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Land Development Activity and the Coral Reef in Shiraho, Ishigaki Island, Okinawa (in Japanese)

Ohgaki, S; Noike, M

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Abstract:

The influence of land development on the coral reef in Shiraho, Ishigaki Island, Okinawa (24 degrees 23 min N, 124 degrees 12 min E) was investigated. Farmland development and watercourse embankment have been going on since 1984 in the Todoroki River catchment area. Top soil that erodes into the river enters the sea during heavy rains, frequently causing turbid water areas that extend around and north of the river mouth. These sediments are easily resuspended and are abundant on the sea bed. Less live coral and more dead coral was found around and north of the river mouth than in the southern area in 1989, and the live coral cover seems to have decreased in this area between 1984 and 1989. The scarcity of live coral and abundance of dead coral in the area with heavy sedimentation, as well as the decline in live coral during active land development, suggests that the human activity in this area induced the degradation of the coral assemblage near the mouth of the Todoroki River. (Author's abstract) 35 88888888