

This newsletter is being sent to current and former The Nippon Foundation fellows, and persons who have asked to be added to the mailing list or have been introduced by The Nippon Foundation staff.



## [The Nippon Foundation News] February Greetings

Greetings from The Nippon Foundation, and Happy Valentine's Day. A unique Valentine's Day culture has evolved in Japan since the holiday was first introduced to the country by a confectioner in the 1930s. The first difference is that Valentine's Day is associated with chocolate, and the gifts given are primarily chocolates made specifically for the holiday. Although customs continue to evolve, it is traditionally women who give gifts of Valentine's Day chocolates to men on February 14. The gifts are broadly classified into two main types – *giri choco* (obligatory chocolate) for workplace colleagues and casual friends, and *honmei choco* (true feelings chocolate) for a romantic partner or man for whom the woman has romantic feelings. Men then give women gifts in return on March 14, which is known as White Day. Department stores have extra sales areas set up and confectionery shops sell special products for both Valentine's Day and White Day, doing a bustling business on the days leading up to February 14 and March 14.



*Valentine's Day chocolates*

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### INDEX - January 10, 2025

#### News

- Project Launched to Address Changes in Ocean Environment (2025.01.23)
- Relaunch of English Website (2025.01.23)

- Launch of Research into Deep-Sea 'Dark Oxygen' (2025.01.23)
- Interim Report on 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake and Flood Damage Relief Released (2024.12.26)

## Project Launched to Address Changes in Ocean Environment

*Fishers and researchers to work together to collect and analyze information*



The Nippon Foundation, the National Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Associations, and the University of Tokyo's Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute have announced the launch of a project to address changes in ocean environments, focusing on Japan's coastal regions. With fishers collecting information from across Japan and researchers analyzing that information, the project aims to shed light on the actual state of changes in ocean environments.

[Full Article](#)

## Relaunch of English Website

*New design aims to broaden scope and enhance accessibility*



The Nippon Foundation has launched a redesigned English-language website. The new design aims to provide a more comprehensive overview of the Foundation's activities while also increasing accessibility. In addition to the information related to the Foundation's activities and grant programs available on the current website, the new website will include data and findings gained from

these activities. The colors, fonts, layouts, and other design elements are also being updated to make the website more accessible to a wider audience.

[Full Article](#)

## Launch of Research into Deep-Sea ‘Dark Oxygen’

*Supporting Scottish Association for Marine Science’s work to discover new mechanism for creating oxygen*



The Nippon Foundation and the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) held a joint press event on January 17 at Scotland House London to announce their launch of research into “dark oxygen,” a mysterious form of oxygen created in the ocean depths by a mechanism other than photosynthesis. The research will involve surveying 11,000 meters below the ocean surface using newly developed, specialized experimental equipment, and has been endorsed as a United Nations Ocean Decade activity.

[Full Article](#)

## Interim Report on 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake and Flood Damage Relief Released

*(Update on activities as of December 2024)*



The Nippon Foundation has issued an interim report on its relief activities in response to the earthquake that struck the Noto Peninsula on January 1, 2024, and the heavy rains the region subsequently experienced in September.

[Full Article](#)

## Yohei Sasakawa Blog

Chairman of The Nippon Foundation



[My Message for World Leprosy Day 2025](#) [2025/2/5]

[My Wife Attends State Funeral for Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter on My Behalf \(2\)](#)  
[2025/1/30]

[My Wife Attends State Funeral for Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter on My Behalf \(1\)](#)  
[2025/1/29]

[\[Photo Diary\] \(2\) Visit to Iran](#) [2025/1/27]

[\[Photo Diary\] \(1\) Visit to Iran](#) [2025/1/24]

[Less Than 40% of Japanese Want to Have Children: New Poll on Declining Birthrate](#)  
[2025/1/15]

[The Nippon Foundation Presents "MEGURI2040" Fully Autonomous Ship Program to IMO's Maritime Safety Committee \(2\)](#) [2025/1/10]

[The Nippon Foundation Presents "MEGURI2040" Fully Autonomous Ship Program to IMO's Maritime Safety Committee \(1\)](#) [2025/1/9]

[Yohei Sasakawa Blog Top Page](#)

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