



2021 United Nations Decade
2030 of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development



ECOP
Early Career
Ocean Professionals

ECOP Japan Survey Report 2023: Analysis and Results



**Prepared by:
ECOP Japan coordinators
Kotaro Tanaka
Yushi Morioka**

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Thanks go to all our
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ECOP Japan Online Survey Report

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Introduction

ECOP Japan is a national network of the Early Career Ocean Professionals Programme ([ECOP Programme](#)) in Japan, whose members are actively involved in various ocean sectors (e.g., research, education, government, industry, NPO/NGO, etc.). ECOP Japan introduces a wide range of ECOP activities across disciplines and provides useful information and opportunities (e.g., events, employment, grants, etc.) to address issues that ECOPs face. Additionally, it identifies ECOPs who will support the future of the ocean sectors. Through these activities, ECOP Japan will contribute to the ten challenges and help achieve the [seven outcomes](#) of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (hereafter referred to as the “UN Ocean Decade”).

Aiming to discover ECOPs in Japan and abroad and to expand their network, our team has been particularly active since the inception of our national node. This includes holding an [ECOP Japan symposium](#) (January 2022), opening a [web page](#), collecting [video letters](#) from a multidisciplinary and multisectoral group of active ECOPs in Japan (seven videos as of February 2024), and giving a presentation at a [domestic symposium](#) about the UN Ocean Decade (February 2023). In order to further develop ECOP activities in the future, it is essential to collect information on issues faced by ECOPs in Japan and expectations for the UN Ocean Decade, and to consider ways forward. Based on this background, in June 2023, we conducted an online survey for ECOPs in Japan about their awareness of the UN Ocean Decade.

Online surveys to gather information on the challenges and expectations of ECOPs are increasingly being conducted in other regions and countries. For example, [ECOP Asia](#), [ECOP Canada](#), [ECOP India](#), and [ECOP China](#) have conducted online surveys and published reports. The questions in the ECOP Japan online survey were prepared to be compatible with those used in previous online surveys. We also added questions that are unique to the context in Japan (see Supplementary Materials). The survey design was finalized through discussions with the

regional coordinator of the ECOP Programme Asia node.

The mailing lists of the coordinators' affiliation, related academic societies, and networks were primarily used to distribute this survey. We also showcased the survey into the [monthly newsletter](#) published by the ECOP Programme. Redistribution of the link was also encouraged, with the aim of collecting responses from as many ECOPs as possible.

Below are the findings and their discussion, along with a comparison to survey results previously published by other ECOP nodes.

Results

Composition of respondents

A total of 55 respondents answered the survey. The gender distribution of the respondents is 39 (70.9%) males and 14 (25.5%) females, while 2 (3.6%) respondents selected the option "Prefer not to answer". Overall, males account for the majority of respondents (Figure 1). Most survey participants come from (92.7%) and reside (94.5%) in Japan (Figures 2,3). Of those residing in Japan, the majority either live in Tokyo (21.8%) or Kanagawa prefecture (20%) (Figure 4). Except for northeastern Tohoku, all other regions (including Hokkaido) recorded at least 1 response.

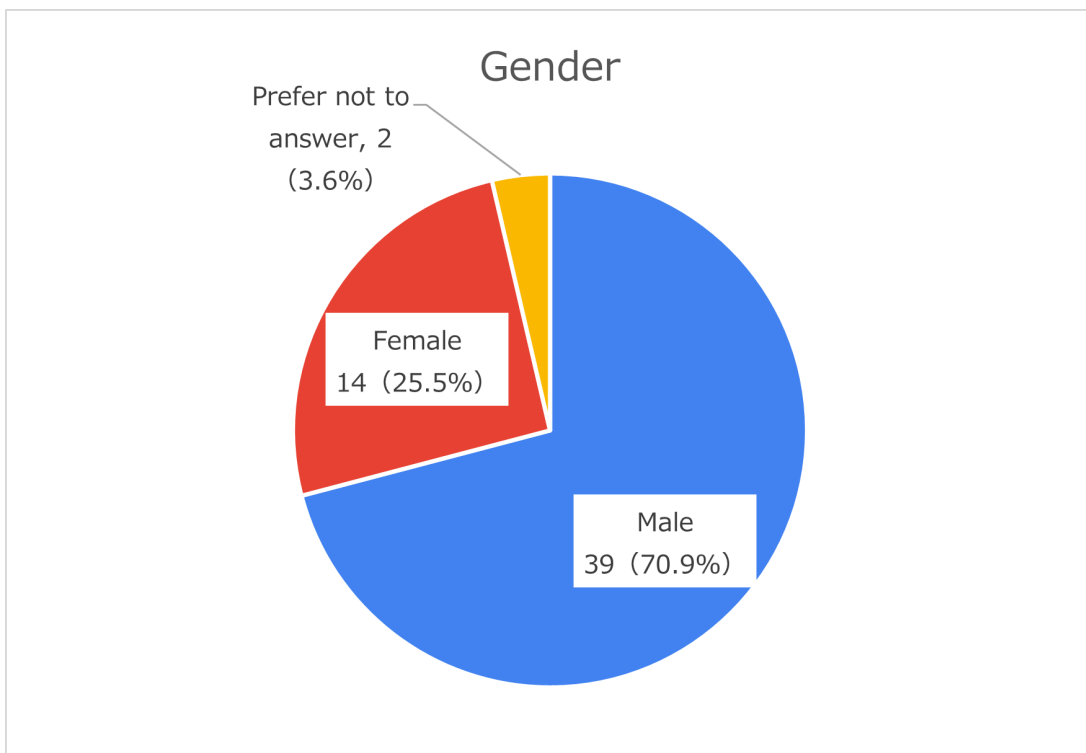


Figure 1: Gender distribution (%) of respondents.

