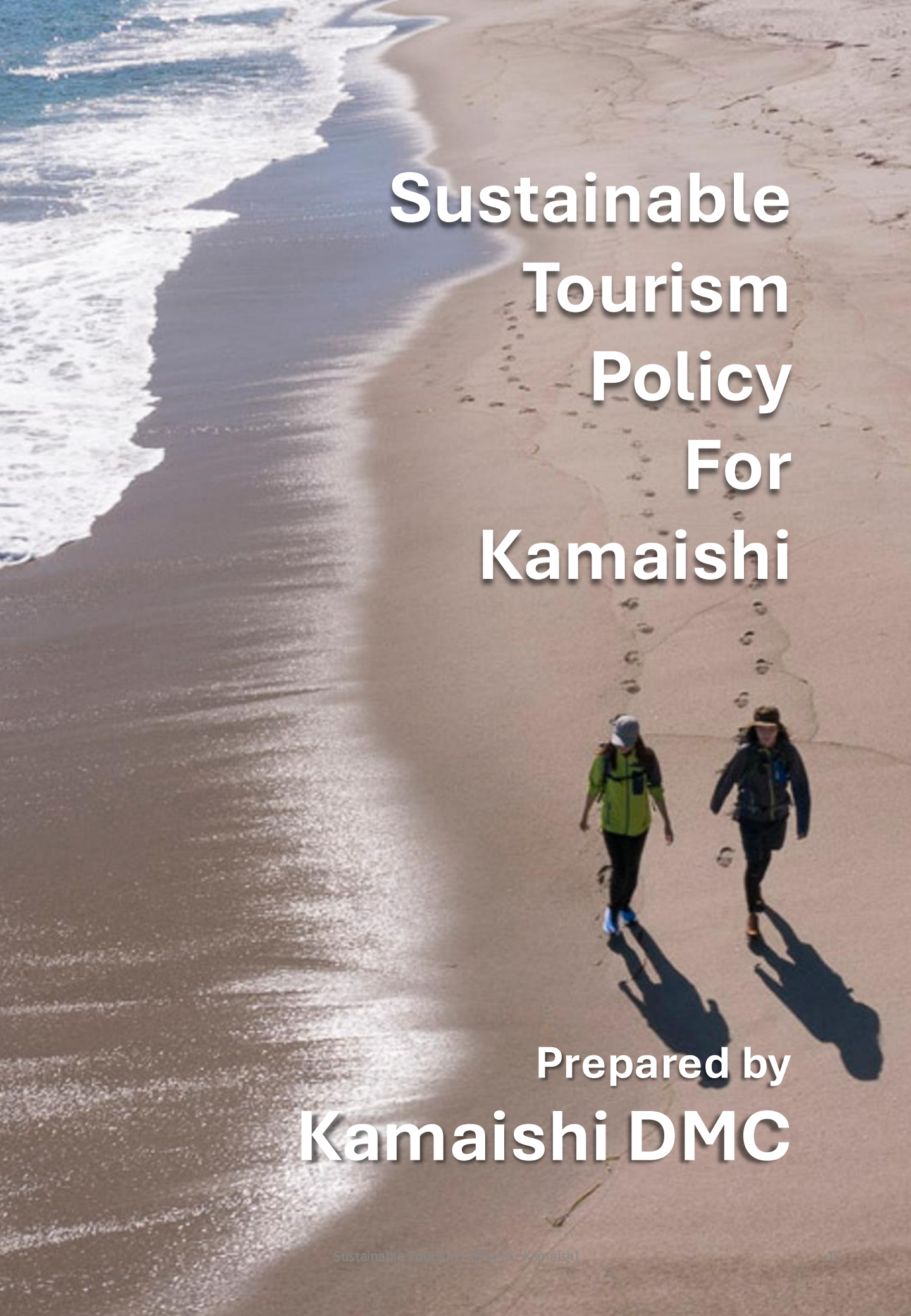




Sustainable Tourism Policy For Kamaishi

**Prepared by
Kamaishi DMC**

Table of Contents

Introduction	03
Introduction to Sustainable Tourism	03
Why Sustainable Tourism Matters to Kamaishi	04
About Kamaishi DMC	05
Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kamaishi	06
Core Commitments	06
Social Responsibility	06
Environmental Responsibility	07
Economic Responsibility	08
Implementation Policies	09
Destination Priorities	10
Protection of Natural Heritage and Ecosystems	10
Protection of Cultural Heritage and Support for Local Culture	11
Community Development and Stewardship	12
Diversity, Gender Equality and Inclusion	13
Climate Action Policy	14
Operational Policies	16
Procurement and Resource Use Policy	16
Energy Management Policy	16
Water Stewardship Policy	17
Waste Management Policy	17
Business Partner Policy	18
Transportation Policy	19
Accommodation Policy	19
Tours and Activities Policy	20
Tour Leaders and Guides Policy	20
Visitor Information and Protection Policy	21
Organizational Policies	22
Financial Policy and Strategy	22
Destination Marketing Policy and Strategy	24
Business Development and Partnership Policy and Strategy	25
Commission Policy	26
Communications Policy	26
Media Relations Policy	27
Social Media Policy	28
Emergency Response Policy	29
Employee Health and Well-being Policy	30
Employee Code of Conduct	30

Table of Contents

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement	32
Monitoring Framework	32
About Sustainability Indicators	32
International Frameworks and Recognition	33
Alignment with the GSTC Destination Criteria	33
About Green Destinations	34
Kamaishi's International Recognition	35
Our Commitment	37
Appendix	38
A. Financial Reference	38
B. Destination Marketing Reference	38
C. Business Development and Partnership Reference	39
D. Commission Reference	40
E. Communications Reference	40
F. Media Relations Reference	41
G. Social Media Reference	41
H. Employee Health and Well-being Reference	42

Introduction

Introduction to Sustainable Tourism

For tourism to contribute to the long-term sustainability of a destination, it must generate lasting benefits for local communities and the economy while protecting the destination's natural and cultural heritage that make the destination unique.

