

Reference

1 History of the Senkaku Islands as part of Japan’s territory in the prewar era
- Background before the incorporation and utilization after the incorporation.

No.	Content	Date created	Repository
No.1	Scroll of the Ryukyus depicting a navigation route	Unknown	Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum
No.2	Proposal to the Government for incorporation	Jun. 13, 1890 (Meiji 23)	Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
No.3	Documents concerning the Yaeyama Islands – Kuba Island	1890 (Meiji 23)	Okinawa Prefectural Library
No.4	Okinawa Prefectural Police Statistics, 1891	1891 (Meiji 24)	National Archives of Japan
No.5	Proposal for incorporating the islands and erecting national marker	Nov. 2, 1893 (Meiji 26)	Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
No.6	Document by which the Minister of Home Affairs requested a Cabinet meeting	Jan. 12, 1895 (Meiji 28)	National Archives of Japan
No.7	Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa Prefecture to erect national markers and have jurisdiction over the Senkaku Islands	Jan. 14, 1895 (Meiji 28)	National Archives of Japan
No.8	Annual Report of the Statistics of Okinawa Prefecture 1895-96	Jun. 28, 1900 (Meiji 33)	Okinawa Prefectural Library
No.9	Imperial Edict No. 169 [To designate the local districts to be exempt from enforcement of the Leaf Tobacco Monopoly Law]	May 31, 1897 (Meiji 30)	National Archives of Japan
No.10	Kenrei (Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance) No. 49	compiled in1906 (Meiji39)	Naha City Museum of History
No.11	Kenrei (Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance) No. 49 (amended on March 28, 1906)	compiled in 1911 (Meiji 44)	Faculty of Law Library, Kyoto University
No.12	Official Gazette No. 2507	Dec. 1920 (Taisho 9)	National Diet Library
No.13	Survey report of deposition, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County	1930 (Showa 5)	National Archives of Japan
No.14	Survey report of deposition, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County	1932 (Showa 7)	National Archives of Japan
No.15	Ledger of Land (Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uotsuri and Kuba Islands, Aza Tonoshiro, Ishigaki City)	1932 - (Showa 7)	Ishigaki Branch Office, Naha District Legal Affairs Bureau
No.16	Official Gazette No. 2952	Jun. 6, 1922 (Taisho 11)	National Diet Library
No.17	Complete Map of Tonoshiro Village, Ohama Magiri, Yaeyama County / "Land Consolidation Map – the Senkaku Islands"	Dec. 1902 (Meiji 35)	Ishigaki City Board of Education
No.18	Field survey logbook on the sale of Minami-Kojima and Kita-Kojima, Tonoshiro, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County in 1930	1930 (Showa 5)	National Archives of Japan

2 Senkaku Islands under administration by the US and the return of Okinawa

No.	Content	Date created	Repository
No.1	Designation of Permanent Danger Areas by the U.S. military command in Ryukyu	Apr. 9, 1948 (Showa 23)	Okinawa Prefectural Archives
No.2	Summation of US Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands No.1	Jul. - Nov. 1946 (Showa 21)	Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
No.3	Gazetteer: The Ryukyu Islands and the Nanpo Islands	Nov. 1944 (Showa 19)	The National Archives, UK [contribution] Japan Institute of International Affairs
No.4	USCAR Ordinance No. 68 (Provisions of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands)	Feb. 29, 1952 (Showa 27)	Okinawa Prefectural Archives
No.5	USCAR Proclamation No. 27 (Geographical limit of the Ryukyu Islands)	Dec. 25, 1953 (Showa 28)	Okinawa Prefectural Archives
No.6	Notice of Requirement to Acquire Property, Ishigaki City	Jan. 1960 (Showa 35)	Okinawa Prefectural Archives
No.7	ECAFE Report, 1969	1969 (Showa 44)	

領土・主権展示館

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF TERRITORY AND SOVEREIGNTY



JAPAN'S TERRITORY AND PEOPLE'S HOPES:
LINKING IN TO THE NEXT GENERATION

Adress: 1st floor, Toranomom Mitsui Building, 3-8-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
<https://www.cas.go.jp/jp/ryodo/index.html>

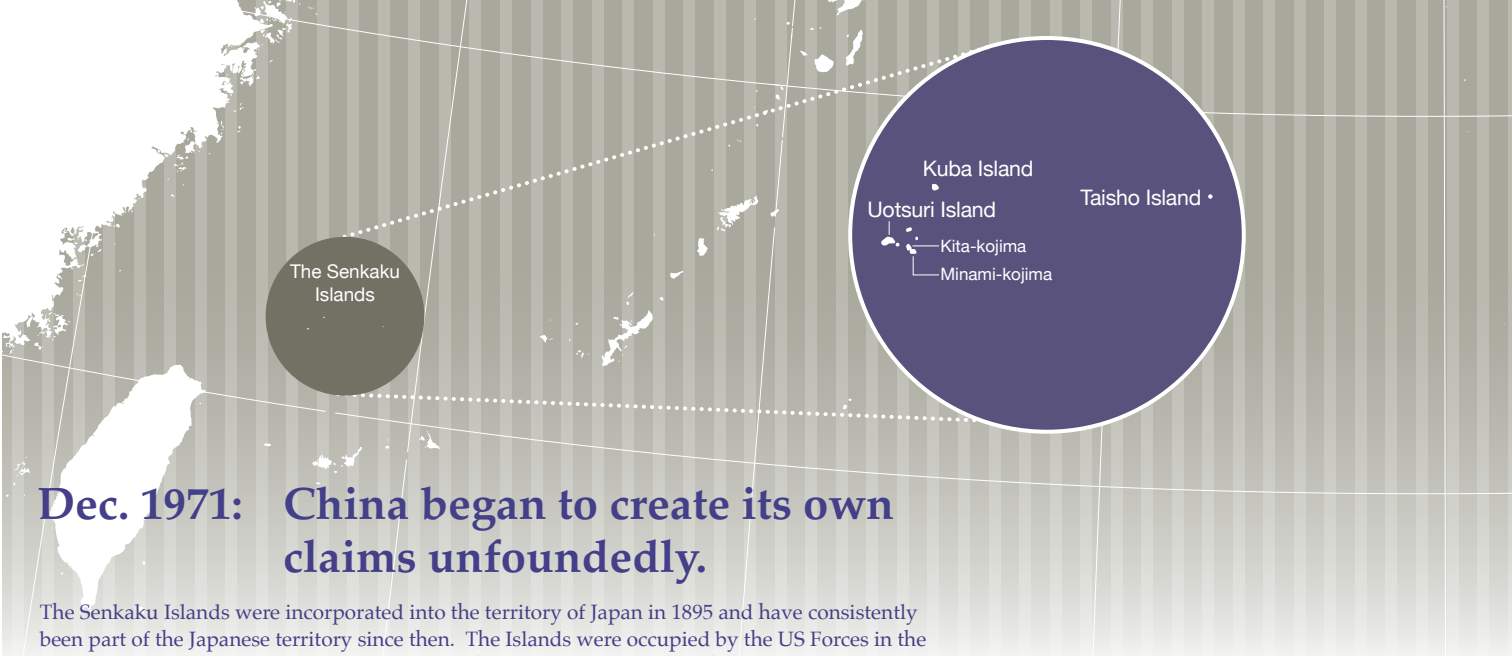


Basic position of Japan

There is no doubt that the Senkaku Islands are clearly an inherent part of the territory of Japan, in light of historical facts and based upon international law. Indeed, the Senkaku Islands are under the valid control of Japan.

There exists no issue of territorial sovereignty to be resolved concerning the Senkaku Islands.

Japan will act firmly and calmly to maintain its territorial integrity. Japan continues to strive for peace and stability in the region, which is to be established through the observance of international law.



Dec. 1971: China began to create its own claims unfoundedly.

The Senkaku Islands were incorporated into the territory of Japan in 1895 and have consistently been part of the Japanese territory since then. The Islands were occupied by the US Forces in the final stages of World War II, and placed under the US administration by the San Francisco Peace Treaty, while being treated as the Japanese territory.

In June 1971, the Okinawa Reversion Agreement was signed by Japan and the United States, which provides the return of the administration of the Senkaku Islands as part of the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands from the United States to Japan. Later, in December, the People’s Republic of China (China) expressed its first ever international claims that the Senkaku Islands are the territory of China. There was no previous record of China asserting any such claims, which suggests that China was only driven to such action by the release of a report, in the 1960s, of potential oil reserves in the East China Sea.

