

# Japan's Maritime Strategy\*

*Masahiro Akiyama*†

## I. PREFACE

JAPAN has often been referred to as an Ocean State. Japan is surrounded by water, and in order to associate with other countries, the Japanese have to cross this vast sea. Ninety-nine percent of Japan's trade, which amounts to 0.83 billion tons, is dependent on sea routes (2009).

The length of Japan's coastline is approximately 35,000 km, the 6th longest in the world. The number of islands is around 6,800. Fisheries production, including fish farming, is 5.4 million tons, earning 1.5 trillion yen and ranking Japan as number 5 in the world. The number of ports is around 1,000 and fishing ports over 2,900.<sup>1</sup>

According to the 1994 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), out of the upper limit of 12 nm as territorial waters, the 200 nm of Exclusive Economic Zone<sup>2</sup> (EEZ) and the seabed of the continental shelf<sup>3</sup> are considered under the jurisdiction of the coastal state. This means that Japan's territorial sea and EEZ amount to 4,470,000 square kilometers<sup>4</sup>, the sixth largest in the world<sup>5</sup>. Japan's land area is 380,000km<sup>2</sup>, meaning that UNCLOS vests Japan with a sea area almost 11.7 times greater than its land.

With the above explanation it is easy to see how Japan has the geographic conditions to become an Ocean State. But they can't say necessarily that Japan has a Maritime Strategy.

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\* This article is originally written in Japanese.

† Chairman of the Ocean Policy Research Foundation, Visiting Scholar at Peking University, President of the Tokyo Foundation.

II. HISTORY OF NATIONAL POLICY OF JAPAN, AN OCEAN STATE

IF IT IS possible to define a state as a continent state or an ocean state, Japan is without doubt an ocean state. But if you look at Japan's history as an "Ocean State" it is doubtful whether Japan deserves such a label.

Several ocean states have appeared throughout history, such as Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and England. From the 19th to the 20th century, maintaining sea power<sup>6</sup> was important to such an ocean state. Sea power consists of naval forces, marine transport capability, foreign markets (which at the time meant mostly oversea colonies), and substantial economic power.

In contrast to these ocean states, it would be more precise to call Japan an Island State. In particular, during the closed-door policy of the Tokugawa Shogunate in the 17th century, the sea meant isolation from the rest of the world.

Japan was considered an ocean state during World War II, when Japan was trying out the so-called Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere. The Grand Asia Concept including the South Seas, French Indochina (Vietnam) and Netherlands Indochina (Indonesia) was an East Asia security bloc pursuing self-sufficiency.

After losing World War II, Japan repented its previous policy. It took a passive stance in advocating maritime rights and interests and emphasized the trade and marine transportation as a mercantile state. Since then, Japan has avoided setting maritime strategy.

During the post-war era, politicians such as former prime minister Yoshida Shigeru were very conscious of Japan as an ocean state and focused on expanding trade and rebuilding the economy by strengthening relationships with the United States and Europe. Yet not even Yoshida was able to provide Japan with a national maritime strategy.<sup>7</sup>

In the civilian sector, Professor Masataka Kosaka from Kyoto University published *A Concept of Maritime Nation Japan*, which describes the direction of development of an ocean state that differs from China. This concept could be called Japan's maritime strategy,<sup>8</sup> but it was never adopted as policy.

Half a century after the war, the UNCLOS came into effect

in 1994 and was ratified by Japan in 1996. A vast area of sea was recognized as under Japan's jurisdiction. It can be said that this was the first time Japan realized the importance of adopting a maritime strategy.<sup>9</sup>

### III. INTRODUCTION OF THE BASIC ACT ON OCEAN POLICY

IN 2007, the Basic Act on Ocean Policy<sup>10</sup> was put into effect. This act was not proposed by the government but rather by members of the Diet. In this sense it was not the government will to introduce the Act. Not only that, but the formation of this Act was led by the civilian sector. The Ocean Policy Research Foundation<sup>11</sup> took the initiative and contributed significantly toward the legislating, which is unusual in Japan's legislation process.