A sustainable destination supports tourism that benefits visitors, local communities, and the environment alike. At the same time, potential impacts such as overcrowding, noise, litter, and pressure on local communities should be carefully managed and kept within acceptable limits.

According to UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), sustainable tourism is based on three fundamental principles:

- Making optimal use of environmental resources
- Respecting the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities
- Ensuring viable, long-term economic activities that generate benefits for all stakeholders

These three principles represent the environmental, social, and economic pillars of sustainable tourism. Long-term sustainability can only be achieved by balancing all three pillars. Focusing on only one dimension is not sufficient to create a truly sustainable destination.

Introduction

Why Sustainable Tourism Matters to Kamaishi

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan experienced a rapid increase in international visitor arrivals, reaching a record high of 31.88 million visitors in 2019. As destinations across the country competed to attract more visitors, tourism generated significant economic benefits for many local communities.

At the same time, the rapid growth in visitor numbers also created new challenges. Some destinations experienced overtourism, including excessive visitor concentration at popular sites, pressure on local communities, and negative impacts on the natural environment and residents' quality of life. These challenges were particularly significant in rural destinations, where local communities place a strong value on mutual respect, cultural traditions, and harmony in daily life.

Although sustainable tourism had already become an important policy priority internationally, the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 accelerated discussions on sustainable tourism across Japan. The COVID-19 pandemic further reinforced the need for destinations to reconsider their long-term vision and destination management strategies. In 2023, the Government of Japan identified "Sustainable Destination Development" as a national priority in the Basic Plan for the Promotion of a Tourism Nation.

Today, sustainable tourism has become one of Japan's core tourism policies.

Kamaishi embraced this approach much earlier during its recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. Faced with population decline and the long-term decline of its traditional industries, the city recognized the need to develop tourism as a sustainable industry that could support the local economy while creating opportunities for people to engage with the community in diverse and meaningful ways.

Through close collaboration among local communities, public authorities, and tourism organizations, Kamaishi has developed tourism initiatives centered on disaster resilience, local industries, and community engagement. Today, Kamaishi stands among Japan's leading sustainable tourism destinations, with growing recognition both nationally and internationally.

Introduction

About Kamaishi DMC

Kamaishi DMC serves as the Destination Management Organization (DMO) for Kamaishi City, leading the planning, development, and management of sustainable tourism in collaboration with local communities, business partners, and public authorities.

Established in 2018 as part of the city's long-term recovery following the Great East Japan Earthquake, Kamaishi DMC works to strengthen community resilience through sustainable tourism. By supporting community-led tourism initiatives, the organization helps foster local pride, create new livelihood opportunities, and encourage continued investment in the destination's natural and cultural heritage.

Kamaishi DMC promotes the co-creation of sustainable tourism by bringing together local communities, public authorities, businesses, and professionals from across Japan. By connecting local knowledge with national and international best practices, the organization helps build partnerships that strengthen the long-term sustainability of the destination.

This Kamaishi Sustainable Tourism Policy reflects our shared commitment to creating lasting benefits for local communities while protecting the destination's natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kamaishi

Core Commitments

Kamaishi DMC is committed to advancing sustainable tourism in Kamaishi through a balanced approach to environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

These core commitments form the foundation of this Sustainable Tourism Policy and provide the guiding principles for responsible destination management.

Together, they guide our decisions, partnerships, and actions to maximize the positive impacts of tourism while preventing, minimizing, and, where possible, eliminating its negative impacts.

Social Responsibility

We:

- Maintain positive relationships with local communities, business partners, and stakeholders.
- Support sustainable community development by creating local employment opportunities.
- Promote residents' quality of life through responsible tourism.
- Create opportunities for business partners, visitors, and employees to participate in community initiatives that contribute to the environmental, social, cultural, and economic well-being of local communities.
- Provide ongoing training and capacity-building opportunities for tourism stakeholders.
- Foster a safe, healthy, and inclusive working environment for employees.
- Provide ongoing professional development opportunities for employees.
- Communicate our policy and related programs to employees, business partners, suppliers, and visitors.

Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kamaishi

Core Commitments

Environmental Responsibility

We:

- Prevent, reduce, and minimize the environmental impacts of our operations, products, and services.
- Promote responsible resource management through waste reduction, water stewardship, energy conservation, and the use of environmentally preferable products.
- Minimize the use of non-renewable resources.
- Provide employees with regular training and guidance on their environmental roles and responsibilities.
- Give preference to business partners and suppliers that share our sustainability values.
- Promote environmental awareness among visitors, business partners, suppliers, employees, and local communities.
- Protect biodiversity, wildlife, habitats, and natural heritage.
- Support the conservation of Sanriku Fukko National Park*.
- Conserve natural ecosystems and landscapes.

**...Sanriku Fukko National Park is a protected national park established in 2013 following the Great East Japan Earthquake. The park extends across Kamaishi and neighboring municipalities along Japan's northeastern Pacific coast, protecting internationally significant coastal landscapes, biodiversity, and the Michinoku Coastal Trail.*

Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kamaishi

Core Commitments

Economic Responsibility

We:

- Generate lasting economic benefits for local communities.
- Strengthen Kamaishi's destination identity by promoting its unique culture, traditions, history, heritage, and sense of place.
- Ensure fair and transparent business practices throughout our tourism operations.
- Work with business partners who share our commitment to sustainable tourism.
- Create meaningful visitor experiences by strengthening connections between visitors and local communities while fostering a deeper understanding of local culture, society, and the natural environment.
- Continuously improve our sustainability performance across environmental, social, economic, and visitor experience outcomes.

