

Executive Council

126th session
Toledo, Spain

10 -11 June 2026

Agenda item 12**Report on the Regional and Thematic Offices**

CE/126/12 rev.1
Madrid, 10 June 2026
Original: English

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**Status of UN Tourism Regional and Thematic Offices****Executive summary**

This report provides updated information to the Executive Council on the status of UN Tourism Offices following the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly. For clarity, it distinguishes between: (a) established and operational Offices; (b) Offices approved by the General Assembly and currently in the process of establishment; and (c) the reform of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific in Japan.

DRAFT DECISION¹

Agenda item 12
Report on the Regional and Thematic Offices
(document CE/126/12 rev.1)

The Executive Council,

Having examined the report on status of the Regional and Thematic Offices,

1. *Takes note* of the agreement between the Government of Morocco and UN Tourism on the provisional implementation of the Host Country Agreement concerning the Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa;
2. *Encourages* the Government of Morocco to complete all remaining procedures required to allow the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement concerning the Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa;
3. *Encourages* the Secretariat to continue to pursue the consultative process with Uruguay on the extension of the Cooperation Agreement between UN Tourism and the Ministry of Tourism of Uruguay beyond February 2027 and to report any progress made to the next session of the Executive Council;
4. *Takes note* of the Agreement between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the World Tourism Organization on the establishment of the Thematic Office on Tourism on the Silk Road in Samarkand done on 8 November 2025, and of the cancellation of the Agreement between the Parties done on 2 July 2025;
5. *Encourages* the Secretariat to continue to pursue the consultative and negotiation process with the Government of Uzbekistan on the financial and administrative requirements for the establishment of the Thematic Office on Tourism on the Silk Road in Samarkand pursuant to the mandate received by the General Assembly in its resolution 785(XXVI), in accordance with the legal and operational framework adopted in said resolution;
6. *Takes note* of the progress made in the consultations with the Governments of China and Japan regarding the distribution of roles between the Regional Office approved in principle for Shanghai and the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific in Japan;
7. *Requests* the Secretariat to submit to the Executive Council, when available, the result of the consultation requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 785(XXVI) to the joint meetings of the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific (CAP) and the Commission for South Asia (CSA) on the distribution of roles;
8. *Takes note* of the signature on 20 November 2025 of the Memorandum of Cooperation between UN Tourism and the Japan Tourism Agency concerning the financial contribution for the operation and maintenance of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific in Japan;
9. *Notes* that the reform process of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific in accordance with the conditions and criteria applicable to Category I entities pursuant to the

¹ This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Executive Council, please refer to the Decisions document issued at the end of the session.

mandate received by the General Assembly in resolution 656(XXI) with a view to integrating it fully into the legal and institutional framework of UN Tourism remains ongoing;

10. *Recalls* the mandate received from the General Assembly in resolution 785(XXVI) that any legal, financial and administrative arrangements concerning the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific become legally binding for both UN Tourism and Japan in accordance with the conditions and criteria applicable to Category I entities adopted in resolution 656(XXI) for its full integration into UN Tourism's legal and institutional framework as a Category I entity; and
11. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue discussions with the Government of China on the legal, financial and administrative arrangements for the proposed Regional Office in Shanghai and with the Government of Japan on the reform of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific, and to report periodically to the Executive Council on progress made.

I. Status of established Offices

A. Saudi Arabia – Regional Office for the Middle East

1. The Regional Office for the Middle East is established in the city of Riyadh pursuant to the Host Country Agreement between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the World Tourism Organization done in Tbilisi, Georgia, on 17 September 2020, following the authorization received by the Executive Council in decision 5(CXII) adopted at its 112th session ratified by the General Assembly in resolution [740\(XXIV\)](#) adopted at its 24th session.
2. Information on the implementation of activities for the Regional Office for the Middle East can be found in document CE/126/4.

B. Brazil – Regional Office for the Americas

3. The Regional Office for the Americas is established in the city of Rio de Janeiro pursuant to the Host Country Agreement between the Federative Republic of Brazil and the World Tourism Organization done in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, on 19 October 2023, following the authorization received by the General Assembly in resolution [763\(XXV\)](#) adopted at its 25th session.
4. At its 26th session, through resolution [785\(XXVI\)](#), the General Assembly further approved the following two supplementary agreements: the Protocol between the Federative Republic of Brazil and the World Tourism Organization concerning the Annual Financial Contribution by Brazil to UN Tourism for the Regional Office for the Americas, done on 26 January 2024, and the Agreement between the Federative Republic of Brazil and the World Tourism Organization concerning for the Financial and Administrative Arrangements of the Regional Office for the Americas, done on 1 November 2024.
5. With the completion of the conditions established for the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement, the Regional Office for the Americas commenced operations in March 2025.
6. Information on the implementation of activities for the Regional Office for the Americas can be found in document CE/126/4.

