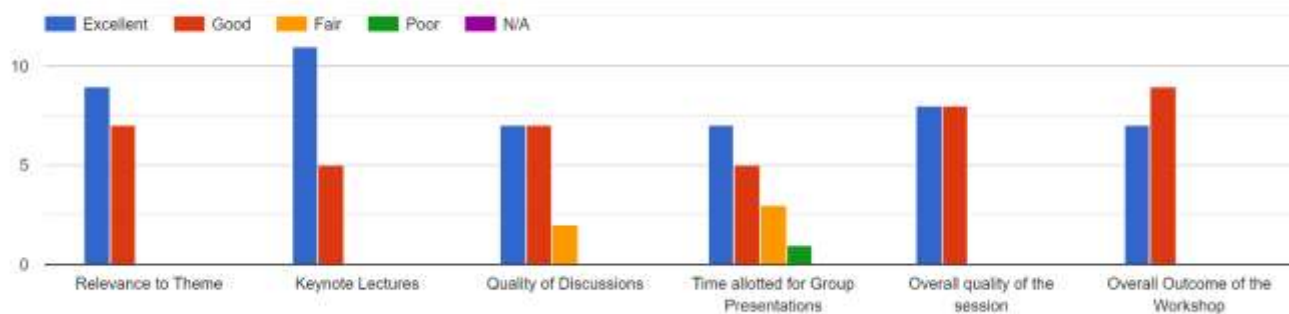
Please evaluate session: March 9 Pre-Workshop Session



Please evaluate each session: March 23 - Day 1 in Miyama



Please evaluate each session: March 24 - Day 2 in Miyama



Which topic/speaker were you most interested in? Tell us the idea that struck you the most:

- Information about Green Tourism
- The cases or the experience of the villages (keynote lecture)
- "One key theme is the effect of certification. In Taiwan it is effective. While Best Tourism Village is not effective enough to attract more tourists yet. What's the difference? Certification vs title?
- The effect of Best Tourism Villages (still not seen)
- Taiwan's emphasis on certification (explanation of sustainability)
- My thought is much more tourists' need-driven. While I learned the concept of BTV "by locals to the locals".
- Difficulty of getting certified. 100 criteria, 2-3years to complete it, cost of being certified, and renewal.
- Feature of local area. "Usually a person who has a strong influence (発言権) makes a decision of how the village wants to be! Whether it be tourist- centered village or less tourists".
- DASTA : Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization).
- Creative tourism, gastronomy tourism struck me the most.
- I'm interested in tourism in Thailand is the best.
- Because Mickey showed us Thailand tourism which has experience of local life. And it's very nice way to improve tourism and to preserve tradition.
- Both, it was a great opportunity to learn how the other countries tourism leaders make efforts for their region and that is inspiring for me to study about tourism more and want to make my country's tourism better.
- Monique and Mickey were very interesting. It was a good opportunity to learn about different destinations.
- Sustainable tourism/CBT
- I took an interest in the topic delivered by Ms. Monique. It was fascinating to learn about her unwavering determination to help communities improve their tourist attractions sustainably. I also realized the truth in her statement that it's better to ignore those who don't want our help when we're attempting to assist them.
- All the speech were very inspiring. Especially the case study provided by the speaker from Taiwan was very interesting. Those are some application cases of SDG's in real villages. They are very instructive and the experience is worth learning from.
- During the tour of Kayabuki-no-sato, I heard from Kogita san that there were almost no international travelers here about 10 years ago but these days many travelers all over the world from Taiwan, China and other countries are coming to Miyama. I felt the magnetic local power of Miyama for global market. I also thought at the era of aging society in Japan, one key point to survive for rural area is to take advantage of global market and BTV initiative will contribute a lot to it.
- The dilemma faced by Best Tourism Villages: their need to attract tourists without attracting too many tourists.
- I was very interested in a field work tour in *Kayabuki no sato*. I learned that the view and atmosphere are very important there. That's why people who live there care about their houses. However, I just worried about disaster because it is very close to the forest from their homes. I went Miyama village,

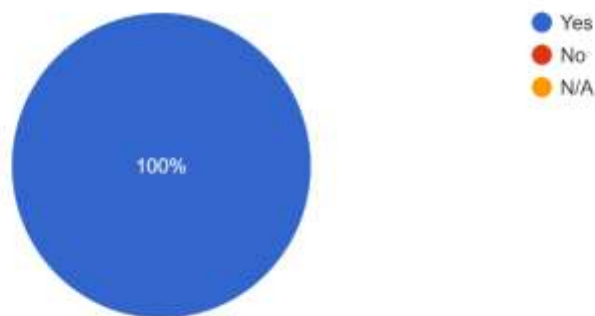
so I wanted to learn and discuss about it more with group members through the workshop. We did Hakuba village, but we were supposed to discuss and give a presentation about Miyama village because we were able to know about the good and bad points there. I think it should be considered contents.

What other themes would you recommend for the workshop?

- To search for originality in each place
- Profile of tourists visiting communities with recognition as one of the best tourism villages
- Working with the local focal person about sustainable tourism/sustainability.
- Tourism and Rural development in Developing Countries
- SDGs in tourism; The future of sustainable tourism and SDGs
- Shrine as Cultural Heritage and Tourist Attraction
- Overtourism on some famous sights
- Seminars on coastal and marine tourism topics in the future.
- Sustainable tourism in big cities.
- Spreading the appeal of local tourism

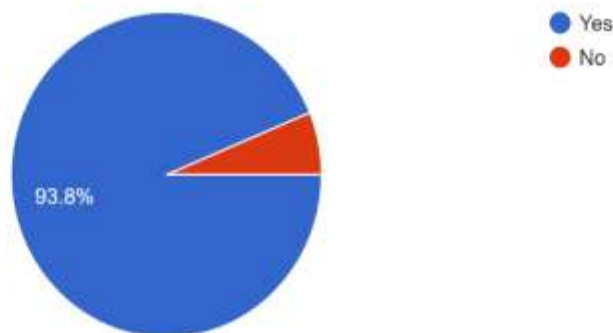
Would you recommend the Future Tourism Leaders Workshop to your peers?

9 responses



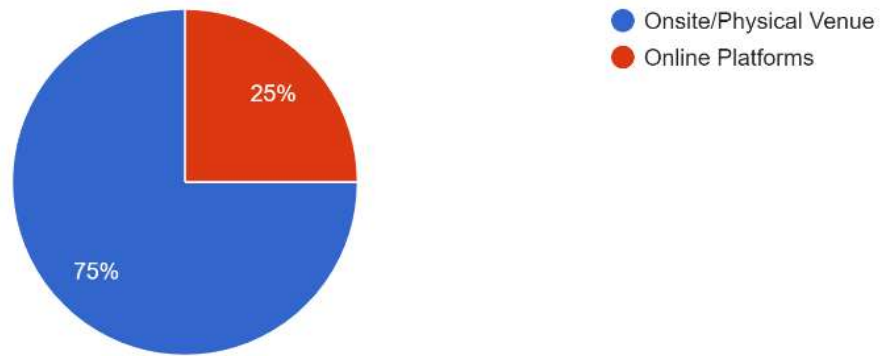
Overall did you find the theme relevant and practical?

16 responses



For the 6th Future Tourism Leaders Workshop, in which format will you be more interested to join?

8 responses



If the 6th Future Tourism Leaders Workshop were to be held in another region, where would you be interested in attending?

