

NPFC-2025-SSC BFME06-IP09

Report of Japanese sea-floor visual survey in the Emperor Seamount area in 2025

Conducted from July 8 to August 1 in 2025

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Objective is...

- To identify the extent of VME indicators communities
➡ Suiko Seamount, Yuryaku Seamount
- To collect information on distribution of cold-water corals and other communities on Seamounts of the northern fishing area continued since 2023
➡ North Koko Seamount
- Resurvey of past survey sites in the Fishing Closed area
➡ C-H Seamount

Drop camera system

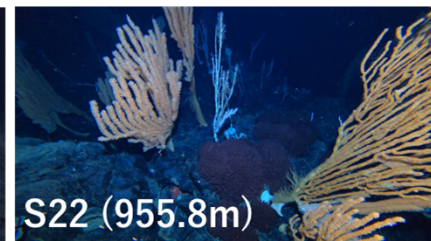
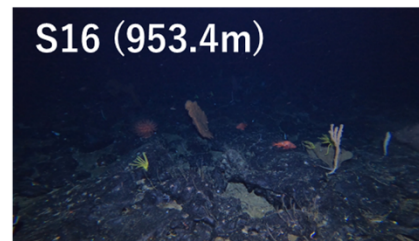
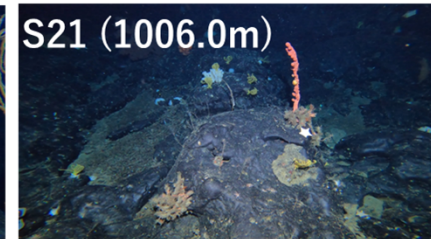
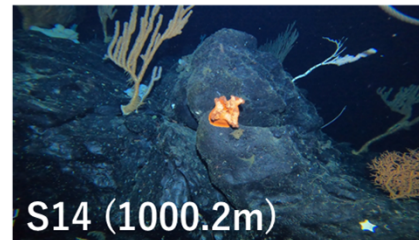
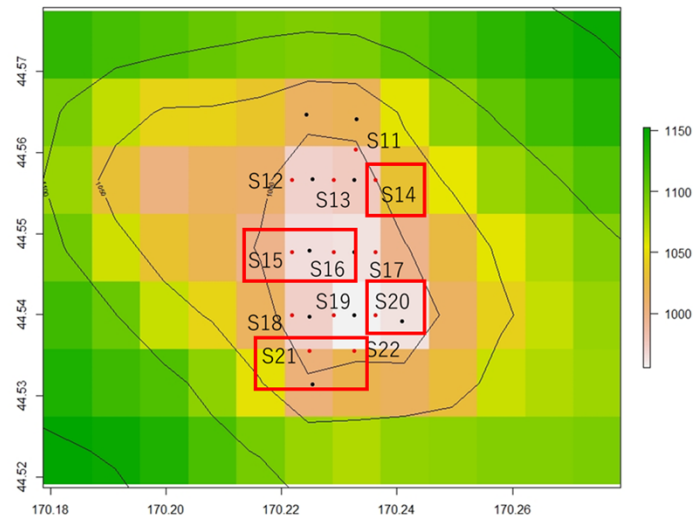
- Comprised a GoPro digital camera used as video camera and LED light
- At each survey site, lowered down on the sea-floor five times to take sea-floor images on five neighboring locations site by site
- Kept on the sea-floor for 2 min at each touchdown



Results of survey of Northern Seamounts in 2024

4

Several species corals (S14, S15, S16, S20, S21, S22)