II. Progress on the establishment of Offices

A. Morocco – Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa

7. At its 26th session, through resolution [785\(XXVI\)](#), the General Assembly approved the following agreements: the Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the World Tourism Organization on the establishment of the UN Tourism Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa in the Kingdom of Morocco, done on 28 January 2025, and the Agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and the World Tourism Organization relating to the financial and administrative arrangements of the UN Tourism Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa in the Kingdom of Morocco, done on 29 May 2025.
8. At the same session, the General Assembly encouraged the Government of Morocco to complete all remaining procedures required to allow the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement concerning the Thematic Office on Innovation for Africa.
9. On 20 April 2026, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in Madrid enclosing a communication from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposing UN Tourism to apply provisionally the Host Country Agreement pending its entry into force upon receipt of the reply from UN Tourism. In accordance with its Article 10(2), the Host Country Agreement may be provisionally applied through an Exchange of Notifications between the Parties.
10. On 21 April 2026, the Secretariat replied to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco conveying the acceptance by UN Tourism of the Government's proposal, it being understood, however, that the Host Country Agreement would be applied by the Parties, without prejudice to the completion

of the requirements by the Government for its formal entry into force pursuant to General Assembly resolution 785(XXVI), and that, during the period of provisional implementation, the commencement of any activities at the Office and the recruitment of Office personnel will take effect upon the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement.

11. The Executive Council is invited to take note of the agreement between the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco and UN Tourism on the provisional implementation of the Host Country Agreement entered into through an Exchange of Notifications held on 20 and 21 April 2026.
12. As of the date of this report, the Secretariat has not yet received the written notification by the Government of Morocco of the completion of its internal procedures necessary for the Host Country Agreement to enter into force.
13. The Secretariat shall keep the Member States duly informed of further progress regarding this matter.

B. Uruguay – Tourism Law Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean (Thematic Office)

14. At its 26th session, through resolutions [777\(XXVI\)](#) and [785\(XXVI\)](#), the General Assembly approved the following agreements: the Cooperation Agreement between the World Tourism Organization and the Ministry of Tourism of Uruguay for the Tourism Law Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, done on 3 September 2024, and the Agreement between the World Tourism Organization and Uruguay on the interim legal status of the Tourism Law Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean in Montevideo done through an Exchange of Letters held on 2 and 11 September 2025.
15. With a view to allowing the Tourism Law Observatory to commence its operations at the beginning of 2025, the Executive Council authorized the Secretary-General, subject to ratification by the General Assembly, to conclude an agreement with the Government of Uruguay providing for the *mutatis mutandis* and *ad interim* application to the Organization of the provisions of another host country agreement concerning an office of a United Nations entity based in Uruguay, in line with a practice in Uruguay with other United Nations entities pending the negotiation and conclusion of a bilateral host country agreement.
16. At its 123rd session, in decision 7(CXXIII), the Executive Council took note of the agreement reached between the Secretariat and the Government of Uruguay to apply to UN Tourism, on a *mutatis mutandis* basis, the provisions of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between UNDP and Uruguay, done on 12 December 1985. This agreement on the interim legal status of the Observatory was formalized through the Exchange of Letters of 2 and 11 September 2025, pending the conclusion of a permanent Host Country Agreement.
17. On 10 April 2026, the Organization and the Ministry of Tourism of Uruguay agreed to extend until 28 February 2027 the Cooperation Agreement done on 3 September 2024.
18. As of the date of the present report, negotiations on a permanent Host Country Agreement between UN Tourism and Uruguay are subject to the extension of the Cooperation Agreement beyond February 2027.
19. The Secretariat shall keep the Member States duly informed of further progress regarding this matter.

C. Uzbekistan – Thematic Office on Tourism on the Silk Road

20. The Host Country Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the World Tourism Organization on the establishment of the Thematic Office on Tourism on the Silk Road in Samarkand was done on 2 July 2025, following the authorization received at the 123rd session of the Executive Council through decision [7\(CXXIII\)](#), and was subsequently submitted to the 26th session of the General Assembly, which approved it in resolution [785\(XXVI\)](#).

