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Title	Competition between corals and algae, and its effect on coral population sustainability(Abstract_論文要旨)
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Citation	
Issue Date	2015-03-19
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12000/30797
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(様式第3号)

論 文 要 旨

論 文 題 目

Competition between corals and algae, and its effect on coral population sustainability.

Coral reefs around the world are facing a crisis of degradation caused by local and global anthropogenic impacts. Phase shifts to alternative stable states, which are from coral- to macroalgal-dominated communities, have progressed over recent decades on a few coral reefs because of reduced herbivory and excess nutrients. As algae are superior competitor to reef building corals for light and space, corals can fail to recover from severe disturbances without abundant herbivores and oligotrophic seawater. However, coral communities have not been necessarily replaced by macroalgal communities after severe disturbances. Recovery of coral communities in Okinawa after severe disturbances has been delayed but macroalgal blooms have not been observed frequently. Instead, turf algae have been increasing in cover at some areas in Okinawa after the disturbances. It is necessary to understand how turf algae are competing with corals, and whether the competition affects coral population sustainability. Thus, I focused to the effect of biotic competition between corals and turf algae under anthropogenic impacts, and reveal the conditions for coral population sustainability by field experiments and field surveys. The major findings of this dissertation are: 1) Reduced herbivory could increase algal biomass; 2) Not only macroalgae but also turf algae could prevent coral growth; 3) Survival rate, growth rate and larval supply from neighboring populations is critical for population viability of corals. These results indicate that even it is not fatal for corals blooms of turf algae could affect coral population dynamics. I suggest that the prevalence of turf algae should be checked in addition to macroalgae during coral reef monitoring.

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