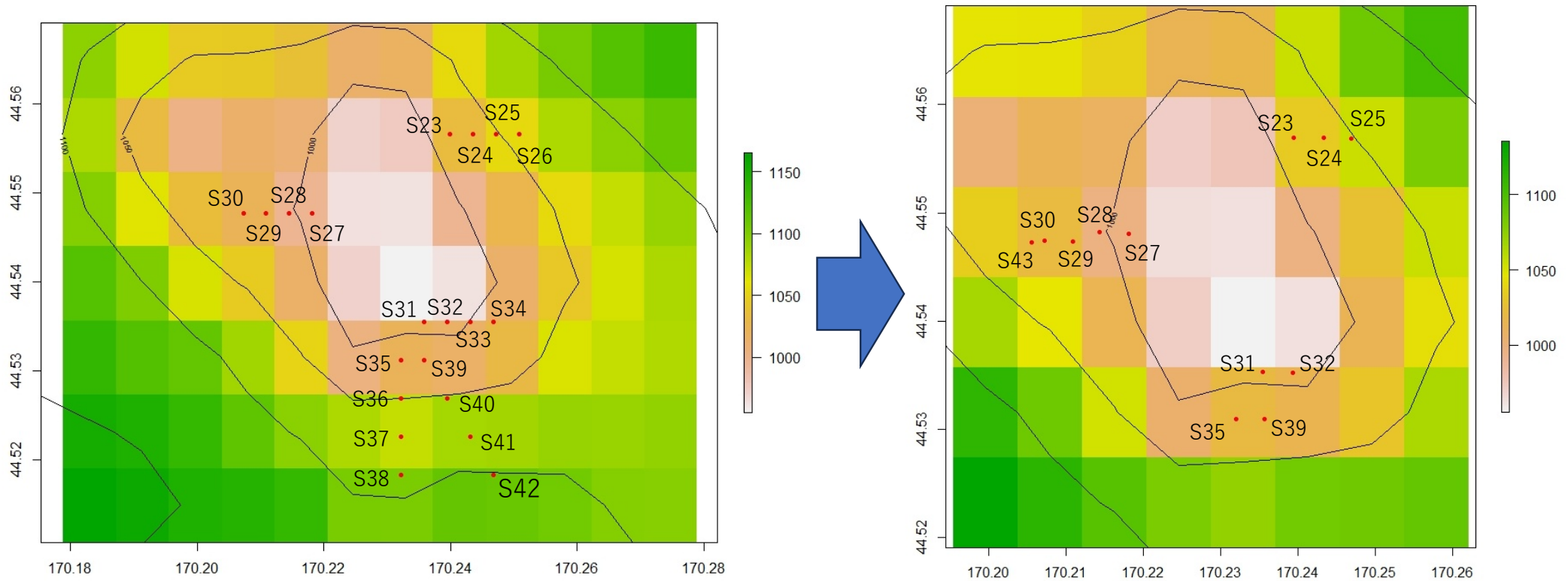


- Continue to confirm the extent of the observed communities

- The distribution status of Yomei and Ojin Seamount were identified
 - Suiko Seamount will continue to be surveyed
- ➔ To clarify the edges (east of S14, west of S15, east and south of S22)

Target seamounts

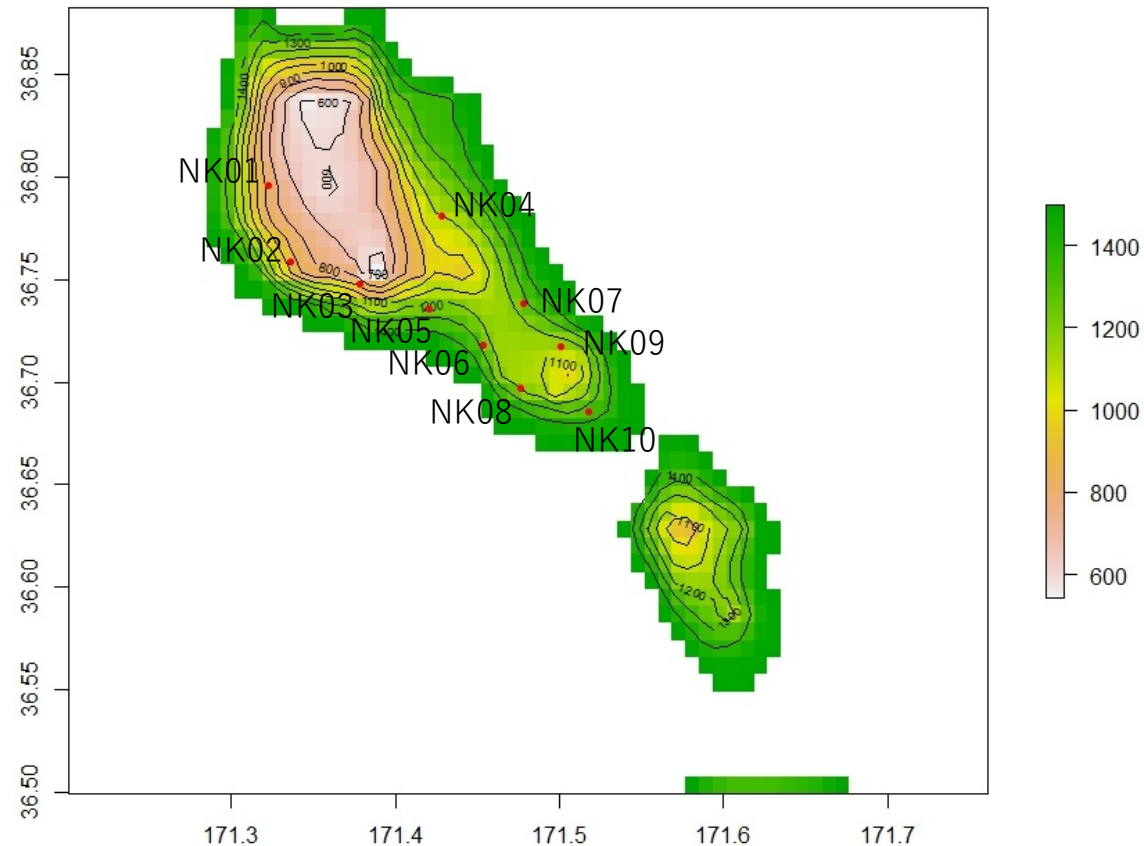
Suiko Seamount



- Planned survey at 20 sites based on the results of 2023 and 2024 surveys
- **Conducted at 16 sites** until the edge of the communities was confirmed

