

The Trajectory and Future Outlook of the Sustainable Seafood Movement





Introduction

The Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit (TSSS) is one of Asia’s largest sustainable and equitable seafood events, and has been held annually since 2015 with the tenth summit in October 2024.

The seafood industry has shown some major improvements over the past decade. This report outlines these changes and future prospects, along with messages from experts and stakeholders such as international organizations, governments, corporations, financial institutions, NGOs, and academia.

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Looking Back on the Past Decade

Wakao Hanaoka

Founder/CEO
Seafood Legacy Co., Ltd.



Since the establishment of TSSS in 2015 under the slogan “Japan’s Challenge Starts with Fish,” we have finally reached our milestone 10th TSSS this year. At this moment, I feel truly fortunate to be

able to celebrate our growth and progress with all key players in the movement. Seafood Legacy is dedicated to creating a world where the lives of all people who rely on the oceans for their livelihoods are filled with joy, vitality and hope. Our next goal is to make sustainable seafood the mainstream in the Japanese seafood market by 2030. I am confident that, together with all of you, we can achieve this ambitious goal.

Kaori Fujita

Senior Deputy Editor,
Nikkei ESG

Professor, Tohoku University,
Green Goals Initiative and
Graduate School of Life
Sciences



The idea for TSSS was conceived in 2015 when Wakao Hanaoka visited my office. He shared with me his passion to change society together with corporations. I thought we could create a compelling initiative if we team up, and combine my insights on biodiversity and

corporate activities with his expertise on seafood sustainability and environmental issues. Thus TSSS was established, co-sponsored by Nikkei ESG and Seafood Legacy. Over the past decade, we have witnessed many changes: the SDGs, the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the rise of ESG investments, and the Nature Positive movement. TSSS has expanded its themes to include procurement, human rights, IoTs, sustainable finance, and international collaboration. We will continue to build the future of TSSS by nurturing the spirit of dialogue between different stakeholders.

Sarah Hogan

Interim Ocean Director
David & Lucile Packard
Foundation



The Packard Foundation is honored to have supported the Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit for the last decade. During this time, we have watched the growth of the Japanese sustainable seafood movement

and have been impressed by the significant strides. Together, we are making a more sustainable and equitable seafood sector a reality for the millions of people around the world — including in Japan — who depend on a healthy ocean for their livelihoods, food security, and cultural heritage. We are excited to see what the next decade holds.

Teresa Ish

Ocean Initiative Lead, Sr.
Program Officer
Walton Family
Foundation



I'm delighted to mark the 10th Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit. From a small NGO gathering, the TSSS transformed into a global dialogue led by Japan's industry, government, academia, and civil society. Thanks

to your dedication, we've advanced marine conservation, sustainable fisheries, and responsible aquaculture. Thank you for being a part of this incredible journey. Your commitment to sustainability inspires us all. Together, let us look forward to another decade of progress, partnership, and positive change. Here's to another decade of progress!

An aerial photograph showing a ship's wake in the ocean. The wake is a dark, turbulent path of water that stretches from the bottom center towards the horizon. The surrounding water is a deep blue, and the sky is a clear, bright blue with a few wispy white clouds near the horizon. The overall scene is serene and expansive.

CHAPTER 01 **The Trajectory of TSSS**

What is TSSS?

A Global Platform to Accelerate Sustainability

The Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit (TSSS) is one of the largest sustainable seafood events in Asia.

We want to instill sustainability within the Japanese seafood industry and transform it into a world-renowned growth industry.

Those who shared this passion with us came together in 2015 to launch an event under the name Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Symposium.

We have held TSSS annually since then, focusing on sustainability and responsibility. TSSS brings together not only fishery operators and aquaculturists, but also companies and experts from areas such as processing, distribution, retail, finance and ICT, as well as government officials and NGOs. They have shared the latest insights and engaged in spirited discussions.

In 2021, we changed the event name to Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit, aiming for further growth as a global platform to accelerate the sustainable seafood movement.

To date, we have welcomed about 510 speakers and more than 10,000 participants.* Encounters at TSSS have led to numerous joint projects.

In 2024, TSSS celebrated its milestone tenth event.

Aiming for sustainable and abundant oceans.

We will continue to further develop TSSS as a leading platform to realize a sustainable seafood industry through collaboration with stakeholders.



Photo from the very first Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Symposium in 2015



*Includes participants in TSSS held online.



A Decade of Sustainable Seafood Movement

2015

2016

2017

News

- The Sustainable Development Agenda, containing the 17 Sustainable Development goals (SDGs), was adopted by consensus at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015.

- The Paris Agreement, which aims to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, came into effect.

Seafood / Sustainability

World

- Global Fishing Watch, which analyzes the activity of fishing vessels using satellite imagery and AI, with the aim to improve ocean governance, was launched.
- The world's largest case of seafood smuggling to date was detected and prosecuted in China. (480-million-USD worth products including salmon and shrimp.)
- Human rights violations (forced- and/or child-labor cases) in the shrimp supply chain of major seafood processing companies were revealed.

- The Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeaBOS) was launched as an initiative whereby the world's largest seafood companies and scientists collaborate.

- The first United Nations Ocean Conference was convened to facilitate the implementation of SDG 14 to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."
- The Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST) was launched to establish global standards for seafood traceability with participation from companies in the global seafood supply chain.



Japan

- Seafood Legacy was established with the purpose of passing on the abundance and sustainability of seafood offered by the world's oceans, which symbolizes the connection between the environment, the economy, and society, to future generations.
- Ayumu Katano became the first Japanese winner of the Seafood Champion Award for Advocacy.
- BLUE, Japan's first MSC- and ASC- certified independent restaurant opened.

- The Shizugawa Branch of Miyagi Prefecture Fisheries Co-operative acquired Japan's first ASC certification for oyster farming.

- Kaiko Bussan, in Funabashi, Chiba, launched Japan's first Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) for its Japanese sea bass fishery in Tokyo Bay.

- The Association for Preserving Seafood for the Future (President Taichi Takeuchi and Director Toshio Katsukawa) became a finalist for the Seafood Champion Award for Innovation.