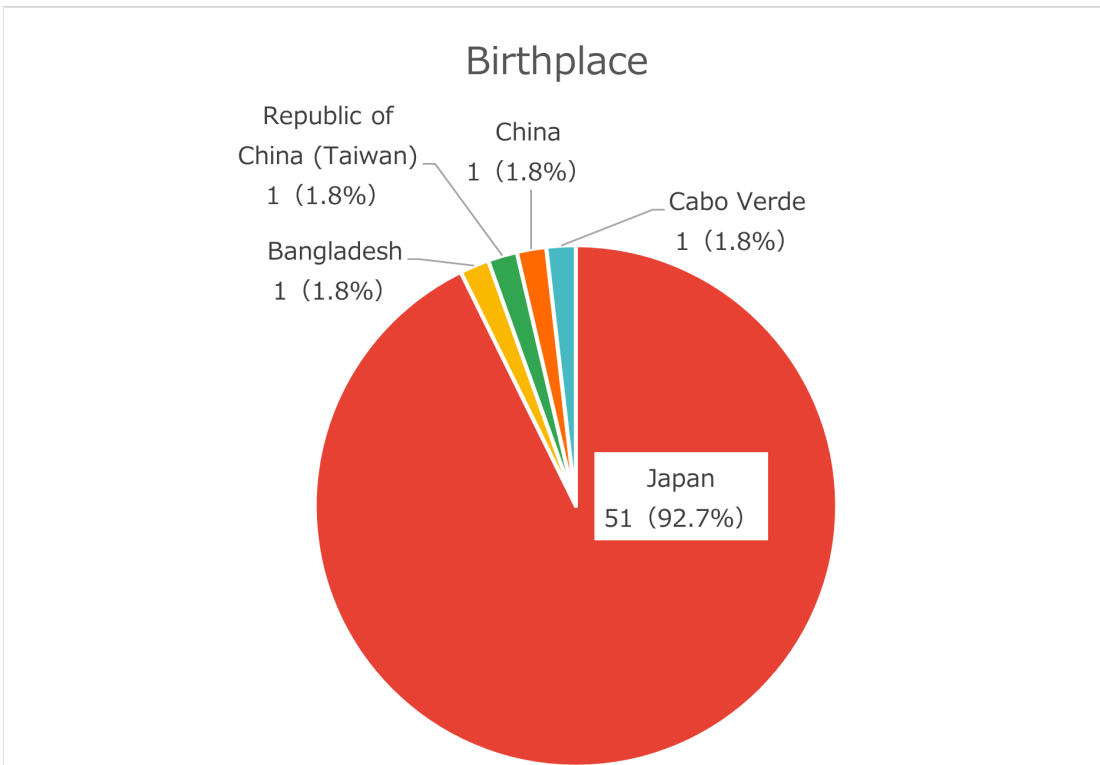


Figure 2: Respondents' birthplace (%)

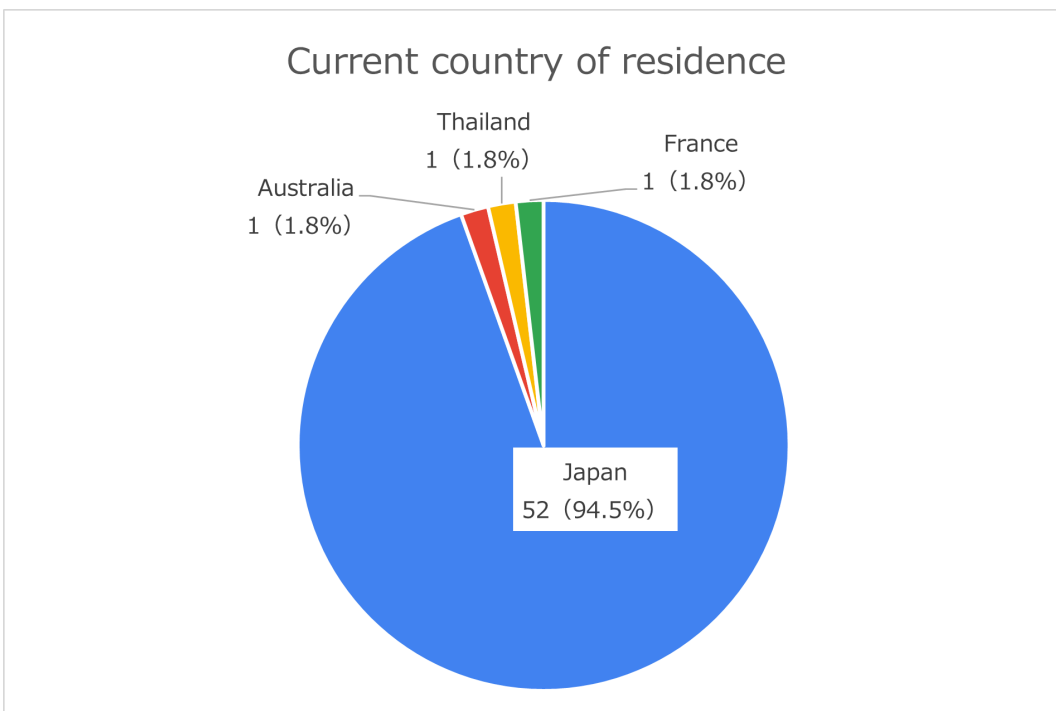


Figure 3: Respondents' current country of residence (%).

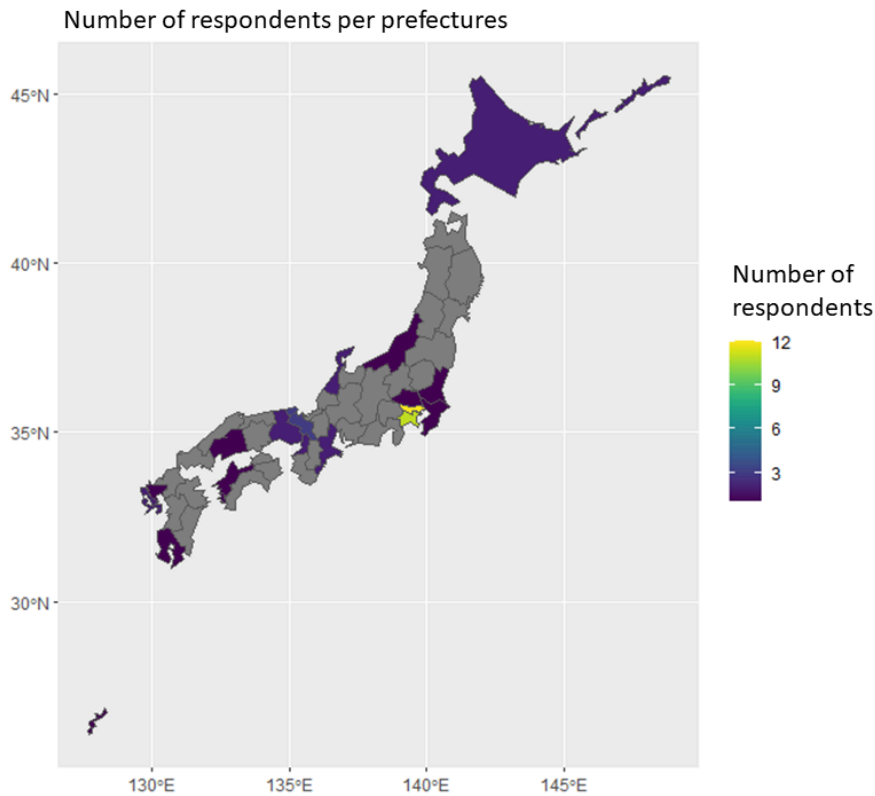


Figure 4: Distribution of responses per prefecture of residence in Japan. Prefectures with no respondents are shown in gray.

Education and sectors

Regarding the respondents' educational background, 37 (67.3%) had a Ph.D. degree at the time of the survey, while 11 (20%) and 6 (10.9%) held a Master's degree and undergraduate degree, respectively. One (1.8%) respondent's highest level of education at the time of the survey was a high school diploma.

