



2022 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Revival of Tourist Boats Through the Use of Fishing Boats

Destination Name: Kamaishi *(include any state, province or region)*

Country: Japan

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Submission category: *(Please check one of the boxes that indicates the focus of your story)*

Please find detailed information for the categories below in the Top 100 training module 'Good Practice Story'.

- Governance, Reset & Recovery
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

Find detailed instructions for submitting good practices in the Top 100 training module "Good Practice Story".

Should you have any questions on your submission please refer to our FAQ page or contact top100@greendestinations.org





DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced

What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice?

- Kamaishi City, located on the Pacific coast of Japan's Tohoku region, was severely damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011.
- Kamaishi City used to own and operate large sightseeing boats, but they were damaged in the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami and scrapped.
- The community had been calling for the "revival of sightseeing boats," but it would cost an enormous amount of money to revitalize the large sightseeing boats that they once had. In addition, the previous cruise business of large sightseeing boats posed a challenge to the profitability of the business.
- For this reason, Kamaishi City, in cooperation with local businesses, has been conducting pilot cruises using work boats to demonstrate the revitalization of sightseeing boats. However, cruises on work boats were not optimal for sightseeing. Kamaishi City needed to develop a more attractive and sustainable form of cruise experience.





Methods, steps and tools applied

How was the good practice implemented?

- A new "fishing boat cruise" experience has been developed, in which visitors board a fishing boat and are guided around Kamaishi Bay by fishermen. By capitalizing on an existing resource -- fishing boats -- we were able to minimize the initial and fixed costs, and a cruise experience with a more realistic feel than that of a large sightseeing boat became possible.
- The "Fishing Boat Cruise" experience includes a visit to the coast, which is designated as a Sanriku Reconstruction National Park, and the world's deepest breakwater (certified by Guinness World Records) at the mouth of the bay, and depending on the time of year, a guided tour of an aquaculture shelf. In addition, passengers are reminded not to feed seabirds to minimize any negative impact on the ecosystem.
- The "Fishing Boat Cruise" experience is an effective way to generate new income for fishermen by making use of the time when they are not fishing. The recruitment of fishermen to operate the cruise is conducted through the fishermen's cooperative association, and all fishermen are invited to participate to ensure that they are given a fair opportunity.
- Kamaishi DMC Co., Ltd. was responsible for the planning of the "Fishing Boat Cruise" experience and the construction and operation of the operation system, using a departure and arrival point in front of a commercial facility adjacent to Kamaishi Port. Kamaishi DMC also secured fishermen to operate the fishing boat cruise and coordinated with government agencies to obtain operating permits.
- The steps to the full-scale operation of the "Fishing Boat Cruise" experience are as follow:
January 2020- Completion of the demonstration cruise project using work boats by Kamaishi City. Kamaishi DMC Co., Ltd. proposes a plan for a "fishing boat cruise" experience.
April 2020- Discussions with related agencies to obtain a licenses to operate the fishing boats. Recruitment of fishermen to operate fishing boats. Creation of cruise courses and operations.
May 2021- Start of operation of "Fishing Boat Cruises"





Key success factors

What helped you tackle the issues?

- In the planning stage, the Ministry of the Environment cooperated with the project and provided support by providing information on reference cases in other regions.
- In the preparation stage for operation, we received supportive advice from the Tohoku District Transport Bureau when discussing the licensing procedures for the operation. Similarly, the Iwate Coastal Regional Promotion Bureau provided supportive advice on licensing procedures for port use during operation.
- Kamaishi City provided support for the purchase of necessary equipment for the "Fishing Boat Cruise" experience by Kamaishi DMC Co.

Lessons learned

While implementing the Good Practice what challenges were faced, and how were they overcome?

- The "fishing boat cruise" experience was guided by fishermen who are not tourism operators, so the challenge was how to improve quality and safety.
- Through careful discussions with the fishermen operating the vessels, operational details were agreed upon. These included the setting of the cruise course, information on attractive points of interest, how to guide safety precautions, and necessary equipment in case of inclement weather.
- When the fishing boat cruise service was first launched, the fishermen themselves were concerned that they would not be able to explain the cruise well to the passengers because they were not good communicators. Therefore, they devised a response in which they would prepare materials on information explaining attractive points and read them to the passengers on board.
- Eventually, as the "fishing boat cruise" experience was conducted many times, the fishermen began to actively communicate with the passengers. And positive feedback began to come in from the passengers, such as "I learned a lot from the many stories they told me about the time of the earthquake," and "It was interesting to hear about the fishermen's work."





Results, achievements and recognitions

What were the qualitative and quantitative results of the good practice?

Economic benefits:

- In 2021, 170 tourists participated in the fishing boat cruise during the 10-month operation period.
- 70% of the boarding fees were used to generate income for fishermen, contributing to the improvement of fishermen's income through tourism.

Socio-cultural Benefits:

- Through interaction with passengers, the fishermen have developed a positive attitude toward tourism, such as studying local history to enhance the content of their guided tours.

Environmental Benefits:

- Furthermore, the "fishing boat cruise" experience has evolved into the development of a program to raise awareness of marine conservation through collaboration with Iwate University, a national university.
- Specifically, during the cruise operation, seawater from Kamaishi Bay is collected and microplastics are actually checked under a microscope by the passengers, enabling them to learn about changes and factors in the marine environment.

- Through this project, we aim to achieve the following results in the future:

- (1) Reduce the administrative budget for facility operation by allocating a portion of the proceeds from the fishing boat cruise to cover the operating costs of the commercial facility.
- (2) Increase the usage rate of the fishing boat cruises, boost the number of fishermen operating the cruise, and generate its recognized as a major revenue-generating business for the fishermen.
- (3) Contribute to an increase in the number of fishermen, whose shortage is an issue, by attracting the younger generation interested in the fishing industry through this initiative.
- (4) Create opportunities to understand the actual changes in the marine environment through the operation of fishing boat cruises, and contribute to the increase in awareness of marine conservation.





Additional references

Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from YouTube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/ One Drive) download URL (not WeTransfer).

- Kamaishi Bay Fishing Boat Cruise Official Website : <https://visitkamaishi.jp/cruise/>
- Interview with Kamaishi DMC Inc. : <https://kamaishi-dmc.com/project/4/>

