

## **The Great East Japan Disaster and Human Geoscience**

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Geoscience is rooted in geography historically, and has been studied mainly for intellectual curiosity and practical engineering purposes. These traditional reasons for study do remain, but they are joined by new, and often urgent, reasons in recent years, namely environmental sustainability and resilience to disaster. It is particularly so in Japan, where there are many hazards such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and typhoons. The Geoscience Committee of the Science Council of Japan took initiative in 2008 by issuing a proposal entitled “Towards co-existence of nature and human on the land and in the marginal sea” in the hope to reduce the increasing risks of disasters in the country, particularly at the coastal areas and the marginal sea, where population and socio-economic activities and disaster risks are concentrated. Regrettably, the proposal was not realized in time to counter the Great East Japan Disaster, which was generated by the gigantic earthquake of March 11, 2011. The Great East Japan Disaster highlighted the distinctive roles of geoscience in general, and human geoscience in particular, in reducing and overcoming disasters. Human geoscience studies both the physical and social scientific phenomena taking place in the human-geosphere, and tackles global environmental problems and disasters with inter-disciplinary perspective. The lecture reviews the development of human geoscience in Japan during the last decade and discusses the roles and prospects of the new discipline in the risk-filled world where we are now in.