



Voice of TAKAE

No military helipads
in our beautiful forests!





Voice of TAKAE

We live in Takae - a community located in the middle of the beautiful Yanbaru forests in northern Okinawa Island. With approximately 150 residents living together, we enjoy our lives and raise our children among singing birds and insects, murmuring streams, and the sounds of the breeze in the leaves of the trees.

At the same time, this forests have been used for military purposes. The Northern Training Area (Jungle Warfare Training Center of the the U.S. Marines) has occupied 78.33km² land here for over 50 years. Military training with low-level helicopter flights has been regularly conducted. Therefore we have been facing noise pollution and the ever-present danger of helicopter crashes.

In 2006, we discovered the news that 6 new-helipads were planned in the very vicinity of Takae.

We demanded an explanation of the construction plan from the Japanese government' s Okinawa Defense Bureau. Without giving us a satisfactory reason why the helipads were to be built, the Bureau forcibly started the construction process.

We, the residents, thus started direct action against the construction by staging a sit-in with a small number of people.

There is the Jungle Warfare Training Center of U.S. Marine Corps (7,500 ha) in the Yanbaru area – the Northeast mountainside of Higashi and Kunigami villages, Okinawa. Subtropical natural forest and mountain streams remain, and the area provides a habitat for over 4,000 species of wildlife. 11 animals and 12 plants are found only in the Yanbaru area. A large number of Threatened Species are listed in the Red List, 188 species in the Okinawan Red List, and 177 in the Red List of the Environment Ministry. The Jungle Warfare Training Center and the Yanbaru Forest around the center have an important natural environment and biodiversity - including numerous endemic, endemic subspecific, and threatened species.



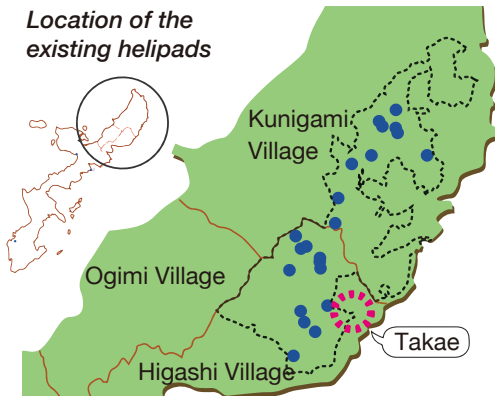
(c) Akino Miyagi

(c)T.Hanashiro

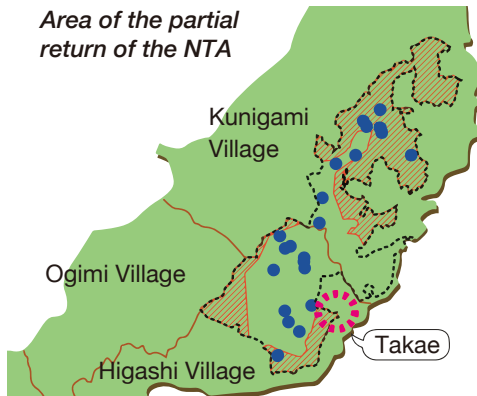
(c)Takashi Morizumi

In its efforts to have Ryukyu Islands registered as a UNESCO World Natural Heritage Site, the Okinawa prefectural government promotes the Yanbaru forest as one of the island' s most important areas. The Japanese government also announced its intentions to designate the forest as a national park just before the opening of COP10.

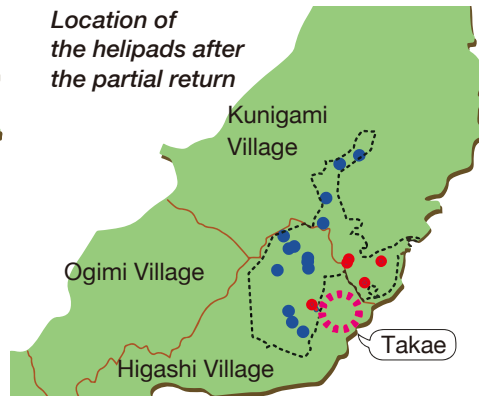
Location of the existing helipads



Area of the partial return of the NTA



Location of the helipads after the partial return



- Existing helipads
- New construction site of helipads
- Northern Training Area of U.S. Forces
- /// Area of the partial return of the NTA



Today, however, 30% of the forest is used as a U.S. military training area, and there already exist 22 U.S. military helipads in the area. The construction of the new helipads will certainly create considerable danger and further impact the Yanbaru forest and Takae's community.

It should be emphasized that the base construction is not only destroying biodiversity; they are also violating the life and the rights of us who are in fact stewards of biodiversity and practitioners of sustainable living. The Japanese government's Okinawa Defense Bureau is proceeding with projects in a manner coercive to the local people and their supporters who oppose the projects, while ignoring their calls for dialogue and evading consensus-building.

The Okinawa Defense Bureau has also filed SLAPP lawsuits (Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation) against us and our supporters who have been carrying out peaceful protests. In our view, these lawsuits disregard the spirit of the CBD, which recognizes the importance of local communities in conserving biodiversity. Moreover, as recognized by the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, Okinawa is a land of indigenous people: the helipad construction in Takae is a repeat of the "history of deprivation" for Okinawan people and it clearly undermines the CBD.

It should also be stressed that these two projects defy more than half of the 20 Aichi Targets. Especially, they are impediments to achieving Strategic goal C Target 12: "By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained" and Strategic goal E Target 18: "By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels" .



Our lives are threatened by the construction of these helipads. If construction is completed, it will destroy not only the natural environment, but also our living directly.

We need help from all over the world.
Please support our movement.

No Helipad Takae Resident Society





(c) Takashi Morizumi



Come to Takae!

*Participate in the movement by sitting in with us!

You can see and feel what is really going on in Takae.

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