

The Volcanic Eruption of Mt. Unzen Japan

Tentative Report on the Facts & Figures, and How the Countermeasures are Being Taken

by Toichi Hayami,
Director,
IDNDR Promotion Office,
Disaster Prevention Bureau,
National Land Agency
Japan

1 Preface

Mt. Unzen, located in the Island of Kyushu in Japan, has been dormant for 198 years. But in November 1990 it started the volcanic activities, in May 1991 the debris-flows and the pyroclastic flows were observed, in June 1991 the pyroclastic flow claimed the lives of over 40 people. The volcano is still very active, and debris-flows and pyroclastic flows are continuing, causing considerable damage to the living of the residents and the local economy. The Japanese Government has set up the Emergency Disaster Headquarters to cope with this disaster. We are in the midst of emergency response, and the government has not come to the stage of making an official record of the disaster. Therefore the following is an informal progress report (as of Sept. 11, 1991) on the volcanic activities and the countermeasures taken by the national and local governments to cope with this disaster.