

CAN FOOD SUSTAINABILITY BECOME A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR TOURISM AND MICE?

— *Chefs, Restaurants, and Building Destinations of Choice* —

GSTC Conference Phuket

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The member of Food & Beverage Advisory Group for the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)

The Chair of the Sustainable Restaurant Working Team, the Council for Public-Private Partnership in Food Technology, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan (MAFF)



SPEAKER PROFILE

Takeshi Shimotaya

- **Executive Director, The Sustainable Restaurant Association Japan**
<https://foodmadegood.jp/>
- **The member of Food & Beverage Advisory Group for The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)**
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<https://srwt.jp/en/chefs-manifesto/>



To serve as a bridge between Japan and Europe in sustainability, he founded Sustainavision Ltd. in the UK in 2010. Based in London, the company offers training and research services on sustainability to Japanese companies. Since 2012, he has regularly conducted the “CMI Approved Certified Sustainability (ESG) Practitioner Training” in Japan. In 2017, he established the Global Alliance for Sustainable Supply Chain (ASSC) as a general incorporated association in Japan—a non-profit organization dedicated to raising awareness and promoting action on business and human rights. He stepped down as Executive Director in April 2022. In March 2018, he established the Sustainable Restaurant Association Japan in collaboration with the Sustainable Restaurant Association (SRA) in the UK. The association promotes sustainability in restaurants and food service, raises consumer awareness, and works to transform the food system toward a more sustainable model.

More recently, as the Chair of the Sustainable Restaurant Working Team of Food Tech Public-Private Council of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, he led the team and contributed to the publication of “Toward a Sustainable Future of Food: Japan’s Chef Sustainability Manifesto – 17 Principles Toward 2030 (Chef’s Sustainability Manifesto)”. This initiative supports the promotion of sustainability among chefs and culinary professionals in Japan, aiming to drive behavioral change among consumers and citizens.

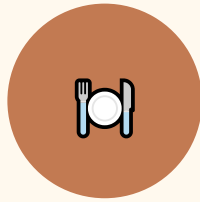
He earned a Master of Science in Environmental Science from the University of East Anglia and an MBA from Lancaster University in the UK. He is also a frequent speaker and author on topics related to sustainability.

FOOD IS OFTEN THE FIRST EXPERIENCE OF A DESTINATION

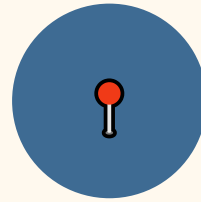
A meal is more than food.



Nature



Culture



Values of
Place

Chefs and restaurants shape how visitors feel a destination from the very beginning.

A meal reflects **local nature**, **culture**, and the **values** of a place.

This is why food is not a side issue in tourism. It is part of destination identity.

Chefs and restaurants contribute to the quality of tourism itself.

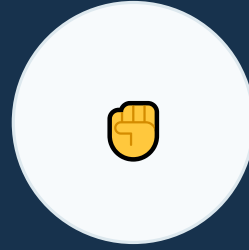
FOOD IS DEEPLY CONNECTED TO GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES



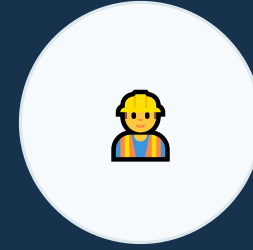
**Climate
Change**



**Biodiversity
Loss**



**Human
Rights**



**Labour
Issues**



**Plastic
Pollution**



- Many chefs care about sustainability but most chefs don't know how to cover the full scope of sustainability.
- Sustainability in food is not only about one issue. It connects environment, society, and operations at the same time.
- We need structure, guidance, and a common understanding about it.

THIS IS WHERE SRA AND FOOD MADE GOOD COMES IN SO FAR

SRA Japan works as the Japanese partner of the Sustainable Restaurant Association in UK. **Food Made Good Standard**

A holistic international framework for F&B businesses. To help expand food sustainability among restaurants and hotels.



The role of FOOD MADE GOOD Standard, the framework, is to help restaurants understand where they are now — and improve in a more comprehensive way.

BUT IN JAPAN, MARKET DEMAND IS STILL WEAK

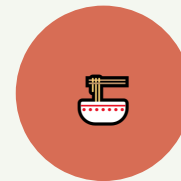
Consumers in Japan do not yet choose restaurants by sustainability.

That means the market incentive for restaurants is still limited.