The majority of respondents (65.5%) were involved in the marine science sector (Figure 6). This was followed by marine industries (20%), marine management and policy (18.2%), and marine culture and/or education (14.5%). In addition, a non-negligible proportion of respondents worked in freshwater environmental protection (10.9%) and marine/environmental NGOs (7.3%).

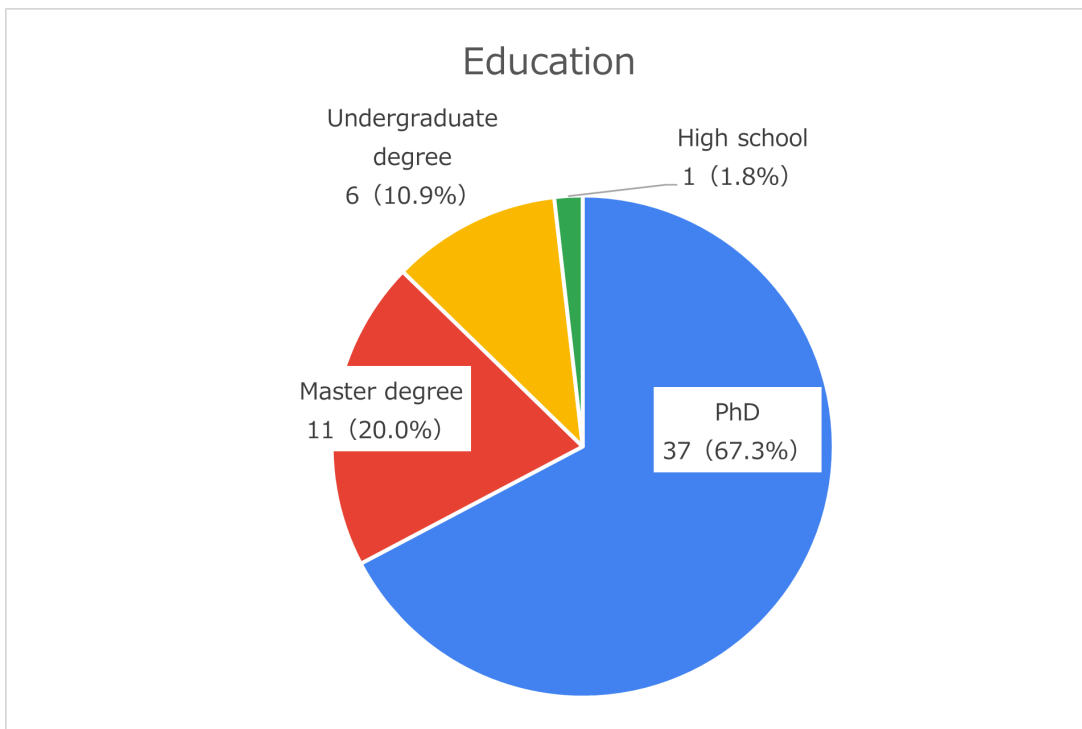


Figure 5: Highest level of education achieved/completed by survey respondents (%)

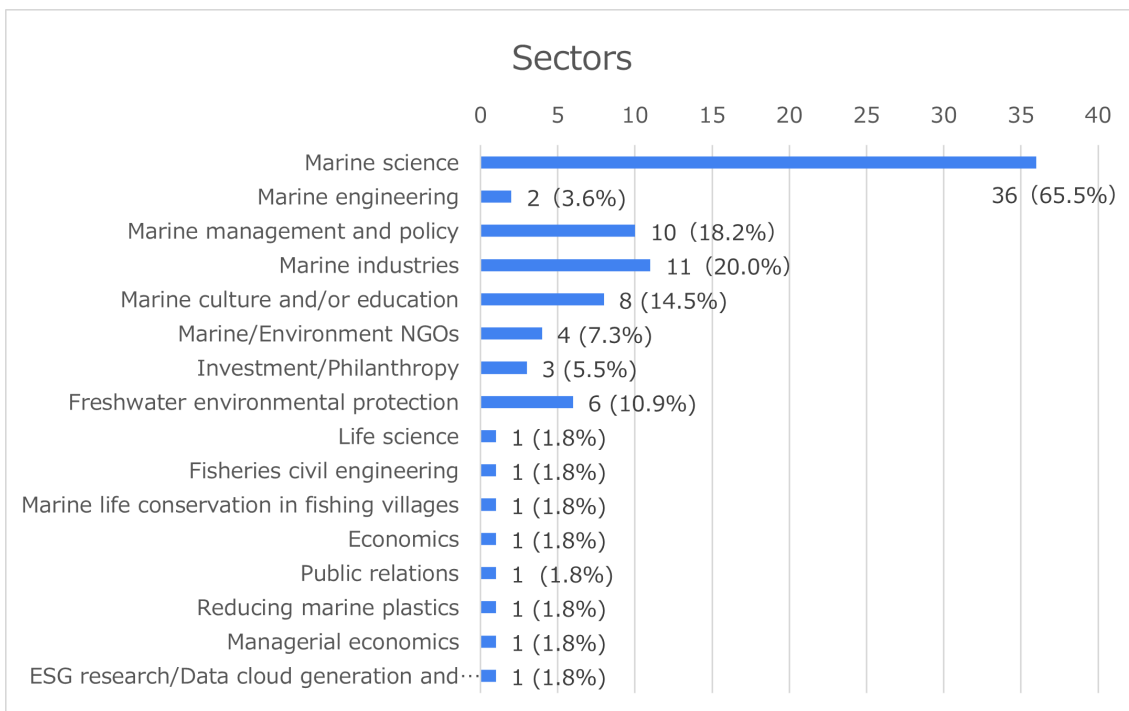


Figure 6: Number and percentage (%) of survey respondents selecting each sector they are involved in (multiple choices available).

Understanding of the UN Ocean Decade and self-identification as an ECOP

Thirteen respondents (23.6%) indicated that they knew a lot about the UN Ocean Decade and participated in it (Figure 7). The highest percentage of respondents (49.1%) had already read about the UN Ocean Decade but never participated in related activities or programs. Additionally, 5 (9.1%) respondents "have heard about it but never tried to know more about it", and 10 (18.2%) reported having never heard of the UN Ocean Decade altogether .

Thirty-seven respondents (67.3%) self-identified as an ECOP, while 16 respondents (29.1%) did not (Figure 8). The definition of an ECOP here is someone who has "10 years or less of professional experience, within any field and sector related to the ocean, not only employed/paid positions"¹.

