

Greetings from Samoa!

I arrived in Samoa on Monday, December 16th. I was transferred from my previous post in Iceland.

Iceland is located in the far northern part of the North Atlantic Ocean, bordering the Arctic Circle. In summer, the sun does not set until late at night, and in winter, the sun is up for only about four hours in Reykjavik. This time of year is the darkest time of the year. The sun only rise around 11 o'clock. By the way, the aurora borealis, or the northern lights, can often be seen in the night sky, sometimes even in the capital city of Reykjavik. Iceland is also described as the "land of fire and ice," and the contrast between the dark rocks made of solidified lava and the glaciers that cover one-third of the island is stunning.

Now I am in Samoa, a subtropical island nation in the South Pacific, in the southern hemisphere.

Both are island nations and they have many things in common. Both are receiving great blessings from the sea that surrounds them, being small in size when measured by population, and being greatly affected by current global climate change. But the climate conditions are completely different. In Iceland, the temperature rarely exceeds 20 degrees even in summer, so I always wore a down jacket over what I would normally wear in winter in Japan. Here in Samoa, I hear, it's close to 30 degrees all year round. The temperature difference alone is roughly 30 degrees. (Note: Due to the influence of the warm Gulf Stream, it doesn't get too cold in winter in Iceland, despite its high north location.)

Before I moved here. I donated many of such winter clothes to charity, since I probably wouldn't wear them in Samoa.

One of my first jobs in Samoa is to have a formal shirt made.