Target seamounts

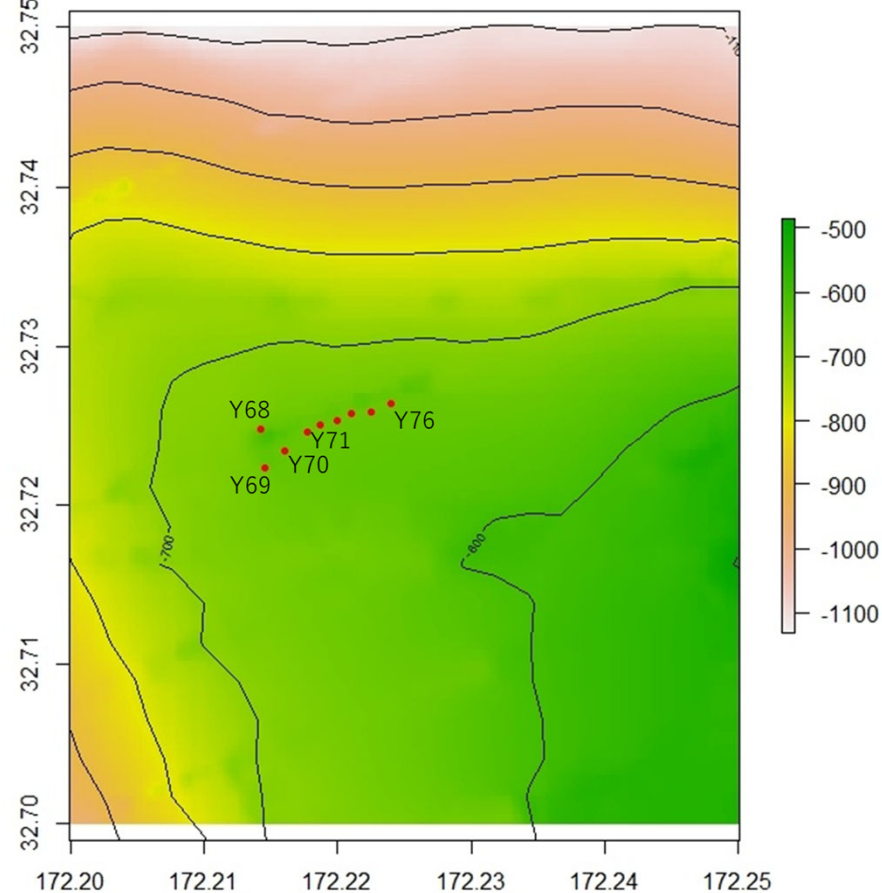
North Koko Seamounts



- Survey data are very limited
- Conducted survey at **10 sites**

Target seamounts

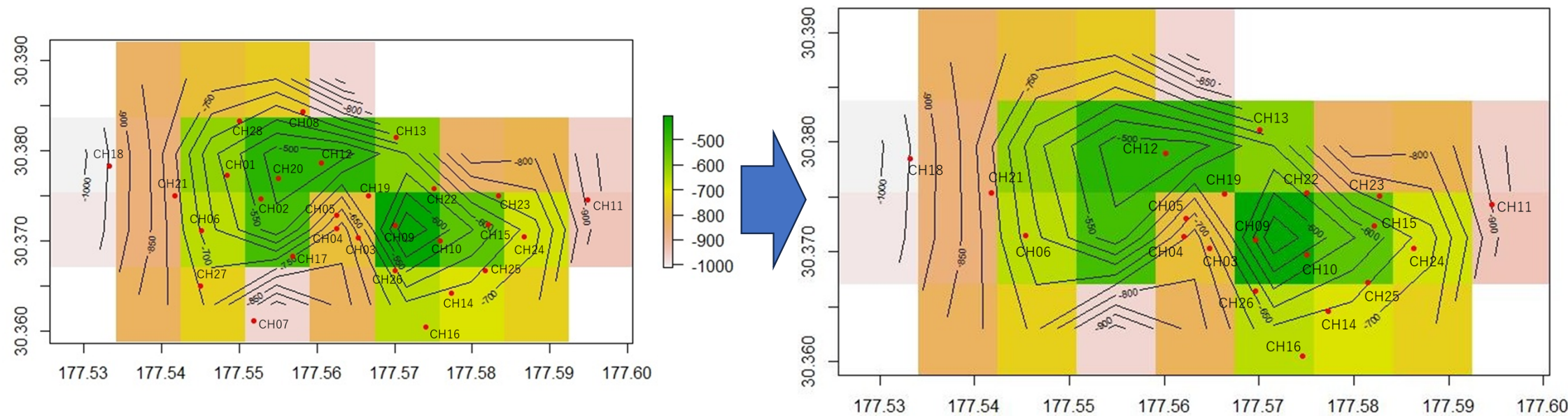
Yuryaku Seamounts



- Conducted survey at **9 sites** based on results of past survey

Target seamounts

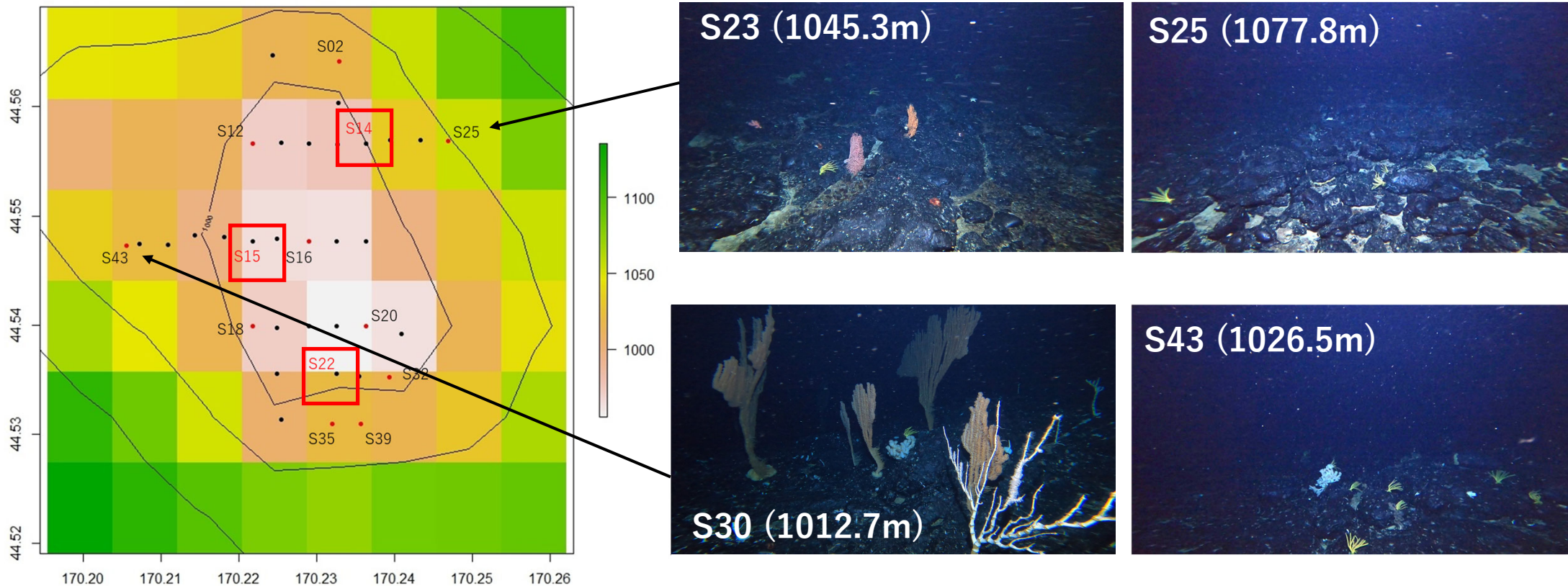
C-H Seamounts



- Planned survey at 28 sites based on the sites of past surveys
- **Conducted survey at 20 sites** in C-H Seamount due to ship time

Results -Suiko Seamount-

Clarify the edges (**east of S14**, **west of S15**, east and south of S22)