- Yoshikatsu Ikuta, representative director, Seafood Smart Institute, gave a guest lecture at SeaWeb Seafood Summit 2016.



- Japan ratified the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA).
- The Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) of Japan started making environmental, social and governance (ESG) investments.
- Mitsubishi Corporation adopted the Bluefin Tuna Sustainable Sourcing Policy. This was made by revising their existing tuna sourcing policy in light of the recovery of the Atlantic bluefin tuna stock and by adding Pacific and southern bluefin tuna.
- To make policy recommendations to eliminate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, IUU Forum Japan was established as a platform for civil society organizations.
- The Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), which certifies responsible aquaculture seafood products that have minimal impact on the environment and society, established a base in Japan.
- Some of Japan's top chefs and a food journalist formed Chefs for the Blue to work together for ocean sustainability.

TSSS

(First TSSS)
Japan's Challenge Starts with Fish: Sustainable Procurement and Future of Our Food Toward 2030



- The first Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Symposium was held

(2nd TSSS)
Japan's Challenge Starts with Fish: Looking Toward 2020 for Sustainable Procurement & Food



(3rd TSSS)
Japan's Challenge Starts with Fish: Beyond 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Building the Legacy and Achieve the SDGs Goals



2018

2019

2020

News

•The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership came into effect.

•The COVID-19 pandemic put the world in turmoil.

Seafood / Sustainability

World

- The High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy was launched and heads of state of 12 maritime nations came together to discuss how to achieve the SDGs.
- Friends of Ocean Action was launched by the World Economic Forum and leaders of global companies, NGOs and other organizations that focus on seafood sustainability.
- The United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP-FI) established the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles as the world's first guiding framework for investors, banks and insurers to finance a sustainable blue economy.
- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) of the United States started implementing the Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP) which requires importers of 13 species groups to collect, report and store key data.
- The Hong Kong Sustainable Seafood Coalition (HKSSC) was established and has partnered with industry members to advance sustainable seafood markets through good sourcing practices.

- The Certification and Rating Collaboration published the report Sustainable Seafood: A Global Benchmark, which shows the percentage of sustainable production in global wild-caught and farmed seafood

- The European Union (EU) announced the Farm to Fork Strategy, aiming for sustainability throughout food systems, from food production to consumption.
- Global Fishing Watch published a study on large-scale IUU fishing of squid in North Korean waters by Chinese vessels.

Japan

- Nippon Suisan Kaisha (now Nissui Corporation) conducted a survey on the sustainability of seafood resources procured by the Nissui Group and publicized its results. This was the first report of its kind to be released by a major Japanese seafood company. (A second report was released in 2021, followed by a third one in 2024.)
- Sales of MSC/ASC-certified seafood at Aeon Retail in fiscal year (FY) 2018 exceeded 10 billion yen, which is an increase of 20% from 8 billion yen in FY 2017.
- Panasonic Corporation became the first company in Japan to offer MSC/ASC-certified seafood menus at their staff cafeteria.



- Seven & i Holdings announced the launch of Green Challenge 2050, the company's environmental initiative. This aims to accelerate the reduction of the company's environmental footprint throughout its supply chain and network of stores in Japan, thereby contributing to passing on a healthy planet to future generations.
- MEL Ver. 2 (updated since then), the certification standards of Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL), was recognized by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI).
- Planet Tracker published the report *Perfect Storm*, which evaluated the sustainability risks of 41 major seafood companies in Japan.
- Wakao Hanaoka, CEO of Seafood Legacy, won the Seafood Champion Award for Leadership.



- Amendments that were made to the Fishery Act of Japan to ensure the sustainable use of seafood resources (for the first time in 70 years in 2018) came into force.
- The Japanese Government formulated the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (2020-2025).
- Maruha Nichiro Corporation made the results of its first survey on raw materials and products handled by its group companies public. This survey was conducted for conservation and sustainable procurement of seafood resources.
- Usufuku Honten acquired the world's first MSC certification for Atlantic bluefin tuna.



TSSS

(4th TSSS)
New Global Trends and Initiatives in Japan



(5th TSSS)
For the Coming Tokyo 2020 Olympics:
Sustainable Seafood as Essence
for SDGs and ESG management



- To date, TSSS 2019 had the largest number of in-person participants!
- The Japan Sustainable Seafood Award was launched to facilitate the sustainable seafood movement in Japan.
- The first ever Seafood Stewardship Index (SSI) was presented by the World Benchmarking Alliance (WBA). SSI ranks the world's top 30 seafood companies based on environmental and social sustainability.

(6th TSSS)
Sustainable Seafood and
the Blue Economy in the New Normal



- This was the first fully online TSSS, held over six days.
- For the first time ever, all three SeaBOS Japanese companies (at the time) participated in the TSSS.
- Seafood Legacy Times, Japan's only media outlet dedicated to sustainable seafood, was launched to keep the inspiration from the annual TSSSs effective all year round.

2021

2022

News

•Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games

•The Russian invasion of Ukraine started
 •At the 15th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15), the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was adopted and the "30 by 30" target was set to conserve at least 30% of the land and sea by 2030 to achieve a nature-positive world.

Seafood / Sustainability

World

•Thai Union secured nearly 11.5 billion THB (330 million USD) through its first sustainability-linked loan. Mizuho Bank, MUFG Bank, and Bank of Ayudhya were the mandated lead arrangers and bookrunners (MLABs) and sustainability coordinators.

•The second UN Ocean Conference took place and the government of Japan talked about its domestic and international efforts for fisheries sustainability, including measures against IUU fishing.
 •The IUU Fishing Action Alliance was jointly established by the governments of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States as a platform to end IUU fishing.
 •The World Trade Organization (WTO) adopted the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies which lays out rules for prohibiting fisheries subsidies that lead to excessive fishing capacity and overfishing.

