



## ***Announcing the Launch of Seabed 2030*** ***Global Project Aiming for 100% Completion of a Map of the World's Ocean Floor***

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO) held the “Ocean’s 8” awards ceremony during the Ocean Conference on June 6 (UN Headquarters/EST) to recognize outstanding contributions in the field of ocean science by organizations and individuals. Award recipients included Craig McLean, assistant administrator of the American National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Morocco’s Princess Lalla Hasna, and from Japan, Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of The Nippon Foundation. In his acceptance speech, Sasakawa announced specific details regarding “NF-GEBCO Seabed 2030,” a joint project of The Nippon Foundation and the General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) Guiding Committee that aims to produce a complete map of the world’s ocean floor by 2030, noting “Understanding the bathymetry of the global ocean is imperative, not only for improving maritime navigation, but also for enhancing our ability to project climate change and monitor marine biodiversity and resources.”

Currently, less than 15% of the bathymetry of the world’s ocean floor is accurately mapped. This project aims for 100% coverage by 2030 by compiling previously unreleased depth data from around the globe, turning that data into digital maps and making those maps available to the public, and identifying and filling in gaps from unexplored areas of the ocean where data is lacking

### **Three Pillars of the Project:**

#### **1. Compiling unreleased data**

The project will establish a Global Data Assembly Coordination Center (GDACC) for overall project supervision and the coordination of four Regional Data Assembly Coordination Centers (RDACCs) – North Pacific/Arctic Ocean, Atlantic/Indian Ocean, South Pacific/West Pacific Ocean, and Southern Ocean. In addition to conducting efficient data collection for each designated area, the project will utilize big data collected from depth logging devices on fishing boats, merchant vessels, and pleasure boats, and will establish a cooperative framework across various sectors for accessing existing data.

#### **2. Creating maps and making them available to the public**

In addition to creating high-resolution maps of the sea floor with the goal of leaving no features larger than 100m unmapped, the four newly-established RDACCs will enlist the cooperation of 78 Fellows from 36 countries who have participated in the joint training program that The Nippon Foundation and the GEBCO Guiding Committee have held since 2004 to train experts in the field of ocean floor mapping. The completed maps will be released on NF-GEBCO Seabed 2030’s official website so that anyone can easily access the latest information, and will also be made available for online resources like Google Earth and ESRI’s Ocean Basemap.

3. Identifying and filling in gaps from areas of the ocean where survey data is lacking areas of the ocean for which data does not exist will be identified and new mapping missions will be carried out using software developed specifically for this project. In addition, a framework will be created to promote technological innovation for mapping in areas where data cannot be collected efficiently using existing technologies.

## *News Release*

This project will be carried out as a concrete action proposed by The Nippon Foundation with the cooperation of various institutions from around the world. Already, 24 government and research organizations, institutions, universities, and businesses have agreed to cooperate and participate in the project, and this number is expected to grow significantly going forward.

The “United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with the 14th goal being to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources.” Accordingly, the project places major importance on the establishment of cooperation between multiple institutions and human capacity building in the ocean field.

Further Information NF-GEBCO Seabed 2030 website <https://seabed2030.gebco.net/>