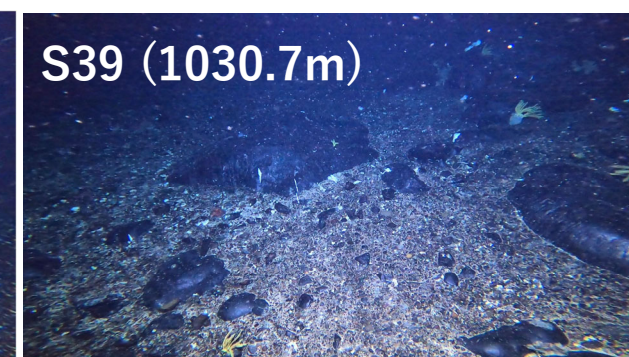
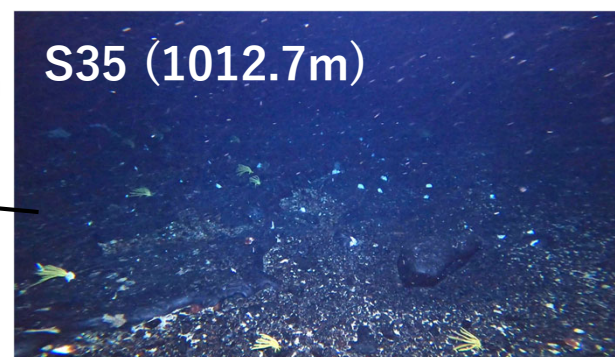
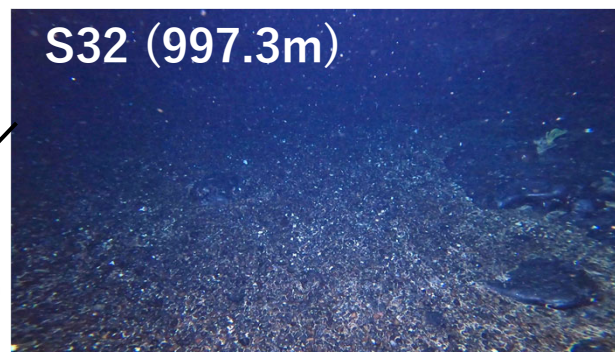
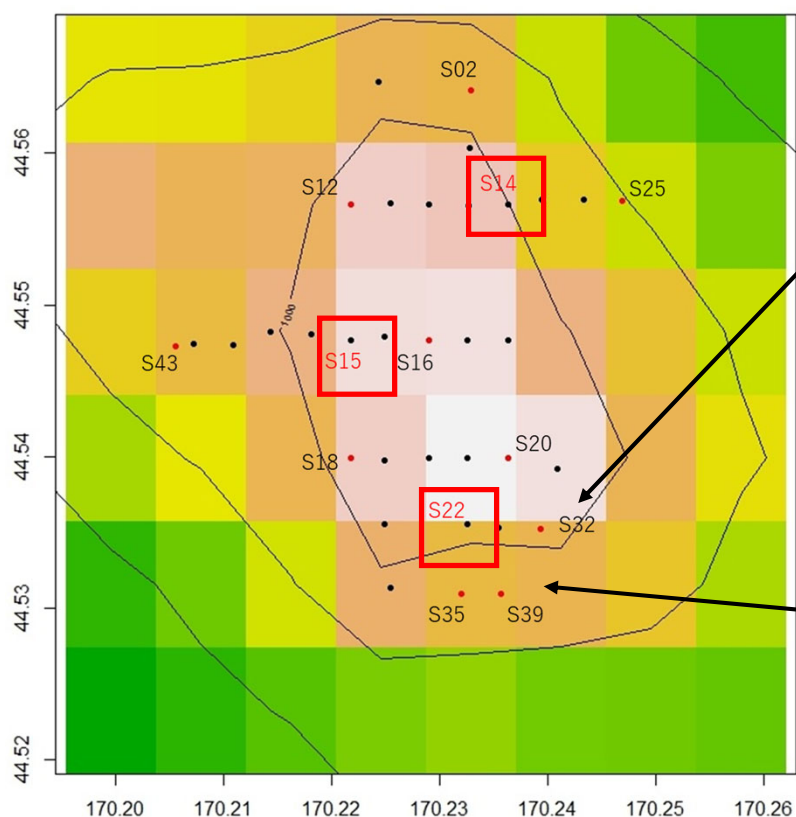
- Edges were defined as the sites where corals were no longer observed

