

February 2014 Global Catastrophe Recap



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Executive Summary

- Active winter weather causes billions in economic damage (USD) across the United States, Japan and China
- Windstorms spawn additional flood and wind damage throughout Western Europe
- Indonesia's Mount Kelud erupts and kills at least seven people; more than 12,000 homes damaged

The heaviest snow in decades fell across parts of Japan during a ten-day stretch, killing a combined 95 people and injuring more than 2,750 others in mostly traffic-related accidents. Several prefectures recorded record snow totals as multiple storm systems tracked along the eastern coast of Honshu Island. The Tokyo metropolitan region was also heavily affected, as the heaviest snow in 45 years occurred. The heavy snow caused widespread residential and commercial damage while also severely disrupting transportation and causing production delays. The agricultural sector was heavily affected as well. Insurers estimated that claims payouts would approach JPY254 billion (USD2.5 billion). Total economic losses were expected to approach JPY641 billion (USD6.25 billion).

In the United States, a series of winter storms again traversed the country during February, bringing renewed heavy accumulating snowfall, sleet, freezing rain, ice, gusty winds, and bitterly cold Arctic air. The costliest stretch occurred during the second full week of the month, where a large system affected areas from the Deep South to northern New England. At least 25 people were killed. More than 20 inches (51 centimeters) of snow fell in several states, including some areas that saw snow fall on top of more than 1.0 inch (2.5 centimeters) of ice. Total economic losses were estimated at USD750 million, while insurers cited losses in excess of USD250 million.

A separate winter storm killed at least nine people across the eastern two-thirds of the U.S. Total economic losses were estimated at USD250 million, while insurers noted losses in excess of USD150 million.

Winter weather was also registered in China, where at least 10 people were killed during the month. Data from the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) indicated that nearly 35,000 structures were damaged or destroyed under the weight of snow and ice, while total economic losses were estimated at roughly CNY5.7 billion (USD930 million).

Western and central Europe endured several windstorm events, as storms Nadja, Petra, Tini, and Ulla all brought high winds and heavy rains. The most significant event was Windstorm Tini, which caused extensive damage across Ireland and the United Kingdom. The storm prompted wind gusts in excess of 160 kph (100 mph) and enhanced flooding across England, Wales and Ireland. Total insured losses were anticipated to approach EUR360 million (USD500 million), with overall economic damages at EUR580 million (USD800 million).

Windstorm impacts were also registered in parts of France, Spain, Slovenia, Serbia, Croatia, and Scandinavia.

Mount Kelud erupted on Indonesia's Java Island, sending ash and debris an estimated 18 kilometers (12 miles) into the air. At least seven people were killed, and officials evacuated 200,000 people from their homes for precautionary measures. The eruption caused ash to blanket dozens of cities and towns – damaging at least 12,447 homes – and led to travel disruption. Economic damages were estimated at IDR1.2 trillion (USD103 million).

A spring-like storm system led to a severe weather outbreak across parts of the Eastern U.S., killing at least one person and injuring several others. The Storm Prediction Center (SPC) cited nearly 500 reports of tornado touchdowns, damaging winds and hail during the event. Most of the damage was attributed to straight-line winds gusting to nearly 90 mph (150 kph) that downed trees and power lines. Total economic losses were estimated at USD175 million, with the insured losses slightly above USD100 million.

Flooding continued to inundate much of Bolivia for a second month, as the death toll stood at 46. Total economic damages across at least eight departments were listed in excess of BOB690 million (USD100 million).

Additional flood events in February were noted in parts of Indonesia, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Philippines, and Fiji.

United States

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
2/3-2/6	Winter Weather	Midwest, Plains, Northeast	9	30,000+	250+ million
2/11-2/14	Winter Weather	Southeast, Northeast	25	50,000+	750+ million
2/20-2/21	Severe Weather	Midwest, Southeast, Mid-Atlantic	1	20,000+	175+ million

A winter storm brought heavy snow, freezing rain, ice, and bitter cold to the eastern two-thirds of the U.S. between the 3rd and 6th, killing at least nine people. States of emergency were declared in more than a dozen states as the inclement weather led to school, business and government office cancellations. Most of the damage was due to broken pipes, collapsed roofs, and fallen trees. Severe delays also affected the travel industry with more than 5,500 flights cancelled and many rail lines suspended due to ice and snow. Total economic losses were estimated at USD250 million, while insurers noted losses in excess of USD150 million.