Sustainable Tourism Policy for Kamaishi

Implementation Policies

The following implementation policies translate our core commitments into practical actions across the key areas of sustainable tourism management in Kamaishi.

To provide a clear and practical framework, these policies are organized into three complementary areas:

- **Destination Priorities**, which focus on protecting and enhancing the destination's natural, cultural, and social assets;
- **Operational Policies**, which guide the responsible planning, delivery, and management of tourism activities and services; and
- **Organizational Policies**, which establish the internal governance and management practices that support effective and accountable destination management.

Together, these policies establish the principles and operational guidance for responsible decision-making while contributing to the long-term sustainability of Kamaishi as a destination.

Protection of Natural Heritage and Ecosystems

We:

- Integrate biodiversity conservation into destination management and business operations in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, management plans, and recognized best practices.
- Work only with business partners that share our commitment to protecting natural heritage and comply with applicable legal and environmental requirements.
- Support the conservation of local biodiversity through responsible tourism and conservation initiatives.
- Manage our owned and operated sites and facilities to protect and enhance biodiversity.
- Identify, monitor, and minimize potential impacts on wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems.
- Monitor for invasive alien species and take appropriate measures to prevent their introduction and spread.
- Give preference to native plant species in landscaping and habitat restoration wherever appropriate.
- Develop, implement, and comply with guidelines for visits to protected areas.
- Support ongoing training for guides working in protected areas.
- Consider the carrying capacity, ecological sensitivity, and conservation objectives of protected areas when determining the size, frequency, and timing of tours and activities.
- Encourage visitors to behave responsibly and support biodiversity conservation.
- Collect feedback from visitors and local communities to continuously improve our conservation practices.
- Ensure that all wildlife interactions comply with applicable laws, regulations, and recognized best practices.
- Develop and implement wildlife interaction guidelines based on advice from qualified wildlife experts whenever appropriate.

Destination Priorities

- Ensure that all business partners comply with applicable wildlife protection laws, regulations, and guidelines.
- Prohibit direct contact with or feeding of wildlife unless permitted under expert supervision or authorized conservation programs.
- Take appropriate measures to minimize disturbance and harm to wildlife.
- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations relating to the capture, possession, trade, and use of wildlife.
- Ensure that all tourism services and experiences comply with applicable animal welfare legislation, regulations, and guidelines.

Protection of Cultural Heritage and Support for Local Culture

We:

- Support the conservation and responsible use of Hashino Iron Mining and Smelting Site*.
- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations relating to the protection of cultural heritage.
- Actively support the protection and conservation of cultural heritage.
- Identify, monitor, and manage tourism-related impacts on cultural heritage sites.
- Respect and protect local assets and sites of historical, archaeological, cultural, or spiritual significance while ensuring that residents' access is not restricted.
- Take appropriate measures to prevent damage to cultural heritage sites and cultural assets by visitors.
- Develop, implement, and comply with visitor behavior guidelines for sensitive sites and cultural events.

**...Hashino Iron Mining and Smelting Site is part of the UNESCO World Heritage property Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining. As one of Kamaishi's most significant cultural heritage assets, it contributes to the destination's historical identity and sustainable cultural tourism.*

Destination Priorities

- Incorporate feedback from local communities on how local cultural heritage is presented and interpreted.
- Collaborate with local communities in developing and offering visitor experiences based on intangible cultural heritage, including traditional performing arts.
- Incorporate authentic elements of local culture into our tourism products, services, design, food, and visitor experiences wherever appropriate.
- Support business partners that incorporate local culture and heritage into their tourism products and services.
- Respect copyright and intellectual property rights and obtain all necessary permissions.

Community Development and Stewardship

We:

- Recognize tourism as a catalyst for strengthening local communities by fostering participation, dialogue, shared responsibility, and lasting connections among residents.
- Recognize that participation in tourism and community activities can strengthen social connections and contribute to residents' well-being and quality of life, particularly in the face of demographic challenges such as population decline and an aging population.
- Ensure that tourism planning is informed by a thorough understanding of local community values, priorities, and needs.
- Develop tourism products, visitor experiences, and destination promotion through inclusive and meaningful engagement with local communities.
- Engage regularly with local communities, community organizations, and public authorities to ensure that community voices are reflected in tourism planning and decision-making.
- Provide local communities with transparent communication, appropriate business information, and training opportunities that enable meaningful participation in tourism development.

Destination Priorities

- Create opportunities for open and equitable dialogue among local communities, business partners, public authorities, and other stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and shared ownership of sustainable tourism.
- Support educational and community initiatives that foster local pride, strengthen appreciation for local culture and everyday life, and contribute to residents' well-being.
- Create opportunities for learning and community dialogue that strengthen residents' connection to their local culture, heritage, and natural environment, encouraging continuous stewardship of the destination.
- Create meaningful visitor experiences that encourage respectful interactions between visitors and local communities, helping residents rediscover the value of their culture, traditions, and ways of life.
- Foster a virtuous cycle in which stronger community pride inspires residents to further enhance local tourism assets, creating richer visitor experiences and contributing to the long-term sustainability of the destination.

Diversity, Gender Equality and Inclusion

We:

- Promote tourism that is inclusive, accessible, and welcoming for people of all genders, gender identities, ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
- Foster an inclusive workplace where diversity is respected and every employee feels valued, supported, and empowered to contribute according to their individual strengths and life circumstances.
- Ensure equal opportunities in recruitment, compensation, benefits, promotion, career development, and leadership opportunities for all employees, regardless of gender or gender identity.
- Provide equal access to education, professional development, mentoring, networking, and leadership opportunities for all employees.