Regardless of who took the initiative, it is notable that this law was passed by an overwhelming majority in both the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors. It is important to understand the Act's background, since this will be the basis of Japan's maritime strategy.

First of all, I need to mention China's steady movement towards development of maritime resources such as oil and natural gas on the continental shelf in the East China Sea. This problem includes the defining limits (delimitation) of the EEZ and the area in the continental shelf which were introduced as new concepts in the UNCLOS. The distance between China and Japan in the East China Sea is less than 400 nautical miles. Therefore, according to the UNCLOS, it is the responsibility of the two countries to define their delimitation in the area.

China claims that its continental shelf extends to the Okinawa Trough, which is very close to Japan's Southeast Islands and Okinawa Islands exceeding the China-Japan equidistance line. On the other hand Japan insists that the equidistance line should be the EEZ delimitation and the limits of the area in the continental shelf.<sup>12</sup> China was developing natural gas on the continental shelf close to China's side of the equidistance line. Japan has indicated the possibility that the underground structure of the continental shelf where the gas field might extend over to the Japanese side under

the ground and has strong concerns towards China. This was the situation at the beginning of the year 2000.

Post-war Japan showed little assertiveness in regards to its maritime rights and interests as I mentioned. So it could be said that Japan resumed its pursuit of maritime rights in 2000s by responding to its neighboring countries' actions.

Since the 1970s, China and Taiwan have made territorial claims on the Senkaku Islands. (In China they are known as Diaoyu Islands over which China has undisputed sovereignty – *ed.*) Since then, invasion of Japanese territorial waters and attempts by activists and fishermen from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to land on these islands have gathered much attention from the Japanese public. This issue became more prominent in the 1990s. Issues related to dominion over islands include the Takeshima (Dokdo) island with South Korea and the Northern Territories with Russia. Both are related to Japan losing World War II. This does not mean that the entire Japanese nation is trying to reclaim territory out of a nationalistic agenda, but is seeking the closure. It has led to growing frustration among the Japanese public.

In 1996 Japan ratified the UNCLOS. According to this treaty Japan has jurisdiction over an EEZ which is 200 nautical miles seaward from Japanese territorial waters baseline and the continental shelf.<sup>13</sup> From this vast area in the Pacific Ocean, Japan saw the possibility of developing the biological, energy and mineral resources in the seabed. Around the same time, major newspapers launched campaigns promoting the ocean development as part of a national strategy.<sup>14</sup>

The Nippon Foundation chartered a boat to take academia, experts and journalists to Okinotori-shima Island, (Okinotori-shima Atoll – *ed.*) a remote island in southeast water in the Pacific Oceans, to close up the island, resulting in that media reported it as a big news.

Then the opposition Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) submitted a bill which aimed to protect Japan's maritime interests by regulating in marine research in the form of lawmaker-initiated

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legislation. This bill was submitted to show to the Japanese public the necessity of legislating for a domestic law which abides by the provisions of the UNCLOS, but was also clearly the result of the disputes in the Southeast China Sea.

UNCLOS provides for conservation of the marine environment as well as exploitation of the ocean. It aims for sustainable development. Approval of UNCLOS at the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea dates back to 1982. Since then, international regulations to protect the environment were introduced, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity. Japanese citizens became more concerned about general management of coastal areas, including waste being washed ashore, the explosive increase of the *echizen* jellyfish, preserving albatross habitat, etc. These were some of the reasons for the introduction of the Basic Act on Ocean Policy.

Article 1 of the Act states that “it is important to realize a new Oceanic State in harmony with the peaceful and positive development and use of the oceans with the conservation of the marine environment.” In order to understand Japan’s maritime strategy or ocean policy, I must start by explaining the Basic Act on Ocean Policy.

The Act explicates 6 main principles. They are as follows:

1. Harmonization of the Development and Use of the Oceans with the Conservation of the Marine Environment
2. Securing Safety and Security on the Oceans
3. Improvement of Scientific Knowledge of the Oceans
4. Sound Development of Ocean Industries
5. Comprehensive Governance of the Oceans
6. International Partnership with regard to the Oceans.