21. At the request of Uzbekistan, the Host Country Agreement was signed a second time on 8 November 2025, immediately after the 124th session of the Executive Council. While the content of this second version is the same as that signed on 2 July 2025, there is no provision expressly cancelling or replacing the original Host Country Agreement. The Report of the Secretary-General on the status of Regional and Thematic Offices addressed to the 26th session of the General Assembly ([A/26/8 rev.1](#)), and considered by the 124th session of the Executive Council, could not be revised to include the request of Uzbekistan and simply submitted the Host Country Agreement signed on 2 July 2025 for consideration by the Governing Bodies. Accordingly, there are two versions of the same Host Country Agreement bearing different dates, with only the version done on 2 July 2025 having received the approval of the General Assembly.
22. In accordance with Article 14(1), the Host Country Agreement shall enter into force upon the fulfilment of the following conditions: (i) approval by the Executive Council, pending ratification by the General Assembly pursuant to Article 12 of the Statutes, (ii) written notification by the Government of Uzbekistan of the completion of its internal legal requisites necessary for it to become effective, and (iii) the entry into force of the supplementary agreement on the financial and administrative arrangements of the Office.
23. On 22 April 2026, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan informing UN Tourism about the completion by Uzbekistan of the internal procedures necessary for the entry into force of the Host Country Agreement signed on 8 November 2025 – rather than the Host Country Agreement done on 2 July 2025 and approved by the General Assembly.
24. On 10 June 2026, the Secretariat received a communication from the Government of Uzbekistan cancelling the Host Country Agreement done on 2 July 2025. The Executive Council is therefore invited to take note of this communication and that the Host Country Agreement dated 8 November 2025 replaces and supersedes in its entirety the Host Country Agreement dated 2 July 2025.
25. Furthermore, and in accordance with resolution [785\(XXVI\)](#), the Secretariat and the Government of Uzbekistan are currently working on the financial and administrative arrangements of the Thematic Office on Tourism on the Silk Road in Samarkand (hereinafter “the Agreement for the Financial and Administrative Arrangements”), in order to align them with the Legal and Operational Framework and submit them to the Executive Council for approval.

D. China – Regional Office

26. Following the adoption of resolution [785\(XXVI\)](#), whereby the General Assembly, at its 26th session, approved the proposal of the Government of China to establish a Regional Office in Shanghai, subject to further discussions at the joint meetings of the Regional Commission for East Asia and the Pacific (CAP) and the Regional Commission for South Asia (CSA) on the distribution of roles between the proposed Regional Office in China and the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP) in Japan, the Secretariat has opened consultations with the Governments of China and Japan with a view to preparing a proposal on such distribution of roles for consideration by CAP-CSA and thereafter by the Executive Council. As of the expiry of the deadline, comments were received from three Member States: China, Iran and Japan. For further information, see the Addendum to the present report in CE/126/12 Add.1.
27. In parallel, the Secretariat has continued discussions with the Government of China on the legal, financial and administrative arrangements required for the establishment and operation of the proposed Regional Office in accordance with the Legal and Operational Framework on the Selection and Establishment of Regional and Thematic Offices adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 785(XXVI).

III. Reform of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific

28. Following resolution [785\(XXVI\)](#), the Secretariat and the Government of Japan have continued discussions with a view to integrating the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP) fully into UN Tourism’s legal and institutional framework as a Category I entity, in accordance with resolution [656\(XXI\)](#).

29. In this context, and further to the approval by the General Assembly of the Arrangements between the Japan Tourism Agency and the World Tourism Organization concerning the legal and operational framework of RSOAP as an interim measure, the Parties signed on 20 November 2025 a Memorandum of Cooperation detailing the terms governing the financial contribution from Japan for the operation and maintenance of RSOAP.
30. This Memorandum of Cooperation complements the interim arrangements approved by the General Assembly and constitutes a further step in the reform process of RSOAP. However, further legal, financial and administrative steps remain necessary in order to complete the full integration of RSOAP into UN Tourism's legal and institutional framework as a Category I entity.
31. The Executive Council is invited to take note of the Memorandum of Cooperation between UN Tourism and the Japan Tourism Agency done on 20 November 2025.
32. In addition, the Secretariat and the Government of Japan have continued consultations concerning the distribution of roles between RSOAP and the Regional Office in Shanghai, with a view to ensuring complementarity, avoiding duplication and preserving the coherence of UN Tourism's presence in Asia and the Pacific.
33. The Secretariat has received proposals from both Japan and China on the intended distribution of the roles between RSOAP and the proposed Regional Office in Shanghai on 19 March 2026 and 12 March 2026 respectively and has circulated these to the members of the CAP-CSA for their feedback. Both proposals are included as Annex I hereto. For information concerning the status of consultations, see the Addendum to the present report in CE/126/12 Add.1.

Annex I: Proposal from Japan and China on the distribution of roles between the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific and the proposed Regional Office in Shanghai



Japan Tourism Agency

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

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Japan Tourism Agency Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

Japan Tourism Agency
19 March 2026

Major Initiatives of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP)

I. Strategic Mandate of the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP)

The Japan Tourism Agency (JTA) has contributed to tourism development across the Asia-Pacific region and worldwide, and as the host country, has supported and collaborated with the Regional Support Office for Asia and the Pacific (RSOAP) to advance tourism development and promote sustainable tourism in the Asia-Pacific region for nearly three decades.

