



Progress and problems of gender equality in Japanese academia, and empowerment activities in science and geoscience

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According to the Global gender equality Rankings by World Economic Forum, the Gender Index rank of Japan has been below 100 during the last 8 years. Every 4 years, Japan ranking has been slipping by 10 points, and has finally reached 121st in 2019. In 2011, the Japanese government released the "Promotion of Positive action" program targeting 30% of women's participation in the workplace including Academia by 2020. However, this goal has not been met as yet. Based on the 15th survey by the Japan Association National Universities which includes most Geoscience departments of Japan, only 4% of national universities have achieved >30% female to total academic staff ratio. The average ratio increased slightly from 13.0% (2011) to 16.7% (2018). The change is quite slow and is hard to accelerate. In the STEM field, female staff ratios are 12.3% (Agriculture), 8.7% (Science) and 6.2% (Engineering). The percentage of undergraduate female students in Science has gradually decreased during these 10 years from ca. 28% to 25% in total, while the number of women in Ph.D. studies increased as a result of several empowerment programs. A recently organized All Nippon Diversity Network (OPENed: O-Progressive initiatives of Empowering Network for Diversity) provides a country-wide platform for networking institutional activities on diversity issues and sharing information on efficient activities and practices for empowerment. In this presentation, we are sharing information on ongoing action in Japan concerning gender issues, and try to identify and discuss unconscious problems/causes for improvement.