



## Preface

Oceanic islands provide unique ecosystems with high levels of endemism. The Ogasawara Islands of Japan are typical oceanic islands and were inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in June 2011. The Ogasawara Islands exhibit the World Heritage values of ongoing ecological and evolutionary processes and high levels of endemism, especially in plants and land snails.

Oceanic island ecosystems often have limited adaptive capacity and are therefore fragile under disturbance caused by invasive alien species. In the Ogasawara Islands, like other oceanic islands, invasive species represent the most serious threat to the value of their unique natural inheritance. The management plan for the protection and management of nature in the Ogasawaras is being implemented effectively by Japan's Ministry of the Environment, Forestry Agency, Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Ogasawara Village with the participation of local communities and scientists. The control of invasive alien species, however, has experienced both successes and setbacks. The principal conservation strategy for island ecosystems is adaptive management. In the process of implementing countermeasures to alien species, it is essentially important to consider direct and indirect effects on multiple species, including both native and alien organisms.

This special feature aims to introduce adaptive management and wise use of nature in the Ogasawaras from the viewpoint of natural science as well as humanities. I hope that the experiences gained in our on-going efforts toward achieving sustainability of nature and the culture of the Ogasawaras will provide useful ideas that can contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of nature on other oceanic islands with unique and outstanding values.

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