Under these 6 main principles, the Act specifies 12 basic measures to carry out. The clauses are as follows:

1. Promotion of Development and Use of Ocean Resources
2. Conservation of the Marine Environment
3. Promotion of Development of Exclusive Economic Zones
4. Securing Maritime Transport
5. Securing the Safety and Security of the Oceans

6. Promotion of Ocean Survey
7. Promotion of Research and Development of Ocean Science and Technology
8. Promotion of Ocean Industries and Strengthening International Competitiveness
9. Integrated Management of the Coastal Zone
10. Conservation of the Remote Islands
11. Securing International Coordination and Promotion of International Cooperation
12. Enhancement of Citizens' Understanding of the Oceans.

In order to execute the above measures, the Act stipulates that the Headquarters for Ocean Policy (with the Prime Minister serving as Director-General) shall be established in the Cabinet with a new Minister of Ocean Policy.<sup>15</sup> Under the Act, an integrated Ocean Policy Office was organized under the Headquarters. The Act also obligates the government to formulate a basic plan regarding the oceans.

#### IV. FORMULATION OF A BASIC PLAN FOR OCEAN POLICY

THE BASIC ACT on Ocean Policy was enacted on the 20th of July in 2008. This date happens to be one of Japan's National Holidays: Ocean Day.<sup>16</sup>

As soon as the Act was enacted, the Japanese government started on the formulation process of a basic ocean policy. In March, 2009, the first basic plan was approved by the Cabinet. In order to understand Japan's present maritime strategy or ocean policy, it is necessary to examine this Basic Plan.

The Basic Plan for Ocean Policy is based on the 6 principles of the Act on Ocean Policy but also specifies 3 measures to carry out these goals:

1. Undertake a leading initiative in the challenge mankind faces in regards to the ocean
2. Creating the basis for sustainable development of the abundant ocean resource and its space
3. Contributions to safety and peace of civilians in the ocean

sector.

These three goals can be considered as Japan's maritime strategy. Below I will explain the measures and these three goals.

### **1. Promotion of Development and Use of Ocean Resources**

THE STATE shall take necessary measures on conservation and management of living aquatic and mineral resources. The latter includes oil, natural gas, methane hydrate, seafloor hydrothermal deposits, cobalt rich crust, and other resources. With regard to methane hydrate and seafloor hydrothermal deposits, in addition to the Basic Plan, a specific development plan<sup>17</sup> was settled on. These are currently the most noteworthy initiative of Japan's ocean resource development.

Additional forms of resource development such as wind, wave and tidal power are being promoted. These have gained public attention after the great East Japan earthquake and tsunami that caused the disaster at the Fukushima nuclear power plant and the meltdown of the reactor.

### **2. Conservation of the Marine Environment**

THE STATE shall take all necessary measures to research and conserve the marine environment in order to maintain the biodiversity of the oceans and reduce the impact of pollution. Measures include restoring the tidal flats, conservation of coral reefs, regulating the volume of waste discharge into the oceans, and prevention of waste washing ashore. These measures have already been in effect, but in 2011 the government formulated the Marine Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.<sup>18</sup> To observe greenhouse gas density and research the CO<sub>2</sub> absorption mechanism in the oceans, the research vessel *Mirai*, which is owned by Japan's Agency for Marine Earth Science and Technology, is currently dedicated to the study of environmental change in the Arctic Ocean.

### **3. Promotion of Development of Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf**

IN REGARD to the EEZ that overlaps the claims of Japan's neighboring countries, Japan will secure its national interest

in accordance with international law. In regard to resource development in the East China Sea, Japan and China reached an agreement in 2008 to co-develop on the matter, but this has not yet led to the final signing.

In order to secure Japan's rights in the EEZ, it is necessary to strengthen the system of observation and regulation. Regarding the investigation of mineral resources and scientific research carried out by foreign vessels in areas under Japan's jurisdiction, the government should examine its institutional mechanism. In 2011, based on the amended Mining Act,<sup>19</sup> exploration for mineral resources in seas under Japan's jurisdiction has changed to a licensing system.

