Report of Study Tour Abroad

(CITR14 International Conference 2026)

Learning Human-Centred and Responsible Approaches to Tourism Resilience: Participation in the CITR14.2026 International Conference, Hanoi, Vietnam

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Abstract

This report details the author's participation in the CITR14.2026 International Conference "Rethinking Tourism & Hospitality: From Theory to Practice", held on 30 October 2026 at Van Khoa Hall, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU-USSH), organized in partnership with Rikkyo University (Japan) and Thuongmai University (Vietnam). The primary aim of the study tour was to examine cutting-edge international perspectives on environmental economics, destination resilience under climate change, and solid waste management (SWM) in rural tourism settings.

The conference programme comprised an opening ceremony, two keynote addresses, and a panel discussion.

- **Keynote 1:** Prof. Dr. Katsuhito Nohara analyzed tourism in the age of climate change through the lens of environmental economics, introducing economic valuation frameworks (such as Total Economic Value, Travel Cost Method, and Contingent Valuation Method) applied to natural resources like coral reefs in Kume Island, Japan and environmental conservation in Ha Long Bay, Vietnam.
- **Keynote 2:** Prof. Dr. Xu Honggang presented a relational ontology and Actor-Network Theory (ANT) approach to rural solid waste management, unpacking the multiplicity of waste and the active agency of non-human components in shaping destination governance.
- **Panel Discussion:** Connected economic valuation theory and relational waste management concepts to actionable policies for destinations, businesses, and academic institutions.

The key takeaways emphasize that natural asset preservation must be supported by transparent economic valuation, solid waste should be treated as a dynamic, relational entity rather than static refuse, and long-term tourism resilience depends on dual adaptation-mitigation strategies alongside holistic performance metrics.

Keywords: environmental economics; solid waste management; relational ontology; climate change adaptation; total economic value; sustainable tourism

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1. Purpose

Tourism in Southeast Asia is experiencing rapid post-pandemic growth, yet it faces mounting vulnerability to global climate change, extreme weather disasters, and acute environmental pressures such as solid waste accumulation. The study tour to CITR14.2026 in Hanoi had four main objectives:

1. To acquire advanced insights into environmental economics and relational waste management directly from leading international scholars.
2. To observe how Vietnam and regional partners are translating non-market economic valuation and waste governance frameworks into national policies and site-level management.
3. To build academic networks with scholars across Vietnam, Japan, China, and Malaysia for joint research, publications, and institutional collaboration.
4. To integrate practical analytical tools (e.g., Total Economic Value - TEV, Travel Cost Method - TCM, Contingent Valuation Method - CVM, and Actor-Network Theory - ANT) into postgraduate coursework and research activities at the home institution.

2. Process

2.1. Conference overview, programme and opening

The CITR14.2026 International Conference, themed "Rethinking Tourism & Hospitality: From Theory to Practice", was hosted by VNU-USSH in Hanoi on 30 October 2026 with partner universities including Rikkyo University and Thuongmai University. The opening and welcoming remarks by leaders of the three universities underlined the conference's role as a platform for cross-border cooperation. The sessions attended are summarised below.

Session	Speaker / content
Opening remark	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bui Thanh Nam, Vice Rector, VNU-USSH
Welcoming remarks	Prof. Dr. Katsuhito Nohara (Rikkyo University, Japan); Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bui Huu Duc, Vice Rector, Thuongmai University
Keynote 1	Prof. Dr. Katsuhito Nohara – *Tourism in the Age of Climate Change: Insights from Environmental Economics*
Keynote 2	Prof. Dr. Xu Honggang – *Solid Waste Management in Rural Destinations: Disentangling Waste-Tourism Relations in a Perspective of Relational Ontology*
Panel discussion	From Theory to Practice: Making Responsible and Resilient Tourism Work

2.2. Keynote 1: Tourism in the Age of Climate Change: Insights from Environmental Economics

Prof. Dr. Katsuhito Nohara (College of Tourism, Rikkyo University / Policy Design Lab, Tohoku University) delivered the opening keynote, examining the vulnerabilities of tourism under climate change and introducing analytical methods from environmental economics.