China has been asserting that the Senkaku Islands historically belonged to China. However, it has never administrated them as a state nor does it provide any grounds for its claims based on international law. China’s claims are unilateral and cannot be accepted in the international community. Japan seeks to consolidate regional peace and stability by respecting international law.

China has made repeated incursions into Japan’s territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands.

The Senkaku Islands

are a group of islands, which include Uotsuri, Kita-kojima, Minami-kojima, Kuba, Taisho, Okinokitaiwa, Okinominamiwa and Tobise Islands, located approximately 170 km north of Ishigaki Island and 150 km north of Yonaguni Island, at the west edge of the Nansei Shoto Islands.

CONTENTS

1 History of the Senkaku Islands as part of Japan's territory in the prewar era

- Background before the incorporation and utilization after the incorporation.

1	Senkaku Islands	p.3-4	2	Incorporation into Japan’s territory	p.5-6
	– uninhabited islands ruled by no country				
	Until Late 19th century	Areas surrounding the East China Sea and the Senkaku Islands before the Islands’ incorporation into the Japanese territory		January 14, 1895	Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa Prefecture to erect national markers and have jurisdiction over the Senkaku Islands
	1885-95	Investigation on the Senkaku Islands and increasing needs for administrative control			
	■ Proposal from Okinawa Prefecture to the Government			■ Development of the Senkaku Islands by Tatsushiro Koga	
	■ Growing activities of fishing operators around the Senkaku Islands and attempts to regulate them				

3 Valid Control of the Senkaku Islands p.7-8

Jurisdiction	1895	Placed under the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture	Management and Disposition of State-Owned Land	1896	Lease of state-owned land Collection of rent
	May 31, 1897	Applicable areas for certain laws			
	Dec. 3, 1902	Incorporated into Tonoshiro Village	Registration	1932	Registered in the Ledger of Land
	1908	Affiliation changed to Yaeyama Village			
	1920	Incorporation of Taisho Island Establishment of Aza (district)	Permission and Licensing	Jun. 6, 1922	Prospecting for phosphate

2 Senkaku Islands under administration by the US and the return of Okinawa

1	Senkaku Islands under administration by the US	p.9-10	2	Okinawa Reversion	p.11-12
	Sep. 1945	Initiation of the administration over Okinawa by the US Military Government		the Late 1960s	Worsening border incursions around the Senkaku Islands
	Sep. 1950	Establishment of US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands and the Ryukyu Government of the Ryukyu Islands		May 1969	A report on the potential oil reserves is made public
	Apr. 1952	The San Francisco Peace Treaty enters into effect, and Okinawa is formally placed under administration by the US		Jun. 17, 1971	The Okinawa Reversion Agreement is concluded. The area of return includes the Senkaku Islands.
	1952 -	Ordinances by the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) include the Senkaku Islands in the area of Ryukyu		Dec. 30, 1971	First official statement by the Government of the People’s Republic of China
					Unfounded and unique territorial claims over the Senkaku Islands
				May 15, 1972	Entry into force of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement

3 Japan’s initiatives to protect our territory p.13-14

- Patrolling the territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands
- Pictorial image of Japan’s territorial sea and other related areas



History of the Senkaku Islands as part of Japan's territory in the prewar erat

- Background before the incorporation and utilization after the incorporation.

1 Senkaku Islands – uninhabited islands ruled by no country

Areas surrounding the East China Sea and the Senkaku Islands before the Islands' incorporation into the Japanese territory

Until the second half of the 19th Century, the Senkaku Islands were uninhabited islands around the Ryukyu Islands that belonged to no country around the Ryukyu Islands.

After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, Japan modernized its administrative organization domestically, while externally making efforts to enhance its status in the modern international community, such as by revising unequal treaties signed with other nations, at a time when western powers were advancing into Asia.

As the situation around the East China Sea had become more volatile, the Meiji Government faced critical challenges in clarifying the status of peripheral islands including the Senkaku Islands. Such challenges became even more critical in the 1880s, when tension was increasing with the growing presence of western powers in East Asia, exemplified by the outbreak of the Sino-French War¹ (1883-85) and the Port Hamilton Incident² (April 1885).

- *1 Sino-French War** France and Qing Dynasty China waged war over the suzerainty of Viet Nam from 1883 to 1885
- *2 Port Hamilton Incident** The British Navy occupied Port Hamilton, an island south of Korea, in April 1885 (Meiji 18), following the confrontation between the UK and Russia.

Situation in the Senkaku Islands

The Senkaku Islands were used as a navigation marker for vessels passing through the East China Sea. The existence of the Islands was known, as they appeared in documents and maps of the Ryukyu Dynasty (see No.1 below). There is a record of a member of the Ryukyu royal family landing on them around 1819 and that of Ryukyu people approaching the Islands to investigate them in 1859.

Nonetheless, the Senkaku Islands, which were uninhabited, were never administered by any other country before Japan incorporated them into its territory in 1895.

→ No.1

Situation in the Ryukyus

In the Edo Period, the Ryukyu Dynasty was under the rule of Satsuma Domain, and the Edo Shogunate regarded the dynasty as part of Satsuma Domain. In the meantime, the dynasty paid tribute to the Qing and traded through Fuzhou, an official port.

After the Meiji Restoration, the Ryukyu Dynasty turned into the Ryukyu Domain in 1872, clarifying its affiliation to Japan, and later became Okinawa Prefecture in 1879.

No.1 Scroll of the Ryukyus depicting a navigation route

This is a scroll that depicts a navigation route between Naha Port in the Ryukyu Dynasty and Fuzhou Port in China (year of production unknown.). The route in this scroll indicates that vessels departed from Fuzhou Port, travelled through Uotsuri Island, Kuba Island, Kume-aka (Taisho) Island, and Kume Island, and reached Naha Port. The Senkaku Islands also appear in Chinese records such as the records by Chinese Envoys of the Ming and Qing Dynasties. What is noteworthy about this scroll is the writing of the island names, with the names used in the records of Chinese Envoys (e.g. Kobi-sho) shown above, and the names used in the Ryukyus (e.g. Kuba Island) shown below.



- 1429 Establishment of Ryukyu Dynasty
- 1609 (Keicho 14) Invasion of Ryukyu Dynasty by Satsuma Domain
- 1616 (Genwa 2) Foundation of Qing Dynasty
- 1868 (Meiji 1) Establishment of Meiji Government
- 1872 (Meiji 5) Establishment of Okinawa Domain (Discontinuance of Ryukyu Dynasty)
- 1879 (Meiji 12) Establishment of Okinawa Prefecture (Discontinuance of Ryukyu Domain)

Let's see China's Argument

(1) China's argument
- Inherent territory -

I. Diaoyu Dao is China's Inherent Territory

1. Diaoyu Dao was first discovered, named and utilized by China
2. Diaoyu Dao had long been under China's jurisdiction
3. Chinese and foreign maps show that Diaoyu Dao belongs to China

Diaoyu Dao, an Inherent Territory of China, State Council Information Office, the People's Republic of China (September 25, 2012)

The People's Republic of China has developed its argument by citing numerous ancient documents, although the interpretation of those documents in the statement does not always appear credible from an academic standpoint. Here, we do not delve further into the academic credibility of the interpretations, but rather, attempt to verify whether the Chinese argument demonstrates any grounds for territorial sovereignty that are regarded as valid under international law, assuming that the Chinese interpretation of the cited documents is correct.

Annotation

1 The term "utilized" in the Chinese argument in fact means that the Senkaku Islands were just looked at as a navigation marker by the missions of the Ming and Qing Dynasties; hence "utilization" cannot be regarded as sufficient grounds for a territorial claim. Their "discovery" or "naming" is not sufficient grounds, either.

The People's Republic of China asserts that China (PRC) discovered and named the Senkaku Islands, simply because Chinese names of the Islands appeared in Chinese documents written in the 15th to 18th Centuries. The PRC also asserts that China utilized the Senkaku Islands, simply because the Chinese Envoy's mission of the Ming and Qing Dynasties went through the Senkaku Islands when dispatched to the Ryukyu Dynasty.

