

## 50-1 Revitalization of Industries and Livelihoods (Restoring tourist facilities and functions)

Case study	Restoring a tourist facility with industry peer support Aquamarine Fukushima
Location	Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture
Phases	<span>Emergency response phase</span> <span>Recovery phase</span> Early reconstruction phase Late reconstruction phase
Members	Fukushima Marine Science Museum, and aquariums and other facilities neighboring Fukushima prefecture

## Activity overview:

A large number of the creatures at Aquamarine Fukushima, an aquarium in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture, were lost in the earthquake and tsunami, but the surviving marine animals, seabirds, and fish were dispersed and evacuated to Kamogawa Sea World and other aquariums. With support from other aquariums, the aquarium was able to recover quickly and reopened in July 2011.

Damage to facilities, equipment, and infrastructure caused by a large-scale disaster can endanger invaluable living organisms. A network of industry peers that house rare animal species had already been established in normal times, and this led to the aquarium's early recovery.

## Activity details:

■ Damage to facilities caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake

Aquamarine Fukushima (Fukushima Marine Science Museum), a large aquarium located in Onahama Port, Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture, was open when the Great East Japan Earthquake struck. Visitors in the building were asked to immediately evacuate the facility, and 80 staff members and volunteers quickly evacuated to the third floor. However, the tsunami had isolated the aquarium.

On March 12, the day after the disaster, the entire building was without power, and the staff worked to keep the fish and other animals alive by powering the blowers with the aquarium's private power generator to supply air. But the fuel oil eventually ran out and they were left with no way to supply air. The earthquake and tsunami also caused damage to water tanks and buildings, damaged electrical equipment from flooding, and caused ground subsidence due to liquefaction around the buildings, resulting in the loss of many fish species.

The staff of Aquamarine Fukushima were dedicated to restoring the aquarium, and after carrying out repair and restoration work at a rapid pace, they were able to open the facility on July 15, 126 days after the disaster. After reopening to visitors, the aquarium has been working to attract tourists to the disaster-stricken areas as a symbol of tourism in Fukushima Prefecture, while introducing new facilities and equipment.

■ Temporary evacuation of marine animals to other facilities

Keepers and staff at Aquamarine Fukushima sent out requests to other aquariums in their network to ask if they can take in sea lions, walruses, and other marine animals and seabirds that survived the

disaster for temporary evacuation to protect their lives. Thanks to these efforts, they were able to transfer marine animals, etc., to Kamogawa Sea World (Kamogawa City, Chiba Prefecture), Shin-Enoshima Aquarium (Fujisawa City, Kanagawa Prefecture), Kasai Rinkai Aquarium (Tokyo), Izu-Mitsu Sea Paradise (Numazu City, Shizuoka Prefecture) and Marinepia Nihonkai (Niigata City, Niigata Prefecture) where they would be taken care of for the time being.

Owing partly to the fact that the director of the aquarium had previously held a post at the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the Kuwaiti government donated \$3 million in reconstruction assistance to Aquamarine Fukushima in 2012, which was used to build the Kuwait-Fukushima Friendship Memorial Garden on the aquarium grounds and develop the Waku Waku Satoyama Jomon Village that opened in 2015.



Photo: Kuwait-Fukushima Friendship Memorial Garden  
(Source: Aquamarine Fukushima website)

#### ■Efforts to achieve full-fledged reconstruction

Since the earthquake, Aquamarine Fukushima has been working to attract tourists by upgrading its existing exhibition facilities while developing new facilities, using reconstruction assistance funds it received from Kuwait and other sources. At the 10th World Aquarium Congress held in Onahama in 2018, Aquamarine Fukushima presented its activities to the world.

Although the number of visitors to Aquamarine Fukushima has remained sluggish since the earthquake, it has established friendly partnerships with 13 domestic and overseas facilities, and will be cooperating with five facilities, notably in China, South Korea, and Hong Kong, not only in the area of staff and technical exchange, but also for their capacity as a resource for attracting visitors to Aquamarine Fukushima.

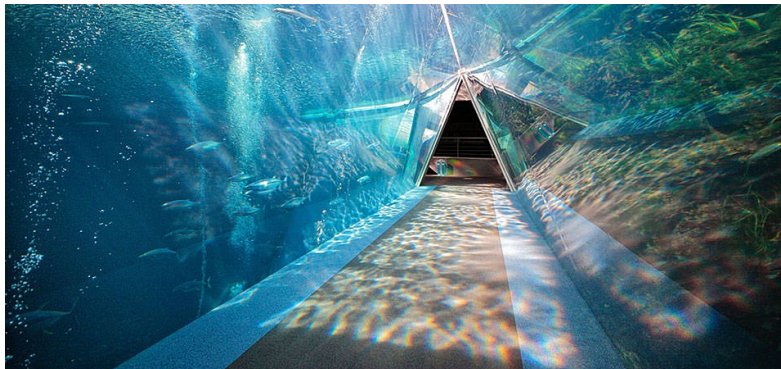


Photo: Exhibit "Tide Sea"  
(Source: Aquamarine Fukushima website)

**Source (Listed in other case studies, etc.):**

- アクアマリンふくしま「アクアマリンふくしま被災報告（第一報）」（2011年3月）  
<https://www.aquamarine.or.jp/curator-message/no47/>
- アクアマリンふくしま「被災から学んだこと」（2011年7月）  
<https://www.aquamarine.or.jp/curator-message/no50/>
- アクアマリンふくしま「クウェート・ふくしま友好記念日本庭園について」（2014年2月）  
<https://www.aquamarine.or.jp/curator-message/no64/>
- アクアマリンふくしま「アクアマリンふくしまの近況」（2019年7月）  
<https://www.aquamarine.or.jp/curator-message/no75/>
- 岩田雅光「よみがえれ！ アクアマリンふくしま復興計画」学術の動向（2011年）p46-47  
[https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/pub/pdfpreview/tits/16/12\\_16\\_12\\_12\\_46.jpg](https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/pub/pdfpreview/tits/16/12_16_12_12_46.jpg)
- 株式会社ヤクルト本社「ヘルシスト アクアマリンふくしまの復活物語」（2014年3月）  
[https://www.yakult.co.jp/healthist/224/img/pdf/p20\\_23.pdf](https://www.yakult.co.jp/healthist/224/img/pdf/p20_23.pdf)

**Systems and mechanisms applied:**

- Kuwait Government Reconstruction Assistance Fund (\$3 million: as at 2011)

**Project cost:**