



Toward the climatological study of polar lows over the Japan Sea

Wataru Yanase

University of Tokyo, Atmosphere and Ocean Research Institute, Kashiwa, Chiba, Japan (yanase@aori.u-tokyo.ac.jp, +81-4-7136-6056)

Satellite imagery shows that meso-alpha-scale polar lows develop over the Japan Sea during cold air outbreaks in winter, which usually occur to the west of synoptic-scale extratropical cyclones. To understand the climatology of polar lows over the Japan Sea, we use satellite imagery and a reanalysis dataset.

We used reanalysis charts of the Japan Meteorological Agency, which shows 3-hourly locations of lower-tropospheric meso-scale vortices. For 6 winter seasons (Dec. 1997 – Feb. 2003), 81 polar low candidates are detected over the Japan Sea. We will show the geographical distribution and some remarkable polar low cases.

We also examine whether the Japanese 55-year reanalysis (JRA-55) is useful for the climatological study of polar lows. The sea level pressure field of JRA-55 represents signals of intense polar lows. The spatial filter for meso-scale cyclones and tracking algorithm of Hodges (1995) successfully detected intense polar lows over the Japan Sea.