

Regional Biodiversity Conservation Plan
(Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan)
(Excerpt)

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Date: March 2014

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Chapter 1 Project Details

1. What Are Regional Biodiversity Conservation Plans?

1) Background to and Positioning of the Plan

Regional Biodiversity Conservation Plans express policies that encourage and support initiatives to continue maintaining and passing down the biological diversity found in each respective region in order to conserve the diverse nature found in each and every part of a changing Japan. As one such policy, this policy is based on the Promotion of Activities for Biodiversity Conservation through the Cooperation among Regional Diversified Actors (Act on Biodiversity Conservation through Regional Cooperation; Act No. 72 from 2010). Specifically, the aim is to enact and put into practice Regional Cooperation and Conservation Action Plans that establish modalities and create initiatives for biodiversity in each region, while also achieving the objective of the law (conserving regional biological diversity and contributing to securing a healthy and cultured lifestyle for the public).

The Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan was created by Ogimi Village with the support and cooperation of organizations that are active in the local region. The targeted region primarily consists of the limestone mountain mass in the central part of the village, and its target period is about ten years in the future. The plan is to continue implementing this by setting in place a structure whereby related organizations and Ogimi Village cooperate and coordinate with one another, mainly in fields where pacesetting organizations are active.

Given such circumstances, in FY2011 experts were commissioned to perform a survey of natural characteristics in the seven fields of amphibious reptiles, geological features, plants, birds, insects, butterflies, and land snails. This focused mainly on Mt. Nekumachiji, which has the most abundant nature out of the village's hilly areas. In addition, previous related surveys and plans, as well as local proposals, were organized to carry out a survey on regional characteristics regarding the status of natural conservation and usage initiatives that have been promoted in the region. In FY2012, based on recommendations from the experts from the previous survey, a supplementary survey was performed on the natural characteristics for nine fields, in which the two fields of mammals and aquatic creatures were added to the seven fields mentioned above. As for the regional characteristics, field observations were carried out on those areas that are environments that are closely connected to the life within the village and that have particularly promising natural environments. Recommendations on conservation and use were received from local experts on current challenges. However, that year the region was buffeted by a typhoon the likes of which have been rare in recent years, and so satisfying results could not be obtained regarding the survey on natural characteristics.

Given the fact that adequate results could not be obtained for the survey on natural characteristics due to natural disasters in FY2013, another supplementary survey was carried out by excluding some of the fields. The survey results from FY2011 through FY2013 were compiled in order to both clarify the characteristics of the natural environment in said region and also offer proposals for activities to conserve the region. What is more, the regional conservation activities currently being carried out based on the policies set forth from the survey results were observed together with the local experts, and consideration was given to the future direction of conservation. The Regional Biodiversity Conservation Plan (Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan) (Draft) was recently created by arranging these in a comparative manner.

(Omitted)

2. Orientation of the Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan

(Omitted)

(4) Importance in terms of the Project

This project aims to connect the nature within human habitations on Okinawa that had been thought about in a partial and localized manner, such as oceans and forests, and popularize the region as an important location for maintaining the biodiversity of Okinawa. Therefore, it was important to clarify the natural environment within the plan region.

What is more, it is necessary to clarify how the local people that have made use of this environment have utilized the nature and surrounding conditions found in the limestone mountains, where a diverse array of natural environments remain. It is also necessary to go about rebuilding connections with nature in a manner suited to the modern age in order to continue to preserve satoyama (border regions between arable land and mountain foothills) environments on into the future. This project began by clarifying the natural characteristics. Next, its goal was to create a specific action plan for awareness-raising activities to extend environmental conservation to the region and for conservation activities, as well as a promotion structure to manage this.

The objective of the project is to make the region one where sound and vigorous pursuits are fostered by maintaining natural diversity and the benefits received from the natural environment.

(Omitted)

Chapter 2 Regional Cooperation and Conservation Action Plan (Draft)

(Omitted)

4. Creation of a Structure to Enable Coordination over the Activities

1) Rationale behind Creating the Structure

In order to give concrete shape to biodiversity conservation activities, the village residents' understanding of the survey on natural characteristics should be deepened. In addition, the action plan necessary to cultivate activities to be carried out in the target region and for developing environments with the desired biological diversity, as well as a structure for promoting said action plan, should be created.