However, it is not clear that China really "discovered" or "named" any islands. Nor is it clear that the sailing of missions, dispatched once every few decades by the Chinese Dynasty, near the Senkaku Islands constitutes "utilization" of the Islands. None of these constitutes grounds to support China's territorial claims.

Under international law, continuous and peaceful display of sovereignty with a clear intention of possessing territory is deemed necessary for gaining territorial title. However, there is no evidence from China that the country ever had such effective control over the Senkaku Islands.

Investigation on the Senkaku Islands and increasing needs for administrative control

Proposal from Okinawa Prefecture to the Government

September 22 – December 5, 1885 (Meiji 18)

Okinawa Prefecture conducted an investigation of the Senkaku Islands and proposed that the central government erect national markers

Against the background of the advancement of western powers, the Japanese Government decided to enhance its surveillance of peripheral islands. As with the Senkaku Islands, Okinawa Prefecture conducted various investigations and proposed that the Government take the initiative in erecting national markers. Later, Okinawa Prefecture conducted an on-site investigation and confirmed that there was no trace of the Islands being ruled by the Qing Dynasty, and then once again submitted the proposal of national markers.

In response, the Government rejected the proposal, taking into consideration the international situation and the relations with other countries.

January 13, 1890 (Meiji 23)

Okinawa Prefecture proposed that the Government incorporate the Senkaku Islands into the Japanese territory to regulate fishery operators

The Governor of Okinawa Prefecture proposed again that the Government incorporate the Senkaku Islands into the jurisdiction of Yaeyama Island Office. The background of this was that fishing operators' activities were growing and the authorities were attempting to regulate these activities.

→ No.2-4

No.2 Proposal to the Government for incorporation

Excerpt
Inquiry concerning the matter of the uninhabited islands: Kuba and Uotsuri Islands ... the Yaeyama Island Office has requested that jurisdiction of the islands needed to be determined due to the increasing necessity for controlling fisheries activities in recent years. On this basis, we would like to ask that these islands be placed under the jurisdiction of the Yaeyama Island Office.

Ko No.1, Teikoku Hanjo Kankei Zaiken (Miscellaneous Matters Related to Imperial Territory) January 13, 1890 (Meiji 23) [Repository] Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

November 2, 1893 (Meiji 26)

Repeated proposal from Okinawa Prefecture for erecting national markers

For the necessity of regulating the growing activities of fishing operators around the Senkaku Islands, Okinawa Prefecture submitted, again, a proposal for incorporating the islands and erecting national markers.

→ No.5

No.5 Proposal for incorporating the islands and erecting national marker

Excerpt
Recently, however, people are coming to the islands to attempt fishery and other activities, and because these not infrequently involve legal control, I (Governor of Okinawa Prefecture) would like to erect markers of this Prefecture's jurisdiction, as I reported in detail back in 1885. I therefore urgently request your guidance, and hereby once again make a report to that effect, attaching copies of the former report and your instruction.

Ko No.111, Teikoku Hanjo Kankei Zaiken (Miscellaneous Matters Related to Imperial Territory) November 2, 1893 (Meiji 26) [Repository] Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Growing activities of fishing operators around the Senkaku Islands and attempts to regulate them

- 1889 Establishment of a fishing encouraging organization, *Yaeyama Island Joint Fisheries in Ishigaki Island*
- Late 1889 Beginning of fishing activities by a company around Kuba and the Uotsuri Islands (followed by activities by other fishing operators)
- Late 1891 Provisional incorporation of the Senkaku Islands into the district of the Yaeyama Police
- 1892 Proposal of Okinawa Pref. to the Imperial Navy to investigate uninhabited islands in and around Okinawa Pref.

Around the Senkaku Islands, investigations were conducted for maritime security needs. The activities of fishing operators grew from around 1889, and the authorities sought to take provisional measures to regulate them.

No.3 Documents concerning the Yaeyama Islands-Kuba Island

In this document, a total of 78 people went to Kuba and Uotsuri Islands, which indicates that there were already many fishermen operating around the islands by that time.

Excerpt
A total of 78 Itohan residents went to the islands of Kuba and Uotsuri. They consisted of 32 persons traveling on the Daiyu Maru, 26 on bonito ships, and 20 from Yonaguni. The report was accompanied by one yakogai (green turban snail) shell harvested on said islands, for which I disbursed four Kan'ei coins. [Hanawa's personal seal]

1890 (Meiji 23) [Repository] Okinawa Prefectural Library

No.4 Okinawa Prefectural Police Statistics (1891)

This is the annual report of the Okinawa Prefectural Police for Fiscal Year 1891. This report records that the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture issued an order to the Police in December 1891 that the Akon-kuba Islands (i.e., the Senkaku Islands) be provisionally placed under the jurisdiction of Yaeyama Islands Police Station.

Excerpt
(1891) On the same day and same month (December 11) Prefectural instruction No. 47 states that the Akon-kuba Islands are provisionally placed under the jurisdiction of the Yaeyama Islands Police Station.

* The term "provisionally" is used here since it was before the Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Japan's territory, and it was not possible to take it as official administrative measures.

- Sep. 22, 1885 (Meiji 18) Okinawa Governor proposed to the Internal Minister for the erection of national markers
- Nov. 29, 1890 (Meiji 23) Enactment of Meiji Constitution
- Nov. 2, 1893 (Meiji 26) Okinawa Governor proposed to the Government for the erection of national markers again
- Jul. 25, 1894 (Meiji 27) Outbreak of Sino-Japanese war

2 The meaning of "coastal defense area" is not clear. The mere appearance of island names on charts and maps in books related to coastal defense cannot be regarded as grounds for territorial sovereignty.

The PRC asserts that China "has long placed the islands under its jurisdiction", based on the grounds that documents in the 16th and 17th century depict that the Senkaku Islands were part of the coastal defense of Ming Dynasty China.

However, in the argument of the PRC, there is no explanation of what "coastal defense area" means. The mere appearance of island names on charts and maps in books related to coastal defense can absolutely not be regarded as proof of those islands being held as territory.

3 The distinction of colors on ancient maps is not sufficient grounds for territorial sovereignty.

The PRC asserts that maps made in the 16th to 19th centuries included the Senkaku Islands in the Chinese maritime area.

However, the grounds for this assertion is only that the islands and the Chinese mainland are the same color on the maps, which cannot be considered to be proof of territorial sovereignty.

As mentioned above, the PRC does not provide any effective grounds, in accordance with international law, to support its claims of territorial sovereignty, and has asserted that the islands are "China's Inherent Territory," based on its unilateral logic, without regard for international law.

2 Incorporation into Japan's territory

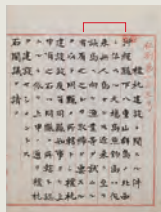
January 14, 1895 (Meiji 28)

Cabinet decision to incorporate the Senkaku Islands into the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture, and erect national markers for the need to regulate fishing operator

At the proposal by Okinawa Prefecture, a Cabinet decision was made to admit the erection of national markers on the Senkaku Islands (Uotsuri and Kuba Islands) and incorporate the islands into the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture for the need to regulate fishing operators.
By this Cabinet decision, the Japanese Government formally incorporated the Senkaku Islands into Japan's territory.

→ No.6-7

No.6 Document by which the Minister of Home Affairs requested a Cabinet meeting



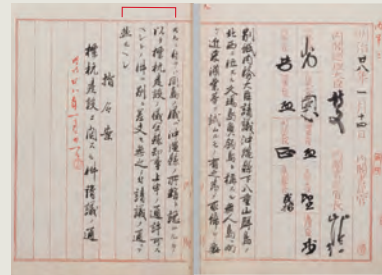
This is a document dated January 12, 1895, prepared by the Minister of Home Affairs for submission to the Cabinet when responding to the report of November 2, 1893, submitted to the Minister of Home Affairs by the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture. In the report, the Governor proposed to the Minister that Kuba and Uotsuri Islands be placed under the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture and national markers be erected to regulate fishing, since, in recent years, people had started attempting fishery operations around the islands, which had been uninhabited until then. The Minister requested a Cabinet meeting with the aim of granting the Governor's wish to incorporate the islands into the prefecture.

