

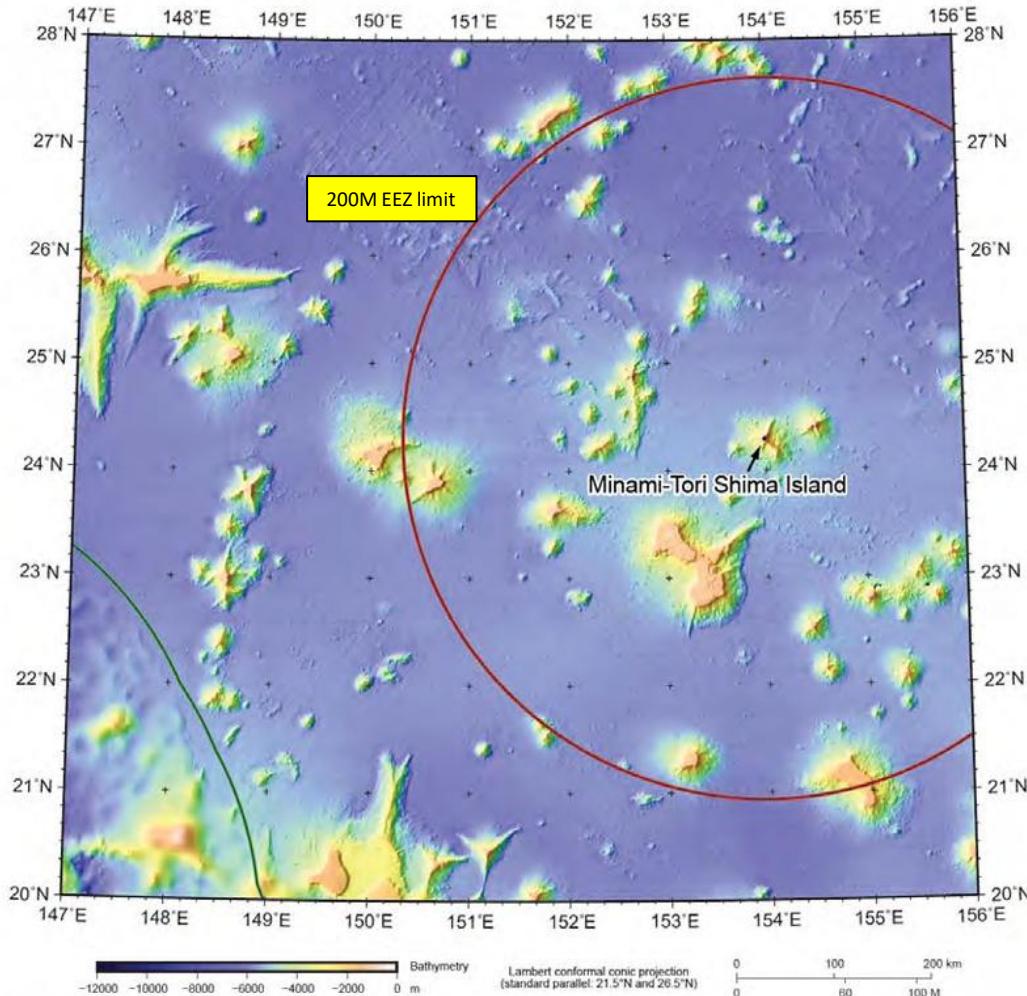
Japan progresses deep-sea mining trials

Peter Croker, The M Horizon (UK) Limited, February 2026

Sources and references

Anon. (2026) Japan pioneers extracting rare-earth elements from the deep sea. Nature portfolio (Advertisement Feature)

CLCS (2012) Summary of Recommendations of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf in regard to the Submission made by Japan on 12 November 2008 (DOALOS website)



The Minami-Tori Shima Island region (MTS)

Note: the Commission recommended that there is no continental shelf beyond 200 M in the Minami-Tori Shima Island region.