*Black dots show the past survey

*S02, S12, S18, S20 and S16 are already revealed edges in the past surveys

Results -Suiko Seamount-

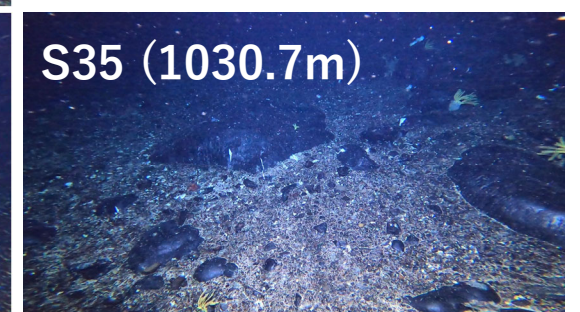
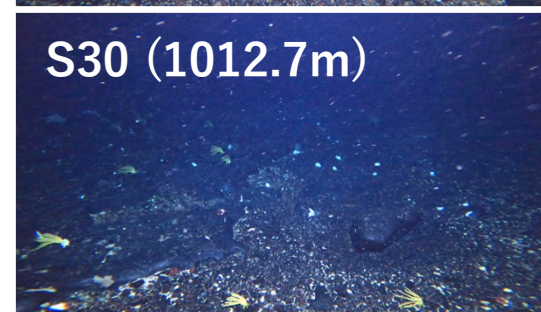
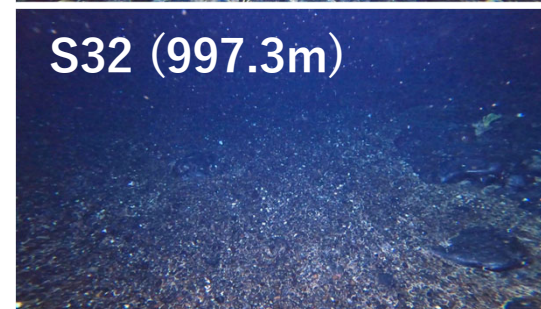
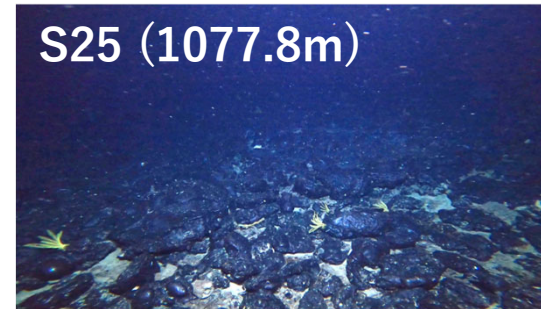