Japan

•In response to its development of the "Consumer Co-op 2030 Environmental Sustainability Policy," the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union adopted the "2030 Goals for CO · OP Brand Products" and released the "Basic Policy on Responsible Procurement."
 •Mitsubishi Corporation and Toyo Reizo revised their Tuna Procurement Guidelines. In addition to the originally covered bluefin tuna species, tropical tuna species were included in the scope of the revised guidelines as well. Human rights due diligence was also added in its scope.
 •Kibun Foods announced the Sustainability Objectives by 2030. These are based on the company's Sustainability Policies, sustainable procurement of raw materials for the first time in the surimi industry.
 •Planet Tracker released *Against the Tide*, a report on a study of the financial situation of 70 seafood companies in the seafood industry that are listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange.
 •Global Seafood Alliance*, which manages Best Aquaculture Practices certification and other certifications, hires a staff in Japan. *Called "Global Aquaculture Alliance" at the time.



•The Japanese government enforced the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants, which aims to prevent seafood products sourced by IUU fishing from entering the Japanese market.
 •The Act to Promote Environmental Burden Reduction Activities for Establishment of an Environmentally Harmonized Food System came into effect in Japan.
 •The Japanese government developed the "Guidelines on Respecting Human Rights in Responsible Supply Chains" which urge all companies to adopt human rights policies, conduct human rights due diligence, and establish grievance mechanisms.
 •Maruha Nichiro Corporation issued Japan's first blue bond and secured 5 billion JPY (34 million USD) .
 •Seven & i Holdings revised "Seven & i Group Sustainable Sourcing Principles and Policies."
 •Hilton made incremental progress on sourcing from MSC and ASC certified fisheries at Hilton, with Japan, South Korea and Micronesia becoming the first region to achieve 25% sustainable seafood target in 2022. ◀ It reached 32% in 2023.
 •Sailors for the Sea Japan, in collaboration with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, released the "Tokyo Edition" of the sustainable seafood list "Blue Seafood Guide."
 •*Ghost Fleet*, a documentary film which highlights modern slavery at sea, was released in Japan.



TSSS

(7th TSSS)
 Build Blue Economy Toward 2030
 Changing Japanese Seafood Industry
 by DX and ESG Investment



•With an aim to make TSSS an even more influential platform, Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Symposium was renamed to Tokyo Sustainable Seafood Summit.
 •The World Benchmarking Alliance released the second Seafood Stewardship Index (SSI) .

(8th TSSS)
 Designing the Blue Ocean Strategy for the Seafood Industry:
 Labor Rights, Biodiversity, and Climate Change
 —the Nexus of Sustainable Seafood Movement



2023

2024 *To Be Continued...* 2025

News

- The Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip started
- The global average temperature hit a record high

- Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai, Osaka (April to October)

Seafood / Sustainability

World

- The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) released "Recommendations of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures" for businesses to report their nature-related dependencies, impacts, risks and opportunities.
- The Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement) was adopted at the UN. This is the first global legally binding agreement to protect the high seas.
- The Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) which requires companies to disclose their environmental and social impacts and governance came into effect in the EU.
- The Coalition for Fisheries Transparency was launched as a global platform for civil society leaders to pursue fisheries transparency to address issues around IUU fishing and human rights violations.
- The government of the Republic of Korea became the first in Asia to join the IUU Fishing Action Alliance.

Japan

- The Japanese government released the Guidance on Sustainable Management for the Food Industry and the Guidebook for Respecting Human Rights in Food Enterprises.
- During some meetings of a working group established by the Cabinet Office, Aeon and Seven & i Holdings made requests to the Japanese government to strengthen its import control rules under the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants: Aeon requested for the addition of rules to cover seafood imports with social risks, in particular, human rights violation risks; and Seven & i Holdings requested for the coverage of all major fish species.
- Nissui Corporation issued the *Nissui Group TNFD Report 2023*, the first TNFD report from a leading Japanese seafood company.
- The Kyokuyo Group publicized the results of its survey on seafood resources, which aimed to understand the status of fish stocks the group's procurement relies on and identify relevant issues as well as how to address these.
- Mitsui & Co. Seafoods established their Marine Products Procurement Policy.
- Yasutaka Suisan Farm and Hamasui Processing Plant, both members of the Ainan Fisheries Cooperative, obtained Japan's first BAP certification.
- Nikkei Inc. and Nikkei Business Publications, Inc. launched the Nikkei Blue Ocean Forum focusing on SDG 14 aiming at conservation of the ocean environment and prosperity of the seafood industry.
- Global Tuna Alliance, a platform where supply chain companies gather and work for sustainable and responsible tuna fishery started working in Japan.

- The Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) which requires companies and their subsidiaries and business partners to address environment and human rights due diligence came into effect in the EU.
- The Ninth Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit made an announcement on a joint commitment to eliminate IUU fishing, including the implementation of effective measures.
- Legislative Yuan, Taiwan, revised laws regulating distant-water fishing to prevent seafood sourced by IUU fishing from entering Taiwan.

- **First time in Japan**
- The 12th World Ocean Summit & Expo, Tokyo (March)
- **First time in Asia**
- The 10th Our Ocean Conference, Busan, ROK (April)
- The United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) 2025, Nice, France (June)

- The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure (TNFD) announced that 320 companies have become "early adopters." With 80 of these being Japanese companies, the country with the greatest number of early adopters in the world is Japan as of 2024.
- Mizuho Financial Group became the first Japanese megabank to release a policy on the fisheries (including aquaculture) sector. The policy clearly states that overfishing, IUU fishing, and violations of human rights are investment risks.
- Food & Life Companies (F&LC), known for the conveyor belt sushi restaurant chain Sushiro, established the F&LC Human Rights Policies.
- Izumisawa-Suisan acquired an ASC certification for coho salmon farming and the world's first ASC certification for commercial masu salmon farming.
- *Suisan Mirai Summit* (The Future of Seafood Summit) was held by Fisherman Japan and others with a passion for making fisheries industries sustainable.
- "JAPAN UNI SUMMIT (Japan Sea Urchin Summit)" was held by Kitasanriku Factory and moova to discuss ocean issues such as vegetation loss in rocky-shore ecosystems and to take action with various stakeholders.
- Seafood Legacy revised its theory of change and "making sustainable seafood the mainstream in the Japanese seafood market" became its new goal to be met by 2030.