Under the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, SRWT published

“The Japanese Chef’s Manifesto for Sustainable Future: 17 Guideline Toward 2030” in 2025



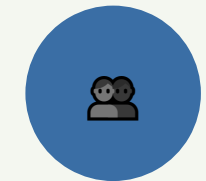
Food Culture



Sourcing

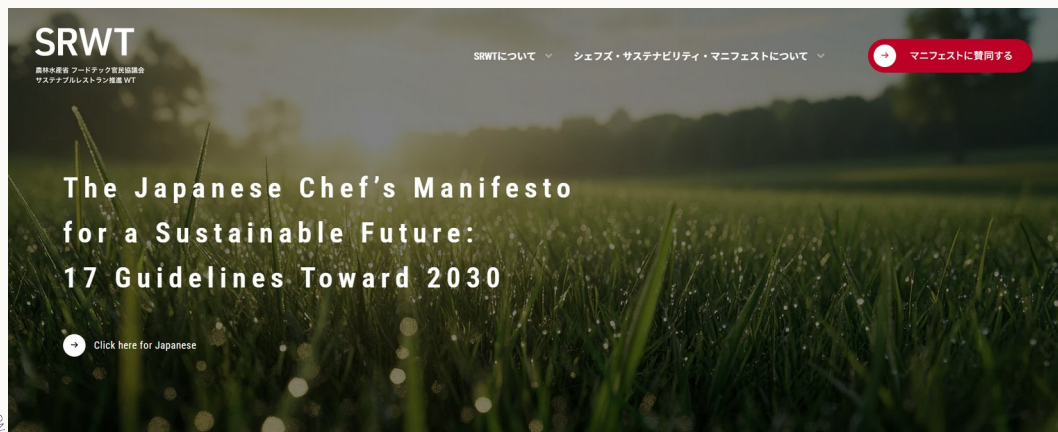


Environment



Society

The manifesto helps chefs in Japan to understand sustainability in Japanese context.



The QR code for Japanese Chefs Sustainability Manifesto



HOW DO WE MAKE FOOD SUSTAINABILITY VISIBLE AS TOURISM VALUE?

**Chefs' sustainability efforts are not visible to tourists.
However, when we translate those actions into tourism language, restaurant practice becomes destination value;**



TOURISM AND MICE CAN BECOME NEW DRIVERS OF CHANGE

If domestic consumer demand is still weak, where can the next push come from?

We need another source of motivation.



Inbound
Tourism



Destination
Choice



MICE
Competitiveness



New Motivation for Restaurants

Food Sustainability is beginning to be positioned as something necessary not only to improve restaurants but also to attract inbound visitors and to win MICE opportunities.

WHY FOOD SUSTAINABILITY MATTERS FOR MICE COMPETITIVENESS

MICE organisers and participants are not looking only at venues or hotel facilities.

The whole destination matters.

- Participants dine, network, and experience the city beyond the venue.
- Restaurants therefore shape trust, consistency, and destination credibility. A food sustainability at restaurants
- strengthens the city's overall MICE proposition.
- This is where GSTC becomes important.

How + Why

Food Made Good Standard & the Manifesto

Shows how restaurants implement sustainability.



GSTC MICE + F&B Standards

Show why it matters for tourism, MICE, and destination choice.

KEY POINTS

The Manifesto provides guidance on sustainability while the Food Made Good Standard helps restaurants implement sustainability in a comprehensive way.

GSTC is not redefining restaurant sustainability from ZERO.

GSTC's MICE Standard & the development of F&B standards, help show why these efforts matter for tourism, for MICE, and for destination competitiveness.

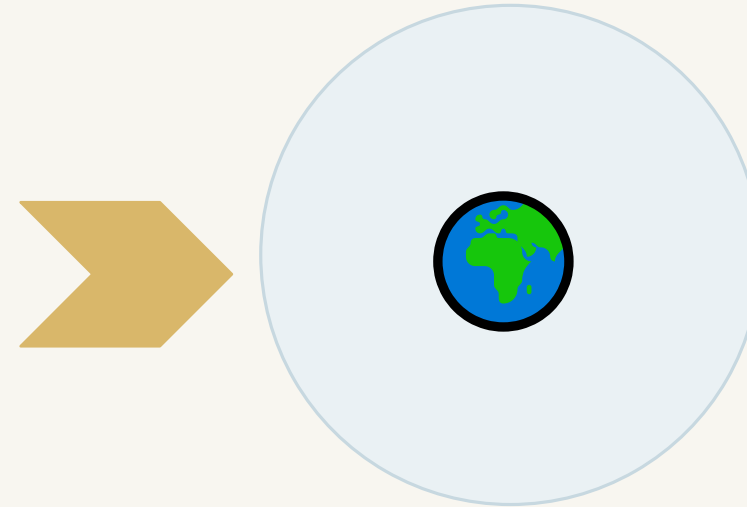
The Japanese Chefs Sustainability Manifesto helps define the direction of sustainability, Food Made Good Standard helps restaurants understand how to act.

GSTC Standards helps destinations understand why those actions matter.



CONCLUSION

- Now, tourism and MICE add a new dimension to this work.
- Food sustainability is no longer just a “good thing to do.”
- It is becoming something that matters for attracting inbound visitors, for winning MICE opportunities, and for building destinations that are trusted internationally.
- It is becoming part of the foundation of a destination that will be chosen.



*Let us build the future of travel,
and the future of destinations,
One Dish at a Time.*

Food sustainability helps turn restaurant
action into destination-level value.