Destination Priorities

- Foster a shared understanding among employees that diversity, equity, and inclusion strengthen employee well-being, organizational performance, and long-term sustainability.
- Communicate our Diversity, Gender Equality and Inclusion Policy to business partners, suppliers, and stakeholders, and seek their cooperation in applying these principles where relevant.
- Ensure that the tourism products, services, and experiences we select, develop, and promote are inclusive and do not undermine diversity, gender equality, or equal opportunity.
- Develop and regularly review policies addressing harassment, discrimination, and other inappropriate workplace conduct through consultation with employees, including clear disciplinary procedures for policy violations.
- Maintain and regularly update organizational guidelines that support employees taking parental leave, childcare leave, family caregiving leave, and other family-related leave.

Climate Action Policy

We:

- Encourage employees to use public transportation and other sustainable modes of travel through appropriate incentives.
- Reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions by promoting low-carbon working practices, including remote work, virtual meetings, and the use of lower-emission vehicles where feasible.
- Measure and monitor energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions at our owned and operated facilities, and continuously improve energy efficiency without compromising safety or service quality.
- Encourage visitors to minimize the carbon footprint of their travel through lower-carbon transportation options and, where appropriate, credible carbon offset programs.

Destination Priorities

- Measure and monitor greenhouse gas emissions associated with visitor transportation and develop strategies to reduce their climate impact.
- Measure greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, and use the results to guide tourism planning, operational decision-making, and the continuous improvement of our climate actions.
- Raise awareness of climate change and climate action among local communities, tourism businesses, employees, and visitors through education, communication, and the sharing of practical knowledge.
- Work with business partners, public authorities, and local stakeholders to advance a low-carbon and climate-resilient destination through collaborative destination management.
- Apply Kamaishi's experience of disaster recovery and resilience to develop tourism initiatives that strengthen the capacity of local communities to adapt to climate change and future natural hazards.

Operational Priorities

Procurement and Resource Use Policy

We:

- Give preference to locally sourced products and services wherever feasible.
- Support local businesses and suppliers through responsible procurement practices.
- Give preference to environmentally preferable products and services, including eco-labelled products, biodegradable cleaning products, environmentally responsible printing services, and sustainably sourced paper where locally available.
- Consider environmental performance when selecting products, services, and suppliers.
- Purchase products in bulk where appropriate to reduce packaging waste.
- Minimize the use of single-use items and disposable consumables.
- Reduce paper consumption by using double-sided printing and other paper-saving settings as the default for printers and photocopiers.
- Minimize printed materials through demand-based printing and digital-first communication wherever appropriate.

Energy Management Policy

We:

- Measure and monitor energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, and continuously improve our energy performance.
- Give preference to renewable energy, energy-efficient lighting, and energy-efficient equipment wherever feasible, taking cost, quality, and environmental performance into consideration.

Operational Priorities

- Reduce unnecessary energy consumption by switching off lights and equipment when not in use.
- Improve energy efficiency by using timers, sensors, automatic controls, and energy-saving settings wherever practical.

Water Stewardship Policy

We:

- Use water responsibly throughout our offices and operations.
- Measure and monitor water consumption on a regular basis, and implement water management plans to continuously improve water efficiency.
- Install water-saving fixtures where feasible and promote the reuse of wastewater and rainwater whenever practical.
- Encourage visitors to use water responsibly during their stay.
- Work with business partners, suppliers, and local stakeholders to promote responsible water stewardship throughout the destination through communication, collaboration, and the sharing of good practices.

Waste Management Policy

We:

- Comply with all applicable laws and regulations relating to waste management and wastewater treatment.
- Develop and implement policies to reduce solid waste, increase recycling, and continuously improve waste management practices.
- Reduce packaging waste and minimize the use of non-recyclable and non-biodegradable packaging.

Operational Priorities

- Reduce the use of single-use plastic water bottles wherever practical.
- Separate recyclable materials and ensure they are collected and disposed of responsibly.
- Minimize waste from printer ink cartridges, toner cartridges, batteries, and other consumables through recycling and responsible disposal wherever practical.
- Minimize the use of hazardous substances wherever possible and ensure their safe storage, handling, and disposal.
- Take appropriate measures to prevent pollution from facilities and operations under our control.

Business Partner Policy

We:

- Give preference to business partners that demonstrate a commitment to sustainable tourism and strong environmental, social, and community performance.
- Communicate our Sustainable Tourism Policy and sustainability expectations to key business partners.
- Support key business partners through written agreements, information sharing, training opportunities, and ongoing dialogue to strengthen sustainable tourism practices.
- Require key business partners to comply with all applicable laws relating to labor rights and human rights.
- Terminate business relationships with partners who fail to address serious violations of child protection within their direct operations or supply chains.

Operational Priorities

Transportation Policy

We:

- Give preference to sustainable transportation options, particularly public transportation, whenever practical, while balancing sustainability with cost, comfort, and operational needs.
- Design and operate tours and visitor experiences using the most sustainable transportation options reasonably available, while integrating sustainable accommodation and visitor activities wherever practical.
- Encourage and promote sustainable transportation options, such as bicycle rental, car sharing, shared shuttle services, and other low-carbon mobility solutions, among employees, visitors, business partners, and local stakeholders.

Accommodation Policy

We:

- Give preference to locally owned and operated accommodation providers that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability, support local employment and community well-being, and, where appropriate, hold recognized sustainability certifications.
- Encourage accommodation providers to strengthen their sustainability performance by establishing sustainability goals, participating in training, and respecting local culture and heritage.
- Maintain an up-to-date understanding of the sustainability practices of accommodation providers through regular communication, questionnaires, and other appropriate means.

Operational Priorities

- Terminate business relationships with accommodation providers where there is clear evidence of serious human rights violations, including failures to protect children from sexual exploitation, or where their operations significantly undermine essential resources and services for local communities.

