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Contribution of Twitter to social propagation of earth and planetary sciences: a case related to marine transgression

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We present how Twitter contributed to correcting widely distributed wrong information about earth science. In Japan, marine transgression occurred in the mid Holocene with a maximum height of ca. 2 to 3 m above the present sea level. However, a book written by a famous professor of religion indicates that the transgression was much greater, >50 m above the present sea level. This wrong recognition was due to his incorrect usage of geological and geomorphological maps, but the book was written as if it was based on geoscientific knowledge. The book discusses the historical origin of social landscape in Tokyo in relation to the marine transgression, and it has been sold well. It also received a famous award of literature, and many common people "learned" the erroneous idea about the transgression. Using Twitter, various people including earth scientists, archaeologists, cartographers, architects, and landscape ecologists discussed this problem. Some earth scientists described research history and introduced important academic publications about the transgression. All relevant tweets were assembled in a web page, and it has been used as an online reference about the transgression.

Keywords: Earth and Planetary Science, society, Twitter, mid-Holocene marine transgression