- Seafood Legacy's 10th anniversary

TSSS

(9th TSSS)
Achieving the 2030 Agenda:
Sustainable Seafood Strategies
for Japan and Global Food Security



- First in-person event held since 2019
- The World Benchmarking Alliance released the third SSI at TSSS 2023.
- Seafood Traceability Engagement, an initiative led by FAIRR et al., was launched. SeaBOS published the Impact Report, Seafood Legacy published an introductory report on corporate responsibility to respect the rights of workers in the seafood supply chain for Japanese seafood companies.



(10th TSSS)
Win the Mainstream:
Nature-Positive, Ensuring Global Food Security
and Respecting Human Rights

- Seafood Legacy released *A Decade of Sustainable Seafood Movement* to look back on the footsteps taken so far.

(The 11th TSSS)
To the next stage.
Details to be announced on
the TSSS2024 3rd day.



CHAPTER 02 **The Impact of TSSS**

Policy Shift

Chapter 2 describes the impact TSSS has had on each of the five focus areas (*policy shift, market transformation, finance engagement, philanthropic collaboration and movement orchestration*) in the effort to achieve a sustainable seafood industry. The first focus area is *policy shift*.



Major legislative changes lead to a paradigm shift in fisheries policy

A significant paradigm shift has occurred in Japan's seafood industry over the past decade with the 2018 revision of the Fishery Act and 2020 enactment of the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribu-

tion and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants. Established shortly after the end of World War II, the original Fishery Act focused on food security and industrial development, and lacked the perspective of sustainable, science-based fish stock management. The revised Act clearly mentions the sustainable use of fishery resources in its purpose and sets

out a nearly world-class framework for sustainable fish stock management. The seafood industry in Japan strongly opposed the revision at first. However, a number of seafood distribution stakeholders joined TSSS and expressed their desire to make the Japanese seafood industry sustainable. Following an increased awareness of the SDGs and trends leading up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, momentum grew within the industry to accept reform, and paved the way for the revision of the Fishery Act.

No to IUU fishing, new legislation tightened regulations

Another crucial issue in Japan was distribution of seafood, including imports, which account for about half of domestic consumption. Since the 2010s, the US and Europe — the world's two largest import markets — have tightened distribution regulations to counter the illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing that threatens sustainable fish stock management. This increased the risk of IUU fishing-derived products entering Japan, the world's third-

largest seafood import market and one without strong protections. The international community pressured Japan to reject IUU fishing, leading to the enactment of the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants in 2020. After the Act was implemented in 2022 targeting specific fish species, measures against IUU fishing in East Asia accelerated in 2024 as the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit announced a commitment to eradicate IUU fishing, and Taiwan also began to develop legislation related to IUU fishing.

Aiming for further reforms together with ministries, companies and NGOs

Realizing a sustainable and equitable seafood industry requires tackling a range of issues such as fish stock management, IUU fishing, and human rights violations. Officials from Japanese and foreign ministries and stakeholders of international organizations have been participating in TSSS to exchange information and opinions, and the summit will continue to provide a platform for advancing policy reforms going forward.

Policy Shift | Messages from stakeholders



The two fishery policies driving change



Hiroshi Izumisawa
CEO,
Izumisawa Suisan Co.,
Ltd.

The Fishery Act revision established catch management rules, while the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants has regulated the distribution and import of illegally caught or gathered aquatic animals and plants. These two fishery policies have become the drivers behind the promotion of sustainable seafood. Japan has long sourced its food from the oceans and practiced sustainable fishing using traditional techniques. However, the pursuit of economic rationality and industry independence has led to a depletion in fishery resources. Balancing resource sustainability with profitability by improving fishing techniques and optimizing fresh fish distribution will ensure a stable supply of sustainable catches.

Close collaboration and continuation are the key



Masanori Miyahara
Founder,
afc.masa
Advisor to the Ministry of
Agriculture, Forestry, and
Fisheries of Japan

Fisheries policy reforms in Japan following the 2018 amendment of its Fisheries Act and the commencement of stock management for Pacific bluefin tuna are areas where the most significant progress was seen in seafood sustainability in recent years. The former, the first major amendment of the act in 70 years, caused considerable friction between fishery operators and the government when they took effect, but things are now finally starting to get on track. As for the latter, owing to the arduous efforts of fishery operators throughout Japan under the strict management of catch quotas, we are now seeing a significant recovery in the bluefin tuna stock. Healthy seafood resources cannot be passed on to the next generation without the understanding and support from not only those involved in fisheries industries, but also consumers, distributors and the general public. I strongly feel that with a close-knit network of a wide range of stakeholders, we must press ahead with our work, which is still only halfway done.

How do we meet our commitment to eliminate IUU fishing?



Sotaro Usui
President,
Usufuku Honten Co.,
Ltd.

At the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, a declaration was made to recognize the importance of addressing IUU (illegal, unreported and unregulated) fishing and to work toward ending IUU fishing worldwide. Before this summit, the European Union and the US had already been spearheading efforts globally by establishing new laws and programs to stop seafood sourced by IUU fishing from entering their markets. In Japan, cheap seafood sourced by those engaged in IUU fishing is still being imported from around the world, resulting in plummeting market prices. It is no longer possible for honest fishery operators playing by the rules to make a living. Going forward, Japan must consider how to keep their words in this international declaration. And we, as fishery operators, must also think and act to protect our longstanding fisheries for future generations.

Market Transformation

The second focus area is *market transformation*.

Each year at TSSS, we discuss how Japan's substantial purchasing power can be leveraged to drive improvements in production sites and the supply chain.



Creating a positive hub to encourage companies' sustainable change

When TSSS was first held in 2015, sustainability was still a new concept to the Japanese seafood industry, and very few companies had introduced sustainable procurement policies. TSSS has addressed themes such as full-chain traceability,^{*1} human rights due diligence, and digital transformation by introducing advanced examples from overseas to foster the positive approach that we can do this in Japan as well.