Tours and Activities Policy

We:

- Maintain an up-to-date understanding of tours and activities that respect local culture, nature, and the environment.
- Give preference to and promote tours and activities that contribute to environmental conservation, biodiversity, and local cultural heritage.
- Advise visitors on appropriate behavior during tours and activities, with a focus on respecting local culture, nature, and the environment.
- Regularly review tours and activities to ensure they respect people, wildlife, natural resources, and local cultural values, and work with providers to improve practices or discontinue offerings where necessary.

Tour Leaders and Guides Policy

We:

- Ensure that all employees and contracted personnel have clear written agreements describing their roles, responsibilities, and working conditions.
- Give preference to qualified local tour leaders, guides, drivers, cooks, and other local staff wherever possible, and provide training and capacity-building opportunities to strengthen local tourism expertise.

Operational Priorities

- Ensure that tour leaders, guides, and other contracted personnel receive fair compensation that meets or exceeds applicable legal or relevant industry standards.
- Ensure that employees and contracted personnel receive appropriate training and maintain the professional knowledge and skills required for their respective roles.
- Ensure that visitors are guided by qualified guides when visiting cultural heritage sites, protected areas, or other ecologically sensitive areas.
- Equip tour leaders and guides to foster meaningful connections between visitors and local communities, encouraging mutual respect, cultural understanding, and shared appreciation for Kamaishi's nature, heritage, and way of life.

Visitor Information and Protection Policy

We:

- Ensure that all marketing, advertising, and visitor communications are truthful, transparent, and do not make misleading or exaggerated claims.
- Protect visitors' privacy and personal information through responsible and appropriate business practices.
- Provide visitors with essential information on health, safety, emergency procedures, and applicable laws before and during their visit.
- Maintain clear emergency response procedures and ensure that employees are prepared to respond appropriately.
- Collect visitor feedback, including complaints, and use the results to improve the sustainability, quality, and overall visitor experience of our tourism services.

Organizational Priorities

Financial Policy and Strategy

Financial Philosophy

As a Destination Management Organization (DMO), our financial management aims to balance two complementary objectives: maintaining a financially self-sustaining organization while strengthening Kamaishi's local earning capacity and supporting long-term regional value creation.

We seek to generate sustainable revenue while avoiding excessive reliance on public subsidies. We are committed to reinvesting our profits into enhancing local tourism assets, supporting community initiatives, and creating lasting value for Kamaishi.

Strategic Priorities

To maintain financial resilience and support sustainable destination management, we pursue the following strategic priorities:

1. Diversified Revenue Portfolio

- Maintain a balanced portfolio of stable and growth-oriented revenue sources to strengthen financial resilience and reduce business risk.
- Secure stable income through long-term contractual services, destination management activities, and other sustainable revenue streams.
- Develop high-value tourism products, including corporate training programs and educational travel, and reinvest the resulting profits into new regional value creation.

2. Strategic Partnerships

- Leverage Japanese public-private partnership mechanisms to build long-term partnerships between Kamaishi and corporations, institutions, and other organizations, creating new opportunities for regional value creation.

Organizational Priorities

3. Efficient Resource Management

- Improve operational efficiency through digital investment, effective management systems, and strategic project prioritization, while prioritizing investments that create long-term value for Kamaishi and its communities.
- Focus human resources on activities that create the greatest value for the destination, including product development, visitor services, and stakeholder engagement.

Financial Governance

As an organization that serves as a bridge between the public and private sectors, we are committed to maintaining sound financial governance through transparent financial management, appropriate internal controls, and responsible investment decisions.

Financial resources are allocated not only to ensure organizational sustainability but also to maximize long-term value for Kamaishi and its stakeholders.

Financial accountability is overseen by the Representative Director & CEO and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

For further details, please refer to Appendix A.

Organizational Priorities

Destination Marketing Policy and Strategy

Marketing Philosophy

Our marketing approach is based on destination stewardship rather than visitor volume. We aim to create long-term economic value for the local community while protecting Kamaishi's natural environment, cultural heritage, and quality of life.

We are committed to maintaining and continually improving internationally recognized sustainability standards, including those based on the GSTC Destination Criteria*.

Strategic Priorities

Our marketing strategy focuses on the following priorities:

- Maximize local economic value by developing tourism products based on Kamaishi's unique regional assets and strengthening collaboration with local businesses.
- Build long-term relationships with people and organizations beyond Kamaishi who have developed meaningful connections through disaster recovery, tourism, education, and community engagement, and foster these relationships into long-term co-creation partnerships.
- Promote tourism experiences that reflect Kamaishi's distinctive identity, including disaster recovery learning, adventure travel, industrial heritage, and rugby culture.

For further details, please refer to Appendix B.

**...See p.33 for explanation of GSTC Destination Criteria.*

Organizational Priorities

Business Development and Partnership Policy and Strategy

Philosophy

Our business development initiatives are designed to build long-term partnerships, promote responsible destination development, and create regional value for Kamaishi.

These initiatives include study visits, familiarization (FAM) programs, and MICE* programs that promote learning, dialogue, co-creation, and long-term partnerships in support of sustainable destination development.

Strategic Priorities

Our strategy focuses on the following priorities:

- Develop high-value study visits that showcase Kamaishi's experience in disaster recovery, community resilience, destination management, and public-private collaboration, providing practical insights that can be applied to regional development in other communities.
- Use familiarization (FAM) programs to build meaningful relationships with travel professionals, educational decision-makers, media, and other partners who can support responsible tourism development in Kamaishi.
- Position Kamaishi as a destination for executive retreats, leadership programs, and MICE initiatives where business leaders and decision-makers can engage directly with real regional challenges, exchange ideas, and develop new perspectives for their organizations.

For further details, please refer to Appendix C.

**...MICE stands for Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions.*

Organizational Priorities

Partnership and Commission Policy

We are committed to maintaining a fair, transparent, and mutually beneficial commission framework that strengthens long-term partnerships with local tourism businesses, including accommodation providers.

