

FIELD WORKSHOP PROPOSAL (AY2026 term II)

Faculty of Sustainability Studies / The Sustainability Co-creation Programme (SCOPE)

1. Basic Course Information

Course Title: Field Workshop: Environmental Governance, Marine Biodiversity, and Peace Studies in the Kerama Islands

Class Code / Hoppii Code: 260906002 (Curriculum Code: C3702)

Instructor: Gaël BESSON (Specially Appointed Lecturer, Faculty of Sustainability Studies)

Language of Instruction: English

Credits & Registration: 2 Credits, officially registered and granted in the **Spring Semester 2027**

Fieldwork Location: Keramashoto National Park (Primary base: Aka Island; field investigations across Zamami, Tokashiki, and Geruma Islands), Okinawa Prefecture

On-Site Dates: **March 2nd (Tuesday) – March 6th (Saturday), 2027** (4 nights, 5 days)

Student Capacity: **8 to 12 students** (Priority given to SCOPE and Faculty of Sustainability Studies candidates; selection interviews will be conducted if applications exceed capacity)

2. Course Objectives & Academic Scope

The Kerama Islands, designated as a National Park in 2014, represent an exceptional socio-ecological system defined by world-renowned coral reef ecosystems, endangered marine fauna, and endemic wildlife, while simultaneously navigating the pressures of mass tourism, structural depopulation, and profound historical war memories.

This workshop trains students to connect **positive environmental law and governance theory** with rigorous empirical fieldwork. Participants will evaluate how legal protections operate in practice for vulnerable marine species such as **Green and Hawksbill Sea Turtles** and terrestrial fauna including the **endemic Kerama deer (*Cervus nippon keramae*)**. The curriculum critically assesses multi-level governance partnerships between the **Ministry of the Environment**, municipal offices, and local fisheries cooperatives, while confronting the historical trauma of the **March 1945 Battle of Okinawa** and examining participatory community conservation alongside local island youth.

3. Course Structure & Fieldwork Itinerary

Preparatory Phase (On-Campus in Tokyo)

Foundational preparation is conducted through two mandatory classroom sessions. **Session 1 (Week of January 18, 2027)** covers general course orientation, risk management protocols, field logistics, and an introduction to the **Natural Parks Act (*Shizen Kōen Hō*)**. **Session 2 (Late February 2027)** provides intensive doctrinal and empirical preparation, analyzing biodiversity governance, the wartime history of the Kerama landing sites, and qualitative stakeholder interview methodologies.

On-Site Field Investigation (Kerama Islands: March 2–6, 2027)

- **Day 1 (Tuesday, March 2) — Ecotourism, Municipal Policy & Protected Area Governance (Zamami Island & Aka Island):** Departure from Tokyo (Haneda) to Naha, followed by high-speed ferry transit directly to Zamami Island. Students conduct an official briefing with the **Zamami Village Office (PR & Tourism Division)** regarding local tourism branding and municipal infrastructure, followed by an in-depth dialogue with **National Park Rangers (Ministry of the Environment)** examining ecological carrying capacity, visitor zoning, and administrative enforcement. The group then transfers to the permanent research base on Aka Island for lodge check-in, spatial orientation, and evening fieldwork briefing.
- **Day 2 (Wednesday, March 3) — Peace Studies, Historical Memory & Battle of Okinawa (Tokashiki Island):** The group takes an inter-island boat to Tokashiki Island for a dedicated historical study of the **Battle of Okinawa**. Fieldwork focuses on the March 1945 initial military landing sites, civilian mass suicide memorials, and local peace education facilities, analyzing how wartime trauma intersects with contemporary island identity and tourism before returning to Aka Island.
- **Day 3 (Thursday, March 4) — Marine Biodiversity, Terrestrial Audits & Cultural Heritage (Aka & Geruma Islands):** Based on Aka Island, students conduct a morning marine audit at the **Sango Yuntakukan Visitor Center**, surveying coral restoration nursery protocols and monitoring coastal sea turtle breeding habitats. The afternoon is dedicated to a terrestrial audit across connected Geruma Island, examining the **endemic Kerama deer (*Cervus nippon keramae*)**, agricultural fencing strategies, and human-wildlife spatial management. Fieldwork also examines traditional coastal customs and biocultural heritage on Aka Island.
- **Day 4 (Friday, March 5) — Environmental Education & Comprehensive Coastal Beach-Cleaning Audit (Aka Island):** Centered entirely on community engagement on Aka Island. Students lead an **interactive environmental education workshop** with local island school children on conservation stewardship and wildlife coexistence. This is followed by an extensive **coastal beach-cleaning audit**, where students and community members collect, categorize, and quantify marine plastic pollution, discarded fishing gear, and cross-border maritime debris.
- **Day 5 (Saturday, March 6) — Data Synthesis, Final Debriefing & Return Transit (Aka Island to Tokyo):** The field investigation concludes with a structured morning debriefing seminar on Aka Island. Student research teams synthesize qualitative notes, cross-reference environmental governance findings, and present preliminary policy recommendations. The group boards the afternoon ferry to Naha (Tomari Port) and departs by air back to Tokyo (Haneda).

Ex-Post Phase (Tokyo)

Following return, students attend an on-campus comparative synthesis seminar to integrate field findings with academic literature, culminating in the submission of an individual **Comprehensive Field Research Report**.

4. Grading & Evaluation Criteria

- **Active Participation & Fieldwork Contribution (50%):** Assessed through preparation quality, adherence to safety and ethics protocols, proactive engagement during stakeholder discussions, and active collaboration in group tasks.
- **Final Field Research Report (50%):** Evaluated on theoretical coherence, analytical rigor, integration of empirical field observations, and the viability of proposed policy solutions.

5. Financial Overview & Logistic Requirements

- **Estimated Out-of-Pocket Cost:** Approximately **48,000 to 65,000 JPY per student**. This estimate covers off-peak round-trip airfare (Haneda–Naha), high-speed ferry and inter-island boat fares, 4 nights of accommodation at a local minshuku on Aka Island (approx. 4,000–6,000 JPY per night), domestic travel accident insurance, and baseline field activity fees (approx. 1,500 JPY).
- **Financial Incentives:** Eligible students enrolled in SCOPE or the Faculty of Sustainability Studies may apply for the **Hosei University Field Study Incentive Program**, which awards financial subsidies (approx. 1,500 to 4,500 JPY) pursuant to faculty guidelines.
- **Mandatory Attendance & Compliance:** Full participation across all preparatory sessions, the entire five-day field itinerary, and post-trip reflection classes is **strictly mandatory** to obtain academic credit.
- **Cancellation Policy:** Withdrawal after official selection is **strictly prohibited**, as bookings and community coordination are finalized in advance; any withdrawal will incur non-refundable personal cancellation expenses.