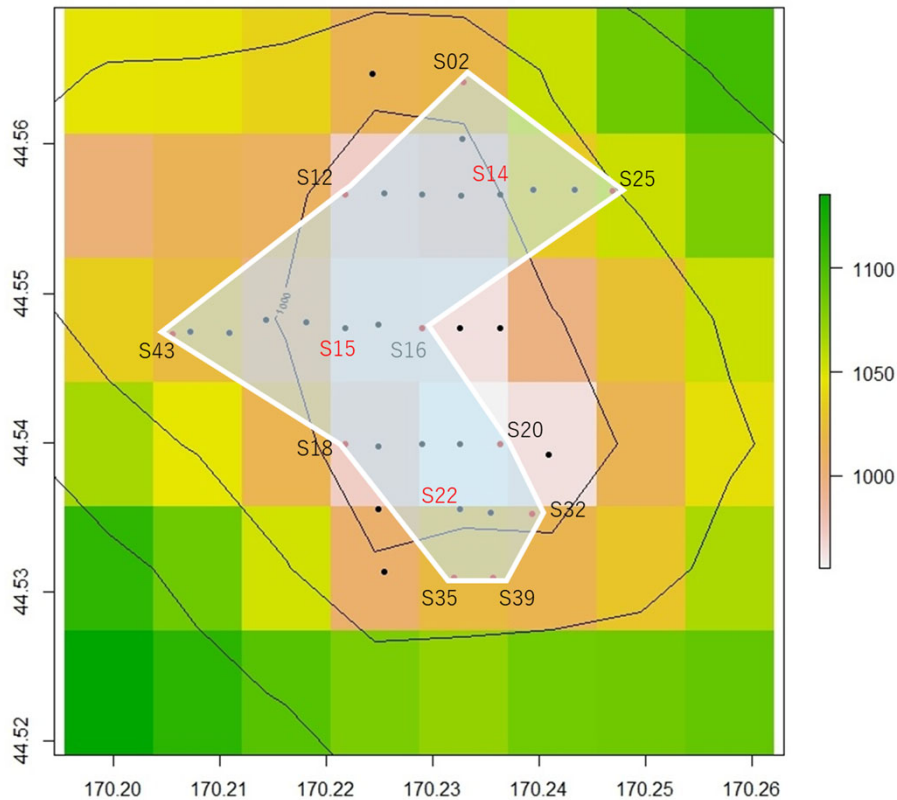
Clarify the edges (east of S14, west of S15, **east and south of S22**)



- *Black dots show the past survey
- *S02, S12, S18, S20 and S16 are already revealed edges in the past surveys

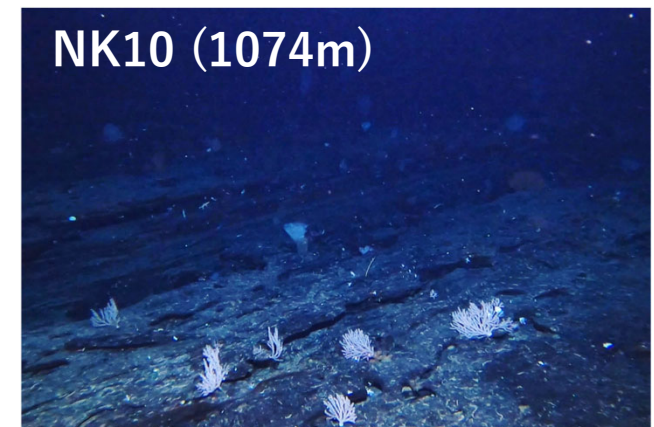
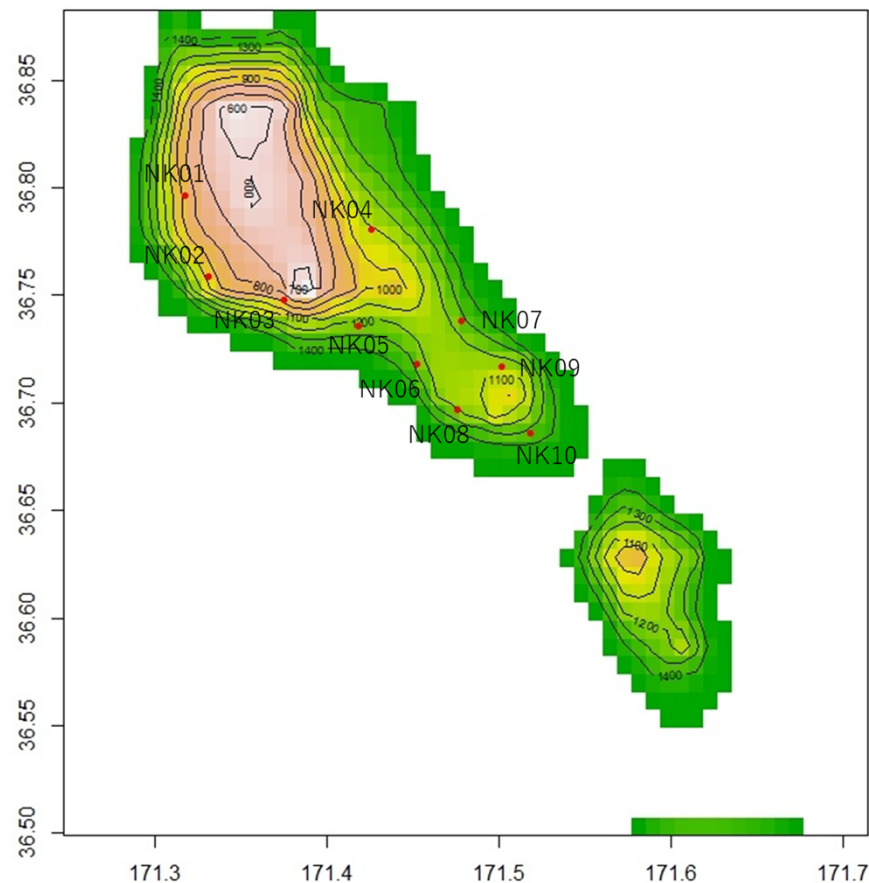
Conclusion -Suiko Seamount-

