

[Gangjeong, Takae, Henoko Villagers' Joint Statement]

Island Biodiversity is being threatened by Military Base Constructions!

Island Biodiversity under threat

At this moment, on Jeju Island, South Korea and Okinawa, Japan, new military bases are being constructed against the will of the residents. In Gangjeong village of Jeju, a massive naval base construction has destroyed Gureombi rock, a designated ultimate conservation area for the unique basalt rock formation which worth geological value. Various endangered marine life in Gangjeong Sea such as soft corals are under threat from it. The sea around Jeju naval base is a UNESCO designated Biosphere Reserve and also protected by the Korean government as a natural monument. However, the base construction is having negative impacts on coastal fishery, women divers and fishermen testify.

In Okinawa, Japan, landfill plan for new US military base construction is under way in Henoko and Oura Bay, famous for the lich coral reefs and seagrass beds. The boring surveys on the seabed and constructions on land area are already going on. This area is an important habitat for dugong, an IUCN listed endangered marine mammal. In Okinawa people's traditional culture, dugong is a very meaningful animal. Takae of Higashi Village in the northern part of Okinawa Island is located in Yanbaru, a unique subtropical evergreen broad-leaved forest where a huge northern training area of US Marine Corps exists. Yanbaru forest is well-known as one of the important ecological areas on the planet, a habitat for endemic species such as Okinawa Woodpecker and Okinawa Rail, natural monuments of Japan. Despite military training activities cause unbearable noise and possibility of dangerous crash, construction of further six new helipads for vertical takeoff and landing aircraft called Osprey are going on just around Takae.

Stop New Military Base Constructions in Takae and Henoko, Jeju Naval Base!

The main theme of International Day for Biological Diversity 2014 was 'island biodiversity'. Islands and their surrounding marine areas have unique ecosystem, linked to rivers and forest. Development plans on islands and the near-shore areas change natural environment on a large scale, and damage biodiversity. Especially, military base construction and its use make a big threat for the local residents as their subsistence gets damaged.

Jeju naval base project, and new military bases in Henoko and Takae are being constructed at the cost of local residents' tears without getting the consent of the people. Base construction is the destruction of life and marine environment of Jeju and Okinawa. There is no peace without life, and no life without peace. The military bases in Jeju Gangjeong and Henoko, Takae destroy the people's way of living to indwell closely within the sea and the mountain.

We never want our pristine islands of Jeju and Okinawa, the grounds and treasure house for life, to be threatened and destroyed by military base construction. Not only designation of conservation areas for endangered species but also essential protection plan is important. New military base constructions in Henoko, Takae, and Jeju naval base construction should be stopped.

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CBD COP12 Side-Event

Participants of Threats to the Island Biodiversity by Military Base Constructions in Okinawa, Japan
and Jeju, Korea

[Korea] .Gangjeong Village Association, National network of Korean Civil Society for Opposing the Naval Base in Jeju Island, Jeju Pan-island Committee for Stop of Military Base and for Realization of Peace Island

[Japan] Citizen's Committee against the Military Base Construction in Henoko, Resident's Group of No Military Helipads in Takae, Network for peaceful Okinawa, Okinawa Environmental Network, Citizen's Network for Biodiversity in Okinawa, Monitoring Mission for Okinawa Dugong EIA, Ramsar Network Japan, Japan Civil Network for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity