



Kuril Islands



Key Points

- **Physical Geography:**
 - Kuril Islands are stretched from the Japanese island of Hokkaido to the southern tip of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula separating Okhotsk Sea from the North Pacific ocean.
 - It consists of 56 islands and minor rocks. The chain is part of the belt of geologic instability circling the Pacific (Ring of Fire) and contains at least 100 volcanoes, of which 35 are still active, and many hot springs.
 - Earthquakes and tidal waves are common phenomena over these islands.
- **Russia-Japan Dispute:**
 - The Kuril Islands dispute between Japan and Russia is **over the sovereignty of [South Kuril Islands](#)**.

- The South Kuril Islands **comprise Etorofu island, Kunashiri island, Shikotan island and the Habomai island.**
- These islands are claimed by Japan but occupied by Russia as the successor state of the Soviet Union.
- Japan calls the Islands as Northern Territories and Russia as the South Kuril.

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