

Takeshima

Takeshima is Japanese Territory

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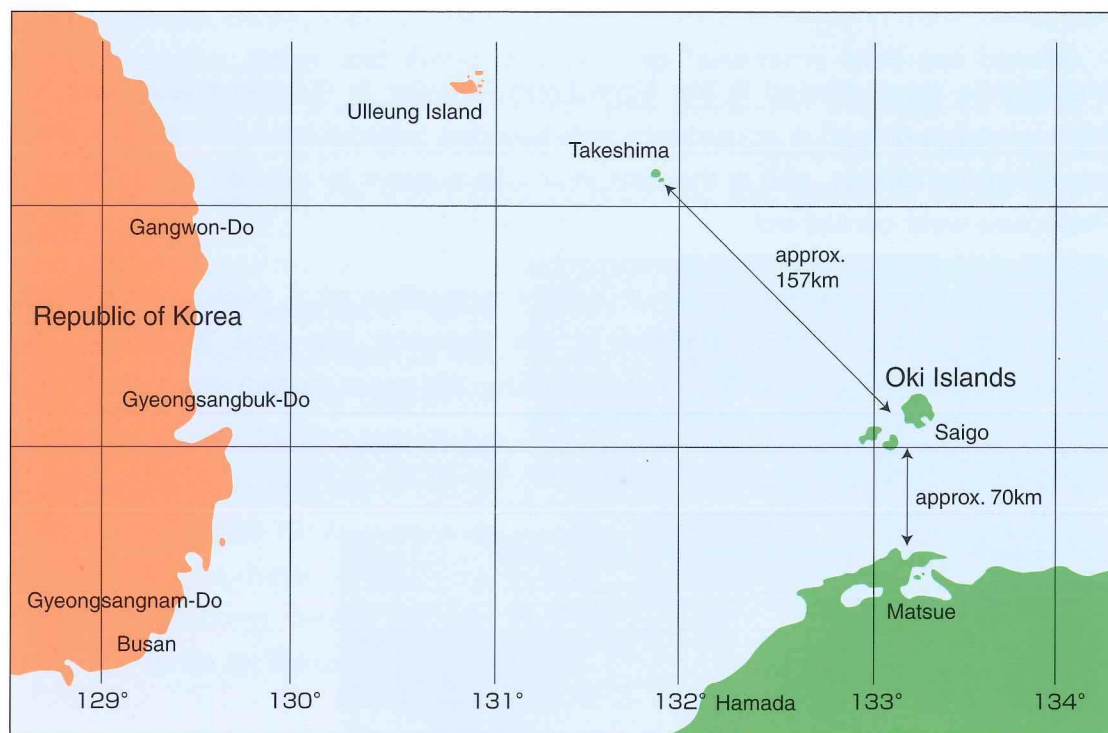
Shimane Prefecture

Citizens' Committee for the Return of Takeshima and Northern Territories

Facts about Takeshima

Takeshima is part of Okinoshima Town, Oki-gun, Shimane Prefecture, and is located approximately 157km northwest of the Oki Islands at N 37°14", E 131°52'. It has two main islands as well as several rocky atolls. It occupies a total land area of 230,967 square meters, which is approximately five times the size of Tokyo Dome, an entertainment arena. The islands are poor in fresh water resources and therefore not suitable for habitation. However, the warm Tsushima Current from the south meets the cold Liman Current from the north around the islands, making the area rich in fish and algae.

In the present age of 200-mile exclusive economic zones, the area surrounding Takeshima is of extreme value, not only to Shimane Prefecture but also the entire country for its potential contribution to the fishing industry and access to marine resources.



Takeshima
(left: West Island, right: East Island)

Establishing Territorial Rights as soon as possible

The Lee Line Declaration

In January 18th 1952, President Syngman Rhee of the Republic of Korea (ROK) unilaterally issued Proclamation of Sovereignty over Adjacent Seas (the so-called Rhee Line Declaration) and included Takeshima within the Rhee Line.

Thereafter, Japan and the ROK repeatedly claimed territorial sovereignty, dispatched inspection teams and protested against measures taken by the other party. In 1954, the ROK occupied Takeshima by stationing armed personnel on the islands.

The Japan-ROK Treaty on Basic Relations

In 1960, the twelve year Rhee Administration came to an end and the dialogue between Japan and the ROK progressed. In 1965, the Japan-ROK Treaty on Basic Relations was concluded and the relationship between the two countries was normalized. It was

previously thought that the dispute over Takeshima would be resolved with the signing of the Treaty, but the issue remained unresolved.



12-mile Territorial Water Zone Implemented by South Korea

In April 1978, the ROK implemented a 12-mile territorial water zone, banning Japanese fishing boats from entering into waters around Takeshima.

The Present State of Takeshima

The ROK currently keeps a lighthouse, watchtower and armed personnel on Takeshima, and continues its illegal occupation. This situation makes it impossible for Japan to exercise its administrative authority. Japan has a fundamental policy to resolve the issue through peaceful means, and tries to continue negotiations, taking every opportunity. Unfortunately, however, there is still no resolution to the problem.

Given this situation, it is necessary for each Japanese citizen to understand the problem and rally support for a just resolution in order to establish territorial rights as quickly as possible and secure the safety of fishing operations.

Historically, Takeshima belongs to Japan

Although there is no record of the exact date of Takeshima's discovery, the islands have been known to Japanese people since the beginning of the Edo Period (1603-1868) at the latest.

