

# The Decade of Progress of the Tohoku Geographical Association following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake

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As an academic society located in a disaster-hit area, the Tohoku Geographical Association played an important role following the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011. The member geographers conducted field studies to assess the damage, examine the recovery of lives of the affected people and discuss rebuilding of Tohoku. Wide range of related studies were conducted with a variety of topics including geomorphology, housing, migration and displacement, the impact of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, and welfares of affected people. It functioned as a hub of frontline researchers who were eager to draw lessons from the catastrophes that occurred in areas close to their fields of study.

Shortly after the earthquake, a special website was established to share geographic studies on this mega disaster and its lessons with the wider public in English and Japanese by the members. Based on the experience of the 2011 earthquake, the Association went on to build a framework to support members who conduct field research immediately after a disaster occurs. In February 2018, the "Internal Rules on Support for Emergency Disaster Investigations by Members of the Tohoku Geographical Society" was ratified to financially support the members. The rules applied recent disasters including the Hokkaido Eastern Iburi Earthquake of 2018, Western Japan Storms of 2018, and the Typhoon disasters of 2019.

There are great expectations for the role that studies of geography could play in disaster risk reduction and its education and enlightenment. One of such contributions include educating the school teachers and the students for topographic map and hazard map reading to raise awareness of the use of geographic information for disaster risk reduction. Hence, the Association in recent years began to hold a series of workshops for in-service high school teachers in collaboration with the Geospatial Information Authority of Japan to better understand geographic understanding of natural and social environments.

As described above, the academic society has developed various efforts in the wake of the catastrophe. By looking back on the trajectory of the decade of progress as local academic society, we discuss its contributions and interdisciplinary collaborations among the academic societies in earth and planetary science.

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