

The Oceans off Fukushima: The Underwater Road to the Continental Shelf

○Shinya Yamauchi¹, Takaharu Ito²

1. Aquamarine Fukushima

2. Atelier Mov

The Oceans off Fukushima display corner was reopened on April 27, 2018 after undergoing renovations.

For the renovations, we made substantial changes to the shape and layout of the display aquariums, and gave the corner the title The Oceans off Fukushima: The Underwater Road to the Continental Shelf. A continental shelf is a topographical feature of the oceans floor that is so named because it extends from the coast to a water depth of 200 m. The displays in the corner are comprised entirely of images in which visitors can make a variety of discoveries while taking a simulated underwater voyage in a submarine from the continental shelf to the deep sea.

What is more, we have organized the exhibit around the three keywords of: “twilight zone”, “deep sea”, and “marine snow” in order to further clarify the images.

“Twilight zone” is a world to which only feeble sunlight can penetrate, and which serves as the entryway to the deep sea.

“Deep sea” generally refers to pitch-black waters where sunlight cannot reach that are generally found at water depths of 200 m or greater.

Such areas contain a world of deep sea creatures that are adapted to a harsh environment that features high water pressure, low water temperature, and so forth.

“Marine snow” was named for the fact that organic matter such as the bodies of dead plankton and their excrement constantly drift down to the deep sea in a manner that makes it appear as if snow is falling.

What is more, at the group of aquariums with round windows that have been patterned after those of a submarine, visitors can catch a glimpse of a wide variety of small deep sea creatures.