Excerpt
Kuba and Uotsuri Islands located to the northwest of the Yaeyama Islands in Okinawa Prefecture used to be uninhabited islands, but recently people have been going to these islands to attempt fishery and other activities, and such activities need to be controlled.

Viscount Yasushi Nomura, Minister of Home Affairs
Hibetsu No. 133 / On the matter of erecting markers
Kobun Ruishu (the compiled records of the precedents and law)
Edition No. 19, 1895
January 12, 1895 (Meiji 28) [Repository] National Archives of Japan

No.7 Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa Prefecture to erect national markers and have jurisdiction over the Senkaku Islands

This document contains the text of the Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa Prefecture to have jurisdiction over Uotsuri and Kuba Islands (dated January 14, 1895) and the text of a draft instruction to the prefecture.



Cabinet decision / Draft Instruction /
On the matter of erecting markers, as the request stated
Kobun Ruishu (the compiled records of the precedents and law)
Edition No. 19, 1895
January 14, 1895 (Meiji 28)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan

Development of the Senkaku Islands by Tatsushiro Koga

In the following year of January 1895, when the Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Japan's territory, Tatsushiro Koga, seafood merchant from Fukuoka Prefecture, was permitted to use for free of rent the state-owned four islands, Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uoturi and Kuba Islands, and engaged in the development of those islands.

In March 1897, Tatsushiro Koga dispatched 35 workers to the Senkaku Islands to start the project of collecting feathers of albatross and the development of the islands. The development started from Kuba Island, and the project of collecting feathers expanded, which led the sharp decrease in the number of albatross. In 1900, experts were invited to conduct research in each island, while other measures were taken.

By 1900 several houses were built in Kuba Island, and a hut and stone fence was built on the sand

beach in northwest of Minami-kojima Island. Photo (1) shows the situation in Minami-kojima Island, with three main-land Japanese style boats on front, and a Okinawan style "Sabani" boat left behind, which indicates that the island was used as a fishing base.

Meanwhile, the project of collecting feathers of albatross shrunk, and Tatsushiro Koga started the businesses of producing stuffed birds of small-sized sea birds such as sooty terns, and also fishing bonitos and producing dried bonitos. In Uotsuri Island, a factory of producing dried bonitos was built (photo (2)). A photo remains now, which appeared to have taken with a research mission for rock phosphate led by Noritaka Tsunetou (photo (3)).

In 1908, the project of producing dried bonitos ran on track, as the development of the Senkaku Islands advanced. The number of residents on the islands amounted to 248 of 99 households.



Photo (1) Situation in Minami-kojima (1900)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan



Photo (2) Landscape of dried bonito factory in Uotsuri Island (1908)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan



Photo (3) Uotsuri Island in the Senkaku Islands (around 1908) [Repository] Tsukasa Ishizawa

Jan. 14, 1895
(Meiji 28)

Cabinet decision permitting Okinawa to erect national markers (Incorporation into Japan's territory)
The Senkaku Islands are under the jurisdiction of Okinawa prefecture

Apr. 17, 1895 (Meiji 28)

End of the Sino-Japanese war
(Treaty of Shimonoseki)

Mar. 5, 1896
(Meiji 29)

The Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Yaeyama County in accordance with Imperial Edict No. 13 (On the matter of the administrative districts in Okinawa Prefecture) in 1896

Let's see China's Argument (2) China's argument - Japan Stole Diaoyu Dao from China -

II. Japan Stole Diaoyu Dao from China

1. Japan's covert moves to steal Diaoyu Dao
2. China was forced to cede Diaoyu Dao to Japan together with the Taiwan Island

Diaoyu Dao, an Inherent Territory of China, State Council Information Office, the People's Republic of China (September 25, 2012)

Annotation

1 In the process of incorporating the Senkaku Islands in 1895, Japan confirmed that they were not under the control by any other state.

The PRC states that in "a report sent in secrecy" within the Japanese Government in 1885, Japan "could not act impetuously," taking in consideration the possibility of "inviting China's suspicion if erecting national markers," because the Senkaku Islands had Chinese names.

As explained above, Japan carefully confirmed that no other nations ruled controlled the Senkaku Islands, prior to issuing the Cabinet decision of incorporating the Senkaku Islands.

Moreover, after the incorporation of the Islands into the Japanese territory in 1895, although China appeared to have recognized that the activities of the Japanese were growing conspicuous, Japan effectively controlled the Senkaku Islands.

2 Japan's incorporation of the Senkaku Islands (January 1895) was three months prior to the conclusion of the Treaty of Shimonoseki (April 1895). The Senkaku Islands were not part of "the islands appertaining or belonging to...Formosa" (Taiwan), and not ceded to Japan.

The PRC asserts that the Treaty of Shimonoseki was concluded as a result of the Sino-Japanese War, and the Senkaku Islands were "ceded" to Japan as the "islands appertaining or belonging to...Formosa."

However, it was in April 1895 that the Sino-Japanese War was ended, while the incorporation of the Senkaku Islands into Japan's territory was three months prior, and thus, the Senkaku Islands were already Japan's territory at the time of the conclusion of the Treaty.

Moreover, it is clear from the negotiation records that the Senkaku Islands were not included as part of the island of Formosa nor the "islands appertaining or belonging to" it.

Therefore, the assertion of the PRC that the Senkaku Islands were "ceded" to Japan by the Treaty of Shimonoseki is wrong.

As is demonstrated above, the Senkaku Islands were neither "stolen" nor "ceded."

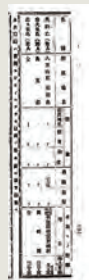
3 Valid Control of the Senkaku Islands

Jurisdiction

1895 (Meiji 28) Placed under the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture

After the Cabinet decision in January 1895, the Senkaku Islands (Uotsuri and Kuba Islands) were placed under the jurisdiction of Yaeyama County. In the Annual Report of the Statistics of Okinawa Prefecture (1895, 1896), there are entries of Uotsuri Island and Kuba Island as uninhabited islands in Yaeyama County.

No.8 Annual Report of the Statistics of Okinawa Prefecture 1895-96



Excerpt
Name: Uotsuri Island (uninhabited)
Affiliation: Ishigaki Island, Yaeyama County
Circumference: 2.13 r (approx. 8.3 km)
Distance to the main island
Address: Tonoshiro Village, Ishigaki Magiri, Yaeyama County
Distance from Tonoshiro Village: 98 nautical miles

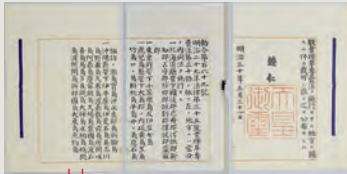
Section 1. Internal Affairs Department, Okinawa Prefecture
June 28, 1900 (Meiji 33)
[Repository] Okinawa Prefectural Library

May 31, 1897 (Meiji 30) Applicable areas for certain laws

Uotsuri Island was excluded from the areas to which the salt monopoly law and the Leaf Tobacco Monopoly Law were applied. The island was specified as included in the exempted area in Okinawa Prefecture.

No.9 Imperial Edict No. 169

[To designate the local districts to be exempt from enforcement of the Leaf Tobacco Monopoly Law]



Excerpt
Imperial Edict No. 169
According to Article 30 of the Leaf Tobacco Monopoly Act (Law No. 35 of 1896), the Act shall not be enforced for the time being in the regions set out as follows.
(text omitted)
1. Under the jurisdiction of Okinawa Prefecture ... Uotsuri Island

Cabinet
May 31, 1897 (Meiji 30)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan

December 3, 1902 (Meiji 35) Incorporated into Tonoshiro Village

After the land consolidation project was completed in the Yaeyama Islands, the administrative districts in the Miyako and Yaeyama Islands were reorganized. Okinawa Prefecture announced Prefectural Ordinance No. 49 on December 3, realigned the four islands of the Senkaku islands (Minami-kojima Island, Kita-kojima Island, Uotsuri Island, and Kuba Island) to Tonoshiro Village, Ohama-Magiri, Yaeyama County.

No.10 Kenrei (Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance) No. 49



Excerpt
Category 2: System
Chapter 2: Gun, Ku, Magiri and Islands
○Prefectural Ordinance No. 49 (December 3, 1902)
(text omitted) Uotsuri Island and Kuba Island of Yaeyama-gun and the adjacent islands shall be incorporated into Tonoshiro Village of the Ohama Magiri.
The areas and names of the villages of each Magiri of Miyako-gun and Yaeyama-gun are stipulated as shown in the appendix.
(The appendix is omitted.)