(Omitted)

3) Creating the Structure

In order to instantiate the Regional Biodiversity Conservation Plan, regional cooperation and conservation activities must be promoting in an ongoing manner. For this, it will be necessary to get the local region concerned with and interested in nature and the environment, while also getting the local region to undertake the activities voluntarily.

For this, a process must be established whereby each of the conservation activities is developed and deployed in a coordinated manner. This is to ensure that the regional biodiversity can be secured with the help of expert advice and with a focus on the activities that are being voluntarily carried out in the region.

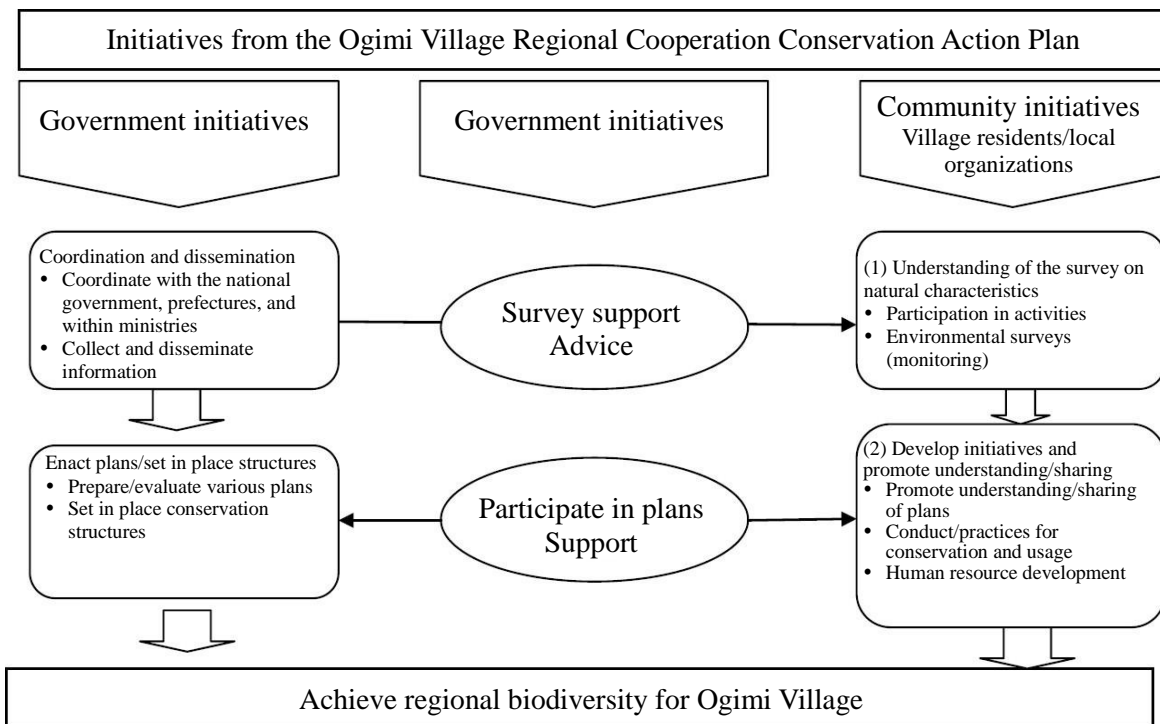


Fig. Flow of initiatives

(Omitted)

5. Orientation of Initiatives by Ogimi Village

At the conclusion of the three-year survey, the natural characteristics of the planned region for the biodiversity conservation project within the village had become clear. By setting the goal as being to conserve these highly diverse natural resources, the expectation is that future projects will feature major initiatives that cover a wide range. However, even if grand plans with multiple interrelated facets contain superior content, they tend to remain nothing more than plans due to factors like budget and personnel shortfalls in some cases.