A large winter storm affected much of the Eastern U.S. between the 11th and 14th, bringing heavy accumulating ice, sleet, and snow to areas from the Deep South to northern New England. At least 25 people were killed in traffic-related accidents and states of emergency were declared by 14 governors. More than 20 inches (51 centimeters) of snow was recorded in several states, including some areas that saw snow fall on top of more than 1.0 inch (2.5 centimeters) of ice. Nearly 13,000 flights were cancelled, and residential and automobile damage was widespread. Total economic losses were estimated at USD750 million, including USD425 million in damage alone to the timber industry in South Carolina and Georgia. Insurers cited losses in excess of USD250 million.

A spring-like storm system led to a severe weather outbreak across parts of the Eastern U.S. on the 20th and 21st, killing at least one person and injuring several others. The Storm Prediction Center (SPC) cited nearly 500 reports of tornado touchdowns, damaging winds and hail during the event. Most of the damage was attributed to straight-line winds gusting to nearly 90 mph (150 kph) that downed trees and power lines. The most significant residential, commercial and automotive damage was recorded in parts of Illinois, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Indiana, Georgia and the Carolinas. Total economic losses were estimated at USD175 million, with insured losses slightly above USD100 million.

Remainder of North America (Canada, Mexico, Central America, Caribbean Islands, Bermuda)

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
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No major natural disaster events were recorded during the month of February.

South America

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/1-2/28	Flooding	Bolivia	46	25,000+	100+ million

Heavy seasonal rains inundated much of Bolivia during January and February, killing at least 46 people. Government officials declared a national state of emergency in the hardest-hit flood areas in the departments of Beni, La Paz, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, Oruro, Pando, Tarija, and Santa Cruz. In total, at least 83 municipalities sustained varying levels of flood inundation and landslides. More than 150,000 people were left homeless or displaced and agricultural lands were destroyed. Total economic damages were listed in excess of BOB690 million (USD100 million).

Europe

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
2/1-2/8	WS Nadja & Petra	Western/Central Europe	1	Thousands+	410+ million
2/11-2/13	WS Tini	Western Europe	1	Thousands+	700+ million
2/14-2/15	WS Ulla	Western Europe	5	Thousands+	100+ million

Windstorms Nadja and Petra affected western and central Europe between the 1st and 8th, bringing renewed flooding and wind damage to multiple countries. Heavy snowfall and ice was also recorded in mountainous terrain. At least one fatality occurred. The most significant impacts were recorded in Ireland and the United Kingdom, where winds gusted to 110 kph (70 mph) and heavy rains led to several rivers overflowing their banks. Storm impacts were also felt in parts of France, Spain, Slovenia, Serbia, and Croatia. Total combined economic losses were estimated at EUR300 million (USD410 million).

Windstorm Tini brought heavy rains, winds gusting beyond 160 kph (100 mph) and flooding to Western Europe between the 11th and 13th, killing at least one person. The worst damage was reported in Ireland, Wales and England as hurricane-force winds ripped off portions of roofs, blew down trees, caused more than 400,000 power outages, and disrupted transportation. Tini also enhanced severe flooding along coastal locales and inland near overflowing rivers. Additional damage was noted in France and Scandinavia. Total insured losses were listed at EUR281 million (USD375 million), with overall economic damages at EUR525 million (USD700 million).

Windstorm Ulla prompted heavy rains and hurricane-force wind gusts in parts of Ireland and the United Kingdom on the 14th and 15th, killing at least five people. At the height of the event, nearly one million customers were without electricity as the inclement weather brought down power lines and tree branches onto homes, businesses and vehicles. Heavy rains enhanced flooding in the already swollen Thames River Valley, with coastal damage prevalent due to high waves battering sea walls and coastal infrastructure. Total economic damages were estimated at roughly EUR72 million (USD100 million).

Africa

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/20-2/10	Flooding	Zimbabwe	0	6,393+	20+ million
2/9-2/10	Flooding	Burundi	77	3,790+	Millions+

Weeks of heavy rains during the end of January into early February led to flooding across much of Zimbabwe. No fatalities were reported. The most significant damage occurred in the districts of Muzarabani, Gokwe, Middle Sabi, Tsholotsho, Malapati, and Chikwalakwala primarily due to several rivers overflowing – including the Tokwe River. At least 6,393 homes were destroyed and the government requested USD20 million in international relief funds.

A torrential rainfall event fell across Burundi late on the 9th into the 10th; prompting extensive flash flooding that killed at least 77 people. More than 180 people were also injured. The most significant damage was recorded in northern districts of the city of Bujumbura, where more than 3,790 homes were destroyed.

Asia

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/31-2/1	TD Kajiki	Philippines	6	427+	3.2+ million
2/1-2/7	Winter Weather	Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan	46	Hundreds+	Unknown

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
2/4-2/5	Winter Weather	China	0	10,000+	115+ million
2/7-2/14	Winter Weather	China	10	20,000+	675+ million
2/8-2/16	Winter Weather	Japan	95	278,000+	6.25+ billion
2/12	Earthquake	China	0	90,000+	350+ million
2/13-2/20	Flooding	Malaysia	2	5,000+	25+ million
2/14	Volcano	Indonesia	7	12,447+	103+ million
2/17	Winter Weather	South Korea	10	Unknown	11+ million
2/17-2/21	Winter Weather	China	0	5,000+	140+ million
2/22	Flooding	Indonesia	11	2,000+	Millions+

Heavy rains associated with the passage of Tropical Depression Kajiki on January 31 and February 1 led to flooding in the Central Philippines, killing at least six people. Nearly 50,000 people were affected across nine provinces, with 427 homes damaged or destroyed. The government allocated PHP145 million (USD3.2 million) for recovery efforts.

A weeklong stretch of heavy snowfall and cold temperatures affected Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan during the first week of February, killing at least 46 people. Most of the fatalities were recorded in the Afghanistan provinces of Jauzjan, Faryab, Kunduz, and Kabul.

Heavy snow fell across northern and eastern China on the 4th and 5th, which led to widespread agriculture damage. No serious injuries or fatalities occurred. The snowfall led to highway closures in the provinces of Shandong, Jiangsu, Xinjiang, Hunan, Anhui, Shanxi, Shaanxi, and Hubei as the country was in the midst of celebrating its Spring Festival (Chinese New Year). The Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) listed economic losses at CNY691 million (USD115 million).

Heavy snow and freezing temperatures swept across much of central and southern China between the 7th and 14th, killing at least 10 people and injuring 90 others. The MCA reported that at least ten provincial regions reported varying levels of damage to property, with at least 20,000 homes affected. Widespread crop damage was also prevalent. Total economic losses were listed at CNY4.1 billion (USD675 million).

The heaviest snow in decades fell across parts of Japan during a stretch between the 8th and 16th, killing a combined 95 people and injuring more than 2,750 others in mostly traffic-related accidents. Among the hardest-hit areas came in the Tokyo metropolitan region, which endured separate events that each prompted at least 27 centimeters (10.6 inches) of snow, which was the most snow in 45 years. The heavy snow caused widespread residential and commercial damage while also severely disrupting transportation and causing production delays. The agricultural sector was heavily affected as well. Insurers estimated that claims payouts would approach JPY254 billion (USD2.5 billion). Total economic losses were expected to approach JPY641 billion (USD6.25 billion).

A magnitude-6.9 earthquake struck western China's Xinjiang province on the 12th, though no serious injuries or fatalities were reported. The tremor occurred at 5:19 PM local time (9:19 UTC) with an epicenter located 268 kilometers (167 miles) east-southeast of Hotan, China. Data from MCA indicated that nearly 90,000 homes had been damaged or destroyed, primarily near the epicenter in Yutian County. Total damage and reconstruction costs were listed at CNY2.13 billion (USD350 million).

Some of the worst floods in 30 years affected the Malaysian state of Sabah between the 13th and 20th, killing at least two people. The hardest-hit districts were Beaufort, Keningau and Tenom, which saw as many as 50,000 people affected. Total economic damages were estimated at MYR 80 million (USD25 million), with much of the damage attributed to infrastructure and agriculture.

Mount Kelud erupted on the 14th on Indonesia's Java Island, sending ash and debris an estimated 18 kilometers (12 miles) into the air. At least seven people were killed, and officials evacuated 200,000 people from their homes for precautionary measures. The eruption caused ash to blanket dozens of cities and towns – damaging at least 12,447 homes – and led to travel disruption. Economic damages were estimated at IDR1.2 trillion (USD103 million).

Heavy snow led to the roof collapse of an auditorium in the southern South Korean city of Gyeongju on the 17th, killing at least 10 people and injuring 101 others. The collapse occurred at the Busan University of Foreign Studies during a concert performance. Government officials cited snow-related damages at KRW12 billion (USD11 million) around the country.