Regarding the extension of the continental shelf, the State shall furnish information to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf. Indeed, in November 2008, the government submitted relevant reports to the committee.

On the marine resources mentioned in, the State shall promote systematic development.

#### **4. Securing Maritime Transport**

HERE, the emphasis is on maritime industries rather than sea lane defense, namely, preserving international competitiveness of the shipping industry, securing Japanese flag vessels, training and securing seafarers, and developing hub ports in the international maritime transport network. The State executed a plan to double the number of Japanese flag vessels in 5 years and raise the number of oceangoing shipping crews by 1.5 times in 10 years. In 2008, the tonnage tax system was introduced. The State also promotes the International Container Port Policy.

#### **5. Securing the Safety and Security of the Ocean**

THE BASIC PLAN stipulates the maintenance of order in the adjacent sea areas and clarifies the prevention of criminal acts such as the intrusion of unidentified boats or smuggling of drugs by enforcing joint exercises and maintaining systematic plan of building patrol boats and naval ships. In June 2008, the government enacted the Law on Navigation of Foreign Ships through the Territorial Sea and



Internal Waters (Act No.55, 2009) to promptly deal with suspicious foreign vessels. The Basic Plan also recommends Japan encourage other states to ratify the SUA Treaty,<sup>20</sup> actively participate in the PSI,<sup>21</sup> and improve the ability of Port State Control (PSC).

For counter piracy measures, the Government enacted The Law on Punishment and Measures against Acts of Piracy (Act No.55, 2009) in June 2009. To secure safe passage over the sea, the Government also promotes measures to prevent ocean disasters and participates in cooperative mechanisms in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore.

## **6. Promotion of Ocean Survey**

THE STATE shall make efforts to establish a unified management of information concerning the oceans and collect and provide fundamental information in order to execute ocean management. In fact, JAMSTEC<sup>22</sup> and JOGMEC<sup>23</sup> are constructing new research, training and survey vessels, but these are not new measures under the Basic Plan on Ocean Policy. These activities had already been underway but have become prioritized in the budget. Unified management of ocean information coincides with the spirit of the Basic Act, which states the importance of integrated management of the oceans. Based on this concept the State established Japan's Marine Information Clearing House and started operation in March 2010.

## **7. Promotion of Research and Development of Ocean Science and Technology**

CONCERNING THE OCEAN, the State continues to carry out basic research while aiming at practical research and development in accordance with policy agenda. The System of Observation and Exploration for Ocean and Earth, the next generation type ocean exploration technology and deep-water autonomous underwater vehicle technology, are under development.

To maintain fundamental research areas, development of ocean-based platforms and basic tools for the use of ocean resources will be enhanced. Various R&D programs related to marine energy are also being promoted. Since various branches overlap with one another, research of offshore wind farms<sup>24</sup> in cooperation with fisheries is under development.

## 8. Promotion of Ocean Industries and Strengthening International Competitiveness

THE STATE shall take necessary measures to strengthen the competitiveness of the international shipping industry, medium to small-size fisheries and coastal shipping, shipbuilding and other ship-related industries. The State, in regards to introducing new technology, shall make efforts to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 30% by the year 2013 and promote development of ship engines that will cut NO<sub>x</sub> emission by 80% while training and securing human resources.

In order to create new ocean industries, the State shall utilize marine resources to boost regional development, establish open sea platform manufacturing technology and correspond to genetic resources.

## 9. Integrated Management of the Coastal Zone

AS PART of the integrated management of coastal land and sea areas, the State will take a holistic approach to managing and restoring sand beaches. Measures will include preventing the outflow of red soil in the Okinawa Prefecture, proper management of nutrient salts and waste impacts, recovery of substance circulation, and elimination of offshore-washed waste. The State shall especially take necessary efforts to maintain sewage facilities, strengthen the regulation of wastewater discharge volumes and create a "fishing ground conservation forest"<sup>25</sup> and formulate *Sato-Umi*.<sup>26</sup>

The State shall also adjust usage of coastal areas, for example, between fishing and leisure and manage the coast in a coordinated manner.

