

Recent transformation of the snow and ice disaster and emerging issues

KAWASHIMA, Katsuhisa^{1*} ; KAMIISHI, Isao²

¹Research Institute for Natural Hazards and Disaster Recovery, Niigata University, ²Snow and Ice Research Center, National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention

Recently, the natural environment and social environment surrounding Japan, such as the increased global warming and the acceleration of demographic aging, have changed greatly. A few decades ago, there was a view that snowfall will decrease sharply with the progress of global warming and the resultant snow disaster will be drastically alleviated. However, since heavy snowfall appears frequently after the 21st century, it is being accepted widely that the impact of global warming on variations in snow cover is not a simple problem. The heavy snowfall events which appeared in three consecutive years from 2010/11 winter to 2012/13 winter are good examples, and consequently more than 100 people were killed each year. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the aspect of snow disaster has greatly differed from the time of Showa. In relation to earthquakes and heavy rainfalls which occurred frequently in the heavy-snow region of Japan, new issues of the compound disaster events, hardly taken note until now, began to gain prominent attention recently. In this study, I am going to discuss about the research perspective towards mitigation of the snow disaster.

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