(CLCS Recommendations to Japan, 19 April 2012)

Figure 8. Overview bathymetric map of the Minami-Tori Shima Island Region. (Fig. 2.1. of MTS-MB-DOC-01).



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Google Maps

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Minami-Tori Shima Island (Google Maps)



CHIKYU
Drilling Ship

A photograph of the drillship Chikyu, showing its white hull, blue superstructure, and yellow lattice boom. The ship is in a harbor with mountains in the background.

Details Track Add photo Add to fleet

Destination
? OFF MINAMITORISHIMA
ETA: Jan 17, 02:00

Speed: 8.9 kn Course: 196.1° Draught: 9 m (max 9.2)
Status: - Last report: Jan 12, 2026 04:23 UTC

Last Port
Shimizu, Japan
ATD: Jan 12, 00:15 UTC (22 days ago)

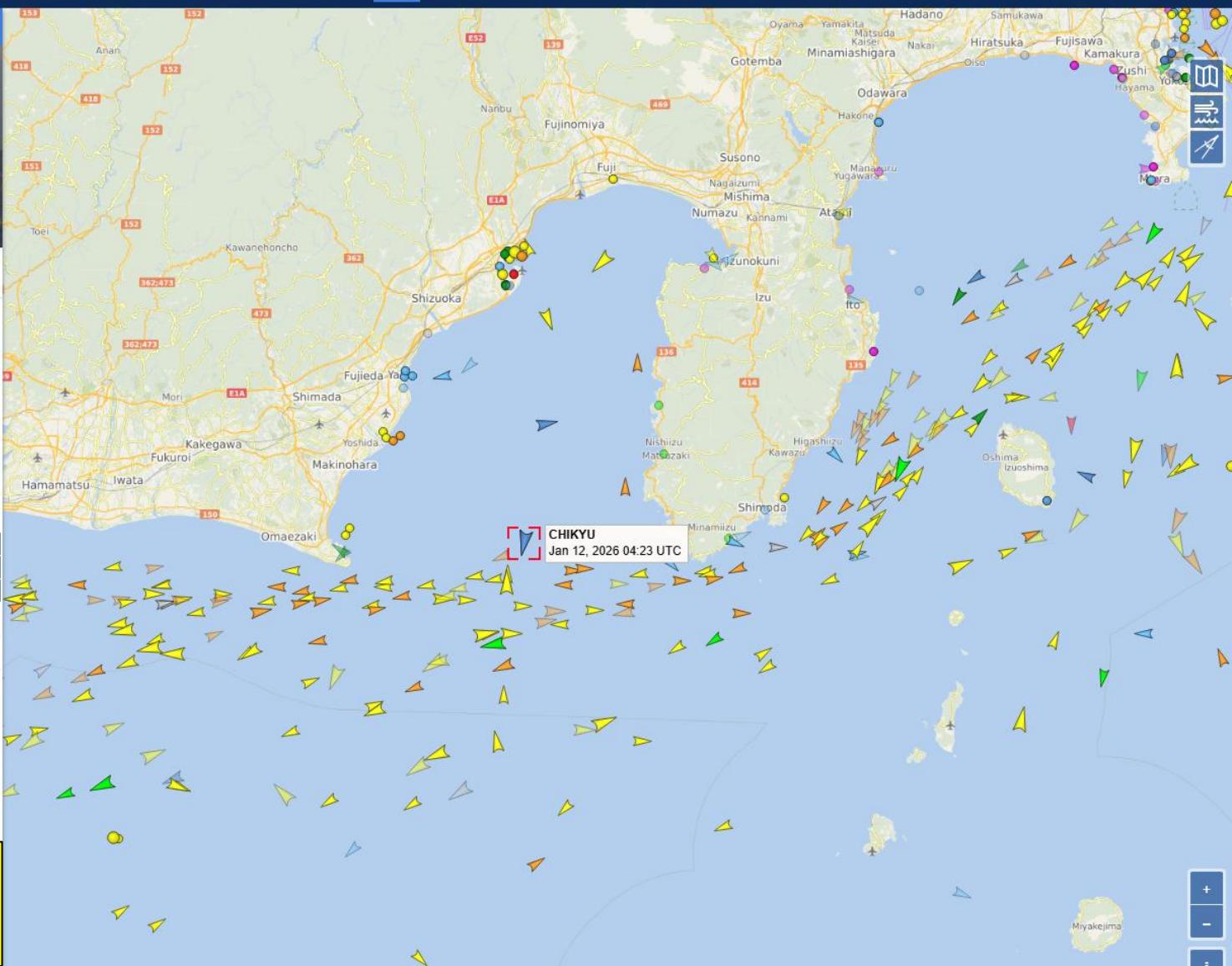
Track for \$25 / month
Satellite position: 45 min ago