## 10. Conservation of the Remote Islands

THE STATE shall conserve and manage the remote islands with the following goals: maintain and manage beacons to navigation and marine meteorological observation facilities; support the development of marine resources; conserve the natural environment and the ecosystem. The Government decided the Basic Guideline on the Preservation and Management of the Remote Islands as a

part of Management of the Oceans<sup>27</sup> in 2009. In order to protect the EEZ, it introduced the Act on Low-Tide Preservation Zones and Maintenance of Hub Facilities to Secure the EEZ and Continental Shelf (Act No.41, 2010) in 2010. Based on the provisions of this law, the State specified Okinotori and Minamitori Islands as Designated Remote Islands and started constructing harbor facilities on them.

In April, 2010, the State settled on a Coral Ecology Conservation Action Plan.<sup>28</sup>

The State shall also promote economic and social aspects of the islands such as grants-in-aid for developing remote island navigation routes.

### **11. Securing and Promotion of International Cooperation**

THE STATE shall resolve problems in accordance with international rules and by utilizing the international judiciary system. The State shall actively participate in the formation of an international framework to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from international shipping through the International Maritime Organization. The State shall proceed with international coordination. Namely, it will utilize the ARF in order to strengthen security cooperation in the oceans, support activities under the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), actively participate in building an international framework to eliminate maritime terrorism, and control marine transportation of weapons of mass destruction. The State shall strengthen coordination according to the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) to preserve the environment in the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea. NOWPAP is active in compiling data on marine litter.

Within the ARF, inter-sessional meetings on marine security have been held since 2009. The extended ARF Defense Ministers Committee agreed on the establishment of a working group specifically dealing with security matters. The State shall also promote international cooperation related to marine resources, ocean survey, science and technology, the environment, sea routes, crime prevention, disaster prevention and maritime rescue in order to accomplish its role in the international society. In fact, Japan

has actively promoted international cooperation concerning the oceans, such as regional fisheries management, the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), Array for Real-time Geostrophic Oceanography (ARGO), and projects such as the World Climate Research Programme (WCRP) and the cooperation mechanism in the Malacca and Singapore Straits.

## **12. Enhancement of Citizens' Understanding of the Oceans**

THE STATE shall take necessary measures to attract the interest of citizens to issues concerning the oceans. These include sending out information by public advertisements, holding ocean related events such as Ocean Day, and generally giving citizens a deeper understanding of the importance of conserving the marine environment. In order to deepen the understanding of our new generation, the State shall promote elementary, middle and high school education with regards to the oceans, including experiencing fishing villages and eco-tourism.

The State shall nurture human resources with scientific knowledge and the capacity to meet the needs of the Ocean State.

## V. JAPAN'S MARITIME STRATEGY

THE MEASURES in the Basic Plan are Japan's present ocean policy. But in reality the policies are merely an adjustment of previous policies classified into 12 new measures abiding by the Basic Act. After the Basic Act was introduced and the government had to decide on the Basic Plan, it took 6 months to shape prior ocean-related policies into the present Basic Plan. Therefore it would be more accurate to say that the Basic Plan was not the basis of an ocean policy aiming for a new national maritime strategy. Be that as it may, Japan's maritime strategy can be drawn from the three goals of the Basic Plan.

The first goal in the Basic Plan is "confronting the challenge to mankind concerning the oceans." The ocean's role in the environment is large. The deep sea and the seabed are the next frontier of mankind, which implies the importance of marine research. In order to conduct such research, it is crucial to possess

a certain degree of technological and financial resources. Japan has shown much dedication and has played an important part in marine survey and research. The 12 measures stipulated in the Basic Plan prescribe marine research and development of ocean science and technology. There have been signs of improvement in the areas of comprehensive planning and budget allocation, and we can expect to see more in these fields.