While Western initiatives often proceed

based on prominent leadership, Japanese society emphasizes harmony and group effectiveness to ensure no one is left behind. At TSSS, we design our programs with these characteristics of Japanese society in mind.

Through the past nine symposiums and summits, overall awareness of seafood sustainability has increased, and most major corporations have established sustainable procurement policies. Retailers are selling more sustainable seafood, while corporations are increasingly using it in their cafeterias. The number of companies pursuing traceability and implementing human rights due diligence is also increasing.

Expanding corporate partnerships and certifications that transform the seafood industry

Furthermore, pre-competitive collaborations among major corporations and the expansion of certification schemes are accelerating transformation. Two Japanese companies are participating in SeaBOS,^{*2} a global initiative involving eight of the world's largest seafood companies and scientists.^{*3} At TSSS, companies that once competed now collaborate on sustainability, with new partnerships emerging from sessions and networking opportunities. Certification schemes recognized by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI) for sustainable fisheries and responsible aquaculture such as MSC, ASC, BAP, and MEL^{*4} are also gaining traction in Japan and promoting sustainability in the seafood industry.

Companies enter the implementation phase to make sustainable seafood the mainstream

Many Japanese companies have announced sustainable procurement policies and other commitments in recent years, and they are now required to demonstrate results. The 2024 TSSS theme "Win the Mainstream" exemplifies how we will continue hosting the summit with the goal of making sustainable seafood the mainstream in the Japanese market, where many different seafood products arrive from all over the world.



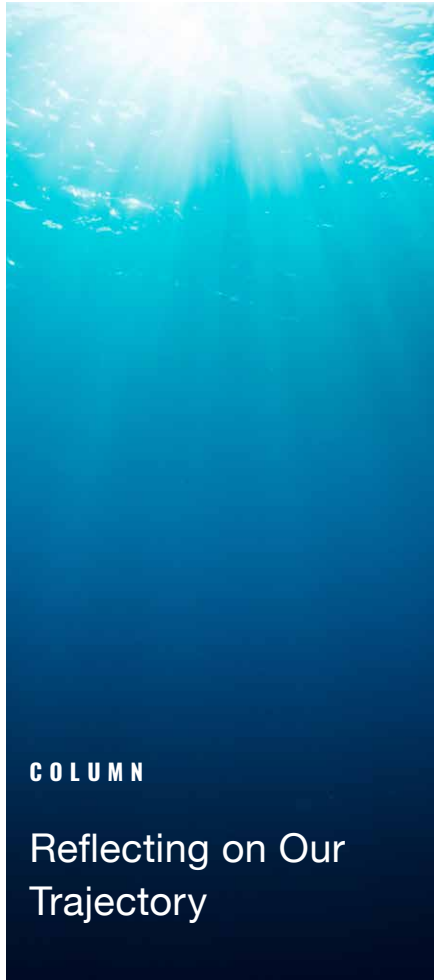
*1 Full-chain traceability: The ability to accurately trace the route from production to the final point of consumption

*2 Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship: A global initiative to produce more sustainable seafood and improve ocean health

*3 As of July 2024

*4 Marine Stewardship Council, Aquaculture Stewardship Council, Best Aquaculture Practices, and Marine Eco-Label Japan Council

Market Transformation | Messages from stakeholders



C O L U M N

Reflecting on Our Trajectory

Passing down fishery resources



Kinzo Matsumoto

General Manager, Seafood Products Department, Food Division, AEON Retail Co., Ltd.

Aeon began selling MSC-certified products in 2006 to conserve fishery resources for future generations. Sales of MSC and ASC products exceeded 10 billion yen in 2018 and continue to grow. Over the past decade we have sold products such as ASC Certified Yellowtail and MSC Certified Fresh Oysters from Mushiake, Okayama, and our commercialization of MSC Certified Karafuto Smelt with a convention-defying new package designed to use less plastic has especially highlighted our commitment to sustainability. By selling sustainable products, we hope to raise consumer awareness of fishery resources and the environment, promote collaboration with local fishery industries, and contribute to the industry's development overall.

Initiatives in Japan have gained traction through TSSS



Satoshi Matsumoto

Sustainability Strategy Department, Brand Strategy Division Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union

When TSSS started in 2015, even though the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) had just been adopted by the United Nations, terms like "sustainable" were still relatively uncommon in Japan. Through participation in TSSS and by learning about the activities of Western companies and NGOs and becoming part of an international network, I feel that Japanese businesses have greatly progressed in terms of awareness and their initiatives. In addition, the amendment of the Fisheries Act and the enactment of the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants were key milestones of the last decade. On the other hand, the sharp decline in catches of popular species, such as the Japanese flying squid and Pacific saury, along with the surge in seafood price, has significantly impacted the lives of consumers. I certainly hope that TSSS will continue to evolve as a platform for collaboration between many stakeholders.

From CSR to diverse activities



Shigeo Morii

Deputy General Manager, Sustainability Department Nissui Corporation

Ten years ago we incorporated CSR into our management plan, and since then we have been committed to fulfilling our social responsibility regarding use of natural capital, which we are heavily reliant on. We have embarked on discussions to ensure the sustainability of fishery resources, eliminate human rights violations in procurement, and reduce the environmental impact of fisheries and aquaculture. We conduct ongoing resource surveys of the seafood products we procure and participate in SeaBOS to promote sustainable seafood, collaborating beyond existing frameworks with companies in and outside Japan. These ten years have made me realize how the world is connected by oceans and how its seafood products need to be protected by all stakeholders. I hope this momentum continues.

Finance Engagement

The third focus area is *finance engagement*.

