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## Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands

Masahiko Asada

Content type: Encyclopedia Entries  
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A table of contents panel is shown in the left column on each page.

### A. General Description of the Islands

**1** The Senkaku Islands (in Japanese) or **Diaoyu**/Tiaoyu Islands (in Chinese) ('**Diaoyu**/Senkaku') are located in the East China Sea, 150km north of the Yaeyama Islands of Japan and 170km north-east of Taiwan. They are composed of Uotsurijima/**Diaoyu** Dao Island (3.6km<sup>2</sup>) and four other smaller islands and three rocks, and have an area of 6.3km<sup>2</sup> in total. Although a Japanese population once lived on Uotsurijima/**Diaoyu** Dao Island, all the islands are now uninhabited. They had been considered to be almost valueless economically, except for fishing and feather-collecting activities, until a survey by the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East in 1968 revealed the possibility of rich petroleum resources on the continental shelf around **Diaoyu**/Senkaku.

**2** **Diaoyu**/Senkaku are presently under the effective control of Japan. In March 2004, when several anti-Japanese activists from the People's Republic of China landed on Uotsurijima/**Diaoyu** Dao Island, the Japanese police arrested them on a charge of contravening the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act of Japan and deported them back to China.

### B. Origin of the Dispute

**3** After World War II, the United States of America ('US') administered **Diaoyu**/Senkaku first de facto and then de iure in accordance with Art. 3 [Peace Treaty with Japan \(1951\)](#). On 17 June 1971, it was agreed between Japan and the US that the powers of administration, legislation, and jurisdiction over **Diaoyu**/Senkaku were returned to Japan along with other islands in the Agreement concerning the Ryukyu Islands and the Daito Islands, which entered into force on 15 May 1972.

**4** On 30 December 1971, the People's Republic of China made its first official claim to sovereignty over **Diaoyu**/Senkaku and thus a dispute arose between Japan and the People's Republic of China. The Republic of China or Taiwan had presented separate but essentially the same claims on 11 June 1971. Japan denies the existence of a territorial issue over **Diaoyu**/Senkaku by asserting that there can be no doubt about its possession of these islands.

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