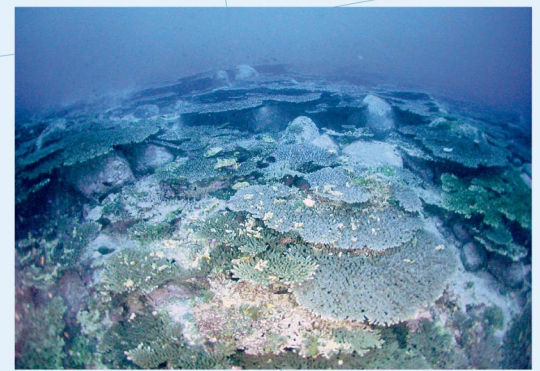
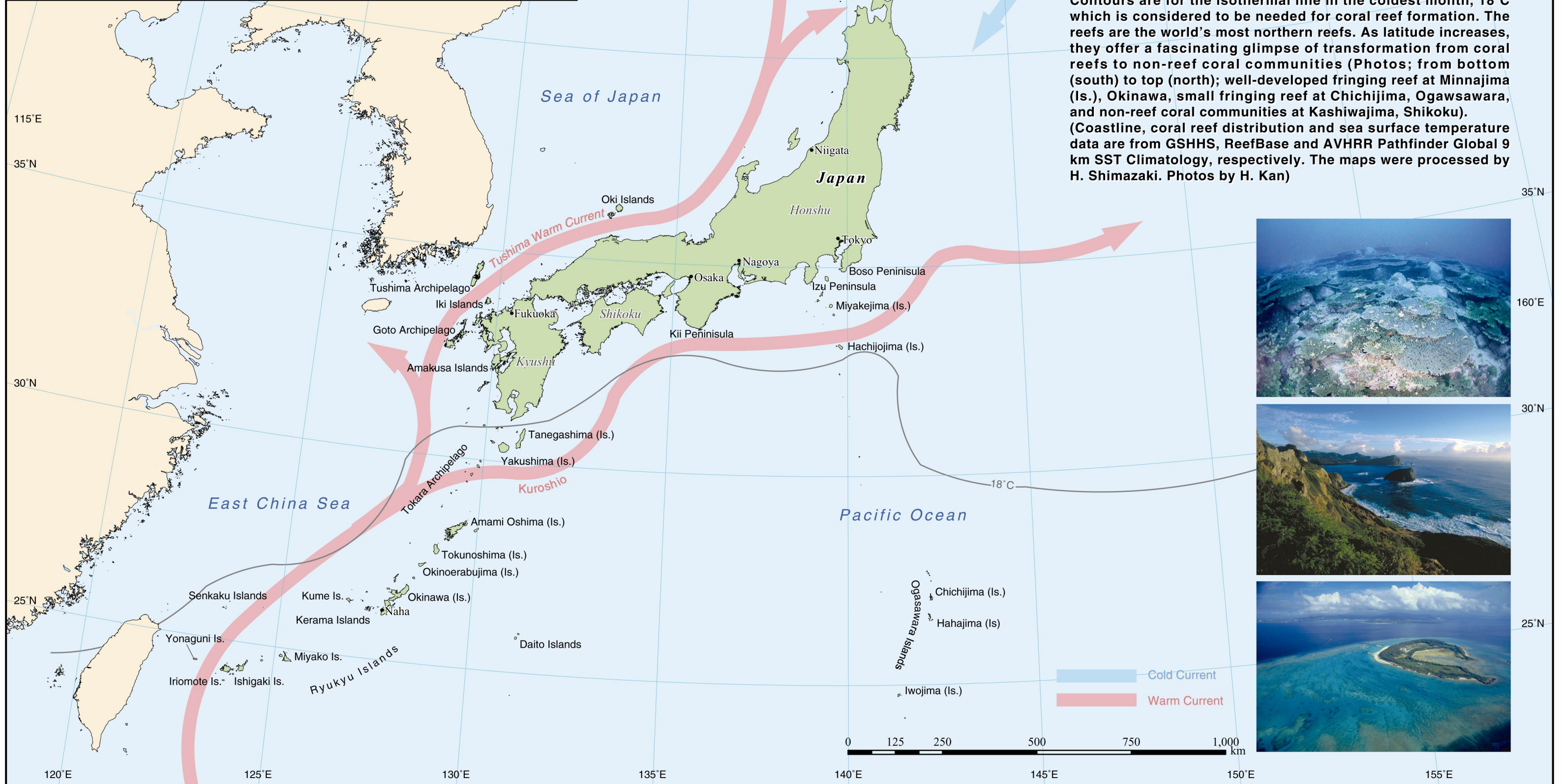


Global distribution of coral reefs (upper left) and map of Japan. Contours are for the isothermal line in the coldest month, 18°C which is considered to be needed for coral reef formation. The reefs are the world's most northern reefs. As latitude increases, they offer a fascinating glimpse of transformation from coral reefs to non-reef coral communities (Photos; from bottom (south) to top (north); well-developed fringing reef at Minnajima (Is.), Okinawa, small fringing reef at Chichijima, Ogawawara, and non-reef coral communities at Kashiwajima, Shikoku). (Coastline, coral reef distribution and sea surface temperature data are from GSHHS, ReefBase and AVHRR Pathfinder Global 9 km SST Climatology, respectively. The maps were processed by H. Shimazaki. Photos by H. Kan)



 Cold Current
 Warm Current