Understanding of the UN Ocean Decade

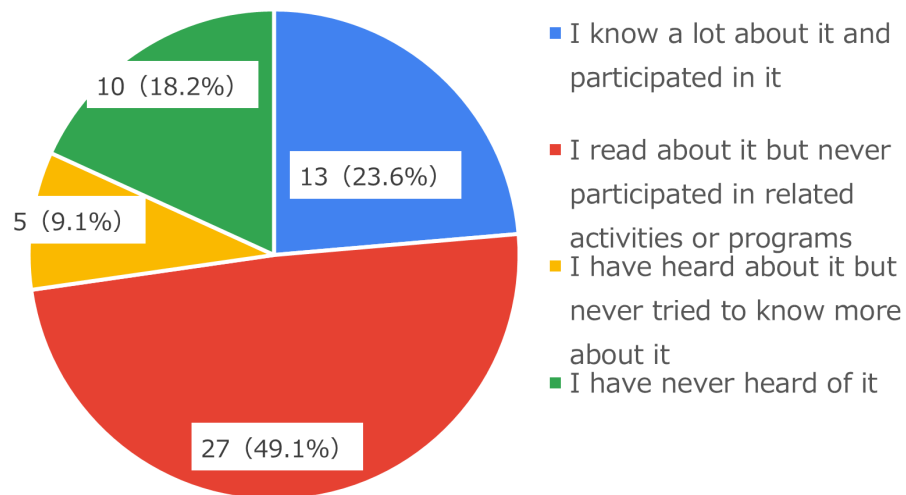


Figure 7: Understanding of the UN Ocean Decade (% of respondents)

¹ Since the ECOP Japan survey was circulated, the ECOP Programme has updated its official definition. The updated definition now reads as: "An ECOP is a person that self-identifies as being early in their career, within 10 years or less of professional experience in any field related to the ocean. This definition includes post-secondary students and any volunteer roles, so not only employed/paid positions. The term 'professional' is used in order to be inclusive of professionals from various sectors of society".

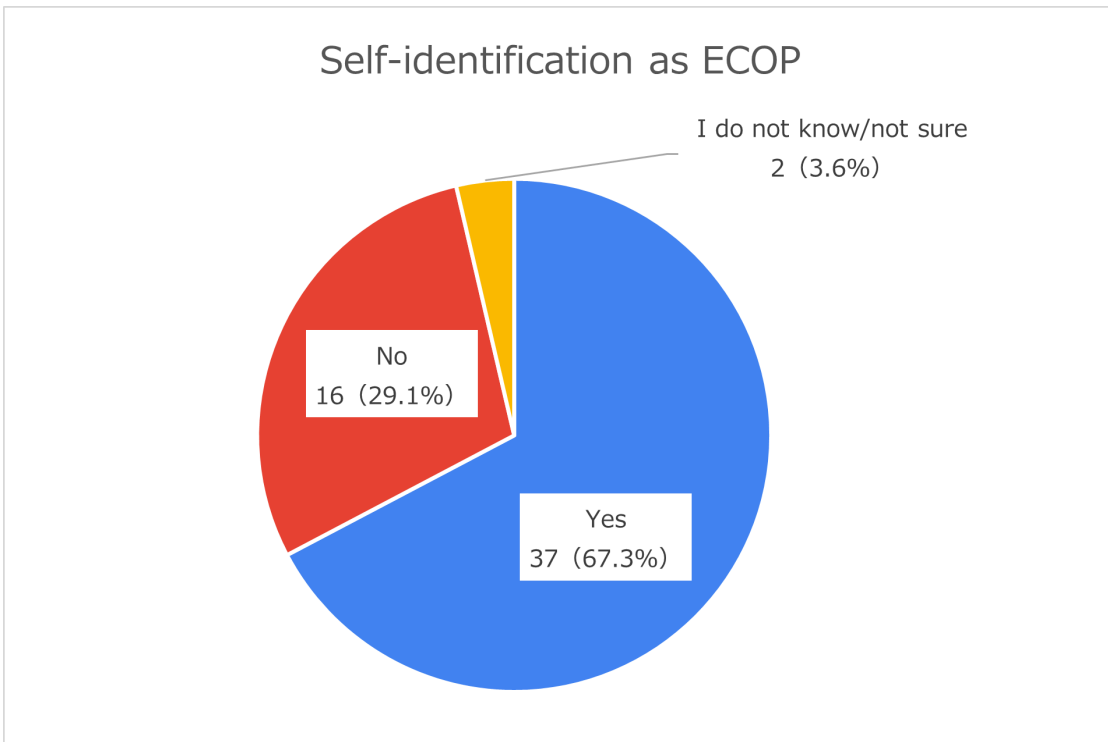


Figure 8: Percentage (%) of respondents who self-identified as an ECOP

Involvement in the outcomes of the UN Ocean Decade

Among the "Seven Oceans" outcomes of the UN Ocean Decade², "A healthy and resilient ocean" was most frequently raised (60%) as relevant to the respondents' own activities (Figure 9). This was followed by "An inspiring and engaging ocean" (25 respondents, 45.5%) and "A productive ocean" (23 respondents, 41.5%). The least selected outcomes (14 respondents, 25.5% each) were "A clean ocean" and "A safe ocean".

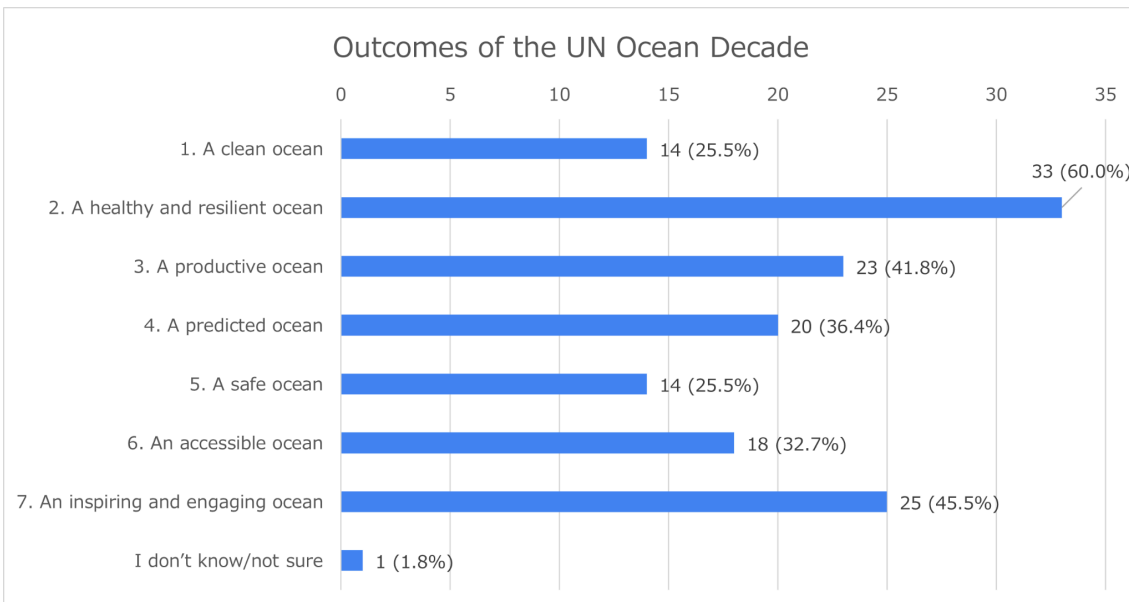


Figure 9: Number and percentage (%) of respondents selecting each UN Ocean Decade outcome based on the relevance to their activities (multiple choices available)

² To learn more about the seven UN Ocean Decade outcomes, visit: <https://oceandecade.org/vision-mission/>

Barriers and expectations for future ECOP Japan activities

The most frequently answered barriers constraining the ability of ECOPs in Japan to contribute to the UN Ocean Decade were "lack of funding" (31 respondents, 56.4%), followed by "insufficient information" (28 respondents, 50.9%), "lack of training opportunities" (22 respondents, 40.0%), and "lack of career opportunities" (19 respondents, 34.5%) (Figure 10).

