

Regional Administration and Management Plan (The Northern Okinawa Forest Planning Area): Excerpts

1. Basic Matters Related to the Administration and Management of National Forests

(1) Basic Policy on Administration of National Forests

This Plan has the Northern Okinawa Forest Planning Area as its jurisdiction, covering 11,964 hectares of national forests, including six hectares of those retired from forestry business, and 4,398 hectares which are leased to Okinawa Prefecture for the purpose of establishing a basic property for the Prefecture and setting an example to the forestry industry there under Article 64, paragraph (1) of the Cabinet Ordinance on Special Measures for Application of the Laws and Regulations Related to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Line with Reversion of Okinawa, etc. (Cabinet Ordinance No.158 of 1972) ("Cabinet Ordinance"). The land leased under the Cabinet Ordinance to Okinawa Prefecture is administered and managed by the prefectural government as prefectural forest under its Prefectural Forest Management Plan.

Most of the remaining area, 7,566 hectares, except for the leased land under the Cabinet Ordinance, is used for the United States' Northern Training Area of Okinawa, based on the permission granted to the Okinawa Defense Bureau.

The Planning Area, lying along the mountainous backbones, composed of Mt. Nishime-dake (420 meters), Mt. Ibu-dake (354 meters), Mt. Terukubi-yama (395 meters), Mt. Iyu-dake (446 meters), and other mountains running in the middle of the northern part of the main Okinawa Island from Northeast to Southwest on one side, and faced with the Pacific Ocean on the other, forms a long, huge stretch of land.

(Omitted)

The Area is inhabited by precious wild animals, such as Noguchi-gera woodpecker (*Sapheopipo noguchii*), Yanbaru-kuina water rail (*Gallirallus okinawae*), and Yanbaru-tenaga-kogane gold beetle (*Cheirotonus jambar*), each designated by the national government as a Special Natural Monument and Nationally Endangered Species of Wild Fauna or Flora, with parts around Mt. Ibu-dake designated as Special Protection Zone of the Wildlife Sanctuary, being expected to serve for preservation and formation of natural environments, especially for protection and multiplication of these species.

Accordingly, this Plan focuses on functions national forests located in places like this are expected to serve for public benefits, such as water conservation and health and culture functions, and promotes effort to deliver open and accessible "forests for people" as well as promotes the forest environmental education, while paying attention to sustainability in forest management, measures to mitigate global warming, and preservation of biodiversity in administering and managing forests.

(Omitted)

(B) Zones not classified into any function type (Forest compartment No. 3 - No. 46)

Most of them are used for the United States' Northern Training Area of Okinawa; based on the permission granted to the Okinawa Defense Bureau, they are not classified into any function type. As the Special Action Committee on Facilities and Areas in Okinawa (SACO) decided in their final report, released in December 1996, that some of them be returned, they, together with those returned so far (497 hectares), must be administered and managed according to the purposes mentioned for each of them in the report issued by the Committee for Examination on Treatment of National Forests in Northern Okinawa.

(C) Zones leased under the Cabinet Ordinance (Forest compartment No. 47 - No. 73)

They are leased to Okinawa Prefecture under Article 64, paragraph 1 of the Cabinet Ordinance, and administered and managed by the prefectural government as prefectural forest under its Prefectural Forest Management Plan.

(Omitted)

(2) Matters Related to the Administration and Management Corresponding to Functional Types

With a view to administering and managing national forests in a manner that the functions they should perform for public benefit will be maintained and facilitated, they must be classified into the function types listed below:

(Omitted)

- Water Conservation Type;

(Omitted)

so that they will be administered and managed to be able to fully perform the type of function each is expected to.

(Omitted)

- (v) Policy for administration and management of the Water Conservation Type, and other matters related to the Type

Forests are classified into the Water Conversation Type when they are primarily expected to perform the functions of supplying plenty of quality water people need for their lives; for better performing the function of water conservation, which includes drought mitigation and water quality preservation, forests there must be grown to maintain forest soil with greater capabilities of water permeability and storage, and root systems and understory vegetation developed enough to resist various types of damage, as their target for development.

Care must also be paid to effective use of forest resources to the extent that the conditions stated above can be satisfied.

Area of Water Conservation Type

(in hectares)

Type	Water Conservation Type
Area	4,581

(Omitted)

2 Matters related to maintenance and preservation of national forests

(1) Matters related to patrol

(i) Forest conservation patrol for forest fire prevention and other purposes

To prevent damage to forests, especially forest fires, closer cooperation must be established with local municipalities and other organizations concerned for taking all possible measures to prevent forest fires by, for instance, installing signs, carrying out public relations for forest fire prevention, raising awareness of users, as well as enhancing patrol for forest conservation.

Effort to prevent illegal dumping of waste must also be exerted through enhanced cooperation between local municipalities and other relevant organizations, the Waste Management Council, Forest Conservation Patrollers, and volunteer organizations.

(Omitted)

(4) Other necessary matters

As the area is inhabited by several Nationally Endangered Species of Wild Fauna or Flora, such as the Noguchi-gera woodpecker, Yanbaru-tenaga-kogane gold beetle, and Yanbaru-kuina water rail, forests there must be actively patrolled to maintain and preserve environments of their habitats. For mountain streams and surrounding areas, which have crucial roles to play for preserving biodiversity as habitats and migration routes for wildlife and source of seeds, effort must be exerted to maintain continuity of vegetation that should naturally thrive there from the upper reaches through the lower, so that a network of ecosystems will be formed with finer meshes.

(Omitted)

3 Matters concerning utilization of national forests

(Omitted)

(3) Other necessary matters

In this Planning Area, natural forests must be used effectively with measures taken to achieve harmonization with public-benefit functions they perform, such as protection of rare wild animals and plants, preservation of rich natural environments, and conservation of water sources, as well as

arrangements made for necessary coordination with other plans for land use in this Area, among others.

5. Matters related to the forest maintenance through public participation

(1) Matters related to national participation forests

Maintenance of forests with any voluntary participation of people must be performed in an appropriate manner in cooperation with volunteer organizations and other relevant stakeholders.

(Omitted)

(3) Other necessary matters

As requested to actively make available national forests, rich in diversity and natural environment, as a place for a variety of activities for experience, "Yuyu-no-Mori" (Forest for Play) projects to be carried out to offer regular opportunities of experience under an agreement concluded for that purpose, and other initiatives must be effectively used to promote forest environment education.

The District Forest Offices and other relevant organizations must strive to perform the functions as a base for providing people with information on participate in maintenance and preservation of forests, counseling them, and helping them with participation.