Building on this longstanding partnership, RSOAP supports the implementation of UN Tourism's global priorities in the region, working in close coordination with UN Tourism Headquarters and other regional presences to translate global frameworks into concrete regional action.

In line with UN Tourism's strategic direction and the evolving needs of Member States in Asia and the Pacific, RSOAP's core mandate is to serve as a regional hub for Asia-Pacific tourism policy dialogue and communication, focusing its programmatic work on two priority areas:

- Tourism Resilience – strengthening preparedness, response, recovery and long-term resilience of tourism systems in the face of natural disasters, climate risks and other shocks; and
- Social Sustainability – promoting inclusive, community-centred and socially responsible tourism development, complemented by environmental sustainability through circular and regenerative approaches.

Through these two thematic pillars, RSOAP contributes to strengthening institutional capacity, policy coherence and the practical implementation of UN Tourism priorities across the region.

Furthermore, RSOAP contributes to the activities of UN Tourism through collaborative efforts and initiatives with a wide range of stakeholders, leveraging the knowledge and experiences of Japan.

II . Operational Framework of the Office

1. Background

- RSOAP was established in 1995 as the first regional office of UN Tourism and relocated from Osaka to Nara in 2012. RSOAP has worked over the three decades. (For details, please see the 'for reference' at the end of this document)
- In 2020, Japan concluded the 'Annex XVIII to the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies'.
- Additionally, as the arrangements for ensuring legal status and the financial matters of RSOAP, Exchange of Letters (EoL) and Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) were signed in 2025 between UN Tourism and JTA.
- In March 2025, Mr. Tadashi Kaneko, Director (full-time) of RSOAP, who was appointed by the Secretary General, assumed the office.
- RSOAP has been operating with the support of the foundation (Asia-Pacific Tourism Exchange Center (APTEC)). As of the end of June 2026, APTEC is scheduled to cease its activities and dissolve, and the management and operations will be fully transferred to UN Tourism.

2. Management and Reporting Structure

- RSOAP is headed by one Director, supported by seven international staff members.
- At this point, only the Director has been appointed. It is desirable to begin recruitment procedures for the remaining staff members as soon as possible.

III . Defined Scope of Work

The role of RSOAP is not only to perform a liaison function — appropriately conveying to the UN Tourism Headquarters the challenges and needs faced by the Member States in the Asia and the Pacific region, while disseminating the expertise and global policy discussions of UN Tourism within the region — but also, as specific areas of action, to advance initiatives that build on RSOAP's past achievements and Japan's knowledge and experience, with particular focus on Resilience as well as the social and environmental dimensions of Sustainability.

The environment surrounding tourism is facing significant change and uncertainty, including the increasing frequency and severity of natural disasters and rising geopolitical risks. Consequently, enhancing tourism resilience has become a common global challenge. In the lead-up to the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027 (IYSRT2027), the importance of further promoting and following up on national initiatives related to tourism resilience is increasing. Therefore, RSOAP will strengthen their efforts in tourism resilience initiatives.

In the field of sustainability, RSOAP has an established track record of supporting Member States through practical tools and capacity-building. This includes collaboration with the JTA to develop the Japan Sustainable Tourism Standard for Destination (JSTS-D) aligned with GSTS-D in 2020, now applied in more than 100 destinations in Japan. Furthermore, RSOAP developed the Handbook on Sustainable Area Management Using Tourism in collaboration with JTA and Japan Transport and Tourism Research Institute, building on the framework of the International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO), and has provided

capacity-building support to Member States. RSOAP also collaborated on the development of a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and UN Tourism publication: 'Achieving the SDGs through tourism: Toolkit of Indicators for Projects (TIPs)', and continues to work with partners to promote its adoption worldwide.

Building on these foundations, RSOAP will prioritize areas where Japan's expertise can make a meaningful contribution, particularly:

- (i) the social aspects of cultural and social sustainability and
- (ii) environmental sustainability such as circular approaches.

RSOAP will implement this scope of work through strengthened partnerships with Member States, Affiliate Members, international organizations and key stakeholders. Japan's 21 Affiliate Members of UN Tourism, including JTB Corp., which serves as the Board of the UN Tourism Affiliate Members for East Asia & the Pacific (2026-2029), provide a strong platform for joint initiatives with the private sector. Collaboration with academia and research institutions will be further strengthened. At the same time, RSOAP will actively pursue collaboration with international organizations based in Japan, including United Nations University, UNDRR, ILO, UN Habitat and Asian Development Bank (ADB), ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) and OECD Tokyo Center, to enhance policy coherence, resource mobilization and delivery impact.

1. Resilience

RSOAP will serve as UN Tourism's regional implementation platform for advancing tourism resilience, supporting policy coherence and knowledge exchange at regional and international levels.

Within this broader mandate, the International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism 2027 (IYSRT 2027) will serve as a key milestone to scale up visibility, partnerships and delivery of tourism resilience initiatives.

