Japan received 6.22 million international arrivals in 2011, of which the five leading origin countries were Korea (1.66 million), China (1.04 million), Chinese Taipei (0.99 million), USA (0.57 million) and Hong Kong (0.36 million). These five markets together accounted for 74.5% of all international visitors to the country.

The East Japan Earthquake occurred on March 11, 2011. Various places in Japan, mainly the coastline facing the Pacific Ocean in the Tohoku area, were hit by a series of huge tsunamis, causing unprecedented damage. The Fukushima Daiichi and Daini Nuclear Power Stations owned by Tokyo Electric Power Company were damaged and a 20km-radius around the power stations designated as an evacuation zone. After the disaster, the number of international visitors to Japan was respectively down 73% in March, 63% in April and 50% in May from the previous year, an unprecedented rate of decrease. However, the rate of decrease declined to 4.4% from 2010 in March, 2012. In order to aim at immediate recovery, the JTA, in co-operation with local governments, the private sector and JNTO, is making efforts, such as transmitting accurate
information to overseas markets, approaching tourism authorities and the media in key markets such as China and Korea to explain the current situation by the Commissioner himself, and enhancing the approach to overseas media and travel agents, etc., by, for example, media invitations or joint advertising.

Immediately after the disaster, we started to make efforts to restore inbound tourism in three steps.

- **Step 1: Transmitting information (from March)**
  - Safety information: Utilization of data from public sources, JNTO Website, etc.
  - Explanatory meeting to be held overseas
  - Transmitting voices: Collection of comments and opinions from Japanese, foreign residents living in Japan, and overseas tourists
  - Information sharing via the JNTO Website, etc.

- **Step 2: Approach to the governments of major countries**
  - Invitation of media and travel agencies (from April)
  - Request to the governments of major countries:
    - Phase 1: Reconsideration of travel advice to Japan based on the latest scientific data
    - Phase 2: Reciprocal promotion of tourism communication

- **Step 3: Approach to general consumers (from October)**
  - Intensive sales of tours in autumn and spring in neighboring countries
  - Full-scale development of overseas advertisements based on each market's characteristics
  - Utilization of people who visited Japan after the earthquake
  - Utilization of interpersonal communication such as SNS
  - Coordinated efforts with local and private organizations through "Visit Japan Plus"

![Graph showing the number of inbound tourists](image)
In March 2012, the Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan has been reviewed for the first time in 5 years. For becoming a tourism nation, the following objectives were set: increase domestic travel expenditure of 25.5 trillion yen in 2009 to 30 trillion yen in 2016; increase the number of international visitors to Japan from 6.22 million in 2011 to 18 million in 2016; increase the number of Japanese travelers going overseas from 16.99 million in 2011 to 20 million in 2016; increase days stay per person for domestic trips for Japanese citizens from 2.12 nights in 2010 to 2.5 nights in 2016. As the measures that the government should undertake comprehensively and systematically, followings are being carried out: creating appealing tourism destinations preferred at home and overseas, implementation of promotion of visits to Japan by the whole of Japan, strengthening international competitiveness of the MICE field such as international conferences, and promotion of time-off reform.