The second goal is “building the fundamental basis for sustainable use of abundant marine resources and ocean space.” The world’s 6th largest EEZ and continental shelf possess rich biological resources, new types of energy, and abundant mineral resources. Exploitation and development of all these resources and the ocean space itself, and systematic cultivation of related industries, will be conducted while conserving the marine environment. This is the very meaning of what the Basic Act of Ocean Policy stipulates: “realization of a new oceanic state in harmonization of the peaceful and positive development and use of the oceans with the conservation of the marine environment.”

The third goal is “contribution to the aspects of marine-related fields to provide a safe and secure life for the people.” This refers to establishing secure marine transportation system to provide a safe and free marine route and take measures against smuggling and trespassing in the coastal areas and peripheral seas of Japan. It also strengthens the ongoing measures to prevent disasters from the sea such as tsunamis.

The Basic Plan is limited to the contents mentioned above,

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but one needs to consider the background elements that affected the introduction of the Basic Act. One of the pillars of Japan’s maritime strategy is to secure its marine rights and interests by protecting the territorial land and waters, the EEZ and the continental shelf. It is noteworthy that the Basic Act places “securing marine safety” as one of the important measures. The Basic

Act stipulates “securing international coordination and promotion of international cooperation” as another important measure. When a dispute over maritime rights and interests occurs, Japan must work out a solution under this spirit of international cooperation.

Since ocean policy is formulated by 10 different departments, a comprehensive approach is essential. The system is not fully effective in this matter, but the government acknowledges this as of utmost importance in building a strategy.

## VII. CONCLUSION

WHAT is the maritime strategy for the Ocean State Japan? The answer is not simple, but the foregoing has summed up the law and government policy—the Basic Plan. The Basic Act on Ocean Policy stipulates that 5 years after its enactment it is to be reexamined. Since the Basic Plan was formulated on the assumption of 5 years, and since the year 2012 is the 5th year, reevaluation of the ocean policy and formation of a new basic plan awaits.

The enforcement system means what to do with the current Headquarters for Ocean Policy and how to strengthen the system in relation with the administrative organization. It is necessary to adopt a more efficient system to carry out a comprehensive and integrated policy. The current system is not yet an integrated system.

It is not too much to say that the Basic Plan as outlined above is what each individual department has been enforcing since the time of the Basic Act. It is not necessarily a plan based on a strategy. A maritime strategy based on the introduction of the Basic Act must be formed, and according to this strategy the Basic Plan should clarify new measures, prioritize these measures and specify how to enforce the plan in an integrated way. The Basic Act on Ocean Policy Research Group<sup>29</sup> supported by the Ocean Policy Research Foundation has already started this process.

Fortunately, the current Prime Minister Noda administration places outerspace and the ocean as the new frontiers of mankind. We can expect this administration to establish a definite maritime strategy and, based on this strategy, enforce truly effective measures.

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<sup>1</sup> For numerical values, refer to a table in “2011 Conditions of the Oceans and Measures on the Ocean Related Issues,” the Cabinet Office, <http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/kaiyou/annual/H23/H23-3.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> 200 nm is measured from the territorial base line.

<sup>3</sup> Depending on the geographical features of the seabed, the outer limits of the continental shelf can be extended beyond the 200 nm to the upper limit of 350 nm. In this case, it is necessary for the coastal state to comply with the recommendation of the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf.

<sup>4</sup> “Illustrated Guide to Japan’s Territorial Waters and Others” released by Japan Coast Guard. The picture attached on the last page. [http://www1.kaiho.mlit.go.jp/JODC/ryokai\\_setsuzoku.html](http://www1.kaiho.mlit.go.jp/JODC/ryokai_setsuzoku.html).

<sup>5</sup> If the French territorial waters and EEZ include its overseas self-governing dominion (the French Colonies), then France becomes number 2, which brings Japan down to number 7.

<sup>6</sup> When Alfred Thayer Mahan first used this concept, it had a tremendous impact on the world.

<sup>7</sup> Shigeru Yoshida, *Kaiso Junen (Reflection: Ten Years)*, Chuko-bunko.