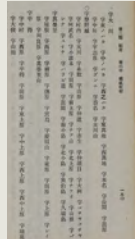
Okinawa Prefecture
Okinawaken Reitatsu Ruisan (Collection of Okinawa Prefectural Ordinances and Notices) Vol. 1
compiled in 1906 (Meiji 39)
[Repository] Naha City Museum of History

1908 (Meiji 41) Affiliation changed to Yaeyama Village

Along with the introduction of the Town-Village system in Okinawa Prefecture, four villages, including Tonoshiro Village were merged to become the newly established Yaeyama Village by Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance No. 22 on March 28, 1908. The four islands came to be affiliated to Yaeyama Village.

* The four islands were described as *Ko-aza* (small district) of *Aza* (district) Tonoshiro, Yaeyama Village, Yaeyama County in Fiscal Year 1911
Okinawaken Reitatsu Ruisan (Collection of Okinawa Prefectural Ordinances and Notices).

No.11 Kenrei (Okinawa Prefectural Ordinance) No. 49 (amended on March 28, 1908)



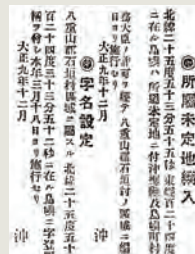
Excerpt
Category 2: System
Chapter 2: Gun, Ku, Town and Village
○Prefectural Ordinance No. 49 (December 3, 1902)
(text omitted)
The areas and names of the village of each Magiri of Miyako-gun and Yaeyama-gun are stipulated as shown in the appendix.
(Appendix)
Name: Tonoshiro
Yaeyama County
Yaeyama Village
(text omitted)
Name: Tonoshiro
(text omitted) Name: Minami-Kojima Island, Name: Kita-Kojima Island, Name: Uotsuri Island, Name: Kuba Island
(text omitted)

Okinawa Prefecture
Okinawaken Reitatsu Ruisan (Collection of Okinawa Prefectural Ordinances and Notices), Vol. 1
compiled in 1911 (Meiji 44)
[Repository] Faculty of Law Library, Kyoto University

1920 (Taisho 9) Incorporation of Taisho Island Establishment of Aza (district)

Taisho Island, land of undetermined affiliation, was incorporated into Ishigaki Village, Yaeyama County on February 17, 1920, and officially named. On March 18, the same year, the island was incorporated into *Ko-Aza* (small district) of *Aza* Tonoshiro.

No.12 Official Gazette No. 2507



Okinawa Prefecture
December, 1920 (Taisho 9)
[Repository] National Diet Library

June 6, 1922 (Taisho 11) Prospecting for phosphate

Prospecting for phosphate in the Senkaku Islands requires permission from the Government. In the Official Gazette, Tatsushiro Koga's application in 1910 for prospecting in Yaeyama Village was permitted, while another application in 1922 for prospecting in Kita-kojima and Minami-kojima Islands was rejected.

No.16 Official Gazette No. 2952

Excerpt
Mining Matters
Prospecting permit not granted
(text omitted)
Kita-kojima belonging to Tonoshiro in Ishigaki Village, Yaeyama County, Okinawa Prefecture 84, 235 Phosphorus
Taira Village, Miyako County, Okinawa Prefecture Oshiro Koei and one other 6, 29 Reason: Permit not granted as completely overlaps with Phosphorus Mining District 245 in Okinawa Prefecture Prospecting Rights Registration Minami-kojima belonging to Tonoshiro in Ishigaki Village, Yaeyama County, Okinawa Prefecture 103, 743 As above
As above 6, 29
Reason: As above

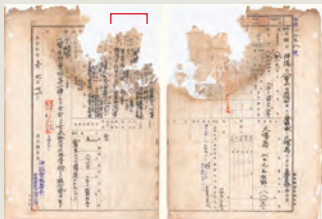
June 6, 1922 (Taisho 11)
[Repository] National Diet Library

Management and Disposition of State-Owned Land

1896 (Meiji 29) Lease of state-owned land Collection of rent

In 1896, the Government leased Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uotsuri and Kuba Islands to Tatsushiro Koga for thirty years free of rent. From September 1926, the end of the gratuitous lease, the Government collected the rent from Zenji Koga, who inherited the business from Tatsushiro Koga.

No.13 Survey report of deposition, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County



Excerpt
No payment for thirty years from August 1896 to August 1926
Four years and eight months from August 1926 to March 1931
Zenji Koga
Total rent, including Ledger 1, amounts to 136.61 yen; currently under lease Chief, Okinawa Forestry Office

1930 (Showa 5)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan

1932 (Showa 7) – Sale of the four islands of the Senkaku islands

From 1926, the Government collected rent from Zenji Koga, who continued to run his business on the Senkaku Islands. In 1932, at the 1930 request of Zenji Koga, the Government sold the four islands (Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uotsuri and Kuba Islands) to him.

No.14 Survey report of deposition, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County



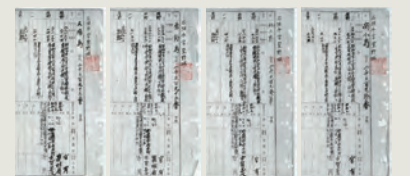
Outline
Okinawa Forestry Office, Kumamoto Forestry Bureau, assessed Uotsuri Island at 2,824.70 yen, Minami-kojima Island at 46.55 yen, Kita-kojima Island at 31.27 yen, Kuba Island at 246.35 yen. The Government sold Kuba Island on February 20, 1932, Uotsuri Island on February 25, Minami-kojima and Kita-kojima Islands on March 31. In the survey report on Kita-kojima and Kuba Islands (left), stamps of "sold" and "registered in 1932" appear on the surviving part.

Okinawa Forestry Office, Kumamoto Forestry Bureau
1932 (Showa 7)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan

1932 (Showa 7) – Registered in the Ledger of Land

The four islands of the Senkaku islands (Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uotsuri and Kuba Islands) were sold to Zenji Koga. With the transfer of ownership of the land, the islands were registered in the Ledger of Land, which made them subject to property tax.

No.15 Ledger of Land (Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uotsuri and Kuba Islands, Aza Tonoshiro, Ishigaki City)



1932 (Showa 7) –
[Repository] Ishigaki Branch Office, Naha District Legal Affairs Bureau

1939 (Showa 14)

Decralation of World War II

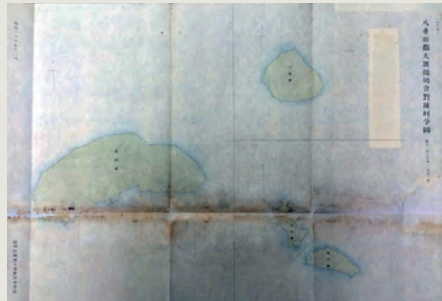
The Senkaku Islands became uninhabited islands

1899 – 1904 (Meiji 32 – 37)

Okinawa Prefecture implemented temporary land consolidation projects, taking measurement of the islands in Yaeyama, including the Senkaku Islands, and making official maps

After the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture in 1879, most of the administrative organizations were carried over from the time of the Ryukyu Dynasty. Okinawa Prefecture implemented drastic organizational reform from 1899, beginning with the reform of the land system (land consolidation projects). In these projects, measurements were taken of all the islands in Okinawa Prefecture to produce official maps (right). In addition, the land use was to be clarified, and the tax systems related to land were also reformed. Measurements were also taken of the Senkaku Islands, as islands in Yaeyama County, and the land use there was designated as undeveloped land.

