

UNOC: Ocean Action Panel 2

Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman, The Nippon Foundation

Thank you Chairs. I have come to realize, while humanity has long focused on land and space, we have paid far too little attention to the “Mother Ocean,” with only 26% of the seafloor mapped and about 10% of marine species identified. Guided by the belief that without a healthy ocean, humanity cannot survive, The Nippon Foundation has spent over 50 years striving to understand the ocean for its conservation and sustainable use.

One example is the Ocean Census project, a global collaboration to discover unknown marine species and protect biodiversity. Recently, with international support, we filmed a live juvenile giant squid, believed to be the Kraken model in *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* for the first time in the world. This demonstrates how international collaboration can lead to major advances in ocean science.

Chairs, the complexity of ocean challenges is such that no nation can solve alone. A coordinated global response is essential. That is why I repeat the proposal I made at the two thousand seventeen UN Ocean Conference, which was, the establishment of an intergovernmental panel on ocean governance, working with existing institutions. This panel would unite cross-sectoral expertise into concrete action for the sustainable use and conservation of the ocean, our shared heritage.

Chairs, I ask for your decision on the future of the ocean and humanity by looking ahead a thousand years into the future.