

# Human Life with the Ocean



## Kombu (seaweed) and Sea Urchin Harvesting

There are various fisheries in this oceanic area, which is blessed with abundant marine resources. Fishing is the principal industry on both Rishiri and Rebun Islands, and harvesting kombu seaweed and sea urchins is prevalent in the coastal sea.

Kombu is a large seaweed that is used extensively in Japanese cuisine. There are about 15 types of kombu that are used, and Rishiri Kombu (*Laminaria ochotensis*) is harvested in this area. August to October is the peak period for harvesting kombu. It is collected using small boats with special fishing tools including one called makka, dried on the shore and then processed. Two sea urchin species, Ezobafun-uni (*Strongylocentrotus intermedius*) and Kitamurasaki-uni (*Strongylocentrotus nudus*) are harvested from spring to fall.

Harvesting kombu in the fruitful ocean



Drying kombu



Harvesting kombu



Harvesting sea urchin

## Cleaning up the Coast to Conserve the Bountiful Ocean

Presently, a large amount of litter has been drifting ashore and furthermore, many of them negatively affect the coastal ecosystem, including non-biodegradable materials such as PET bottles and harmful materials such as broken glass.

The locals periodically clean up the coast in the park, removing the garbage on the shore.



Local residents cleaning the beach

Motochi Beach

### Column

## An Extension of Okhotsk's Culture

A culture represented on Satsumon earthenware developed in Hokkaido and the northern Tohoku region between the 7th and 10th centuries. Around this time, a distinct cultural sphere common to southern Chishima and Sakhalin existed on the coastal areas of Hokkaido along the Sea of Okhotsk and the northern Sea of Japan, including Rishiri and Rebun Islands.

This Okhotsk culture roughly overlaps with the region where there is drift ice. The people in this region had their own cultural earthenware, created well-developed bone tools, whaled, hunted true seals, domesticated dogs and pigs, and cultivated assorted grains. They are also thought to have had interactions with the people of Russian Far East.

The Okhotsk culture was absorbed by the Satsumon culture and vanished between the 11th and 12th centuries. The Moyoro shell midden in Abashiri City is well known as an historical ruin. Relics from this period, such as bone tools and bone figures have been unearthed in this region, which includes the Matawakka ruins on Rishiri Island and the Kafukai ruins on Rebun Island.

