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Title	★ GBT NTA Proposes Sustainable Business Travel Program Webinar; Employee Awareness is Key

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American Express Global Business Travel | Nippon Travel Agency (GBT NTA) held a webinar titled "Sustainable Travel Strategies - From Ideas to Action". The webinar featured case studies of companies' efforts and challenges in building sustainable business travel programs to achieve "net zero" carbon emissions by 2050, as well as the latest information on SAF (Sustainable Aviation Fuel), which has recently been promoted in the airline industry. In particular, the presentation highlighted the importance of raising employee awareness of sustainable practices as a key to actual action.

The seminar began with an introduction of the three rules proposed by the UN Climate Change Champion as a "path to decarbonization": harness ambition loops, set exponential goals, and follow shared action pathways. Next, two companies, Salesforce Japan Co.,Ltd. and Nikko Asset Management Co., Ltd. in addition to GBT NTA, explained their corporate sustainability initiatives.

For internal efforts, GBT NTA has set internal goals, such as to be 100% renewable energy by 2025 and to achieve carbon neutrality in its own business travel starting in 2019. Externally, GBT NTA will build on its internal efforts to promote and support sustainable initiatives, such as CO₂ emissions reduction and procurement, for its corporate clients. In addition, as a sustainable initiative for the airline industry, the company participates in SAF's "Avelia" purchasing and procurement program.

Salesforce added sustainability as one of its "core values" a year and a half ago. Rie Endo, Senior Director of ESG & Sustainability, said that each employee "thinks about how to aim for a sustainable society in their own work and puts it into practice." The company has already achieved net zero emissions throughout its entire value chain. In the future, the company will set clear targets, and will propose and cooperate with suppliers in their efforts to reduce CO₂ emissions. In addition, the company is also promoting technological initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the provision of the Net Zero Cloud, which collects and visualizes emissions data.



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Nikko Asset Management established a Corporate Sustainability Department to "infuse sustainability into our corporate culture and business strategy" (Daisuke Kono, Head of Corporate Sustainability Department.) In 2018, the company began measuring the greenhouse gas emissions of its group companies. In 2021, the company set a clear target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in its business activities, with the goal of reducing emissions per employee by 40% by 2030, compared to 2019 levels.

In addition, the company has established a business trip rule that requires the approval of the president or chairman for overseas business trips with large emissions volumes, and requires business travelers to enter the amount of CO₂ emissions for each flight. The goal is to have business travelers "realize the amount of emissions" by writing down the amount of CO₂ emissions. Mr. Kono commented, "It would be a complete disaster to impede business by placing restrictions on things that are essential to doing business, such as electricity use and business travel. We are aiming for carbon efficiency that achieves the same or better business results with less emissions. We need creativity, ingenuity, and a change in mindset by our employees," he said.

SAF's Purchasing and Procurement Program "Avelia" Increased demand and fair pricing

Meanwhile, Mr. Shoichi Watanabe, Director of Aviation Decarbonization, Shell Japan, which participates in the "Avelia" purchasing and procurement program, explains SAF, which is attracting attention as a sustainable initiative in the aviation industry. Currently, airplanes account for about 90% of CO₂ emissions from business travel; by 2019, aviation fuel will reach about 1 billion tons, which is about 3% of global emissions; by 2050, it will account for more than 6%, making emissions reduction an urgent issue.

SAF is refined from biofuel and waste oil, and is expected to reduce CO₂ emissions by up to 80%. In the case of airplanes, SAF can be used for existing airplanes as well, which is a more effective means, since it takes time to renew equipment and engines.

However, SAF currently accounts for only 0.1% or less of aviation fuel, and its price is high due to supply and demand expansion as well as refining costs, so it will be necessary to keep the price down by increasing supply and demand. In addition, to achieve net-zero aviation fuel by 2050, 65% of aviation fuel must be SAF.

In this context, Avelia was launched in June 2022. This SAF purchase procurement program, created by Shell, Accenture, and GBT, is unique in that it incorporates a book-and-claim system (online transactions rather than physical transactions). Mr. Watanabe emphasized the benefits of this system, stating that "Shell's global aviation network allows us to refuel at the lowest cost location," and that he hopes to make SAF easily accessible in Avelia in the future.

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