Regarding barriers to participate in ECOP Programme activities, the survey identified three main concerns. First, 32 respondents (58.2%) indicated that they “do not know how to participate in the Programme”. Second, 21 respondents (38.2%) expressed uncertainty on whether they can participate, stating that they “do not know the purpose of this team and the meaning of my participation”. Finally, 20 respondents (36.4%) cited a “lack of channels to receive relevant information” (Figure 11). Another 13 (23.6%) respondents mentioned a “lack of time” as a barrier to engagement.

When considering the respondents’ preferences for future ECOP Japan node activities, "Webinars about scientific tools, ocean research topics and NGO-related work" (33 respondents, 60%) and "Interactive salon between ECOPs" (29 respondents, 52.7%) were the most favored options(Figure 12). All other preset options were selected by more than 35% of the respondents, namely "Introduction of job opportunities" (22 respondents, 40.0%) and "Introduction of ocean-related institutions/labs" (20 respondents, 36.4%).

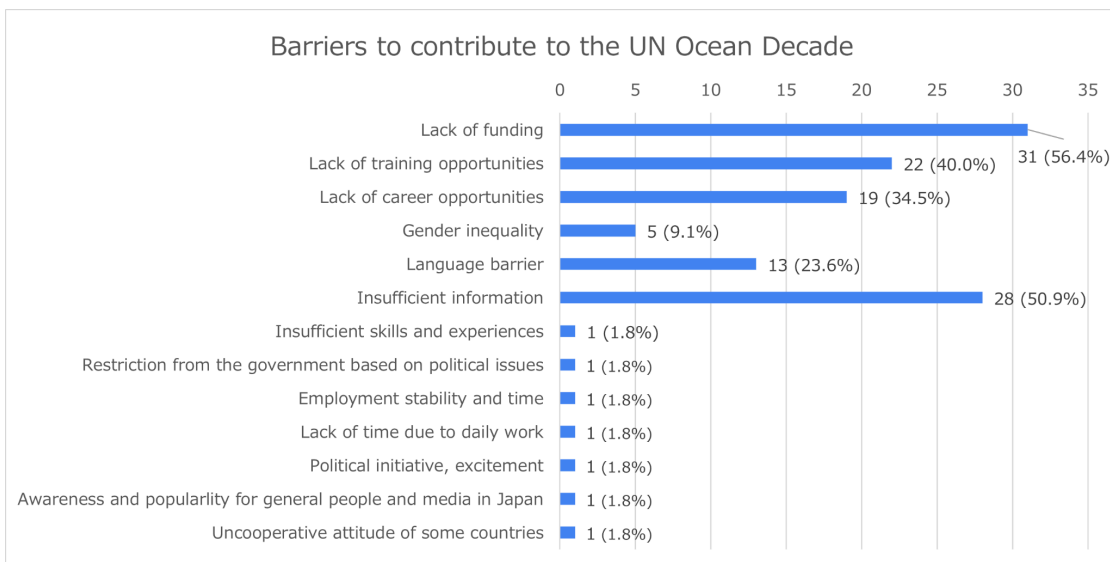


Figure 10: Number and percentage (%) of respondents selecting each barrier constraining the ability of ECOPs to contribute to the UN Ocean Decade (multiple choices available with open-ended option).

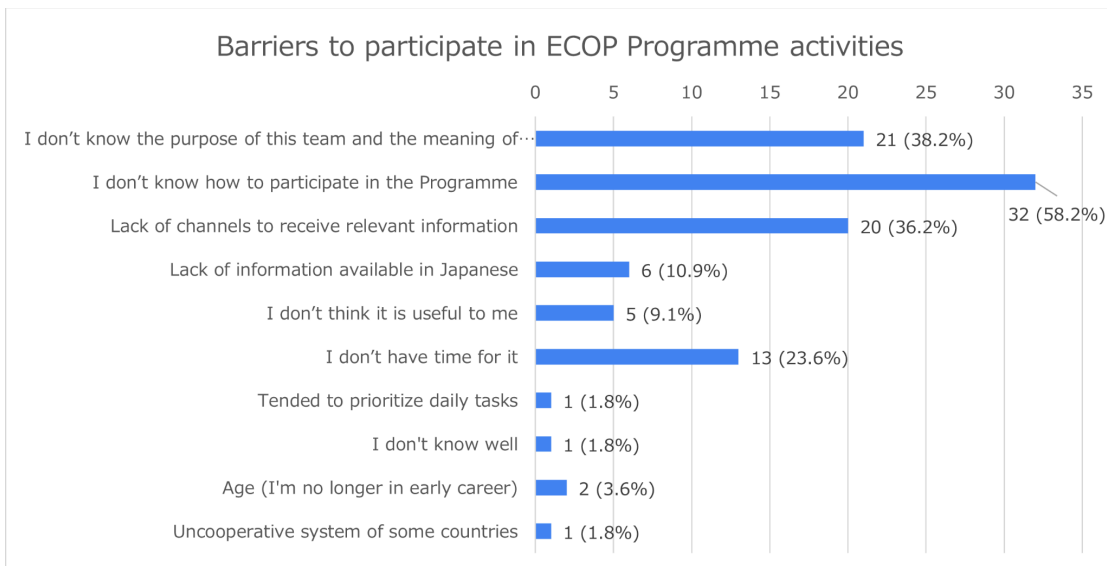


Figure 11: Number and percentage (%) of respondents selecting each barrier to participate in ECOP Programme activities (multiple choices available with open-ended option).