Commissions are applied only to bookings generated through Kamaishi DMC's marketing, promotion, and reservation services, ensuring that businesses pay only for measurable results while sharing in the value created through our partnership.

We apply commissions flexibly and fairly, taking into account the scale, business model, and operational circumstances of local tourism businesses, particularly small-scale providers.

Commission revenue is reinvested in destination management, tourism infrastructure, and initiatives that enhance the long-term sustainability, competitiveness, and shared prosperity of Kamaishi as a destination.

Communications Policy

We are committed to communicating Kamaishi's values, sustainability efforts, and destination identity in a clear, accurate, inclusive, and responsible manner.

Our communications aim to inspire understanding, trust, and meaningful connections with people who share our commitment to responsible tourism and sustainable destination development.

We communicate not only to promote Kamaishi as a destination, but also to attract visitors, partners, and organizations who value authentic experiences, environmental stewardship, community well-being, and long-term regional sustainability.

For further details, please refer to Appendix D.

Organizational Priorities

We communicate sustainability achievements and impacts through accessible stories, visual content, and, where appropriate, data that demonstrates how tourism contributes to the local economy, community well-being, and environmental stewardship.

We encourage community-based communication by highlighting local people, producers, businesses, and tourism stakeholders as authentic voices of Kamaishi.

When using generative AI to support communications, we ensure that all AI-assisted content is reviewed by humans for accuracy, safety, rights protection, confidentiality, and alignment with Kamaishi DMC's values.

Media Relations Policy

We are committed to engaging proactively with journalists, media organizations, and content creators through open dialogue, recognizing that responsible media engagement is an important opportunity to build trust, deepen understanding, and communicate the long-term value of Kamaishi.

We communicate with openness, accuracy, timeliness, and integrity, while respecting local communities, cultural context, and the perspectives of all stakeholders. We seek to ensure that media coverage contributes to an accurate and balanced understanding of Kamaishi and supports its long-term reputation as a sustainable destination.

In the event of significant incidents or issues that may affect Kamaishi's reputation or visitor safety, Kamaishi DMC will coordinate promptly with senior management and relevant public authorities to ensure timely, accurate, and consistent communication.

For further details, please refer to Appendix E-F.

Organizational Priorities

Social Media Policy

We use social media to build lasting relationships with people and organizations beyond Kamaishi who share an interest in the city's future, while communicating the destination's values in an authentic, respectful, and engaging manner.

Our social media communications seek to strengthen trust by sharing the everyday stories, people, culture, and landscapes that make Kamaishi unique, while encouraging meaningful dialogue with visitors, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

We communicate with courtesy and respect, recognizing our role as a destination management organization representing the local community.

We respect privacy, human rights, intellectual property, and cultural diversity, and do not publish or encourage content that is discriminatory, misleading, offensive, or politically or religiously partisan.

Where inaccurate information, misunderstandings, or significant reputational issues arise, we respond promptly through appropriate fact-checking, transparent communication, and coordination with relevant stakeholders where necessary.

For further details, please refer to Appendix G.

Organizational Priorities

Emergency Response Policy

We are committed to protecting the safety of visitors, employees, and local communities through effective preparedness, response, and recovery for natural disasters and other emergencies, with particular emphasis on tsunami preparedness and the lessons learned from Kamaishi's disaster recovery experience.

Preparedness

- Improve visitor safety by providing clear, multilingual tsunami evacuation information, signage, and guidance to designated evacuation areas.
- Conduct regular emergency drills with tourism businesses, local residents, and relevant organizations to strengthen preparedness and coordination.
- Share information regularly with local stakeholders to improve disaster awareness and emergency readiness.

Emergency Response

- Prioritize immediate tsunami evacuation by encouraging tourism staff to take leadership in guiding visitors quickly to designated safe locations in accordance with official emergency procedures.
- Encourage evacuation on foot whenever appropriate, drawing on lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake to reduce traffic congestion and support faster, safer tsunami evacuation.

Recovery and Visitor Support

- Support visitors following natural disasters and other emergencies through temporary accommodation arrangements, information sharing, and communication assistance in cooperation with Kamaishi City and relevant organizations.
- Review emergency procedures regularly and continuously improve preparedness based on lessons learned, changing risks, and ongoing collaboration with the local community.

Organizational Priorities

Employee Health and Well-being Policy

We are committed to promoting the health, safety, and well-being of our employees by providing a supportive working environment and encouraging healthy and sustainable ways of working.

Employee Code of Conduct

As employees of Kamaishi DMC, we take pride in serving as professionals who contribute to the sustainable future of Kamaishi. As one of Japan's leading destination management organizations, we strive to connect people, organizations, and communities, building partnerships that create long-term value for the region.

Our conduct is guided by the following principles.

1. Represent the Spirit of Kamaishi

We embrace Kamaishi's history, culture, natural environment, resilience, and spirit of openness. Regardless of where we come from, we act as ambassadors for the destination by sharing its stories, values, and identity with pride while helping others discover the unique character of Kamaishi.

2. Embrace the Spirit of Openness

Inspired by Kamaishi's long history as an open industrial and port city, we welcome diverse people, ideas, and cultures. We create opportunities for collaboration between local communities and partners from outside the region, recognizing that openness strengthens both innovation and regional resilience.

3. Create Shared Value

We serve as coordinators who balance the interests of visitors, local communities, businesses, and public partners. We seek solutions that create mutual benefit and long-term environmental, social, cultural, and economic value for Kamaishi.

For further details, please refer to Appendix H.

Organizational Priorities

4. Act with Agility and Resilience

Inspired by Kamaishi's recovery from repeated disasters and its enduring rugby spirit, we embrace change, continuous learning, and evidence-based decision-making. We approach challenges proactively and continually seek better ways to strengthen destination management.

