



2021 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Ao no kuni Fudai - Towards Sustainable Tourism

Fudai Village

country:Japan

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Category of entry:

- Localizing the destination supply chain
- Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
- Culture & Communities
- Environment & Climate
- Nature & Ecotourism
- Tourism Reset & Recovery

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Issues faced

The Sanriku Coast, including the coast of Fudai Village--with its steep coastal landform from the mountains to the sea--has been recognized as a Sanriku Reconstruction National Park and Sanriku Geopark and certified as a natural heritage that conveys the activities of the earth to the present. The precious natural scenery is also the center of the village's tourism resources. In addition, in recent years, tourists have become interested in experiencing local resources, such as the fishing industry that developed against the backdrop of the natural environment, and the fishing village culture and traditional performing arts that have taken shape over a long period of time. The tourism industry is becoming an industry that can support the village.

The continuous maintenance and management of the beautiful natural landscape and the securing of local industry leaders, including the tourism industry, are both directly related to the survival and sustainability of the local identity. The issues that need to be resolved in Fudai Village include the rapidly aging population with a declining birthrate and the inability to respond to the new travel needs of land-based tourism--the core of the village in terms of spiritual and economic development, and the inability to effectively manage and utilize tourism resources.

Methods, steps and tools applied

The coastal area of this village has been designated as Sanriku Reconstruction National Park and Sanriku Geopark. In addition, a long-distance trail course has been established in the village that connects the village to neighboring municipalities, known as the "Michinoku Shiokaze Trail" by hikers from Japan and abroad. In this way, tourism resources are connected to neighboring cities, towns, and villages, with synergistic effects and increased satisfaction can be expected through cooperation. For this reason, we are promoting wide-area cooperative tourism with neighboring municipalities. As a specific activity, we have mapped out the tourist resources in Fudai (trail map), distributed it, and actually used it in the town tour to raise awareness. (Reference: Document 2.3)

In addition, as a mechanism to support wide-area cooperative tourism, we train volunteer guides and support their organization.

Also, the Kagura of Utsori Shrine, which is the traditional performing art of the village and designated as an intangible folk cultural asset, envelops the entire area and travels around the Sanriku region used to perform prayers.

In addition, the local people are deeply aware of the unique climate of the area, including the sea, yamase, and disaster preparedness.

Recognizing the village's, rich culture and nature--unique in terms of tourism--we are working to strengthen the tourism aspect of the village by creating a tourism-related company, We have added a tourism association staff member to become a DMO in the future. We have also increased the staff of Aonokuni Fudai Co., Ltd. to hold liaison council meetings.

By developing travel products, this company organization responds to diversifying travel needs, utilizes attractive village resources, and promotes the realization of an economic flow within the region.

In addition, the village is actively exchanging opinions with local producers, businesses, and commercial and industrial organizations in the decision-making process to hold events, transform local resources into new tourism resources, and develop local brands. This promotes the sustainability of the community and the realization of sustainable tourism in an integrated manner.

The main supporters of this project can be said to be the young and future leaders of the village,



making it a very promising initiative.

Key success factors

The Tohoku coast of Japan was devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, but amidst this adversity, this village quickly recovered. In other words, the deepening "attachment" to the area gained during the reconstruction process has become the engine that drove things forward in various situations.

This "attachment" has led to the daily and active exchange of opinions, which in turn prompted discussions on the management and utilization of tourist sites. Through discussion, compounded by direct and physical management, such as the maintenance and management of East Japan's natural landscape, the economic cycle within the region and the fostering of local leadership gradually became apparent. In achieving this, Aonokuni Fudai Co., Ltd. is planning to increase sales and the number of tourists to foster awareness. This is exactly the attitude that will lead the region as a tourism destination.

(Reference: Document 1, page 4)

Lessons learned

Many of the businesses in the village where we exchanged opinions in making decisions were actually men, with times when we felt that their opinions were biased. In village society and fishing village, when social development is taken into consideration, inviting women to the meetings with the right to express their opinions and to be heard is important to ensure on a conscious level gender equality.

This helped to broaden our thinking in many situations, such as understanding travel needs, the outlook for the village, and developing a local brand. In addition to the differences in individual points of view, the experience of moving to the village upon marriage provided a new perspective.

In addition, the lack of know-how and influence in the development of travel products and PR activities in the village were an issue, but they were resolved through the development of mascot characters, collaborative projects with NPOs and the Michinoku Trail Club, plus other various efforts involving influencers such as TV personalities (Nasubi-san). (Reference: Document 3)

Results, achievements and recognitions

The tourism association in the village was strengthened by utilizing the local resources such as the Sanriku Geopark and the Michinoku Sea Breeze Trail, and by preparing to accept tourists through travel products. In addition, new tourism resources that took root in the community were created, such as the development of "Oden Can," a food product using ingredients from the village, and the holding of events including beach yoga that take advantage of the environment. As a result, Aonokuni Fudai Inc. saw a 103% increase in sales from 2008 to 2019. (Reference: Document 1, p. 6) By repeating this kind of process, the tourism industry in Fudai Village will further develop.

Additional references

The 4th Fudai Village Comprehensive Development Plan Late Basic Plan

https://www.vill.fudai.iwate.jp/uploads/2016/05/%E6%99%AE%E4%BB%A3%E6%9D%91%E7%B7%8F%E5%90%88%E8%A8%88%E7%94%BB_%E6%9C%AC%E7%AF%87.pdf

Website <http://vill.fudai.iwate.jp>

Facebook Page <https://ja-jp.facebook.com/fudai.iwate/>

Instagram page https://www.instagram.com/sukky_enzo/

Attachments: Documents 1-3, other tourist brochures