(1) Collaboration toward IYSRT2027

Functions and Scope of Work

- In collaboration with JTA, support Member States in advancing national and regional initiatives on tourism resilience, including follow-up to the "Sendai Statement", adopted at the Tourism Resilience Summit Ministerial Meeting in 2024, the first ministerial-level meeting in Asia and the Pacific region, by the JTA in collaboration with UN Tourism.
- Promote tourism resilience in international fora such as the G7, G20, OECD, APEC and ASEAN, through coordinated proposals, policy inputs and information-sharing, in partnership with JTA.
- Strengthen cooperation with relevant international organizations (UNDRR, PATA etc.) in order to enhance coherence, visibility and technical quality of regional initiatives.

Near-term Work Plan

- Organize the "Tourism Resilience Working-Level Meetings" on an ongoing basis to follow-up to the Sendai Statement, gathering practitioners involved in tourism resilience within the Asia-Pacific region, jointly by the JTA and RSOAP (approximately twice a year). As an outcome of these meetings, guidelines and a compendium of good practices on tourism resilience will be developed and released.

- Continue collaboration with events hosted by AJC (Assist in hosting an event organized by AJC in the Philippines in February 2026)
- Cooperate in the organization of Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2027, convened by UNDRR.

(2) Capacity building

Functions and Scope of Work

- Coordinate with the relevant department of the UN Tourism Headquarters to develop a capacity-building programme for the Member States as a project contributing to IYSRT2027.
- Leverage Japan's extensive experience in disaster response, including its proven track record in conducting training programmes and exercises.
- Draw on established networks of disaster-response practitioners and experts to support the initiative.

Near-term Work Plan

- Work toward the 2027 launch of a capacity-building programme. Currently exploring collaboration with the JTA's survey-related initiatives.
- Implement the developed programme in 2027 including workshops and related activities for Member States, and ensure the achievement of tangible results.

(3) Good Practices and Knowledge Development

Functions and Scope of Work

- Continue current project collecting good practices related to responses to the wide range of natural disasters experienced to date, planning to compile them into a reference publication, and considering initiatives to share information by utilizing it

Near-term Work Plan

- Finalize the ongoing case study research in early 2027 and organize an online seminar based on the deliverables to disseminate the findings of research.
- Conduct additional research in 2027.

2. Sustainability

In the field of sustainability, in addition to the ongoing capacity-building support for Member States, RSOAP will prioritize areas where Japan's experience and expertise offer particular added value, notably the social dimensions of sustainability and environmental sustainability through circular and regenerative approaches.

(1) Capacity Building

Functions and Scope of Work

- Continue to provide tailored technical assistance and capacity building support to Member States, drawing on tools and methodologies including TIPs and Handbooks, on a regular annual basis.
- Further strengthen collaboration with JICA and other development partners to integrate sustainable tourism into development cooperation frameworks.

Near-term Work Plan

- Conduct on-site training in Mongolia in 2026, along with online seminars to promote the use of tools/materials for Member States.

(2) Regional Collective Initiatives (Best Tourism Villages)**Functions and Scope of Work**

- Contribute to improvement of the quality and expansion of BTV initiatives in collaboration with the Regional Office for Middle East (ROME), focusing on the framework for horizontal collaboration among BTV-designated areas such as “Japan Chapter,” which has been highly evaluated as one of the pioneered BTV initiatives.
- Support activities of the Japan Chapter of BTV, while encouraging autonomous and self-directed operation by participating BTV-designated regions.

Near-term Work Plan

- In cooperation with ROME, RSOAP continues efforts to expand the horizontal collaboration in Asia and the Pacific region, and plan to hold a conference event in 2027 where designated regions will gather and interact.
- Continue guiding the Japan Chapter Annual Meeting.

(3) Social Aspect of Sustainability**Functions and Scope of Work**

- Focus on the social aspect within cultural and social sustainability, in particular, excessive concentration and its impacts and rapidly progressing aging society, leveraging Japan's experiences.
- For the issue of excessive concentration and its impacts, advance efforts from both the perspective of demand management and traveler's responsibility, utilizing JTA's accumulated knowledge including the establishment of JSTS-D in 2019.
- Regarding the challenges posed by an aging society which requires comprehensive approaches including accessibility and medical services for travelers, advance research by leveraging Japan's insights and experience gained from having faced aging earlier.

Near-term Work Plan

- Conduct case studies on social aspect of sustainable tourism and the impacts of excessive concentration, in collaboration with the Japanese Government and partners, and compile the report in 2027.
- Regarding accessibility as part of measures for elderly people, conduct collaborative research with Okayama University, with a report to be completed in 2027.
- Collect and analyze information in collaboration with the private sector and research institutions regarding changes in the needs of elderly people and the appropriate form of acceptance systems.