This project will consider the overall framework for the activities needed in order to promote conservation. In addition to this, it will also start out with those undertakings that it can implement under its current structure, then consider methods for reaching its ultimate goals by amassing the results from this. For example, we are confident that by steadily amassing results one by one from even small-scale undertakings, we will be able to achieve our ultimate goals of conserving the biodiversity in the planned region and promoting the village.

It is hoped that, rather than laying out major goals and striving to achieve them right from the outset, instead amassing experience through small, specific undertakings for individual matters and continuing to accumulate knowledge will serve as a shortcut to reaching our goals.

Activities to observe butterflies were carried out on an experimental basis through the across-the-board cooperation of Shioya Elementary School in the Yako Region as part of outreach activities and regional observation activities. Attention was paid to this for the reasons that the biodiversity in the Yako Region has been recognized as being extremely high in its capacity as a satoyama region, children who were motivated to observe nature are found there, and Shioya Elementary School made efforts to promote this. What is more, it was also because the Yako Region adopted a positive and welcoming attitude with respect to these activities, and there were absolutely no problems regarding project implementation. Therefore, it will be possible to implement specific projects almost immediately starting from the following fiscal year.

The decision has been made to have the village adopt an approach of initiating this sort of method of amassing experience in those areas where it is feasible to do so in the village, then ultimately tying this in with activities for the conservation of biodiversity that cover the entire village.

6. Action Plan

1) Objectives of the activities

The activities that are necessary to promote the Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan have been compiled below. Here, the objectives of the activities will be shown based around the major axes of “Satoyama conservation,” “Collecting information on nature,” “Exchanges,” and “Education and learning.”

(1) Satoyama conservation

With the goal of coexisting with environments that are high in biodiversity, perform conservation based on the appropriate considerations for regions inhabited by rare living creatures, make use of the diverse nature found in regions inhabited by humans, and work to maintain and restore the environment.

(Omitted)

(2) Collecting information on nature

Collect nature information on this region, which is rich in biodiversity, and put it to good use in conserving the environment. In addition, disseminate the aggregated information in order to encourage industrial development in the village.

(Omitted)

(3) Exchanges

With the goal of conserving satoyama regions, hold ecotours and events aimed at people from outside the village and work to revitalize the region. In addition, hold exchanges with regions that are working to address biodiversity to create a network for maintaining biodiversity.

(Omitted)

(4) Education and learning

Increase opportunities for people to come into contact with the nature all around them to realize the importance of regions with an abundance of biodiversity, and carry out initiatives to cultivate a mentality of taking pride in the region.

(Omitted)

2) About the activities

Activities for specifically promoting “Satoyama conservation,” “Collecting information on nature,” “Exchanges,” and “Education and learning,” which have been established for each target, are shown below.

Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan on Biodiversity

(1) Satoyama conservation	
Objective	With the goal of coexisting with environments that are high in biodiversity, perform conservation based on the appropriate considerations for regions inhabited by rare living creatures, make use of the diverse nature found in regions inhabited by humans, and work to maintain and restore the environment.
Activities	(1) Establish the Ogimi brand by capitalizing on its biodiversity

	(2) Establish mountain roads and clean-up the region
	(3) Develop the site for a satoyama butterfly garden

(2) Collecting information on nature	
Objective	Collect nature information on this region, which is rich in biodiversity, and put it to good use in conserving the environment. In addition, disseminate the aggregated information in order to encourage industrial development in the village.
Activities	(1) Collect and disseminate nature information

(3) Exchanges	
Objective	With the goal of conserving satoyama regions, hold ecotours and events aimed at people from outside the village and work to revitalize the region. In addition, hold exchanges with regions that are working to address biodiversity to create a network for maintaining biodiversity.
Activities	(1) Create and engage in tourism
	(2) Coordinate with other regions working to address biodiversity

