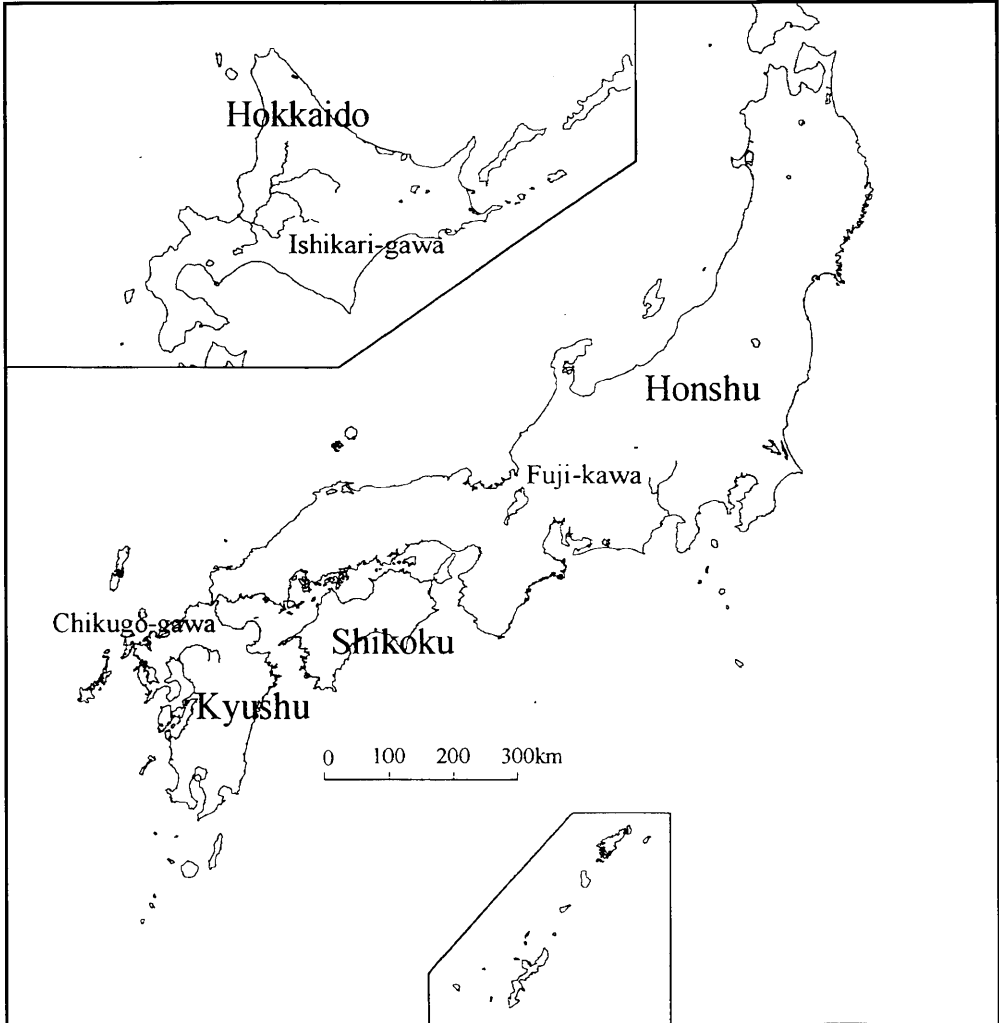


# Japan

Japan-4: Chikugo-gawa

Japan-5: Fuji-kawa

Japan-6: Ishikari-gawa



## Introduction

The three rivers catalogued in this volume are Chikugo-gawa in Kyushu Island, Fuji-kawa in Central Honshu Island and Ishikari-gawa in Hokkaido Island. They are the representative rivers in each island having distinct hydro-climatic conditions of Japan. Japanese archipelago belongs to the warm humid to temperate humid climatic regions. Since it extends from 31° to 45° N and is about 2,000 km long, each region has very different hydro-meteorological conditions. Hokkaido is cool with mean monthly temperature ranging from -8 to 20°C and mean annual precipitation 800-1,200mm having snow in winter. The Pacific side of Central Honshu is milder with temperatures in the range 2-26°C and precipitation 1,000-2,000mm with little snow except in the mountains. The Northern Kyushu is in 5-28°C and 1,600-2,000mm with little snow even in the mountains. Hokkaido seldom has Baiu or Typhoons but the others have strong influence of both.

Chikugo-gawa is the largest river in Kyushu Island. The river is so important and heavily relied upon by the people to the extent that the development has caused strong conflicts between the indigenous people and the new beneficiaries. The resistance shown by the affected people by a dam construction in 1960's was one of the earliest social conflicts experienced in the late history of Japanese water resources development. Fuji-kawa is a representative of the steep rivers in Japan which has been experiencing major floods in history. In this river, many flood control techniques have been tested and implemented particularly in the last 400 years. Ishikari-gawa is the largest river in Hokkaido Island of which the development started only some 130 years ago and still relatively less populated. It was more than 70 km longer than the current length before many short cutting works were implemented for flood plain development and channel improvement.

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