- Global Climate Change Context & Tourism Pressures:
    - Global mean temperatures have risen by ~1.43°C compared to pre-industrial baselines, driving severe ocean warming and triggering the 4th global coral bleaching event in 2024.
    - Local climate severe impacts: Vietnam experienced a record high of 44.2°C in Nghe An (May 2023) and catastrophic destruction from Typhoon Yagi in September 2024 (over 300 fatalities, 27 tourist boats sunk in Ha Long Bay).
    - Economic development vs. CO_2 emissions: While developed nations demonstrate decoupling trends (reducing per capita emissions while growing GDP), emerging economies like Vietnam show rising per capita emissions. Vietnam can leverage its "latecomer advantage" to leapfrog toward green tourism infrastructure.
- Frameworks in Environmental Economics:
    - Tourism relies heavily on ecosystem services (over 50% of global tourism is nature-based) but generates negative externalities (congestion, pollution, habitat loss) unreflected in market prices.
    - Total Economic Value (TEV): Categorizes natural assets into *Use Values* (Direct, Indirect, Option) and *Non-Use Values* (Bequest, Existence).
- Empirical Valuation Studies:
    - *Kume Island, Okinawa (Japan):* Using the Contingent Behavior Travel Cost Method (TCM) with a Random Effects Poisson-Inverse Gaussian (RE-PIG) model, Narukawa & Nohara (2024) estimated a annual recreational Consumer Surplus (CS) loss of ¥590 million (~ ₫ 96.3 billion) if coral reefs were completely destroyed.
    - *Ha Long Bay (Vietnam):* Nguyen et al. (2026) applied the Contingent Valuation Method (CVM) to find a mean tourist Willingness-to-Pay (WTP) of ₫ 97,327 per visit for an environmental protection fund, representing an annual conservation value of ₫ 260 billion.
- Policy Implications:

- Implementing the "Beneficiary-Pays Principle" through user fees, environmental surcharges, or dedicated conservation funds.
- Balancing two core strategies: Adaptation (climate risk management, disaster readiness) and Mitigation (decarbonizing transport and lodging).

2.3. Keynote 2: Solid Waste Management in Rural Destinations: Disentangling Waste-Tourism Relations

Prof. Dr. Xu Honggang (School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University) provided a critical lens on Solid Waste Management (SWM) in rural destinations using Relational Ontology and Actor-Network Theory (ANT).

- **SWM Challenges in Rural Ecotourism:**
  - Rural tourism directly intersects with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 3, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14). However, rural ecosystems face heightened vulnerability due to limited financial resources, narrow physical infrastructure, and seasonal influxes of tourists.
  - Rejecting static definitions of waste, the study adopts a relational ontology: non-human objects and material properties actively interact with human actors, shaping waste generation, collection, and disposal processes.
- **Empirical Insights from Xidi and Hongcun (China):**
  - *Multiplicity of Waste Roles:*
    - **Waste as Resource:** Organic waste in Xidi is composted or traded with surrounding farmers for eggs/meat; recyclable plastics in Hongcun hold economic value for local scavengers.
    - **Waste as Leftover of Tourist Experience:** Inevitable plastic food containers and organic leftovers resulting from heavy-flavored local cuisine and commercial set-meal strategies.
    - **Waste as Tricky Hazard:** Persistent swill liquid stains historic cobblestones, causing sensory degradation (darkened stone, odor) that threatens destination brand quality.
  - *Institutional-Technical Arrangements:*
    - Overcoming physical barriers (narrow heritage alleys, high tourist mobility) requires public-private partnerships (PPP), customized narrow electric transport

carts, heavy-duty leak-proof bags in Xidi, and continuous street patrol sweeping protocols to maintain immaculate heritage standards.

- Recommendations from Keynote 2:
    - Attach symbolic value to durable, authentic heritage experiences over disposable plastic items.
    - Establish reciprocal circular networks between village residents and external rural stakeholders.
    - Deploy differentiated technological and social arrangements suited to specific material waste types.

2.4. Panel discussion

The panel "From Theory to Practice: Making Responsible and Resilient Tourism Work" brought together Dr. Trinh Le Anh (VNU-USSH), Prof. Hiram Ting (APU, Malaysia), Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Viet Thai (Thuongmai University), Prof. Dr. Xu Honggang (Sun Yat-sen University, China) and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pham Hong Long (VNU-USSH). It connected the human-experience perspective of the ADAPT framework with the community-based perspective of responsible tourism and discussed how research can be turned into concrete action by governments, businesses, universities and communities.

