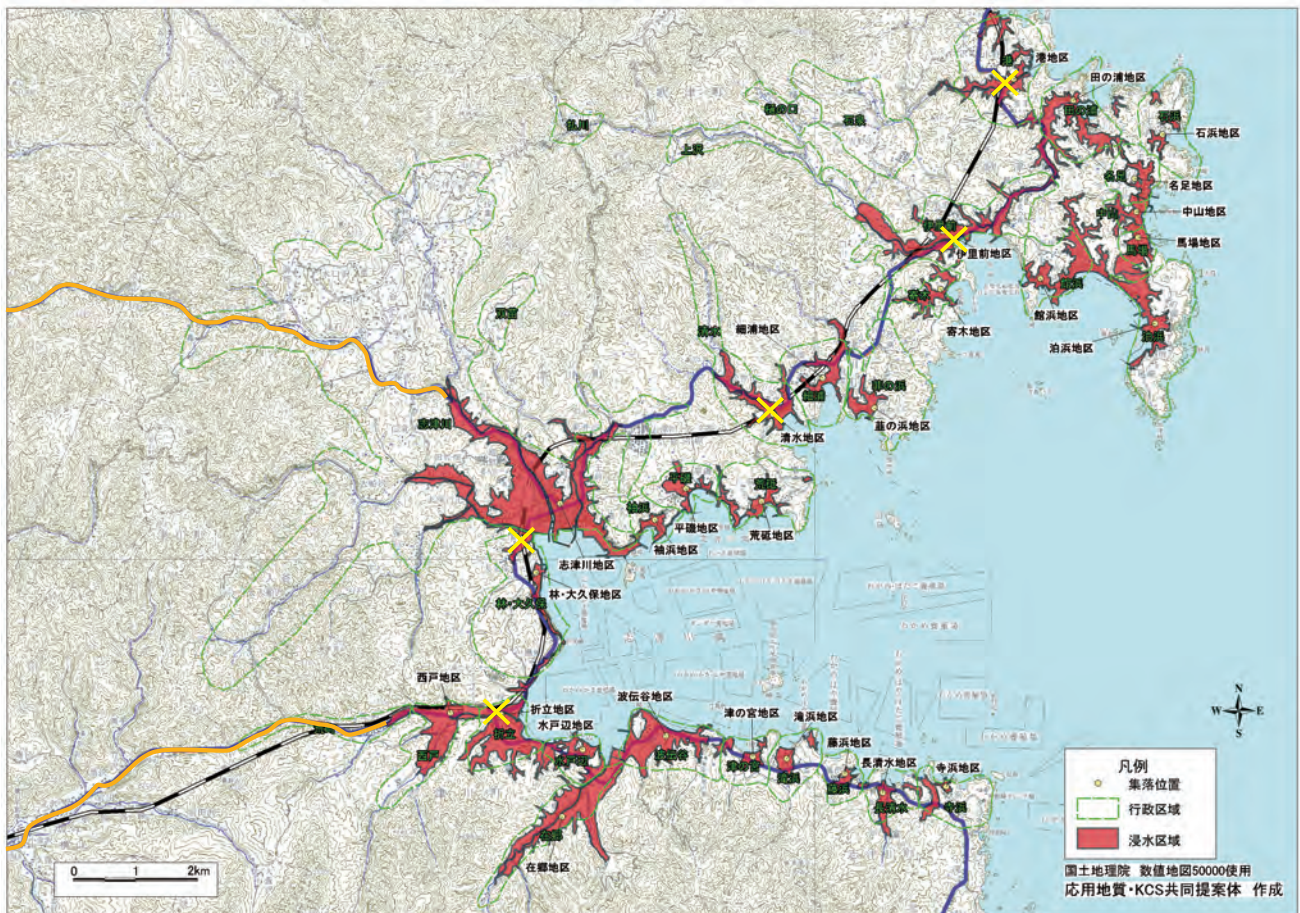
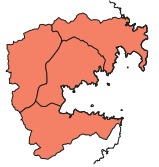


Destruction of Bridges and Coastal Roads

Paths that Sustained Life



- ▲ A yellow x marks locations where major bridges were destroyed.
- Orange lines are inland roads, which at the time were a main artery for logistics and transportation.
- Narrow paths in the mountains became essential routes.

The tsunami destroyed all of the bridges along the coast and the main road National Highway 45 was torn to shreds in many places. The only road providing access to the affected areas of the town was highway 398 which runs inland from the coast.

In the peninsula area, the tsunami destroyed road after road, leaving the people isolated for weeks. Because aid could not be delivered, people had to survive by foraging for food within their communities, they collected canned goods and unopened sweets found with the rubble to sustain their lives.



▲ The bridge on National Road 45 in Isatomae (Utatsu) was completely destroyed by the tsunami.
Photo courtesy of Ground Self-Defense Forces Northern Army

Those searching for family members had to walk along mountain paths to reach Bayside arena and area schools which were being used as morgues as vehicles could not traverse these paths.

The roads that led to and from the town were closed, but what helped in this difficult situation were the mountain paths, which even the locals did not use much anymore. These paths provided support for residents who had lost their possessions, homes and were forced to evacuate.