5. Demonstrate Integrity and Accountability

We recognize that our decisions contribute to shaping the future of Kamaishi. We act honestly, transparently, and responsibly, always placing the trust of local communities, partners, and visitors at the center of our work. We uphold the highest ethical standards while striving to be an organization trusted by the people of Kamaishi.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

Monitoring Framework

Effective monitoring is essential to understanding whether tourism is delivering positive outcomes for the destination while minimizing negative impacts.

Kamaishi DMC monitors environmental, social, cultural, and economic performance using a set of sustainability indicators. These indicators provide objective information that helps us assess progress, identify emerging issues, support evidence-based decision-making, and continuously improve our destination management practices.

Monitoring results are shared with relevant stakeholders where appropriate and are used to inform planning, policy development, and the ongoing review of this Sustainable Tourism Policy.

About Sustainability Indicators

Sustainability indicators provide objective information that helps destinations understand whether tourism is creating positive environmental, social, cultural, and economic outcomes.

As sustainable tourism developed around the world, many organizations created their own sets of sustainability indicators. To promote consistency, credibility, and international comparability, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) established internationally recognized destination criteria that provide a common framework for sustainable destination management.

Kamaishi DMC uses sustainability indicators aligned with the GSTC Destination Criteria to support evidence-based decision-making, monitor progress, and continuously improve destination management.

International Frameworks and Recognition

Alignment with the GSTC Destination Criteria

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) develops internationally recognized criteria for sustainable tourism.

The GSTC Destination Criteria provide a common framework for destination management covering four key areas:

- Sustainable Management
- Socio-economic Sustainability
- Cultural Sustainability
- Environmental Sustainability

The GSTC Destination Criteria are widely recognized as the global baseline standards for sustainable tourism and form the foundation of many destination certification programs worldwide.

Relationship between the GSTC Criteria and Green Destinations Certification and Kamaishi



International Frameworks and Recognition

About Green Destinations

Green Destinations is an international non-profit organization based in the Netherlands that supports sustainable destination management through certification, recognition, and capacity-building programs.

Its destination certification program is accredited by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) and assesses destinations against internationally recognized sustainability standards.

Kamaishi has chosen Green Destinations as its external certification and recognition program to support continuous improvement, international benchmarking, and responsible destination management.



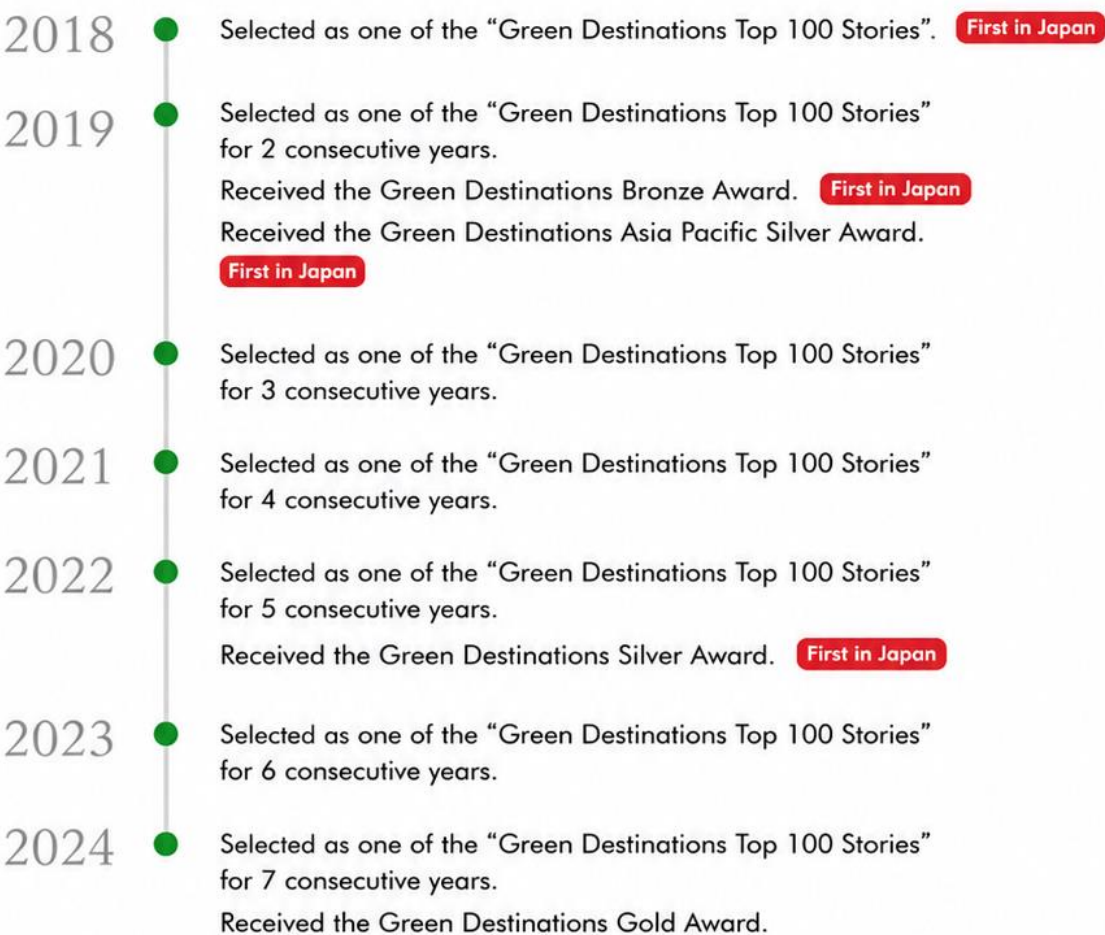
International Frameworks and Recognition

Kamaishi's International Recognition

Since 2018, Kamaishi has been continuously recognized as one of the Green Destinations Top 100 Stories and has received Bronze, Silver, and Gold Green Destinations Awards.

These recognitions reflect Kamaishi's long-term commitment to sustainable destination management, community resilience, and continuous improvement.