3. Experience and Suggestions

3.1. Experience and lessons learned

1. Economic valuation provides necessary empirical leverage for climate policy:
    - Tourism accounts for significant GDP shares (8.1% in Japan, 6.7% in Vietnam) while contributing heavily to environmental stress.
    - Non-market valuation tools such as Travel Cost Methods (TCM) and Contingent Valuation Methods (CVM) convert natural landscapes into concrete economic figures (e.g., ¥590 million CS loss in Kume Island; ₫ 260 billion/year potential fund in Ha Long Bay). This empirical data is essential for justifying conservation investments to policymakers and private operators.
2. Adaptation and Mitigation must be pursued in tandem:

- Severe climate disasters such as Typhoon Yagi destroying Ha Long Bay infrastructure or global sea temperature rises causing widespread coral bleaching mandate comprehensive risk reduction (Adaptation).
- Simultaneously, destination management must actively reduce carbon footprints (Mitigation) to achieve economic growth while decoupling from environmental harm.

3. **Rural waste management requires a dynamic, relational approach:**
   - Waste in rural destinations displays multiplicity: it functions as a Resource (compostable organics, recyclable plastics), a Leftover of tourist experience (packaging, meal leftovers), or a Tricky hazard (leachate ruining historic walkways).
   - Successful management depends on aligning institutional arrangements (PPP models, frequent patrol sweeping) with material-tailored physical technology (narrow electric carts, leak-proof bags).

3.2 Suggestions

Implement conservation funding under the "Beneficiary-Pays Principle":

- Utilize tourist Willingness-to-Pay (WTP) empirical data to introduce targeted conservation surcharges or ecotourism entrance fees at heritage destinations. Earmark these funds into transparent accounts dedicated to local waste treatment and habitat restoration.

Deploy material-tailored infrastructure for destination waste management:

- Avoid uniform, one-size-fits-all waste systems in rural and heritage contexts. Implement micro-vehicles for narrow alleys, specialized collection bins for organic swill, and formalize reciprocal waste-exchange networks with regional agricultural actors.

Shift focus toward symbolic and durable experience design:

- Encourage hospitality operators to emphasize authentic, intangible cultural experiences and durable products, reducing reliance on single-use plastics designed for short-term tourist convenience.

4. Conclusion

Participation in CITR14.2026 achieved its purposes. The conference provided up-to-date concepts, frameworks and evidence on tourism resilience and responsible tourism, real examples from Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia, and new academic contacts across the region. The central lesson, that people

and places must be at the centre of tourism development — will inform the author's future teaching, research and community engagement.

References

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Appendix: Photo Documentation

The following photographs were taken by the author during the conference on 30 October 2026 at Van Khoa Hall, VNU-USSH, Hanoi.



Figure 1. Opening remark by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bui Thanh Nam (Vice Rector, VNU-USSH)



Figure 2. Welcoming remark by Prof. Dr. Katsuhito Nohara (Rikkyo University, Japan)



Figure 3. Keynote 1 by Prof. Dr. Katsuhito Nohara

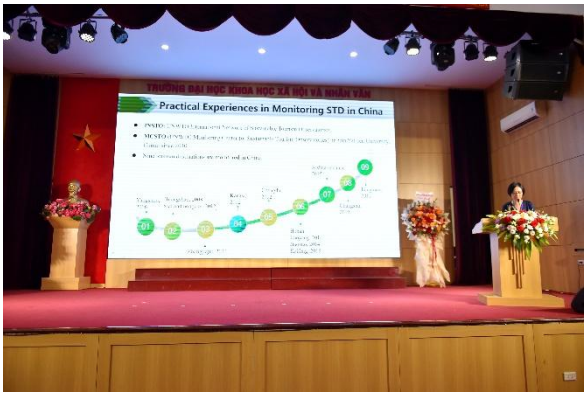

Figure 4. Keynote 2 by Prof. Prof. Dr. Xu Honggang

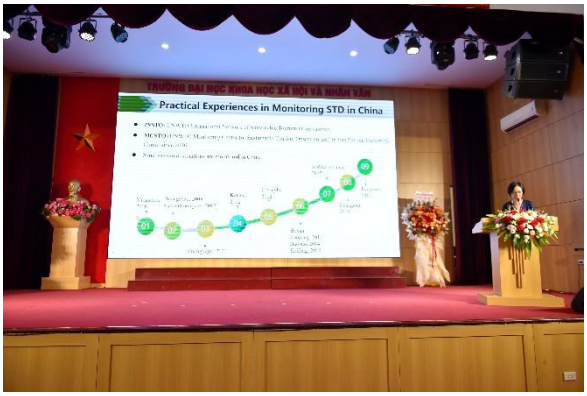

Figure 5. The Practical Experiences in Monitoring STD in China presented in Keynote 1



Figure 6. Panel discussion "From Theory to Practice"