11



- Identify all direction edges
➔ Potential VME range has been clarified in Suiko Seamount

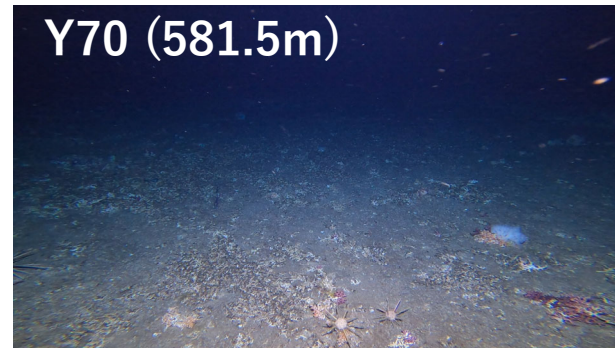
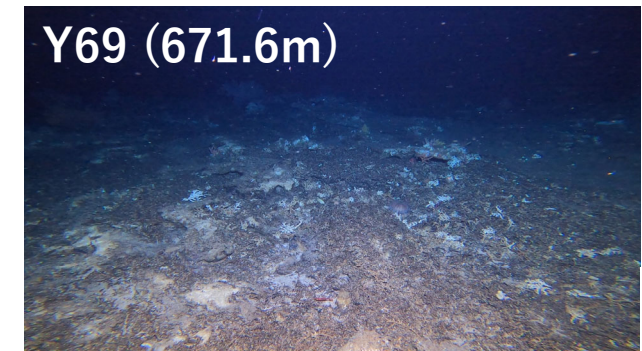
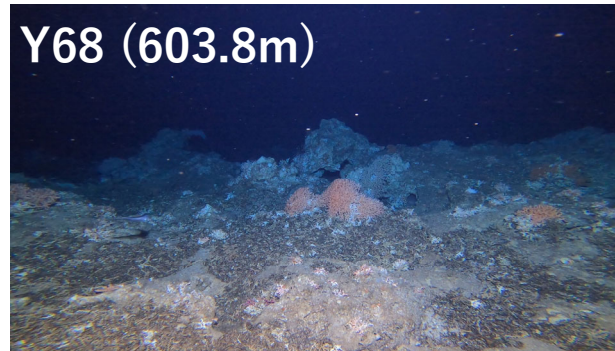
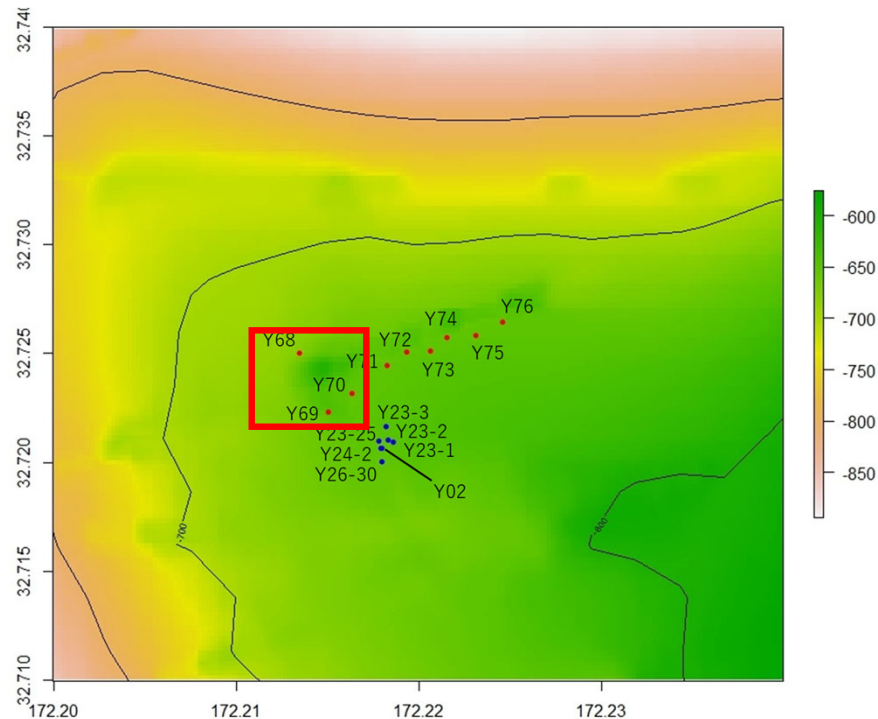
Results –North Koko Seamount-