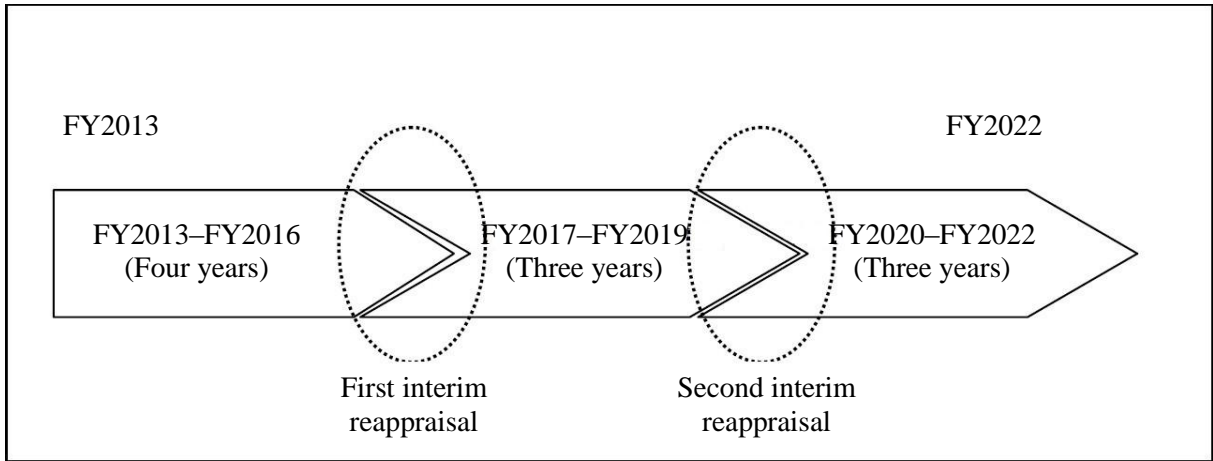
(4) Education and learning	
Objective	Increase opportunities for people to come into contact with the nature all around them to realize the importance of regions with an abundance of biodiversity, and carry out initiatives to cultivate a mentality of taking pride in the region.
Activities	(1) Hold observation tours that involve having local children take records on living creatures
	(2) Hold symposia and lectures

3) Period of activities

For the project period for Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan, this fiscal year, which corresponds to the final fiscal year of the survey, was set as a trial period. Including this, the project period was set at ten years, to conclude in FY2022.

What is more, it was decided that reappraisals would be carried out, with the aim being to do this after three years have elapsed. This is designed to accommodate factors like changes in the activity sponsor and the social conditions.

The contents of activities starting on the next page list the specific initiatives for the four-year period lasting from FY2013 to FY2016.



Plan period

(Omitted)

4) Contents of activities

(Omitted)

(2) Collecting information on nature

Initiative	(1) Collect and disseminate information on nature
Contents of the initiative	<p>In order to promote biodiversity conservation activities, it will be important to make records and amass data on environmental changes. For these initiatives, the most desirable thing is to have a structure whereby local residents carry these out on a daily basis.</p> <p>To start with, nature information on the region will be collected and aggregated based primarily around the butterfly observations by Shioya Elementary School that are currently carried out in the Yako area. Catching site of butterflies will be taken as an indicator for biodiversity.</p> <p>In addition, a structure will be created whereby informational placards on living creatures are installed in the village, and local people who catch sight of living creatures or hear their calls will be asked to write this down on them. The information will be aggregated and periodically disseminated to local residents once more via the placards in the form of notices. If the trial run in Yako is successful, it will be sequentially expanded out to the other settlements within the village.</p> <p>The information collected here will be analyzed in cooperation with experts, and the results will be put to good use in conservation activities. Moreover, it will be necessary to foster NPOs to perform monitoring together with the residents in order to promote this in a sustainable manner.</p>
Activity (1)	
Sponsor	Ogimi Village/NPO Yambaru House
Implementation period/location	<p>Period: Year round</p> <p>Location: Yako area</p>
Implementation details	<p>Nature information on the region will be collected and aggregated based primarily on the butterfly observations by Shioya Elementary School. A structure will be created whereby informational placards on living creatures are installed, and local people who catch sight of living creatures or hear their calls will be asked to write this down on them to exchange information.</p> <p>The Monitoring Sites 1000 Satoyama survey manual from the Biodiversity Center, Nature Conservation Bureau, Ministry of the Environment will be used for the monitoring methods. Experts will be invited and monitoring lectures will be held.</p>