No.17 Complete Map of Tonoshiro Village, Ohama Magiri, Yaeyama County / "Land Consolidation Map – the Senkaku Islands"



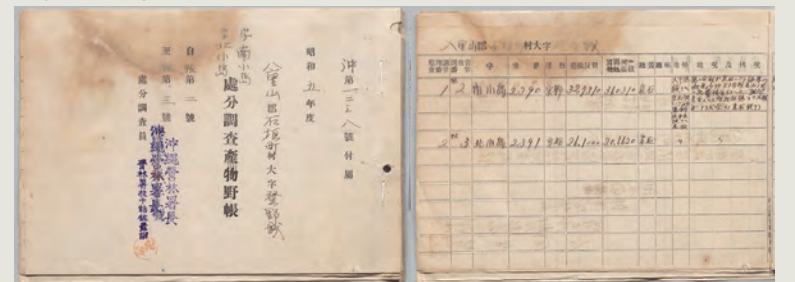
December 12, 1902 (Meiji 35)
[Repository] History Editorial Department, Board of Education, Ishigaki City

1930 (Showa 5)

Zenji Koga applied for the sale of the four islands of the Senkaku islands. The Okinawa Forestry Office implemented an on-site survey to assess the land value

At the request of Zenji Koga for selling the state-owned land, the Okinawa Forestry Office, Forestry Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry dispatched its officials to the four islands of the Senkaku islands (Minami-kojima, Kita-kojima, Uotsuri and Kuba Islands) to assess the land value. In the "Field survey logbook on the sale of Minami-Kojima and Kita-Kojima, Tonoshiro, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County in 1930," geological characteristics, forestry conditions and other entries of each island are recorded.

No.18 Field survey logbook on the sale of Minami-Kojima and Kita-Kojima, Tonoshiro, Ishigaki Town, Yaeyama County in 1930



Okinawa Forestry Office, Kumamoto Forestry Bureau, 1930 (Showa 5)
[Repository] National Archives of Japan

2 Senkaku Islands under administration by the US and the return of Okinawa

1 Senkaku Islands under administration by the US

After the war, Okinawa was placed under military control by the US Forces. In accordance with the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the territorial sovereignty of Okinawa including the Senkaku Islands remained in Japan, and the administration was executed by the US.

The US recognized the Senkaku Islands as part of Okinawa from the time of the war. Under administration by the US, the Senkaku Islands were placed under the jurisdiction of the Yaeyama Islands. The same status regarding land-owners of the four Senkaku islands, passage by fishing operators, the implementation of academic surveys, among other matters, was basically maintained in the same form as from the time before the war.

September 1945 –

Initiation of the administration over Okinawa by the US Military Government

On September 7, 1945, by the signature of the Instrument of Surrender in the Ryukyu islands, the occupational administration by the US Military Government of the Ryukyu Islands started over the Nansei Islands south of 30 degree latitude. The Amami Islands, Okinawa Island and the Sakishima Islands were under military administration, in which the administrative organization was established, centering on the Okinawa Civilian Administration consisting of local residents. This represented no change from the prewar time, in that the Senkaku Islands still belonged to Ishigaki Town (City).

September 1950, April 1952

Establishment of US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands and the Ryukyu Government

In August 1950, the US Military Government established the island governments of Amami, Okinawa, Miyako and Yaeyama, and set the boundary of administration. In December, the US Military Government was reorganized as the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR), and in 1952, USCAR abolished each island government and reorganized them into the organization shown in the chart (next page).

USCAR : United States Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands

April 1952

The San Francisco Peace Treaty enters into effect, and Okinawa is formally placed under administration by the US

With the entry-into-effect of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the Ryukyu Islands were formally placed under the administration by US, as "Nansei Shoto south of 29° north latitude."

CHAPTER II TERRITORY

Japan will concur in any proposal of the United States to the United Nations to place under its trusteeship system, with the United States as the sole administering authority, Nansei Shoto south of 29° north latitude (including the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands), Nanpo Shoto south of Sofu Gan (including the Bonin Islands, Rosario Island and the Volcano Islands) and Parece Vela and Marcus Island. Pending the making of such a proposal and affirmative action thereon, the United States will have the right to exercise all and any powers of administration, legislation and jurisdiction over the territory and inhabitants of these islands, including their territorial sea.

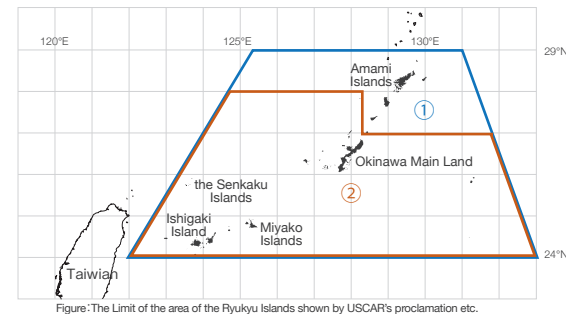


Figure: The Limit of the area of the Ryukyu Islands shown by USCAR's proclamation etc.

① **Area of the Ryukyu Islands shown by Civil Administration Ordinance No. 68 (Provisions of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands) (February 29, 1952)**

② **Area of the Ryukyu Islands shown by Civil Administration of the Proclamation No. 27 (Geographic Boundary of the Ryukyu Islands) (December 25, 1953)**

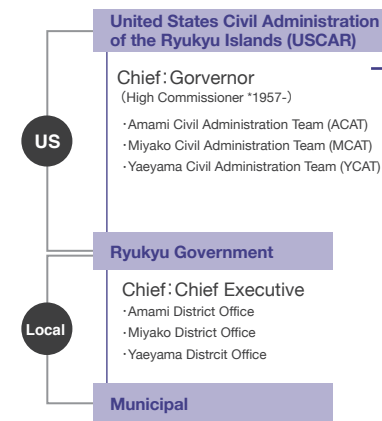


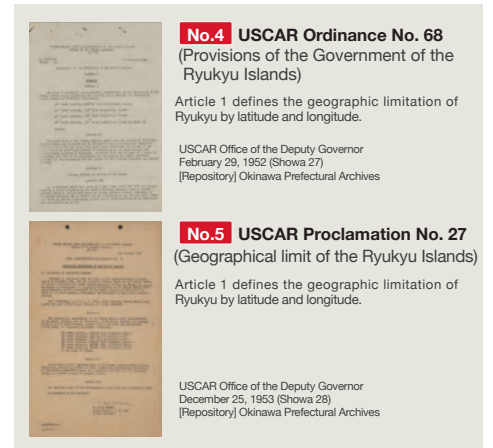
Chart: Governance System under administration by the US

1952 –

Ordinances by the US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR) include the Senkaku Islands in the area of Ryukyu

After the establishment of USCAR (see left chart), the US (US Forces) indicated the limit of the area of the Ryukyu Islands under its administration by latitude and longitude in Ordinance No.68 (Provisions of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands) and other documents. The Senkaku Islands were always included in the area under the administration. The Islands were consistently treated as part of the Nansei Islands.

→ No.4-5



Cases demonstrating that the US (US Forces) was executing administration over the Senkaku Islands

1948

The US Military Government in Ryukyu designates Kuba Island as a bombing range

The US military command designated Kuba Island and the area within a 5 mile radius as a permanent danger area (bombing range), and requested, through the US Military Government, that the Okinawa Civilian Administration notify all the people concerned.

→ No.1

No.1 Designation of Permanent Danger Areas by the U.S. military command in Ryukyu



Document Section, Liaison and Public Affairs Division, General Affairs Department, the Government of the Ryukyu Islands April 9, 1948 (Showa 23) [Repository] Okinawa Prefectural Archives

Excerpt

RYCOM
0830 April 9
Commanding Officer, Transportation Service
Deputy Commander, Military Government
To: Governor of Okinawa
1. The following are permanent danger areas in use by the 1st Air Division:
a. Range Number 1: 25° 56' N, 123° 41' E
(Kuba Sho, within a 5 mile radius)
(text omitted)
3. Request the above information be notified to all the people concerned under your jurisdiction.
(text omitted)

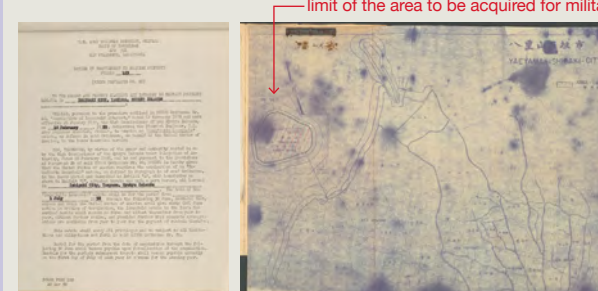
1950s

The US Forces conclude land-lease contracts for military reserve with the land-owner of Kuba Island

Kuba Island, designated as a bombing range, was owned by Zenji Koga from the time prior to the war. The US Forces were required to lease the island as a military reservation. In 1958, the US concluded a comprehensive lease agreement with the Government of the Ryukyu Islands for the land used by the US Forces. At this time, many land-lease contracts were concluded for land for use by the US Forces, including Kuba Island.