In the year 1618, Jinkichi Oya and Ichibei Murakawa of Yonago City received permission from the Shogunate Government to sail to Ulleung Island in order to catch abalone, sea lions, and to cut down trees and bamboo for lumber. On their way to Ulleung Island, they used Takeshima as a midway port, and also hunted and fished there. In 1661, the Oya Family and Murakawa Family were granted official permission to travel to Takeshima by the Shogunate Government.

The Shogunate Government prohibited visits to Ulleung Island in 1696 owing to a conflict between Japan and Korea, but visits to Takeshima were not banned. In 1836, a man named Imazuya Hachiemon was punished because he sailed to Ulleung Island on the pretext of visiting Takeshima. Knowledge of Takeshima was maintained throughout the Edo Period by recording the islands in books and on maps.

After the Meiji Restoration, large numbers of fishermen began to visit Ulleung Island again, and Takeshima was used as a midway port. Since the end of the second decade of the Meiji Period (1868-1912) people of the Oki Islands have hunted and fished for abalone, sea lions and other marine life on Takeshima.



Hunting sea lions on the Takeshima shoreline
(Photograph: San-in Chuo Shimpo Newspaper Co., Ltd.)

Given the historical background of Takeshima, there is no doubt that it belongs to Japan.

According to international law, Takeshima belongs to Japan

In 1904, a resident of the Oki Islands, Yozaburo Nakai, requested the government to incorporate Takeshima as a territory and lease it out for the purpose of sea lion hunting.

In response to this, the government officially named the islands Takeshima, by a Cabinet Decision on January 28, 1905, and designated them as belonging to Japan under the jurisdiction of the Oki Islands Branch, Shimane Prefectural Government.

Based on this Cabinet decision, the Governor of Shimane Prefecture announced the details in the Shimane Prefectural Notice NO.40 on February 22 of the same year.

The islands were entered in the State Land Register in the same year, sea lion hunting was approved in accordance with fisheries supervision rules, the Governor inspected the islands, and in the next year, site surveys by officials from Shimane Prefecture were carried out.

The requirement under international law for acquisition of a territory is effective possession of the land. In addition to the historical title over Takeshima, the aforementioned measures reaffirmed the Japanese title under modern international law.

In accordance with international law, Takeshima clearly belongs to Japan.



Territorial signpost is erected anew by Shimane Prefecture and the Japan Coast Guard in June,1953

Chronological Table of Takeshima (20th Century-)

29 September 1904	Yozaburo Nakai submits a request to the three Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Commerce and Agriculture Affairs to incorporate Takeshima as a territory and to lease it out.
28 January 1905	Takeshima is officially named, during a cabinet meeting, and is put under the jurisdiction of the Oki Islands, Shimane Prefecture.
22 February	The Governor of Shimane Prefecture announces the naming of Takeshima and the office of its jurisdiction in the Shimane Prefectural Notice NO.40.
17 May	Shimane Prefecture enters Takeshima in the State Land Register for Oki-no-kuni.
5 June	The Governor of Shimane Prefecture grants approval for Yozaburo Nakai and three other people to hunt sea lions.
22 July	Thirty-eight naval workers land on Takeshima and construct a temporary watchtower.
19 August	Bukichi Matsunaga, the Governor of Shimane Prefecture and three attendants inspect Takeshima aboard the naval vessel Kyoto maru.
March 1906	Yoshitaro Jinzai, the Director of Shimane Prefecture, Division 3, together with 44 staff members implement a survey of conditions on Takeshima.
24 April 1939	The decision to incorporate Takeshima under the jurisdiction of Goka Village is made by the Goka Village Assembly in Oki-gun, Shimane Prefecture.
17 August 1940	Shimane Prefecture terminates public use of Takeshima and hands it over to the Maizuru Naval Station for naval use.
1 November 1945	Takeshima falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance after the elimination of the Naval Ministry.
18 January 1952	President Syngman Rhee of South Korea claims Takeshima by including it within the Rhee Line (Presidential Proclamation of Sovereignty over Adjacent Seas).
27 June 1953	Shimane Prefecture and the Japan Coast Guard carry out an inspection of Takeshima, order six Koreans to leave the island, and erect a wooden territorial signpost.
25 September 1954	The Japanese Government proposes to South Korea that the Takeshima dispute be referred to the International Court of Justice.
22 June 1965	The Japan-South Korea Treaty on Basic Relations is signed, but the Takeshima problem remains unresolved.
1965-1976	The Governor of Shimane Prefecture, under the joint signature of the Chairman of the Shimane Prefectural Assembly, requests that the government secure the territorial rights of Takeshima.
19 March 1977	The Shimane Prefectural Assembly resolves to establish the territorial rights of Takeshima and secure safe fishing operations.
27 April	The Shimane Prefecture Council for the Promotion of Resolving the Takeshima Issue (Promotion Council) is established.
1977-1995	The Promotion Council requests the government to establish territorial rights over Takeshima and secure safe fishing operations.
11 March 1987	The Shimane Prefecture Citizens' Council Demanding the Return of Takeshima and the Northern Territories is established.
1982-Present	A priority request is made to the government to secure territorial rights of Takeshima and safe fishing operations.
15 March 2004	The Shimane Prefectural Assembly officially adopts a written statement that the national government should establish a 'Takeshima Day'.
25-26 October	Shimane Prefecture requests the government to establish 'Takeshima Day'.
16 March 2005	The Shimane Prefectural Assembly, supported by a majority, officially passes the 'Takeshima Day' Ordinance.
25 March	The Governor of Shimane Prefecture promulgates the 'Takeshima Day' Ordinance, and the ordinance enters into effect.

●●● For inquiries regarding Takeshima ●●●

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