- Only NK10 confirmed some corals
- Confirmed different fauna depending on site
 - ➔ Continue collecting distribution information

Results –Yuryaku Seamount-

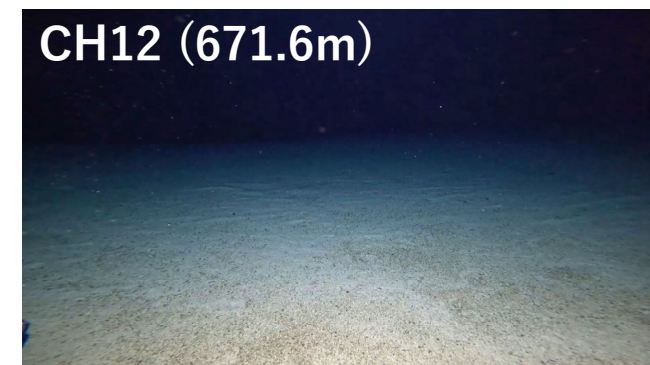
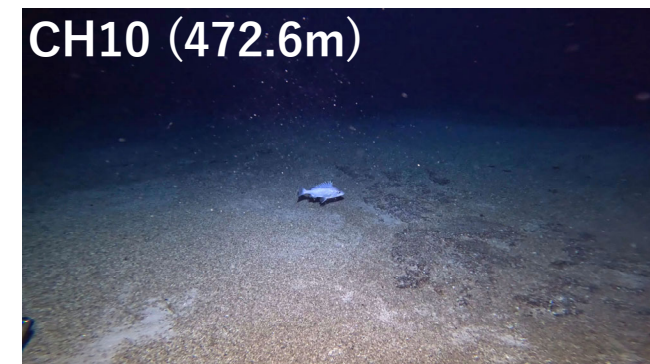
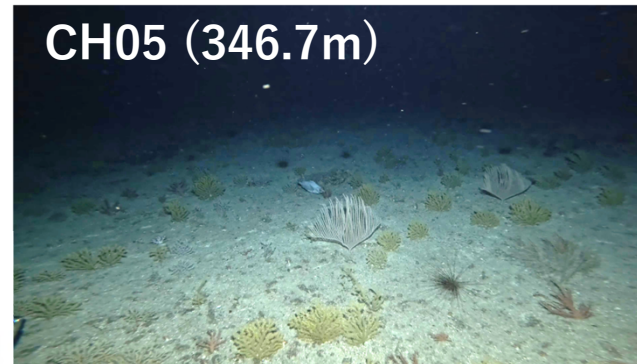
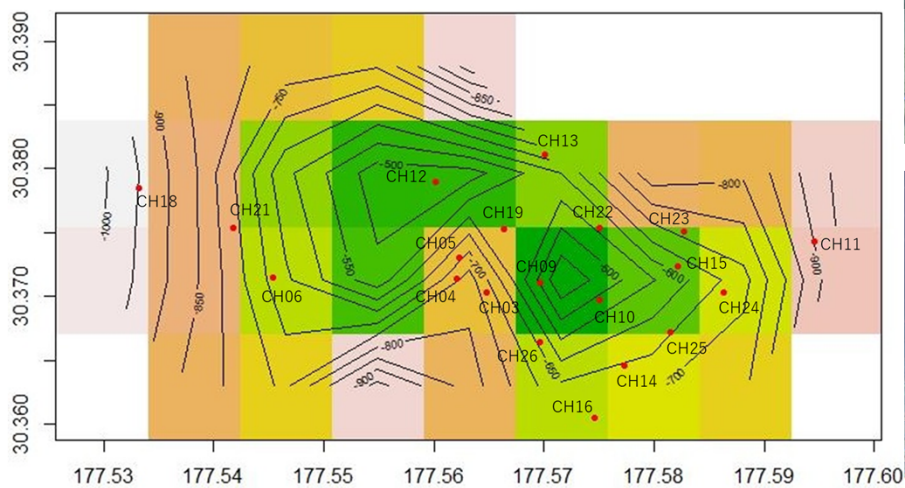
13



*Blue dots show survey sites where indicator species distribution has confirmed in the past surveys

- Y68, Y69 and Y70 were confirmed some corals
- That density was very low
 - ➔ It is considered that there will be **no further extent to northward**

Results - C-H Seamount -



- Some sites showed an increase in density of corals and other benthos
- Sites with low/no coral and benthos in past survey have not changed
➔ Continue resurvey the remaining sites