→ No.6

No.6 Notice of Requirement to Acquire Property, Ishigaki City



General Affairs Section of the Military Land Office, Legal Affairs Department, Government of the Ryukyu Islands January 1960 (Showa 35) [Repository] Okinawa Prefectural Archives

Outline

This document is a notification that the US made a request to the Government of the Ryukyu Islands for the acquisition of Kuba Island, located in Ishigaki City, for a military reservation on an indefinite lease. In the notification, the period for the start of the acquisition through the lease was to be set retroactively to July 1958. As requested in the notice, an agreement was concluded between the Government of the Ryukyu Islands and Zenji Koga, the owner of Kuba Island. This notice is attached with papers and maps that indicated the land to be acquired.

1945
(Showa 20)

Acceptance of the Potsdam Declaration

Sep. 2

Signing of Japan's Instrument of Surrender

1948
(Showa 23)

Designation of Kuba Island as a bombing range

1950
(Showa 25)

Establishment of US Civil Administration of the Ryukyu Islands (USCAR)

Sep. 8, 1951
(Showa 26)

Signing of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

Apr. 1952
(Showa 27)

Establishment of the Ryukyu Government

Apr. 28

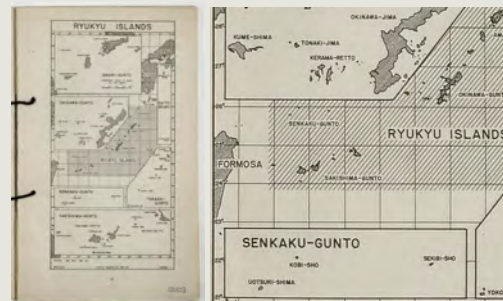
Entry into force of the San Francisco Peace Treaty

The US included the Senkaku Islands in the area of the Ryukyu Islands from the time of the war

The first activity report by the United States Military Government (Issued in July 1946: Refer to chart on the right) depicted the Senkaku Islands as "SENKAKU-GUNTO," as a part of the Ryukyu Islands. After that, the relevant ordinances and other documents continued to indicate the Senkaku Islands as being in the area of the Ryukyu Islands. Moreover, it is confirmed by documents such as the Monograph on Japan made by the Information Office of the US Navy and the Gazetteer that the US Forces recognized the Senkaku Islands as part of the Ryukyu Islands already at the time of war. This recognition continued until the return of Okinawa.

→ No.2-3

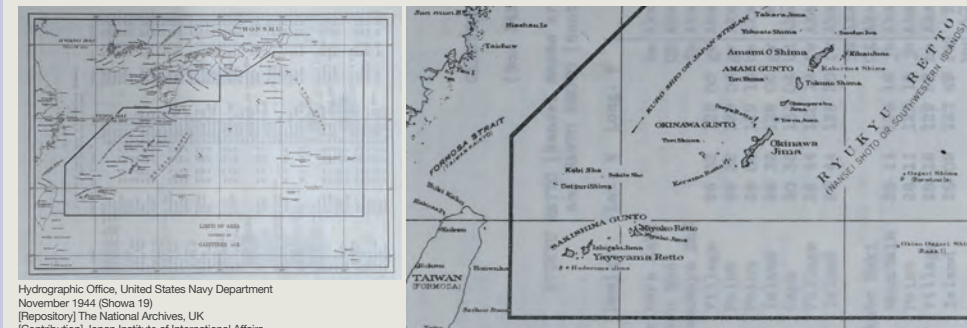
No.2 Summation of US Military Government Activities in the Ryukyu Islands No.1 SENKAKU-GUNTO in the area of the Ryukyu Islands



SUMMATION OF UNITED STATES ARMY MILITARY GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE RYUKYU ISLANDS No.1

July-November 1946 (Showa 21)
[Repository] Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

No.3 Gazetteer: The Ryukyu Islands and the Nanpo Islands



Hydrographic Office, United States Navy Department November 1944 (Showa 19)
[Repository] The National Archives, UK
[Contribution] Japan Institute of International Affairs

The Senkaku Islands in the area of the Ryukyu Islands

GAZETTEER No.14X RYUKYU RETTO AND NANPO SHOTO

2 Okinawa Reversion

In the late 1960s, the illegal entry by the Taiwanese into the Senkaku Islands became a problematic issue, and the Government of the Ryukyu Islands started enforcement in consultation with USCAR. This was a time when the Japanese Government was conducting surveys, and the situation around the Senkaku Islands was beginning to change. This change became all the more conspicuous in the lead up to the Okinawa Reversion Agreement, signed on June 17, 1971. The People's Republic of China (PRC) and Taiwan suddenly began to claim territorial sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands, which they had never done before.



Administrative marker and signboard erected by Ishigaki City (1969)

Left : Administrative marker (Uotsuri Island)
Right: Administrative signboard that lists the names of each of the Senkaku Islands
Photo by Yoshima Niino

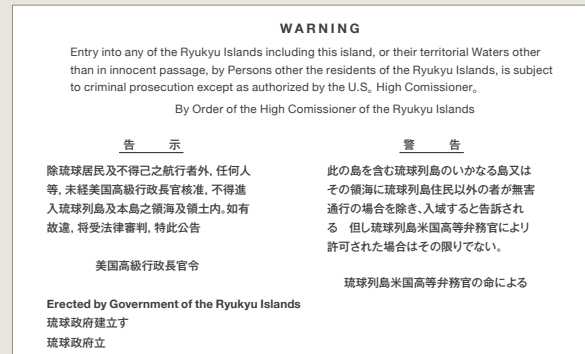


The Ryukyu Government cracked down the border incursions in 1970.

Report on the border incursions around the Senkaku Islands, August 1968 – July 1970
[Repository] National Archives of Japan



Photo: "Senkaku Island Photography" [Repository] Okinawa Prefectural Library



The Government of the Ryukyu Islands erected warning boards under the name of the US High Commissioner of the Ryukyu Islands (1970)

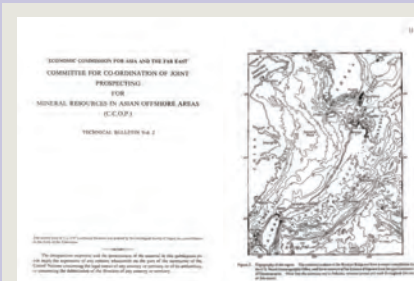
In September 1968, USCAR proposed to erect warning boards that notified that authorization was required for entry into the Senkaku Islands, as an effective measure to address illegal intruders. In July 1970, the warning boards were erected in the respective Senkaku Islands by the Immigration Agency of the Government of the Ryukyu Islands.

May 1969

A report on the potential oil reserves is made public

In 1969, the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), the United Nations, publicized a report, stating that: The most favorable part of the region for oil and natural gas is the 200,000 sq. km area northeast of Taiwan; a high probability exists that the continental shelf between Taiwan and Japan may be one of the most prolific oil reserves in the world. A map in the report clearly described the islands as "the Senkaku Islands," although there was no objection from the PRC and Taiwan.

No.7



No.7
ECAFE Report, 1969

Geological Structure and Some Water Characteristics of the East China Sea and the Yellow Sea. (1969)
CCOP Technical Bulletin Vol.2

June 17, 1971

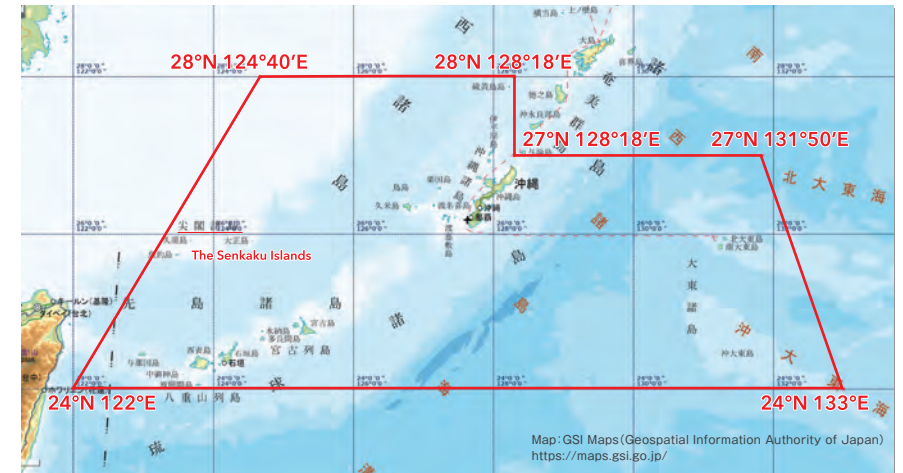
The Okinawa Reversion Agreement is concluded. The area of return includes the Senkaku Islands

Japan and the US signed the Okinawa Reversion Agreement, in accordance with which the administration over Okinawa was returned to Japan. The Agreed Minutes of the agreement provide that the geographic scope of the return is the area specified by USCAR Proclamation No. 27 (December 25, 1953), which includes the Senkaku Islands (right).