(4) Environmental Aspect of Sustainability**Functions and Scope of Work**

- In the environmental field of sustainability, focus on activities for circular and regenerative tourism, taking into account the growing importance of the perspective that tourism itself contributes to the environment and has a positive impact on society.
- Contribute to member states' activities leveraging the advanced initiatives Japan has accumulated toward a circular society across national and local governments as well as the private sector.

Near-term Work Plan

- Compile a collection of good practices of circular and regenerative tourism in 2027
- Organize an online seminar to disseminate the knowledge developed.

3. Collaboration with Stakeholders

Taking the transition to a directly managed office as an opportunity, strengthen collaboration with Member States fundamentally, and thoroughly reinforce relations with international organizations in Japan.

(1) Member States

Functions and Scope of Work

- Fully leverage the relationships with Member States built over 30 years of activities, as well as cooperation with RDAP, to fundamentally strengthen collaboration with Member States.
- Create opportunities to strengthen relationships among Member States and directly capture their needs to achieve effective responses.

Near-term Work Plan

- In close coordination with RDAP, hold a Focal Point meeting in the first half of 2026.
- Conduct the follow-up meeting online in the latter half of 2026.
- Continue the meeting in 2027 in coordination with RDAP.

(2) International organizations (located in Japan)

Functions and Scope of Work

- Make proactive efforts to develop cooperative relationships with international organizations in Japan that have not been sufficiently explored to date.
- Specifically, among more than 40 international organizations in Japan, conduct individual visits focusing on those related to tourism, such as UN-Habitat, UNDRR, AJC, to explore opportunities for collaboration.

Near-term Work Plan

- Contact all international organizations in Japan in 2026 to explore the opportunities for collaboration, and intend to implement 1–2 concrete joint projects in 2027.
- Collaboration with UNDRR is already planned, with a view to holding workshops for IYRST 2027.

(3) Academic/Private Sector

Functions and Scope of Work

- Strengthen collaboration with JICA and Affiliate member universities, on the track record of highly-evaluated Young Leaders Workshop for Tourism, which has been held five times to date Further joint research is planned as well.
- Steadily correspond to the requests from Affiliate Members to strengthen collaboration (e.g., human resource development methods).
- In addition, work in cooperation with National Tourism Organizations (NTO) of each Member State in areas such as tourism promotion and sustainability initiatives, drawing on Japan's experience and expertise in inbound tourism development.

Near-term Work Plan

- Hold the sixth "Young Leaders Workshop for Tourism" for young generation in collaboration with JICA and universities in 2027.
- Implement research on Adventure Tourism in collaboration with private companies, with results to be compiled in 2027.

<For Reference> Recent initiatives of RSOAP

- Seminars and symposium for Sustainable Local Management Using Tourism (2022-2024, Vietnam)
- Cooperation for the realization of sustainable tourism (September 2025, Palau)
- Promotion of Best Tourism Villages “Japan Chapter” (2024~)
- Collaboration with ASEAN-JAPAN Centre for sustainable tourism (February 2026, Philippines)
- Tourism Resilience Symposium (November 2024, Japan)
- Support of Tourism Resilience Working-level Meeting (July 2025~)
- Participation at JICA ・ GTRCMC Joint Workshop (February 2025, Jamaica)
- Cooperation for enhanced tourism resilience (January 2026, Fiji)
- Compilation of Good Practices of Proactive Measures for Tourism Crisis
- Young Leaders Workshop for Tourism (2019~)
- Two forums at EXPO 2025 (April 2025, Osaka)
- Cooperation of Tourism Expo Japan 2025 (September 2025, Nagoya)

Overview of Near-Term Work Plan of RSOAP

		2026				2027			
AREA OF WORK		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Resilience									
(1) Collaboration toward IYSRT 2027 (Events & Projects)									
International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism'									
- Collaboration with JTA									
Followup of Sendai Statement				Mtg (Online)		Mtg (Online)		JTA Event?	
Appeal to the International Community								APMCDRR (Sendai)	
- Collaboration w/Int'l Orgs & pv. sec.		JTA Symposium (Tokyo)						JTA Event	
(2) Capacity Building									
- Creation of Training Program				Creation		EC Release		GA	
- Training Workshop								Implement	
(3) Good Practices									
- Research & Report		Phase-1				Report		Seminar(OL)	
- Online Seminar						Phase-2			
2. Sustainability (Social Aspect)+(Capacity Building)									
(1) Capacity Building									
① TIPS									
- On-site Training in Member States (Mongolia)				WS(Mongolia)					
- Online Seminar				TIPS Seminar (Online)					
② Handbook									
- post-Vietnam						Workshop			
(2) Regional collective initiatives of BTV (Collaboration with ROME)									
- Japan Chapter				#2 Japan chapter BTV Council (Hakuba)		Asia Pac. BTV Council		#3 Japan chapter BTV Council (TBD)	
- Asia-Pacific Region									
(3) Social/Environmental Aspects of Sustainability									
① Responsible Tourism									
- Responsible Tourism Conference				Malaysia					
- Negative Effects of Excessive Concentration						Compilation of Good Practices		Report	
② Aging Society									
- Needs of aged travelers									
- Accessibility								Accessibility Report (w/Univ.)	
- Enhancement of Emergency Medical Services									
(4) Environmental Aspect of Sustainability									
- Preservation of Natural Tourism resources									
- Circular Tourism/Regenerative Tourism									