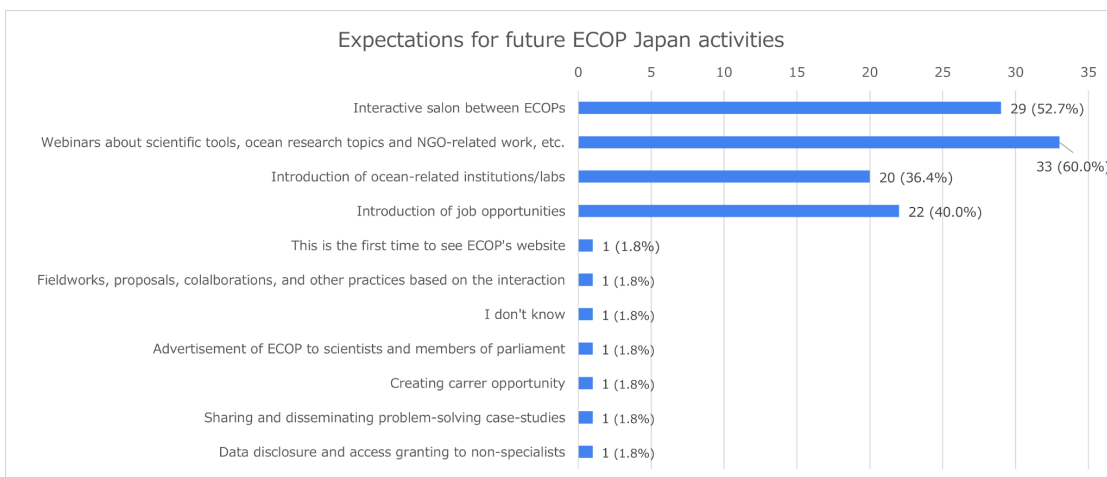


Figure 12: Number and percentage (%) of respondents selecting each expected or preferred activity for ECOP Japan (multiple choices available with open-ended option).

Networks and initiatives related to the ocean (including early-career ones)

Among the respondents, 34 (61.8%) were involved in networks or initiatives related to the ocean, including early-career ones (Figure 13). The networks mentioned by survey respondents consisted of young researchers' associations of various academic societies, alliances composed of private companies, and cross-disciplinary research projects, among others (Table 1).

Part of ocean-related networks and initiatives?
(including early-career ones)

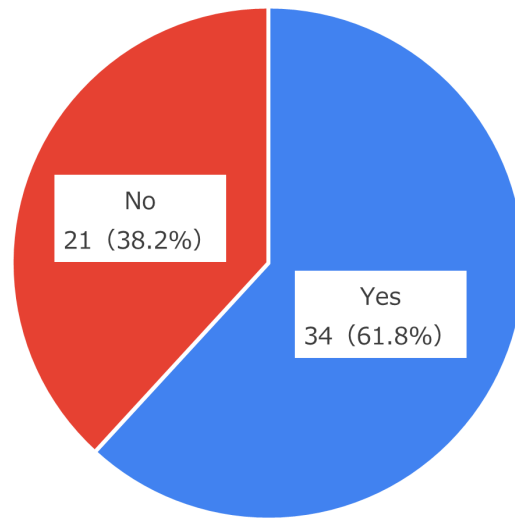


Figure 13: Number and percentage (%) of respondents participating in networks/initiatives related to the ocean, including early-career ones.

Table 1: Examples of Japanese networks, initiatives, and websites (if identified) related to the ocean, including early-career ones.

Network/initiative name	Link
Blue Ocean Initiative	https://blueocean-initiative.or.jp/
Early Career Ocean Professional Programme (ECOP Programme)	https://www.ecopdecade.org/
Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) WG, Ocean Prediction	https://scor-int.org/work/groups/
The young Scientist Group of the Plankton Society of Japan	https://sites.google.com/view/plawakate2014
Southern Ocean Observing Systems	https://www.soos.aq/
Japan Society of Ocean Education	https://sites.google.com/view/japan-soe
Japan Society for Ocean Policy	https://oceanpolicy.jp/
Toba City Red Data Book, Mie Prefecture	
Shellfish Section, Mie Prefecture Red Data Book	
North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES)	https://meetings.pices.int/
The Japanese Society of Fisheries Science	https://jsfs.jp/
Young Scholars' Group, The Oceanographic Society of Japan	https://kaiyo-gakkai.jp/jos/
Ocean Policy Research Institute (OPRI) of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation	https://www.spf.org/opri/

Second Cooperative Study of the Kuroshio and the adjacent regions (CSK-2)	https://ioc-westpac.org/csk2/
Global Compact Japan	https://www.ungcjin.org/index.html

Role that ECOP Japan should/could play

As a question unique to ECOP Japan, we asked, in an open-ended format, what role ECOP Japan should or could play in global ECOP Programme initiatives. As a result, a variety of opinions were collected, including compilation of domestic case studies, promotion of cooperating with other regional/national nodes, and dissemination of information about the UN Ocean Decade (Table 2).

Table 2: Role that ECOP Japan could/should play in the global ECOP initiative (opinions collected from respondents)

<i>"I would like ECOP Japan to consult with MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) in order to improve the financial support for graduate students (PhD students in foreign/advanced countries are paid to create a situation where they can focus on marine research)."</i>
<i>"Communicating information to Japanese students and young researchers"</i>
<i>"Role as a counterpart among overseas networks, presenting and leading the future of Japan itself as well as young researchers in Japan"</i>
<i>"To publicize and promote the significance and purpose of the UN Ocean Decade to potential ECOPs and the general public, as well as the ECOP Japan itself."</i>
<i>"Asian countries are considerably less aware of plastic waste and other pollution than Western countries. However, this is due to their consciousness of mass production and consumption and the fact that single-use plastics are deeply rooted in their culture. Considering that their lifestyles have long benefited from the ocean, the potential for improvement through awareness-raising is much greater. It would be significant to change the awareness of Asian countries with large populations. Although awareness is not as high in Japan as in the West, the momentum is still growing, and ECOP Japan should involve other Asian countries in its awareness-raising activities."</i>
<i>"I would like ECOP Japan to disseminate Japanese case studies to other countries and introduce foreign case studies to Japan."</i>
<i>"Leading role in funding and capacity building in the Indo-Pacific region"</i>
<i>"Regular and continuous activities"</i>
<i>"Introduce that OCEAN is connecting everyone with everything."</i>
<i>"Solving problems in fishing villages across the country (lack of successors in the fishing industry, expansion of markets, etc.)"</i>
<i>"Spreading ocean literacy"</i>
<i>"Enhancement of basic research in marine science"</i>
<i>"Scientific evidence-based approaches toward solving East Asia's complex and intricate challenges in the ocean"</i>
<i>"Demonstrate presence and leadership as a maritime nation toward the redefinition of a global "bountiful ocean""</i>
<i>"Actively disseminate domestic research results in the international arena. Actively utilize training opportunities provided to become a professional who can contribute to solving international problems in the future, and strive for capacity building and networking. Contribute to the global achievement of UNODS by promoting collaborative research with ECOPs in other countries (especially SIDS and developing countries). "</i>
<i>"Advocate for global standards in cooperation with industry relating to environmental</i>

<i>impact assessment methods.”</i>
<i>“Strong leadership as a maritime nation (including government and administration)”</i>
<i>“Promote networking activities between regional ECOPs groups, to organize seminars and training opportunities. As a developed island nation, support and foster SIDS related activities.”</i>
<i>“Investigate and publicize the impact on marine ecosystems in connection with climate change measures on land (green watershed flood control)”</i>

Discussion

When attempting this online survey, we did not conduct a random sampling, but rather spread the survey through a network of connections that ECOP Japan coordinators had. Since this approach was used, biases should be noted, such as the fact that the audience of this online survey was limited to specific sectors and groups, and that the number of respondents was relatively small (less than 100). However, we believe that this data is still valuable as similar surveys targeting ECOPs in Japan have rarely been conducted to date.