(Omitted)

(4) Education and learning

Initiative	(1) Hold observation tours that involve having local children take records on living creatures
Contents of the initiative	<p>It was learned that the results of the outreach activities from this fiscal year and the activities to deepen awareness of biodiversity in the form of environmental education for the elementary school produced significant outcomes for the region.</p> <p>For the future, one of the most momentous challenges will be working to promote the understanding of village residents in the nature all around them for Ogimi Village, which forms a corner of the Yambaru Region that is slated for registration as a Natural World Heritage Site.</p> <p>The butterfly observations in the Yako community that were carried out this fiscal year on a trial basis by Shioya Elementary School will be performed in an ongoing manner. What is more, it was decided that the regular observation records taken by the children will be used to collect information on nature, which is stipulated in the plan. The collected information will be analyzed in cooperation with experts, and the results of the investigations will be put to good use in conservation activities.</p> <p>The intention is to foster understanding of the importance of biodiversity as the source of life in the children by providing them with an understanding of the region in which they live and considering the environment around them through the specific approach of observing butterflies.</p> <p>With this initiative forming the core, the circle of activities to conserve biodiversity will be widened to regions where observations are carried out, as well as the school districts that encompass these, or even the village as a whole.</p>
Activity (1)	
Sponsor	Village-run Shioya Elementary School
Implementation period/location	Period: About ten times a year Location: Yako area
Implementation details	Hold nature observation club events. The butterflies in the Yako area will be observed.

(Omitted)

7. Promotion Structure

1) Establish the Ogimi Village Biodiversity Center

In order to boost the effectiveness of the Ogimi Village Regional Cooperation Conservation Action Plan, the entities within Ogimi Village must each fully understand their own roles and work to undertake said roles.

The village enacted the Ogimi Village Basic Plan for Tourism Promotion in FY2009, which set goals for promoting a style of tourism that would conserve the environment and contributing to the development of the region. This would be done by opening the excavation of Nejame Fortress, which is considered to be the fortress for the northernmost part of the main island of Okinawa, as well as the registration of the Yambaru Region (Ogimi Village, Kunigami Village, and Higashi Village), which has garnered global attention for its biodiversity, as a Natural World Heritage Site.

As the village is being considered for designation as a natural park and registration as a Natural World Heritage Site, in the future the Ogimi Village Biodiversity Center (provisional title) should be established as a base for creating a structure that can accommodate this. In striving to promote this plan, the Ogimi Village Biodiversity Center will play the following roles and move ahead with activities through the combined efforts of the public and private sectors.

(1) Ogimi Village Biodiversity Center

- The center will undertake the following roles when it comes to promoting the plan and promoting conservation activities.

1. Collect and disseminate information related to biodiversity
2. Coordinate among a diverse array of activity sponsors in relation to conservation activities
3. Introduce scientific knowledge from experts, etc.
4. Support education and learning
5. Ensure volunteers and other human resources
6. Support human resource development
7. Create a network with other regions with biodiversity

In working to conserve and restore the biodiversity in the planned region for which this plan was established, ideally the environment in the local region will either be allowed to maintain its intrinsic capabilities or will be restored to its ideal conditions. What is more, activities should be carried out

to make the local people grateful for the nature all around them amidst the connections between their daily lives and nature, and to urge them to take a concern and interest in it.

Therefore, the decision was made to have the entire region band together by seeking the participation and cooperation of a diverse array of entities, including village residents, local organizations, business operators, specialized agencies, and the government. It is not enough to just have mainly ecotourism business operators and some local organizations involve themselves with the natural environment, as has been seen so far. Instead, it will be necessary to seek the participation of a wide range of village residents, with this including local farmers and those related to trade and welfare, in order to promote conservation activities for the biodiversity in Ogimi Village.

In addition, a network will be created with various other regions that are working to address biodiversity and a wide range of information will be collected. What is more, the expectation for the future is that the village will serve to function as a think-tank capable of drafting measures and plans and offering advice to allow it to promote the conservation of biodiversity while still using local resources, even as the village develops.

(Omitted hereafter)