

## Characteristics of snow in Japanese mountains during the heavy snows of 2005/2006

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There is no analysis of the mountainous snow cover in the heavy snow season based on measurement data because of few continuously meteorological data in Japanese mountain area.

In this study, meteorological data in the Japanese mountain areas, which have been collected by the National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Prevention (NIED) for over 10 years, were analyzed to examine the characteristics of the mountainous snow cover in the winter of 2005/2006.

The analyses indicated that the average monthly air temperature in the December was 4 degree lower than the average value for ten years and its sum of monthly precipitation was much larger than the average value. The snow covers on mountains had high density and hard snow layers due to the abnormal conditions in the early winter season.

The greatest snow depths were recorded in the mountains of central Japan while those at other sites were as same values as the normal year. The days of maximum snow depth in the western mountains are one month earlier than the normal year due to cold and heavy precipitation condition in December, 2005.