PORT CALLS

WEATHER

VESSEL PARTICULARS

Gross Tonnage:	Built:	IMO:
56752	2005	9234044
Deadweight:	Size:	MMSI:
27161	210 / 38m	432522000

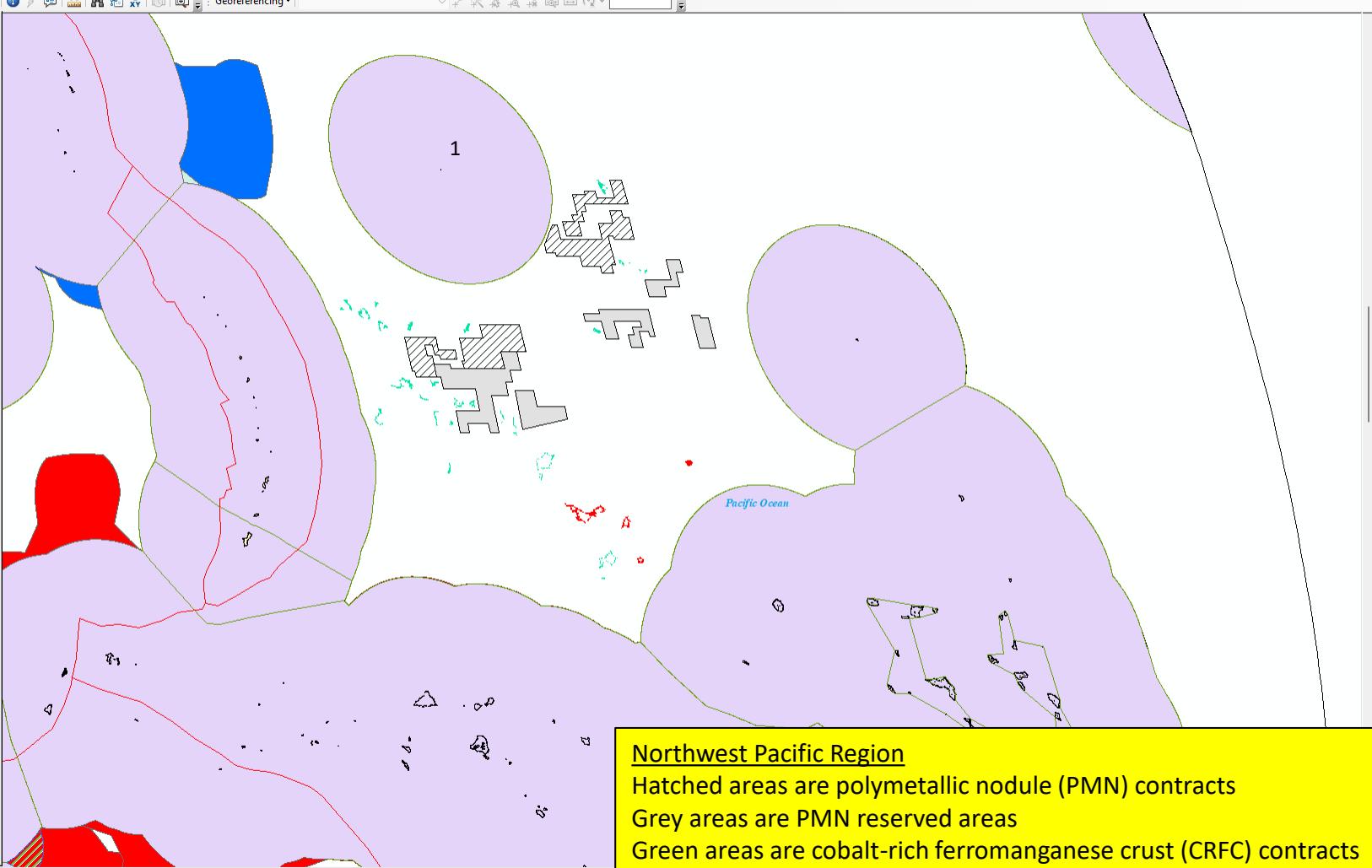


Drillship Chikyu exiting Suruga Bay 12
January 2026, en route to Minami-
Tori Shima Island (courtesy of
VesselFinder)



Table Of Contents

- World
 - PB2002_boundaries
 - ISA_Areas
 - ISA_ContractAreasPMN
 - ISA_ContractAreasPMNres
 - ISA_ContractAreasCRFC
 - ISA_ContractAreasCRFCres
 - ISA_ContractAreasPMS
 - ISA_APEIs
 - ECS_Active_Brazil_OMM
 - ECS_Active_Cuba
 - ECS_Active_Denmark_Greenland_South
 - ECS_Active_Iceland
 - ECS_Active_Madagascar
 - ECS_Active_Mauritius_Rodrigues
 - ECS_Active_Mexico_East
 - ECS_Active_Mozambique
 - ECS_Active_Namibia
 - ECS_Active_Palau
 - ECS_Active_Portugal
 - ECS_Active_Spain_Galicia
 - ECS_Active_Tanzania
 - ECS_Active_The_Cook_Islands
 - ECS Deposits and Recommendations
 - ECS Submissions
 - PB2002_plates
 - World_ECS_v02boundaries
 - World_ECS_v02
 - World_EEZ_v12_20231025_boundaries
 - World_EEZ_v12_20231025
 - World_land_boundaries
 - World_coastline
 - World_EEZ_v10_20180221_boundaries
 - World_EEZ_v10_20180221

