

Current Status and Problems of Decontamination by Municipalities in Fukushima Prefecture: Records from Three and a Half Years after the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Accident

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Summary

This study discusses the current status and problems of decontamination by municipalities in 52 out of the 59 municipalities in Fukushima Prefecture, that is, in all municipalities except for the 7 whose entire administrative area has been designated as Special Decontamination Area, three and a half years after the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, mainly based on the results of a questionnaire survey. This study reveals that (1) the number of municipalities which planned, ordered and implemented decontamination work has peaked although decontamination work of public facilities, housing, roads, farmland and forests has been still carried out in many municipalities, (2) more than half of the municipalities have not secured enough temporary storage sites for contaminated soil and waste, (3) most municipalities recognize that the national government's prompt decisions about the installation of interim storage facilities, the securement of enough temporary storage sites, and decontamination work of forest are major challenges concerning decontamination work, (4) most municipalities regard efforts concerning decontamination work by the national government and the Fukushima prefectural government office as inadequate, (5) not a few municipalities recognize that residents cannot live their lives with a sense of safety and security unless air radiation dose is reduced to the level before the accident, and (6) most municipalities recognize that safe living environments can be recovered by decontamination work. Finally, based on these results, this study points out safety and smooth transfer of the removed soil and waste to interim storage facilities and development of conditions to maintain and manage temporary storage sites, the end of decontamination work based on the air radiation dose rate, and reconsideration of decontamination policies concerning forests, rivers and waterways, as main future challenges concerning decontamination work by municipalities.

Key Words: Radioactive contamination, Decontamination, Intensive contamination survey area, Municipality, Fukushima, Questionnaire survey