<sup>8</sup> Masataka Kosaka, *Kaiyo Kokka Nihon no Koso (A Concept of Maritime Nation Japan)*, Chuko Classics.

<sup>9</sup> Initially Japan opposed the establishment of the EEZ and the extension of territorial waters, based on the argument of freedom of the seas.

<sup>10</sup> The Basic Act on Ocean Policy (Act No.33 of April 27, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> The Ocean Policy Research Foundation announced “The Proposal for a 21st Century Ocean Policy” in November 2005, calling for the establishment of a Basic Ocean Law. Next year in April, the Basic Ocean Law Study Group was formed with members from the academia, industry and bipartisan members of the Diet. In December 2006, the Guideline for Ocean Policy and the Outline for a Basic Ocean Law were adopted. In January 2007, the Foundation drafted a proposal and in April the same year, the bill was passed in both the House of Representatives and the House of Councilors.

<sup>12</sup> China’s assertion of the Chinese continental shelf extending to Okinawa Trough stems from the natural prolongation theory of continental shelf. On the other hand, Japan claims that the Okinawa Trough is not a sea-trench that ends the Continental Shelf but merely a trench on the Continental Shelf, which means that this does not end the natural extension of the Continental Shelf. Therefore, by international rules, the two countries should use the equidistance line as a delimitation.

<sup>13</sup> Regarding the continental shelf, Japan has currently applied to the UN Committee for the extension due to the conventionary regulations. (The first recommendation has already been announced in 2012.)

<sup>14</sup> Yomiuri Shimbun, Political Division, “Kensho: Kokka Senryaku naki Nihon” (Verification: Japan without a National Strategy), Shinchosya, 2006.

<sup>15</sup> As of March 2012, the Director-General is Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and the Minister of Ocean Policy is the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Takeshi Maeda.

<sup>16</sup> According to the Law on National Holidays, Ocean Day was changed from July 20 to the third Monday of July.

<sup>17</sup> On March 24, 2009, Headquarters for Ocean Policy approved the Marine Energy and Mineral Resources Development Plan which was decided by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. [www.meti.go.jp/committee/materials2/downloadfiles/g90130a10j.pdf](http://www.meti.go.jp/committee/materials2/downloadfiles/g90130a10j.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> [www.env.go.jp/nature/biodic/.../honbun/pdf](http://www.env.go.jp/nature/biodic/.../honbun/pdf).

<sup>19</sup> Act No.84, July 22, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Vessels at Sea.

<sup>21</sup> Proliferation Security Initiative.

<sup>22</sup> Japan Agency for Marine Earth Science and Technology.

<sup>23</sup> Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Cooperation.

<sup>24</sup> The farm would comprise an integrated system such as an offshore floating wind park, large-scale offshore farm and operational deep-water platform etc.

<sup>25</sup> This is a realization that forests have considerable water-retaining capabilities and play an important role in providing a stable supply of water as well as nutrients to rivers and oceans, thus creating a sound fishing ground.

<sup>26</sup> According to the Ministry of the Environment, *Sato-Umi* is a coastal area where biological productivity and biodiversity has increased through human reaction. [www.env.go.jp/water/heisa/satoumi/en/index\\_e.html](http://www.env.go.jp/water/heisa/satoumi/en/index_e.html).

<sup>27</sup> Decision made by the Headquarters on Ocean Policy.

<sup>28</sup> [http://www.env.go.jp/press/file\\_view.php?serial=15568&hou\\_id=12430](http://www.env.go.jp/press/file_view.php?serial=15568&hou_id=12430).

<sup>29</sup> The Basic Act on Ocean Policy Follow-up Research Group, which has been active for the past 4 years, was renamed in Feb. 2012 as The Basic Act on Ocean Policy Strategy Research Group. This research group has continued reevaluating the Basic Plan and the Basic Act enforcement system. The representative manager is Yoshiaki Takagi (member of the House of Representatives), the chairman is Seiji Maehara (member of the House of Representatives) and the members are from universities and government bureaus.