Northwest Pacific Region

Hatched areas are polymetallic nodule (PMN) contracts

Grey areas are PMN reserved areas

Green areas are cobalt-rich ferromanganese crust (CRFC) contracts

Red areas are CRFC reserved areas

(GIS elements for these areas courtesy of ISA)

Area of Chikyu operations

ISA licensed areas

Table of Contents

- World
 - ISA_Areas
 - ISA_ContractAreasPMN
 - ISA_ContractAreasPMNres
 - ISA_ContractAreasCRFC
 - ISA_ContractAreasCRFCres
 - ISA_ContractAreasPMS
 - ISA_APEIs
 - ECS_Active_Brazil_OMM
 - ECS_Active_Cuba
 - ECS_Active_Denmark_Greenland_South
 - ECS_Active_Iceland
 - ECS_Active_Madagascar
 - ECS_Active_Mauritius_Rodrigues
 - ECS_Active_Mexico_East
 - ECS_Active_Mozambique
 - ECS_Active_Namibia
 - ECS_Active_Palau
 - ECS_Active_Portugal
 - ECS_Active_Spain_Galicia
 - ECS_Active_Tanzania
 - ECS_Active_The_Cook_Islands
 - ECS Deposits and Recommendations
 - ECS Submissions
 - PB2002_plates
 - World_ECS_v02boundaries
 - World_ECS_v02
 - World_EEZ_v12_20231025_boundaries
 - World_EEZ_v12_20231025
 - World_land_boundaries
 - World_coastline
 - World_EEZ_v10_20180221_boundaries
 - World_EEZ_v10_20180221