Regarding the composition of respondents, the 2022 ECOP Asia online survey recorded 28 responses from Japan. In the current survey, the number of respondents has nearly doubled, reaching 55, suggesting an expansion of the network in Japan. On the other hand, the number of respondents to the ECOP China and ECOP India online surveys conducted in 2022-2023 were 75 and 124, respectively. Despite the difference in population, further expansion is expected for ECOP Japan.

Most survey respondents were from or residing in Japan, and about 40% of them were concentrated in Tokyo and Kanagawa Prefecture. One of the reasons could be that this online survey originated from these places. Other areas where there were no respondents included the northeastern Tohoku region and inland or landlocked prefectures. In the future, it will be necessary to reach out to these areas to expand the ECOP Japan network.

Concerning the highest level of education achieved/completed, the majority of respondents had a Ph.D. degree. This could be explained by the fact that we used a network of several academic societies to distribute the online survey. Needless to say, attracting the attention of many marine scientists is important for the development of the UN Ocean Decade. At the same time, fields outside of academia also contribute to the UN Ocean Decade, and there is a need to actively bridge and connect with different sectors (e.g., government, private companies, NGOs/NPOs, etc.).

Furthermore, the percentage of respondents with a Ph.D., at 67.3%, is far higher compared to other country surveys (e.g., ECOP China at 27.6%). When it comes to marine industries, the proportion of respondents involved in this sector in Japan (20%) was higher than those recorded in other surveys (ECOP Asia (2023) 9.0%, ECOP China 13.2%). These results suggest that the activities of the UN Ocean Decade and ECOP Japan are becoming better known to domestic stakeholders across sectors. It is important to continue disseminating activities to sectors outside of academia.

The awareness of the UN Ocean Decade in Japan increased from 72% of respondents in the [2021 ECOP Asia online survey](#) to 81.8% in this survey. This could be the result of proactive public relations (PR) activities by stakeholders and organizations in Japan. Meanwhile, 84.2% and 92.0% of respondents in the ECOP China and ECOP India online surveys, respectively, were aware of the UN Ocean Decade. Although the level of recognition in Japan is still lower than those countries, the PR activities have been effective to a certain extent.

While awareness in Japan has increased, the highest percentage of respondents (49.1%) answered that they had heard about the UN Ocean Decade but had never participated in related activities or programs. This indicates the necessity to focus PR efforts on specific ways to participate in the UN Ocean Decade, in other words, from “what the UN Ocean Decade is” to “How to take part in it”.

In relation to the [seven Outcomes](#) of the UN Ocean Decade, the highest percentage of respondents were involved in "A healthy and resilient ocean" (60%) and the lowest percentage equally shared by "A safe ocean" and “A clean ocean” (25.5%). In comparison, ECOP India had most responses for the Outcome "A healthy and resilient ocean" (69%) and the least for "An accessible ocean" (36%), while for ECOP China, "A healthy and resilient ocean" scored the highest (53.9%) and the least chosen ones were "A predicted ocean" and "A safe ocean", with the same percentage (15.4%). Common to all three countries was the importance of “A healthy and resilient ocean”, which is the Decade Outcome that consistently gathered the largest number of responses . Because these countries have rich and diverse marine ecosystems, there is a strong emphasis on understanding these systems and on properly assessing the impacts of human activities and climate change, in order to maintain ecosystem services. This information is meaningful for shaping future collaborative initiatives among these nations, such as joint research projects, webinars, events, and much more, under the umbrella of the UN Ocean Decade and the ECOP Programme.

On the other hand, Japan, as well as China had fewer respondents related to "A safe ocean". This may be due not only to a lack of researchers involved in ocean safety, but also to insufficient outreach to ECOPs who protect people's safety at sea, such as coast guards and lifesaving volunteers, among others.

Barriers to contributing to the UN Ocean Decade included "lack of funding", "insufficient information," "lack of training opportunities," and "lack of career opportunities." Regarding financial assistance, it is not always easy for the ECOP Programme, whose staff mostly work on a volunteer basis, to directly provide such support. On the other hand, the ECOP Programme can definitely assist in sharing information about the UN Ocean Decade and upcoming training and career opportunities, including some offered by the ECOP Programme and in collaboration with other Decade partners. The ECOP Programme publishes a monthly newsletter³, which provides information on training programs that can be attended online or in-person, as well as events and employment information relevant to ECOPs. Financial support opportunities are also shared, including information on travel and research grants for early career professionals. These are also publicly available on the [ECOP Programme website](#), and we are working on creating an environment where ECOPs around the world can become more aware of these opportunities through enhanced information sharing.

The most common response regarding barriers to participating in ECOP Programme activities was that they did not know how to participate. Participation in the global ECOP network can take many forms, such as gathering and providing ocean-related information, updates and opportunities, organizing ECOP workshops and networking sessions at conferences, joining social media and video campaigns, or coordinating and facilitating the establishment of nodes and topical working groups (e.g., ocean literacy)⁴. In order to be a cross-disciplinary network,

³ To subscribe to the newsletter, please fill out the short form at this link here.

⁴ For more information on the establishment and coordination of ECOP nodes and working groups, see: <https://www.ecopdecade.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ECOP-Programme-Onboarding-Handbook-Final-Version-2.pdf>

ECOP Japan does not set clear scope or conditions, but aims to create "casual" connections. We would like ECOPs to participate with the mindset of "casual listening," regardless of field, age, or experience. Anyone can join ECOP Japan by filling out the required information on the [ECOP Japan webpage](#) or the ECOP Programme [newsletter registration form](#).

In Japan, many respondents expressed their expectations or preferences for future webinars and interactive salons between ECOPs. In addition, they would also like to be introduced to other marine-related organizations/labs across the country and receive employment opportunities, the latter being already done through the ECOP Programme newsletter. As a result, ECOP Japan is planning to hold a national ECOP symposium in March 2024, where active Japanese ECOPs in various fields and sectors will introduce their respective activities and discuss ways forward. ECOP Japan also plans to launch a webinar series that participants can join in a casual manner. Information will be disseminated through newsletters and other media channels as appropriate.

A majority of respondents indicated that they have not participated in activities and/or networks related to the ocean (including early-career ones). For those who had already been involved, most activities/networks that were mentioned concerned academic societies and research programs. This reflects the strong representation from academia among respondents. Despite this bias, the fact that we also received responses from the [Blue Ocean Initiative](#), a Japan-based collaborative community which is composed of several private companies, is an important step forward.