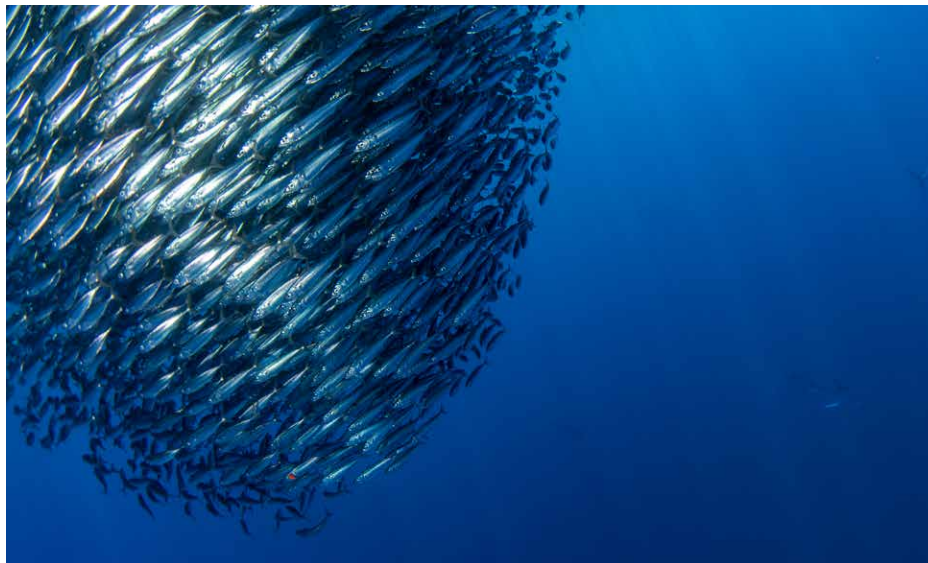
The promotion of sustainability in the seafood industry through investment and financing has accelerated in the past five years.



Sustainable finance is gaining momentum: A five-year groundwork phase

In Japan, the Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF) entered the

ESG investment market in 2017, leading the momentum for sustainable investment following Europe and the US. Data and reports^{*1,2} published in 2019 by the NGOs World Benchmarking Alliance and Planet Tracker also highlighted the risks



of investing in seafood companies, which impacted how those companies should operate. At that time, TSSS was one of the few places where stakeholders could exchange information and opinions. Since 2016, finance professionals have spoken at nearly every TSSS about investments for achieving a sustainable seafood industry.

Promoting sustainability through financing

These developments have greatly impacted the financing of the seafood industry. In 2021, Thai Union Group, the world's largest manufacturer of canned tuna, raised funds through a sustainability linked loan (SLL), which encourages borrowers to address environmental and social issues. This sparked a trend throughout the industry, and in 2022, Maruha Nichiro became the first Japanese company to secure the fund through a blue bond (a bond earmarked for initiatives such as marine conservation and sustainable fisheries).

Further reforms of the seafood industry prompted by TNFD

The publication of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) recommendations in 2023 was another turning point. The TNFD framework helps companies assess and disclose their impact on natural capital and biodiversity. At the end of the same year, Nissui published its TNFD Report, and Japanese seafood industry began to accelerate its information disclosure efforts. At TSSS, we held panel discussions with a TNFD member and financial sector representatives, and financial institutions also pushed major seafood companies for stronger traceability. We will continue promoting ESG investments and loans, striving for transformation towards a sustainable seafood business model.

*1 World Benchmarking Alliance, "2019 Seafood Stewardship Index data set" (October 2019)
<https://www.worldbenchmarkingalliance.org/research/2019-seafood-stewardship-index-data-set/>

*2 Planet Tracker, "Against the Tide: tracker report" (March 2021)
<https://planet-tracker.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/3.1-Against-the-Tide-Executive-Summary-ENG.pdf>

Finance Engagement | Messages from stakeholders



Reforms of the seafood industry boosted by investment



Mariko Kawaguchi

Specially Appointed Professor,
Graduate School of Social
Design Studies,
Rikkyo University
ESG Advisor,
Fuji Oil Holdings Inc.

Ten years ago, Japan's financial industry showed little interest in climate change. Then the 2015 Paris Agreement triggered a surge in sustainable finance. The internationally highlighted realities surrounding the seafood industry — the depletion of popular fish stock, the lack of sustainability in some aquaculture practices, and the issue of forced labor on fishing vessels — resonate with Japanese investors with a strong affinity for seafood. Scientific research on the seafood industry has influenced investment and financing decisions, leading to investor engagement with seafood companies and the issuance of blue bonds. We expect the growing body of scientific knowledge, and the advancing sophistication and transparency of the fishery industry, to strengthen this momentum.

Connecting natural capital and business



Minoru Matsubara

Chief Sustainability Officer and
Managing Executive Officer,
Responsible Investment
Department,
**Resona Asset
Management Co., Ltd.**

Amid the focus on the transition to stakeholder capitalism, the Dasgupta Review compiled in 2019 has played a crucial role in linking natural capital and business. The report highlights that human demand has exceeded the Earth's ability to supply goods and services by 1.6 times, which has boosted assessments of our dependencies and impact on nature, and sustainability efforts. In the Japanese financial industry, seafood-related initiatives are gaining attention as companies take action towards a sustainable society. As the demand for seafood rises, all I can hope is that gaining collective wisdom and knowledge on long-term viable practices will lead to the development of a sustainable society and sustainable seafood.

Integrating sustainability with financial considerations



François Mosnier

Head of Ocean team,
Planet Tracker

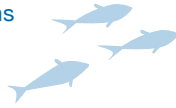
When we think about the damages caused by overfishing, many victims come to mind: fish populations, fishers, coastal communities, other marine wildlife, etc. But investors are on this list too. Our long-term analysis of the Japanese seafood industry shows that overfishing is negatively impacting the financial health of these companies, and therefore their investors.

To reverse this trend, traceability, sourcing transparency and low-impact fishing gear are some of the tools that companies can use to help investors and the ocean they rely on. To ensure sustainable seafood continues to be enjoyed by millions across Japan, never has it been more important to integrate sustainability and financial considerations to combat the depletion of marine natural capital.

Philanthropic Collaboration

The fourth focus area is *philanthropic collaboration*.

We believe that non-profit organizations and public institutions are essential to seafood industry reforms.