		2026				2027			
AREA OF WORK		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
3. Collaboration									
(1) Member States	Provide a forum for collaboration among Member States, expanding the possibilities for collaboration, and foster a sense of unity in efforts across the AP region	◆ Focal Point Mtg (Tokyo)			◆ Focal Point Mtg (online)				◆ Focal Point Mtg (HQs)
(2) International Organizations									
- International Financial Institutes (IFI) (IBRD, IDA, ADB, AfDB, etc.)	Pursue concrete ways of cooperation with international organizations that have offices in Japan (ex. Cooperation in research and HRD programs, etc.)	◆ Initial Inventory	◆ Organizational Mapping	◆ Tracking System					
- Functional Organizations (UNDRR, UNU, UNESCO, WHO, ILO, UN-Habitat, Asean-Japan Center, OECD, etc.)					◆ Contact to organizations				
						◆ Project with UNDRR			◆ Workshop
(3) Academic/Private Sector									
① Academic									
- JICA: HRD & technical assistance	Collaboration with JICA has a good reputation in sustainable tourism and JICA has a wealth of experience in human resource development					◆ Young Leaders Workshop			
- Academics/Research Institutes	Plan collaboration with domestic universities (Access, T). Collaborated with JTTRI (Sus. T)								
	Explore the possibility of cooperation as Affiliate Member has requested collaboration with UN Tourism								
② Private Sector									
- Int'l Org. (ex. PATA for Resilience HRD)	Plan collaboration in the field of tourism resilience					◆ Resilience Training Programme			
- NTOs of Member States	Support for promotional activities by NTOs and the private sector Cooperate in activities such as seminars/meetings on sustainability or resilience.								
- Affiliate Members: Thematic Tourism, etc.									
- Gastronomy	Held Gastronomy forum in Nara								
- Sports/Adventure	Participated in an event in Hokkaido								
- Contents	Extensive experience in content tourism (Held a related seminar in TEJ 2025) Many content ideas in Asia								
						◆ Adventure Tourism Report			



Terms of Reference of UN Tourism Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Shanghai

Recognizing that the Asia-Pacific region has been one of the most dynamic and promising regions for global tourism in recent years, playing a key role in tourism recovery, digital transformation and sustainable development worldwide;

Considering the rapid development of tourism in the Asia-Pacific region, which has made important contributions to the sustainable growth of global tourism;

Noting that the Asia-Pacific region is at the forefront of smart tourism, with remarkable achievements in the integrated development of culture and tourism, as well as modernization of tourism governance, bringing vitality to the high-quality development of the tourism sector;

Taking into account that Shanghai possesses a mature tourism market and an enabling environment for international organizations;

Recalling that the 26th Session of the UN Tourism (hereinafter referred to as “the Organization”) General Assembly, held in November 2025, approved the establishment of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as “the Office”) in Shanghai, China;

The Terms of Reference of the Office are as follows:

Part I Mission and Objectives

1. The Office is a Category I entity jointly established by the Government of China and the UN Tourism in Shanghai, serving as a key permanent presence of the Organization in the Asia-Pacific region. The Office shall carry out its work in accordance with the Organization’s overall strategy and work plan, serving the region’s Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members.
2. Leveraging tourism development in China and the Asia-Pacific region, particularly practical experience in smart tourism and the integrated development of culture and tourism, the Office shall advance the Organization’s strategic priorities, support digital transformation and modernization of tourism governance in the region, and contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.
3. The objectives of the Office include:

- Serving as a hub for Asia-Pacific tourism policy dialogue and communication;
- Acting as a support platform for smart tourism development;
- Functioning as a regional center for capacity building and technical assistance;
- Serving as a center for producing and disseminating tourism knowledge products;
- Acting as a coordination node for regional tourism cooperation networks.

Part II Operating Principles

1. Demand-driven approach

The Office shall be driven by the actual needs of Member States in the Asia-Pacific region, contributing to the development of a sustainable tourism sector in the region.

2. Promoting tourism governance

The Office is committed to strengthening tourism governance capacities in the Asia-Pacific region to serve the high-quality development of the tourism sector.

