

November 14, 2018
ASEAN-Japan Centre

**Interpretation is a cost effective way for conservation and protection
of the national parks and natural heritage sites in ASEAN**



Interpretation at the Shiraito waterfall



Mt. Fuji forest walk



Workshop



Meeting the local community at the festival

The ASEAN-Japan Centre (AJC) conducted a "Training Program on Interpretation in Japan" from November 1 to 5, 2018 in Tokyo and Fujinomiya City in Shizuoka, Japan. A total of 11 participants, consisted of site managers of national parks/natural heritage sites and officers from national tourism offices and natural resources management offices, were invited for this program to learn the interpretation method for tourist sites management.

Interpretation can preserve and protect natural and cultural heritage sites without or at a minimum cost as it relies on the communication to help people understand the value of the heritages, and increase the awareness of visitors on conservation of natural and cultural resources in that area while attracting more visitors.

After receiving the introductory lectures in Tokyo, the participants visited Fujinomiya City in Shizuoka, located at the foot of Mount Fuji inscribed as a World Heritage site. The program included inspections of community-based eco-tours that utilize interpretation method, lectures by the experts, and a presentation by the city's Tourism Division to explain the importance of the partnership between the public and the private sectors in developing local tourism. The participants learned that it is important to have clear objectives and messages to protect natural and cultural heritage sites when using interpretation. Also, the significance of participation and cooperation of the local communities were highlighted throughout the program.

At the end of the training, each participant designed and presented a program/action plan aiming to apply the knowledge on interpretation into their respective heritage sites in the ASEAN Member States to contribute to the development of the sustainable tourism.

In the post-activity questionnaire, some participants answered that the inspections in Fujinomiya city helped them understand the role of interpretation in conserving natural and cultural heritage sites. Also, 82% of participants answered that once they return to their countries, they wish to improve the on-going programs by using interpretation method, and that they will share the information they obtained during the training with their colleagues.

AJC plans to organize a follow-up activity of this training in Lao P.D.R in early 2019.

<< ASEAN-Japan Centre >>

The ASEAN-Japan Centre is an intergovernmental organization established by the ASEAN Member States and Japan in 1981. It has been promoting exports from ASEAN to Japan while revitalizing investment, tourism as well as people-to-people exchanges between the ASEAN Member States and Japan.

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