Increase in non-profits and public institutions as we work together

Philanthropic collaboration has made great strides over the past decade. One notable event was the launch of IUU Forum Japan in 2017. The forum was launched by seven organizations to make recommendations for Japanese policies and the market to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. It played a key role in the enactment of the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants. International certification schemes such as the Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) and the Global Seafood Alliance (GSA) are also gaining momentum in Japan, and Marine Eco-Label Japan (MEL) has been recognized as an international certification. There has also been an uptick in activities by chefs and fishery groups,

such as Chefs for the Blue and Fisherman Japan. Many of these non-profit organizations and public institutions have attended TSSS since its inception, serving a platform for encounters and collaboration.

Building partnerships with corporations and governments

Another significant change is that corporations and governments are now collaborating with non-profit organizations. Japanese seafood distributors, including major seafood supply chain companies, are increasingly working with NGOs such as WWF Japan and Sailors for the Sea Japan, which would have been unimaginable a decade ago. At TSSS, human rights organizations sometimes present about human rights violations in the seafood industry. Even though they can be painful to listen to, companies do not shy away from these presentations and rather view them as valu-



able learning opportunities, actively participating and collaborating with non-profits to address the issue.

Taking the seafood industry one step further with philanthropic leaders

Non-profit organizations and public institu-

tions play a key role in promoting forward-thinking activities that are one step ahead of corporate initiatives and indicate the way forward. TSSS brings together philanthropic leaders from all over the world, and provides a forum for corporations and the seafood industry to promote sustainability.

Philanthropic Collaboration | Messages from stakeholders



Realignment between NGOs and the government



Minako Iue
Chair and CEO,
Sailors for the Sea
Japan

In my view, the alignment between NGOs and the government has changed the most in the past decade. While they had been heading in opposite directions, I feel their aims have aligned since the Fisheries Act amendments were enacted in 2018. Shortly before the Act on Ensuring the Proper Domestic Distribution and Importation of Specified Aquatic Animals and Plants passed the National Diet, I had a productive discussion with a Fisheries Agency of Japan representative during a TSSS 2020 session. And in a TSSS 2023 panel discussion, representatives from NGOs in Japan, the US, Europe and South Korea shared the latest information about their own countries. The power of NGOs lies in their capacity to quickly and flexibly provide platforms in the global community for creating new value. Global cooperation is now essential, and I will continue collaborating with stakeholders around the world, aiming to improve the marine environment for a sustainable society.

Further collaboration ahead to solve issues together



Satoshi Maekawa
Leader, Oceans and
Fisheries Group,
Nature Conservation
Division,
WWF Japan

The prices of popular fish like autumn chum salmon, Pacific saury and Japanese flying squid are soaring due to poor catches. Biodiversity continues to decline, and mackerel catches alone have decreased by 70% in the last 50 years. Nature Positive by 2030 is an international goal aimed at halting and reversing nature loss by 2030, which was agreed upon at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15). Despite the challenges, we believe the goal is achievable given that stocks of Atlantic bluefin tuna — once thought to be on the verge of extinction — have recovered thanks to strict management measures and the efforts of fishery operators and other stakeholders. The WWF aims to “ensure productive and resilient marine ecosystems that promote human happiness and ecosystem conservation.” We look forward to working and collaborating with everyone even more in the future.

The challenge for the future is to realize the concept



Dr. Atsushi Sunami
President,
the Sasakawa Peace
Foundation

I admire your remarkable commitment to initiating TSSS a decade ago in Japan when sustainable seafood was not widely recognized. You have transformed it into one of the most significant summits in Asia. Over the past ten years, we have witnessed a significant rise in the collaboration between government, industry, and academia in various regions in Japan, such as Setouchi, Suruga Bay, and Sanriku Coast. There is a growing momentum to promote smart fisheries, the introduction of seafood traceability, and the promotion of UMIGYO, Japan's blue economy initiative through DX, deregulation and regulatory reform in the marine sector, including the fisheries industry. The challenge for the future is to realize the concept. We will try our best to ensure that this wonderful concept is implemented in society and that we can also help to disseminate the Japanese best practices in the international arena.

Movement Orchestration

The fifth focus area is *movement orchestration*. A number of efforts are underway to sustain and develop activities initiated in each region.



Various conference promotes stakeholder engagement

The movement towards a sustainable seafood industry has been supported by conferences around the world. For example,

the World Economic Forum's Friends of Ocean Action gathers ocean conservation leaders to find solutions that transcend groups such as businesses, civil society, international organizations and scientists. As an annual event in Japan, TSSS has

become a forum that brings together diverse stakeholders, including governments, financial and IT firms, seafood companies and non-profit organizations. In recent years it has attracted speakers and participants from all over the world, and similar summits have been held in Hong Kong and Mexico. Other conferences, such as the Suisan Mirai Summit (the Seafood Future Summit) and the NIKKEI Blue Ocean Forum are also helping to spread the movement throughout Japan.

Expanding motivation and learning through media and awards

Ongoing information sharing is crucial for supporting the movement. [Seafood Legacy Times](#) is an online media outlet launched in 2020 that provides information and inspiration to stakeholders in the seafood industry by sharing the passion and insights of key players advocating for sustainable seafood. Also started in 2020 and held concurrently with TSSS, the Japan Sustainable Seafood Award aims to motivate applicants and energize the movement. The application process allows organizations to learn from each other as they explore better practices.

Increasing opportunities for collaboration, and accelerating the movement

While "Japan's Challenge Starts with Fish" was the theme of the first TSSS, the tenth summit in 2024 was held under the theme "Win the Mainstream." This shows how the foundation for sustainable seafood development has solidified over the years, and going forward we will continue creating a platform for dialogue that accelerates the movement.