Finally, several respondents shared their expectations on the role that ECOP Japan should play in global ECOP efforts, such as disseminating examples of Japanese activities (e.g., local case studies) to overseas partners and ECOP groups, while also introducing examples and practices from overseas to the ECOP Japan community. Some respondents also hope that ECOP Japan will promote cooperation in specific regions, including Asia, Pacific island countries, the Indian and Pacific Oceans, etc. Until now, ECOP Japan has mainly been engaged in domestic activities (e.g., video letters, symposiums, etc.). But in response to the expectations expressed in the survey, the team plans to foster cooperation with other regional/national ECOP nodes, among other future work priorities.

Summary and ways forward

The 2023 ECOP Japan online survey allowed us to collect information on the status, issues, and expectations of ECOPs in Japan. Despite a limited sample size, the data were useful when considering the future direction that the ECOP Japan node should take. We believe that carrying out similar surveys on a regular basis will provide one of the indicators for evaluating how the UN Ocean Decade and ECOP initiatives are moving forward in Japan. In addition, comparing survey results between ECOP nodes would help to identify common issues which require cooperation, as well as issues that are unique to Japan.

Based on the results of this online survey, we are considering the following action items as future directions:

- Outreach to ECOPs working outside the Tokyo metropolitan area,
- Outreach to ECOPs working towards the UN Ocean Decade Outcome "A safe ocean",
- Promote interaction with ECOPs outside of academia,
- Disseminate information on financial assistance and training/career opportunities, etc,
- Introduce and share information and knowledge about Japanese activities, projects and case studies to overseas partners and ECOP groups, and vice versa.

Based on these directions, the following specific activities have been implemented or are planned to be implemented:

- Held a [second ECOP Japan Symposium](#) in March 7th 2024, to introduce Japanese ECOPs' activities related to the seven outcomes of the UN Ocean Decade, and to discuss the future of ECOP Japan (to broaden the regions, fields, and sectors of activities),
- Regular ECOP Japan webinars on the seven outcomes of the UN Ocean Decade,
- Disseminate information about ECOP Japan through the mailing list and future LINE group,
- Exchange of ideas and networking events with other national (e.g. ECOP Korea, ECOP China) and regional (e.g. ECOP Asia, ECOP Africa) ECOP nodes.

Surrounded by the ocean from all sides and home to a diverse marine environment from the North to South, Japan has built its history alongside the ocean, with various stakeholders living in harmony with it over the generations. ECOP Japan's mission is to create "casual" connections among ECOPs active in diverse ocean fields, without being restricted by region or sector, and to gather and amplify the voices of individual ECOPs. The first step toward sustaining Japan's marine sector, which is facing a shortage of early career human resources, and ultimately contributing to the international community, is to create connections that have never existed before. Under the common trait of the ocean, we would like to expand our collaboration little by little, respecting each area of expertise and seeking sustainable ways of doing so.

Acknowledgements

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Contact us

ECOP Japan Coordinators (Kotaro Tanaka and Yushi Morioka)
japan@ecopdecade.org

Appendix

2023 ECOP Japan Online Survey Questions

This online survey is brought to you by the Japan node (ECOP Japan) of the Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOP) Programme, which was endorsed by the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (“UN Ocean Decade”) in June 2021. Through this survey, we aim to gather information on the status, challenges, and future expectations of ECOPs in Japan and Japanese ECOPs residing abroad, and to link this information to guide future activities. We would highly appreciate your participation in this survey, which should take around 5 minutes to complete. We are planning to report the results and insights back to you, through the ECOP newsletter and ECOP Japan symposium, which is tentatively scheduled for early 2024. For any inquiries on the survey and our ECOP Japan node, contact us: japan@ecopdecade.org.

*: Answer required

1. Gender*
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
2. What is your nationality?*
3. What is your current country of residence?*
4. Which prefecture are you based in (If you live in Japan)?
(Describe here)
5. What is your highest level of education achieved/completed?
 - Nine-year compulsory education
 - High school
 - Junior college/community college
 - Undergraduate degree
 - Master degree
 - PhD
6. What sector(s) are you involved in? (Select all that apply)*
 - Marine science
 - Marine engineering
 - Marine management and policy
 - Marine industries
 - Marine culture and/or education
 - Marine/Environment NGOs
 - Investment/Philanthropy
 - Freshwater environmental protection
 - Other (Free description)
7. Which one best describes your understanding of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)?*
 - I know a lot about it and participated in it
 - I read about it but never participated in related activities or programs
 - I have heard about it but never try to know more about it
 - I've never heard of it
8. In which of the UN Ocean Decade Outcomes is your primary area of involvement?

(Select all that apply)*

- Outcome 1: A clean ocean where sources of pollution are identified and reduced or removed
 - Outcome 2: A healthy and resilient ocean where marine ecosystems are understood, protected, restored and managed
 - Outcome 3: A productive ocean supporting a sustainable food supply and a sustainable ocean economy
 - Outcome 4: A predicted ocean where society understands and can respond to changing ocean conditions
 - Outcome 5: A safe ocean where life and livelihoods are protected from ocean-related hazards
 - Outcome 6: An accessible ocean with open and equitable access to data, information and technology and innovation
 - Outcome 7: An inspiring and engaging ocean where society understands and values the ocean in relation to human well-being and sustainable development
 - I don't know/not sure
- 9.** Do you self-identify as an Early Career Ocean Professional (ECOP)? An ECOP is a person who self-identifies as being early in their career (i.e., 10 years or less of professional experience, within any field and sector related to the ocean, not only employed/paid positions).*
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know/not sure
- 10.** What barriers constrain your ability to contribute to the UN Ocean Decade? (Select all that apply)*
- Lack of funding
 - Lack of training opportunities
 - Lack of career opportunities
 - Gender inequality
 - Language barrier
 - Insufficient information
 - Other (Describe here)
- 11.** What barriers constrain your participation in the ECOP Programme? (Select all that apply)*
- I don't know the purpose of this team and the meaning of my participation, and I'm not sure if I can participate
 - I don't know how to participate in the Programme
 - Lack of channels to receive relevant information
 - Lack of information available in Japanese
 - I don't think it is useful to me
 - I don't have time for it
 - Other (Describe here)
- 12.** What kind of activities would you like ECOP Japan to organize in the future? (Multiple choices)
- Academic salon between ECOPs
 - Webinars about scientific tools, ocean research topics and NGO-related work, etc.
 - Introduction of ocean-related institutions/labs
 - Introduction of job opportunities
 - Other (Free description)
- 13.** Are you part of any Ocean related and/or Early Career Networks and Initiatives?*
- Yes

- No
- 14.** If you answered "Yes" to Question 13, can you share their name(s) and key focus area(s)?
[Free description]
 - 15.** What role do you think ECOP Japan should/could play in global ECOP initiatives?
[Free description]
 - 16.** Are you willing to register as an ECOP? If yes, please provide your Name and Email address.
[Name]
[Email address]
 - 17.** Any other thoughts, comments, or questions you would like to share with us?
[Free description]