May 15, 1972

The Okinawa Reversion Agreement enters into effect. In accordance with the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement, Kuba and Taisho Islands are provided as bombing ranges

Upon the entry-into-effect of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement with the US, the administration over Okinawa was returned to Japan. At this time, the Kuba and Taisho Islands were provided to the US Forces as bombing ranges.



Map: GSI Maps (Geospatial Information Authority of Japan)
<https://maps.gsi.go.jp/>

The PRC and Taiwan suddenly started claiming territorial sovereignty, which they had never done before.

It was not until the 1970s, after the report of the research by ECAFE in the fall of 1968, that the PRC Government and the authority of Taiwan started to make their unique assertions over the Senkaku Islands. They had never expressed their objection to the fact that the Senkaku Islands were included in the area under the execution of the administration by the US in accordance with Article 3 of the San Francisco Peace Treaty.

First official statement by the Government of the People's Republic of China

Excerpt from the Statement by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the PRC (December 30, 1971)

...In this argument, the government of the United States and Japan overtly included the Diaoyu Islands among territories to be reversed to Japan. This is a blatant violation of China's territories and sovereignty...The Diaoyu Islands and other islands have been China's territory since ancient times. As early as in the Ming Dynasty, they were placed under the areas of China's naval defenses as affiliated islands of Taiwan, not the Ryukyus which is today's Okinawa...However, during the First Sino-Japanese War of 1894, Japan illegally stole the Diaoyu Islands and forced the Qing court to sign the unfair Treaty of Shimonoseki that ceded to Japan "the island of Formosa (Taiwan), together with all islands appertaining or belonging to the said island of Formosa", as well as the Penghu Islands.

Jun. 17, 1971
(Showa 46)

Signing of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement

Dec. 30

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China

May 15, 1972
(Showa 47)

Entry into force of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement

1978
(Showa 53)

Case of the intrusion by Chinese fishing vessels

1979
(Showa 54)

Academic surveys by Okinawa Development Agency
Implementation of the feasibility study on development

Fisheries activities and academic surveys around the Senkaku Islands

Academic research after the war started on fishing boats headed for the Senkaku Islands

In 1950, the late Tetsuo Takara (from Ishigaki Island, former President of the University of the Ryukyus, Doctor in Agriculture) travelled to Uotsuri Island and conducted the first academic survey after the war, embarking on bonito-fishing boats headed for the Senkaku Islands.

After that, Prof. Takara conducted academic survey trips to the Senkaku Islands in 1952, 1953, 1963 and 1968 with research corps including local researchers who were mainly from the University of the Ryukyus. Further academic surveys were conducted in 1971 by the University of the Ryukyus, and in 1979 by Okinawa Development Agency, contributing to the accumulation of academic knowledge, including the discovery of indigenous species of albatross and other animals and plants.



Tetsuo Takara collecting a sample of Easter lily at the former site of the dried-bonito factory in Uotsuri Island

Photo by Shinjun Tawada (1952)



On the beach at Uotsuri Island, Hideo Aragaki and crew members of Kihon-maru, a fishing boat
Photo by Hideo Arakaki (1952)

Basic position of Japan

There is no doubt that the Senkaku Islands are clearly an inherent part of the territory of Japan, in light of historical facts and based upon international law. Indeed, the Senkaku Islands are under the valid control of Japan.

There exists no issue of territorial sovereignty to be resolved concerning the Senkaku Islands.

Japan will act firmly and calmly to maintain its territorial integrity. Japan continues to strive for peace and stability in the region, which is to be established through the observance of international law.

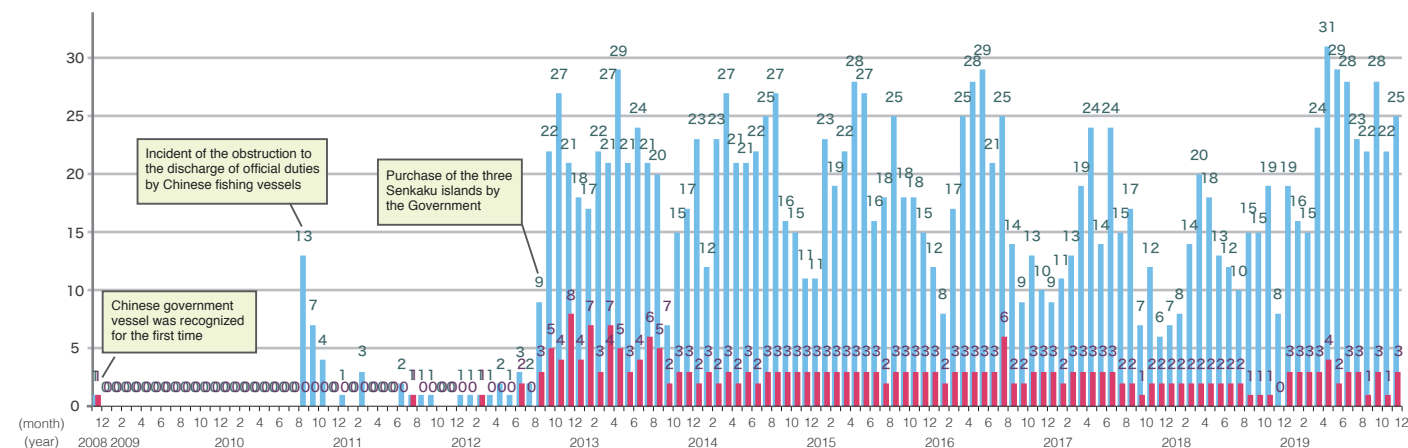
3 Japan's initiatives to protect our territory

Patrolling the territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands

In recent years, the activities by Chinese Government-owned vessels have been identified almost everyday in Japan's countiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands. Moreover the incidents of intrusion into Japanese territorial sea have been occurring. In such circumstances, the Japan Coast Guard deploys its patrol vessels, while taking other measures, in the determined policy line of firmly protecting our territory and territorial sea, and thereby continues to act calmly and firmly in order to prevent escalation of the situation in collaboration with related organizations.

the number of incidents of intrusion into the territorial sea (per month)

the number of days that Chinese Government-owned vessels are identified in the contiguous zone (per month)



Graph: Situation concerning Chinese Government vessels in the maritime area surrounding the Senkaku Islands (as of December 31, 2019)

- In 2019, the number of days that Chinese Government-owned vessels are identified in the contiguous zone and the number of total vessels identified there are both the highest ever (282 days, 1,097 vessels).
- For 64 days from April 12 to June 14 in 2019, Chinese Government-owned vessels continued navigating in the contiguous zone, which broke the past record of 43 days from August 9 to September 20, 2014.
- Since September 2016, the intrusion into the territorial sea by a fleet of four Chinese Government-owned vessels has been identified frequently, whereas a fleet of three vessels had been more commonly identified before then.

At the same time as the return of Okinawa, the 11th Regional Maritime Safety Headquarters, Maritime Safety Agency (currently Japan Coast Guard) was established, resulting in the start of the surveillance of the Senkaku Islands and its surrounding maritime area. In 1979, the Okinawa Development Agency conducted academic surveys and feasibility studies on potential development in the Senkaku Islands. Administrative management has continually been exerted over the islands to date.



Photo: Japan Coast Guard patrol vessel (foreground) engaged in the surveillance of a Chinese government vessel (background)

Pictorial image of Japan's territorial sea and other related areas