Movement Orchestration | Messages from stakeholders



Fisheries Act amendments triggered changes in society



Hiroko Sasaki

Representative Director,
Chefs for the Blue
Food Journalist

I think the most significant topic from the last ten years was certainly the enactment of the amended Fisheries Act in 2020. I remember it was at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when there were some notable changes in consumer awareness toward food. These not only affected government policies, but also led to a significant shift in society. For example, we experienced a sudden increase in press coverage, not only from the usual food media, but also in business and fashion magazines, the business and lifestyle sections of newspapers, and television news programs. Meanwhile, fisheries stock management in Japan has not progressed as initially planned and yields from Japanese waters continue to decline. Further impetus is urgently needed. I believe it is crucial that we build a system across the entire supply chain to sustain our oceans.

The emergence of local heroes over the past decade



Takuya Hasegawa

Chief Editor of Yahoo!
Japan SDGs,
LY Corporation
Co-Founder,
Fisherman Japan

Exactly ten years have passed since the establishment of Fisherman Japan (FJ). On the journey to restore livelihoods after the 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami, FJ was launched with the goal of transforming the fishing industry to be cool, successful, and innovative. Over the decade, many fishery operators, including FJ members, have started taking action in different regions across Japan, aiming to protect the sea and its fish for the future. So much so that they have become local heroes. The promotion of sustainable seafood can only start from those who live with the sea. I think the most significant topic of the past ten years may well be the emergence of these local heroes. There are still many challenges that need to be addressed, but I am confident that these heroes will overcome them.

An amazing, impactful, and juggling act



Ned Daly

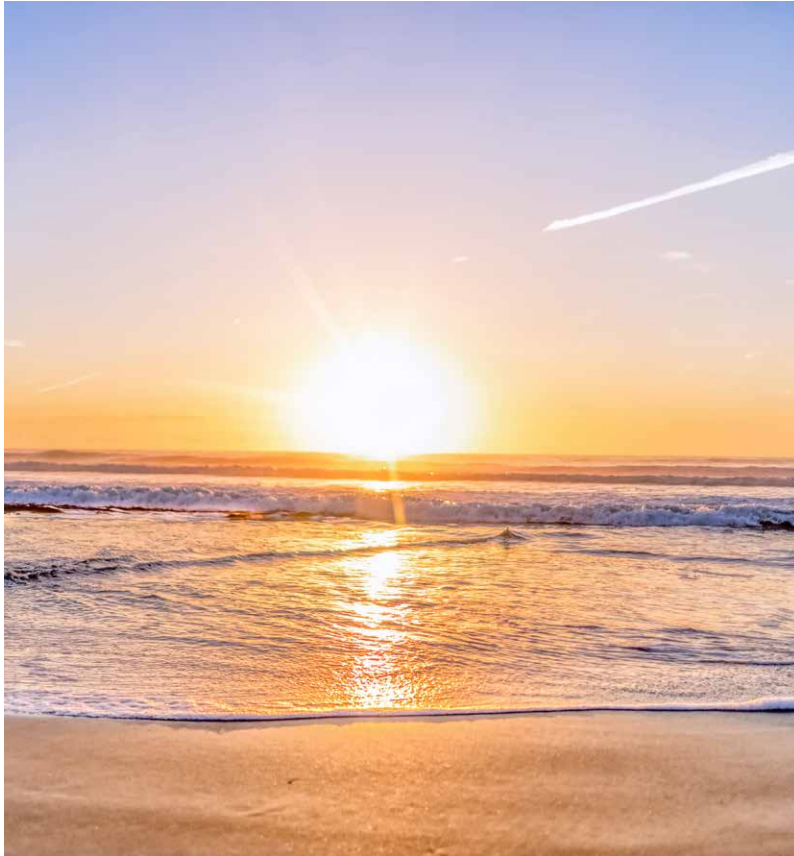
Contributing Editor
Seafood Source

TSSS has played the critical role creating coherence around the complexity of sustainability issues facing the global seafood industry. Not only does this help the industry understand key sustainability issues and their relationship to species or geographies, but this coherence creates a common understanding of the challenges in front of the Japanese industry allowing the industry to move forward collectively. Seafood Legacy recognized this “collective movement” strategy was essential for Japanese companies to comfortably engage with sustainability. Seafood companies understand the challenge of trying to juggle the roles of selling fish, acquiring new customers, and building new markets all at the same time. What TSSS has done over the last ten years has been an amazing, impactful, and juggling act.



CHAPTER 03 **Toward 2030**

From Japan to the World



We will continue to take on further challenges through TSSS as we head towards 2030.

Japan will lead reforms of the seafood industry

The seafood industry was once Japan's cornerstone industry, and as such, it used to be criticized by the international community for overfishing. It is now time for the country to leverage everything learned while fulfilling its international accountability in response to such criticism, and to lead the global seafood industry to an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible future.

Japan is the world's third-largest seafood import market, and has the world's sixth-largest exclusive economic zone. Transforming the country's seafood policy will significantly enhance not only the sustainability of oceans and the seafood industry, both domestically and around the globe, but also ensure food security. TSSS will continue to serve as a platform to accelerate Japan's sustainable seafood movement.

Sharing goals and working together

One organization alone cannot bring sustainable seafood into the distribution mainstream. It is crucial that diverse stakeholders in Japan and around the world not only continue their activities in their respective fields, but also coordinate them. The world's major fishery resources are in crisis. About 40% of them are being overfished and 50% are being fished at maximum capacity. Addressing this issue is essential to meeting the growing demand for food as the global population rises.

The sustainable seafood movement aims to create a world where everyone who depends on the oceans lives with joy, vitality and hope. As an indispensable platform for promoting this movement, TSSS will continue to share its goals with stakeholders in Japan, Asia and around the world, and contribute to strengthening collaborative frameworks.

Towards a Sustainable and Thriving Ocean

We will continue to further develop TSSS as a powerful flagship event to realize a sustainable seafood industry through collaborations with stakeholders.

Special videos for the 10th TSSS

Interview with Organizer Wakao Hanaoka of Seafood Legacy



Celebratory Messages from Global Leaders



Related articles

Roundtable Discussion with Key Personnel for TSSS (Part 1)



Roundtable Discussion with Key Personnel for TSSS (Part 2)



Click each image to watch the video or read the article.

Special Report for the 10th Tokyo
Sustainable Seafood Summit

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