Kamaishi's Sustainability Recognition Timeline



International Frameworks and Recognition

Green Destinations Awards and Recognition



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2018



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2019



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2020



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2021



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2022



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2023



Green Destinations
Top 100 Stories
Selected in 2024



Green Destinations
Bronze Award
(2019)



Green Destinations
Silver Award
(2022)



Green Destinations
Gold Award
(2024)

Our Commitment

Sustainable tourism is not a destination but an ongoing journey of learning, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

At Kamaishi DMC, we believe that the future of tourism depends on creating lasting value for local communities while protecting the natural environment, cultural heritage, and unique identity that make each destination meaningful.

This Sustainable Tourism Policy represents our long-term commitment to responsible destination stewardship and to creating a better future for Kamaishi and generations to come.

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Appendix

A. Financial Reference

To evaluate our financial sustainability and regional impact, we regularly monitor the following indicators:

- **Stable Funding Ratio**
The proportion of stable funding sources within total revenue.
- **Return on Investment (ROI)**
The economic value generated for participating local businesses through Kamaishi DMC's activities.
- **Community Reinvestment**
The value reinvested in the local community through our activities and spending.

B. Destination Marketing Reference

The following examples support the implementation of Kamaishi DMC's destination marketing strategy and may be updated as markets, products, and business priorities evolve.

- **Corporate Clients (B2B)**
Organizations seeking practical learning in disaster recovery, resilience, risk management, and regional revitalization.
- **International Visitors**
Environmentally and culturally conscious travelers interested in adventure travel, coastal landscapes, local culture, and meaningful regional experiences.
- **Educational Travel**
Schools and educational institutions seeking field-based learning experiences focused on disaster recovery, sustainability, and the SDGs.
- **Domestic Repeat Visitors**
Kamaishi enthusiasts, campers, regional travelers, and visitors seeking authentic local activities and culture.

Appendix

C. Business Development and Partnership Reference

The following examples support the implementation of Kamaishi DMC's business development and partnership strategy and may be updated as programmes, partnerships, and business priorities evolve.

Study Visits

- Combine disaster recovery storytelling with destination management, regional revitalization, and public-private partnership practices.
- Incorporate workshops and discussions with local stakeholders to encourage practical learning and knowledge exchange.
- Develop long-term relationships through follow-up programmes, repeat visits, and advisory opportunities.

Familiarization (FAM) Programs

- Offer flexible learning programs combining unique Kamaishi experiences, such as fisheries, environmental initiatives, blue carbon, and sustainability projects.
- Apply a co-creation approach by incorporating feedback from participating travel professionals into future product development.
- Develop premium programs showcasing authentic local lifestyles and high-value regional experiences for international markets.

MICE

- Position Kamaishi as an off-site destination where organizations can explore real regional challenges while developing new ideas and leadership.
- Utilize distinctive local venues, including the Unosumai Memorial Stadium, Nebama Beach Campground, TETTO, and NEMARU PORT.
- Promote sustainable MICE programs incorporating carbon reduction and blue carbon initiatives.

Appendix

D. Commission Reference

Market Alignment

Commission rates are benchmarked against the standard rates charged by major online travel agencies (OTAs), generally 10–15%, to ensure a fair and competitive commission structure for local tourism businesses.

E. Communications Reference

International Visitors

Primary Channels- Instagram, YouTube, English-language website

Core Message- Responsible travel in a globally recognized sustainable destination, featuring Kamaishi's sustainability initiatives, unique regional experiences, and international recognition.

Corporate Partners and Business Leaders

Primary Channels- Business media, PR TIMES, referrals, direct outreach

Core Message- Corporate training, regional revitalization, co-creation projects, workations, and leadership development through real regional challenges.

Educational Institutions

Primary Channels- Academic conferences, educational publications, direct outreach

Core Message- Disaster recovery, community resilience, sustainable destination management, and field-based learning opportunities.

Local Residents

Primary Channels- Official LINE account, local newspapers, tourism facilities

Core Message- Rediscovering local pride, strengthening community engagement, and promoting Kamaishi's regional products and tourism initiatives.

Appendix

F. Media Relations Reference

The following examples support the implementation of Kamaishi DMC's media relations policy and may be updated as operational practices and communication priorities evolve.

Media Request Assessment

Evaluate media requests based on their potential to enhance Kamaishi's reputation while respecting the interests of local communities and business partners.

Media Preparation

Coordinate appropriate interview locations and local stakeholders to ensure that each story reflects the context and values of Kamaishi.

Media Support

Provide on-site support during interviews and filming to facilitate accurate communication and smooth media operations.

Content Review and Promotion

Review factual information, including names, figures, and official statements where appropriate, before publication. Promote published content through Kamaishi DMC's communication channels with the consent of the media organization.

G.Social Media Reference

The following examples support the implementation of Kamaishi DMC's social media strategy and may be updated as communication priorities, audiences, and emerging platforms evolve.

Tourism Information

Ex.) Seasonal events, scenic locations, local restaurants, regional products, travel tips, and visitor experiences.

Project Updates

Ex.) Destination management projects, study visits, partnership activities, sustainability initiatives, and event reports.

Appendix

Life in Kamaishi

Ex.) Seasonal landscapes, everyday life, behind-the-scenes stories, local people, community activities, and authentic regional experiences.

Emergency and Disaster Information

Ex.) Accurate emergency information, disaster preparedness, recovery updates, appreciation for support, and public safety messages.

H. Employee Health and Well-being Reference

The following examples support the implementation of Kamaishi DMC's employee health and well-being policy and may be updated as organizational needs and workplace practices evolve.

- Regular health examinations, mental health support, work-life balance initiatives, and safe and supportive working environments.
- Professional development, training, and continuous learning opportunities that strengthen employee capabilities and support sustainable destination management.