

Cooperation with Local Communities

We believe that an Okinawan society that coexists and co-prospers with nature can only be achieved through cooperation and collaboration with everyone who lives in and loves Okinawa. We are striving towards an environmentally symbiotic society for the next generations through a wide range of collaborations, from research to educational outreach, with local universities, high schools, museums, and government agencies.



Science Education Outreach

The OKEON Churamori Project also works to communicate the diversity of Okinawan nature, especially to the younger generations.

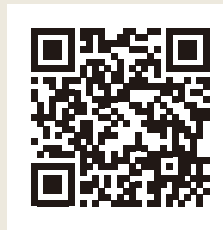


Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST)

Located in Onna Village, Okinawa, Japan, OIST provides a unique, 5-year doctoral programme in science and technology. OIST attracts outstanding researchers from across the world to conduct high-quality research in both basic and applied science. It was established by the Japanese government in 2011 to contribute to the improvement of science and technology worldwide and to drive innovation in Okinawa. In 2022, an OIST researcher was awarded a Nobel Prize.



Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST)
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OIST | Core Facilities



Okinawa Biodiversity Monitoring Project

OIST's commitment to the future

OKEON 美ら森プロジェクト
OKinawa Environmental
Observation Network



The OKEON (OKinawa Environmental Observation Network) Churamori project is a terrestrial biodiversity monitoring effort run by the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology (OIST). We have established 24 monitoring sites across Okinawa Island, from north to south, that record the nature of the island 24/7.



Insect collecting traps

We have installed 72 insect traps across our 24 monitoring sites and conduct insect collection surveys. Every two weeks, we collect the samples and bring them to the lab for storage and analysis. This allows us to discover new insect species, study the relationship between land use and wildlife, and monitor invasive insects such as fire ants.



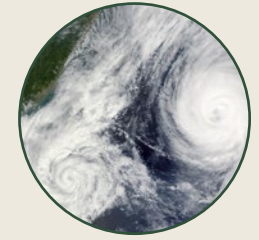
Camera trap

Automated cameras are continuously capturing images of wildlife, allowing us to record the distribution and behavior of the animals for research and provide basic data for the management of invasive species like the mongoose.



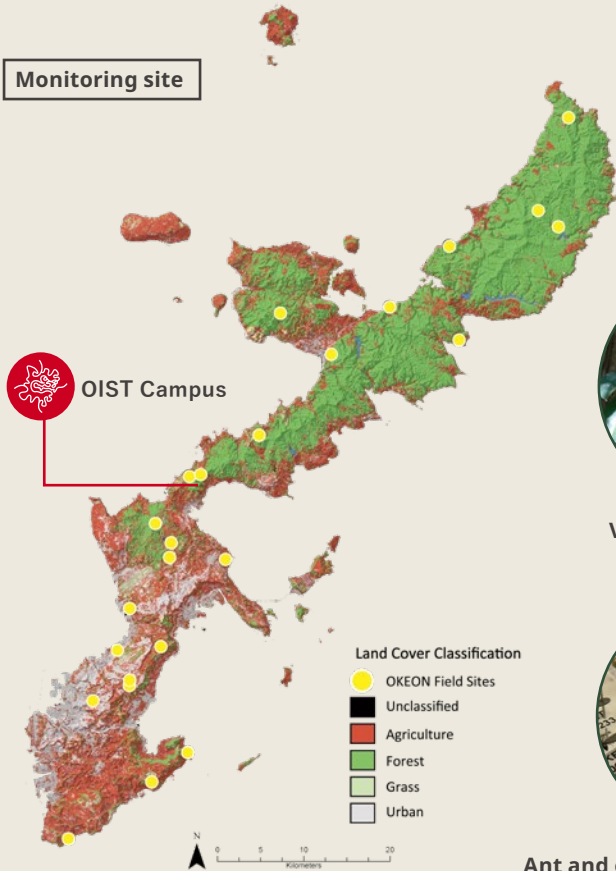
Sound trap

Box-shaped sound recording devices installed on trees to record the local soundscapes. The vast amount of audio data, spanning tens of thousands of hours, is analyzed using artificial intelligence to help reveal the distribution and seasonality of birds and other wildlife.



Weather Tracking

Monitoring site



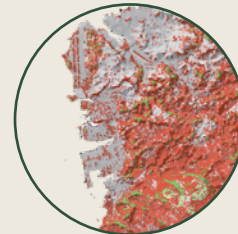
Vegetation surveys



Ant and other arthropod curation.



Gene analysis system



Geographic information system



Database system

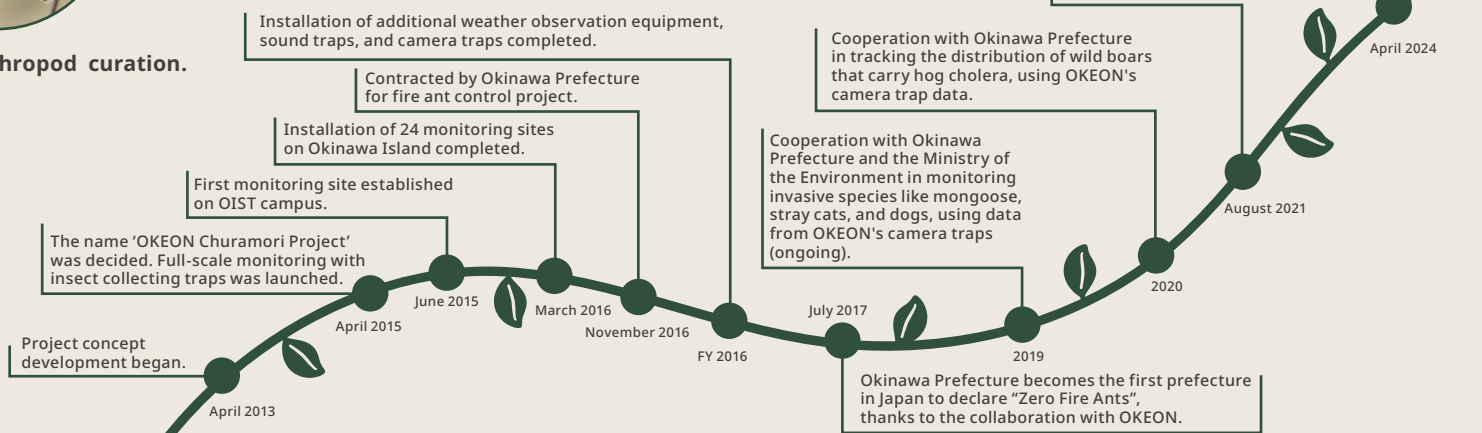


Large-scale sample processing and management system

Cooperation with Okinawa Prefecture to provide information using sound trap data to determine the distribution of invasive pheasants.

Signed collaboration agreement among seven organizations, including Okinawa Prefecture and Ministry of the Environment for the conservation and management of the Yanbaru National Park, a World Natural Heritage Site.

History of OKEON Churamori Project



Our long-term goal is to elucidate how our human activities affect the natural environment of Okinawa. By documenting nature over a long period of time, we can analyze data to get a better understanding of the ecosystem 20-30 years from now, which can better inform targeted conservation measures. The OKEON Churamori Project documents Okinawa's diverse natural environment in a variety of ways, by conducting surveys, analysis and research together with the local community.