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Earthquake-related ULF Phenomena in Kanto, Japan

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A passive ground-based observation of ULF (ultra low frequency) geomagnetic signatures is considered to be the most promising method for seismo-magnetic phenomena study due to deeper skin depth. In order to clarify the earthquake-related ULF magnetic phenomena, a geomagnetic network has been installed in Japan and plenty of data associated with moderate-large earthquakes have been accumulated. In this study, we have analyzed geomagnetic data observed during the past decade in Kanto area, Japan.

First, the ULF magnetic signals at frequency 0.01Hz have been investigated. We have applied wavelet transform analysis to the 1Hz sampling data observed at three magnetic observatories in Boso Peninsula and Izu Peninsula. The signature at 0.01Hz frequency band has been revealed and daily average energy has been computed. In order to minimum artificial noise, we only use the midnight time data (LT 1:00-4:00). And to remove influences of global magnetic perturbations, we have developed another method to obtain reliable background based on principal component analysis (PCA). Three standard geomagnetic stations (Memambetsu, Kakioka, and Kanoya) operated by the Japan Meteorological Agency have been selected as reference stations and PCA method has been applied to the yearly energy variation of the 0.01Hz signals at the three stations. The first principal component which contains more than 95% energy is considered to be global background.

After comparing the results at the stations with global background, it is found that there are several local energy enhancements which only appear in Boso or Izu area. Especially for the case studies of the 2000 Izu Island earthquake swarm and the 2005 Boso M6.1 earthquake, significant anomalous behaviors have been detected in Z components.

Finally, we have applied superposed epoch analysis to the above results and make a statistical study. The statistical results have indicated that before an earthquake there are clearly larger probabilities of anomalies than that after the earthquake. For Izu area, three weeks and few days before statistical value of anomalies is significant; for Boso region, around ten and few days before it is significant. Based on these results, we conclude that magnetic observations are important for geophysical study and may have potential advantages in short-term earthquake prediction.

Keywords: Seismo-Magnetic Phenomena, superposed epoch analysis, ULF magnetic phenomena, short-term earthquake prediction