

Embassy of Japan

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Press Release

Handover ceremony of MIMRA's transport vessels

Date: January 7, 2026
Majuro, Marshall Islands

On Wednesday, January 7, 2026, the handover ceremony was held for the "Economic and Social Development Programme" under Japan's Grant Aid in FY 2022, in the amount of 300 million Japanese Yen (approx. 2 million US dollars). The ceremony was attended by H.E. SOMA Hirohisa, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Her Excellency Dr. Hilda C. Heine, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Honorable Anthony Muller, Minister of Natural Resources and Commerce, member of the Cabinet and Nitijela, traditional leaders, Ms. Berry Muller, Acting Director of the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA), government officials, and members of the diplomatic corps.

The two transport vessels named MS Bikar and MS Bokar will be utilized to help promote sustainable fisheries in the outer atolls and, at the same time, improve livelihoods in those atolls. MS Bikar and MS Bokar are expected to play an essential role in ensuring connectivity within the country as fish caught in the neighboring atolls will be brought by those vessels to the two main ports in Majuro and Ebeye for distribution.

During the ceremony, Ambassador SOMA stated that Japan and the Marshall Islands have engaged in continued maritime cooperation since Japan began its first project with the Marshall Islands in 1980: building the Majuro Bridge and the channel underneath it. He also added that this cooperation and partnership are also consistent with the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" vision which underlines the respect for "diversity", "inclusiveness" and "openness".

Minister Muller, on behalf of the Government of the RMI, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the people and Government of Japan for their longstanding and multifaceted support particularly to the fisheries sector and stated that the provision of these two vessels to the fish market centers in Majuro and Ebeye will serve as integral assets supporting subsistence fisheries, local livelihoods, and food security across the Marshall Islands.

For more information, please contact:

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