3. Fairness and transparency

Decision-making processes, resource allocation, and performance results shall be transparent to Member States and the Headquarters. The Office shall conduct regular evaluations of its work.

Part III Scope of Work

1. Modernization of tourism governance;
2. Smart tourism and innovation;
3. Integrated development of culture and tourism;
4. Inclusive, green, and community-based tourism;
5. Capacity building.

Part IV Main Functions

1. Enhancing tourism governance capacity for Member States

The Office shall support Member States in enhancing their tourism governance capacity by establishing ministerial and high-level policy dialogue mechanisms within the region, conducting research and assessments on the modernization of tourism governance, providing support in institutional design and strategic planning, and promoting cross-sectoral coordination and data-driven decision-making.

2. Supporting Member States in smart tourism development

The Office shall identify and promote best practices in smart tourism, facilitate the application of technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data in the tourism sector, and support Member States in developing smart tourism.

3. Promoting the integrated development of culture and tourism

The Office shall support the utilization of culture as a viable means to enhance the attractiveness of tourist destinations, enrich visitor experiences, and promote sustainable tourism, while advancing tourism as an important vehicle for preserving and promoting cultural heritage and fostering intercultural exchange.

4. Implementing green and inclusive tourism initiatives in the region

The Office shall assist the Organization in the research and implementation of initiatives such as green tourism and inclusive tourism, support the development of ecotourism and rural tourism, and adapt these efforts to the specific context of the Asia-Pacific region.

5. Strengthening research and statistics

The Office shall conduct research on tourism-related standards and guidelines in the Asia-Pacific region and analyze regional tourism development trends. It shall assist Member States in improving their tourism statistical systems and compile Asia-Pacific tourism

data to provide reference for Headquarters' decision-making and policy formulation.

6. Capacity building for Member States

The Office shall assist Member States in talent development through training exchanges, sharing of faculty and course resources, and alignment with professional standards, with particular attention to youth and to talent development in developing areas. It shall coordinate technical assistance for Member States within the region.

7. Creating a platform and a cooperation network for Member State exchange and cooperation

Leveraging Shanghai's position as an international connectivity hub, the Office shall strengthen cooperation with UN agencies, international organizations, government departments, tourism institutions, and media in the region, and establish a regional tourism exchange platform.

8. Carrying out tasks assigned by the Secretariat

The Office shall efficiently carry out tasks entrusted by the Secretariat, ensuring that the Organization's strategic priorities are accurately communicated and effectively implemented in the Asia-Pacific region.

Part V Post-Establishment Work Plan

1. Brand activities

- Hold forums on “Smart Tourism” and “Integrated Development of Culture and Tourism”, create a high-level regional dialogue platform focusing on smart tourism,;
- Develop initiatives on smart tourism or urban tourism, drawing on the “Best Tourism Villages” model;
- Organize Asia-Pacific culinary tourism exchange events;
- Organize Asia-Pacific rural tourism development conferences.

2. Capacity-building activities

- Hold smart tourism training and development workshops for tourism authorities and industry organizations in the Asia-Pacific region;
- Design smart tourism pilot projects to enhance industry management and service capacity;
- Facilitate exchange and cooperation on tourism governance among regional authorities.

3. Strengthening industry research

- Conduct research on the current status and trends of tourism development in the region and publish reports;
- Undertake research on smart tourism and integrated development of culture and tourism and publish findings;
- Assist Member States in preparing country-specific investment guides;
- Document and disseminate successful industry case studies from Member States in the region, and assist them in developing related promotional materials;
- Publish flagship research reports annually.

4. Expanding cooperation networks

- Strengthen links with other UN agencies, international organizations, government departments, industry institutions, and media in the Asia-Pacific Region;
- Support Member States in organizing trade fairs, forums, and other industry events;
- Expand the Asia-Pacific tourism cooperation network and promote information sharing.

5. Tasks assigned by the Secretariat

- Assist in compiling Asia-Pacific tourism statistics and support the Secretariat in preparing for the “Tourism Barometer” for the region;
- Participate in the Sustainable Tourism Observatories in the Asia-Pacific region;
- Coordinate World Tourism Day promotional activities in the region;
- Implement directives from the Secretariat, the Executive Council, and the General Assembly.

Part VI Organizational Structure

The Office shall be headed by one Director, supported by over ten international staff and locally recruited personnel. The Office is planned to comprise the following divisions: the Division of Administration, Division of Research and Capacity Building, Division of Smart Tourism and Development, and Division of Partnerships and Networks.

Part VII Work Evaluation

1. Submit annual reports to the Secretariat and the Commission for East Asia and the Pacific (CAP) and the Commission for South Asia (CSA).

2. Establish a set of quantifiable performance indicators.
3. Set up periodic external evaluations and a feedback mechanism from Member States to optimize work plans based on suggestions from the Secretariat and Asia-Pacific Member States.