Heavy snow fell across parts of China's provincial regions of Sichuan, Guizhou, and Yunnan between the 17th and 21st, causing widespread residential and agricultural damage. The MCA reported that thousands of homes were damaged or destroyed in addition to wide swaths of cropland. Total economic damages were listed at CNY846 million (USD140 million).

Heavy rains inundated parts of Indonesia's Papua province on the 22nd, prompting multiple landslides that left at least 11 people dead. The fatalities occurred in three districts of the provincial capital of Jayapura after landslides damaged or destroyed at least 55 homes. Widespread flooding was also registered in the province of Banten. Thousands of homes were flooded by up to 1.75 meters (5.74 feet) of water in Tangerang Regency.

Oceania (Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands)

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
2/25-2/28	Flooding	Fiji	0	Hundreds+	2.1+ million

Heavy rains associated with a tropical disturbance caused flooding across parts of Fiji during the last few days of February. No serious injuries or fatalities were reported. Damage was widespread in Fiji's Central and Eastern divisions as structures were inundated by high water levels. Total economic damages were preliminarily estimated at FJD4.0 million (USD2.1 million).

APPENDIX

Updated 2014 Data: January

United States

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/1-1/5	Winter Weather	Midwest, Ohio Valley, Northeast	16	10,000+	200+ million
1/5-1/8	Winter Weather	Midwest, Northeast, Southeast	21	150,000+	3.0+ billion
1/11	Severe Weather	Southeast	2	5,000+	50+ million
1/20-1/22	Winter Weather	Central and Eastern U.S.	4	Thousands+	100+ million
1/26-1/29	Winter Weather	Southeast, Midwest, Mid-Atlantic	13	Thousands+	250+ million

Remainder of North America (Canada, Mexico, Caribbean, Bermuda)

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/13	Earthquake	Puerto Rico	0	Hundreds+	Unknown

South America

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/1-2/28	Flooding	Bolivia	64	25,000+	100+ million
1/12	Flooding	Brazil	24	500+	Unknown

Europe

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
12/23-3/1	Flooding	United Kingdom	0	17,500+	1.5+ billion
1/2-1/3	WS Anne	United Kingdom, France	0	Thousands+	100+ million
1/5-1/7	WS Christina	UK, France, Scandinavia	3	Thousands+	500+ million
1/26-1/30	Winter Weather	Central/Western Europe	4	5,000+	Millions+
1/26-2/3	Earthquakes	Greece	0	1,000+	Millions+

Africa

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/21	Flooding	Tanzania	1	4,086+	Millions+

Asia

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/1-2/1	Volcano	Indonesia	32	Unknown	83+ million
1/2	Earthquake	Iran	1	Thousands+	Millions+

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/11-1/20	Flooding	Philippines	79	3,500+	13+ million
1/12-1/15	Winter Weather	China	0	Unknown	89+ million
1/14-1/17	Flooding	Indonesia	20	10,844+	153+ million
1/14-1/21	Flooding	Indonesia	12	38,762+	430+ million
1/15-1/31	Winter Weather	Thailand	63	Unknown	Unknown
1/17-1/20	Winter Weather	India	25	Unknown	Unknown
1/17-1/22	Winter Weather	China	0	Unknown	79+ million
1/19-1/22	Flooding	Indonesia	13	4,000+	515+ million
1/24-1/28	Flooding	Indonesia	26	100+	173+ million

Oceania (Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands)

Date	Event	Location	Deaths	Structures/ Claims	Economic Loss (USD)
1/10-1/12	CY Ian	Tonga	1	1,130+	48+ million
1/12-1/19	Wildfires	Australia (WA, VIC, SA)	2	350+	25+ million
1/20	Earthquake	New Zealand	0	4,004+	Millions+
1/30-1/31	CY Dylan	Australia (QLD)	0	Unknown	Unknown

Additional Report Details

TD = Tropical Depression, TS = Tropical Storm, HU = Hurricane, TY = Typhoon, STY = Super Typhoon, CY = Cyclone

Fatality estimates as reported by public news media sources and official government agencies.

Structures defined as any building – including barns, outbuildings, mobile homes, single or multiple family dwellings, and commercial facilities – that is damaged or destroyed by winds, earthquakes, hail, flood, tornadoes, hurricanes or any other natural-occurring phenomenon. Claims defined as the number of claims (which could be a combination of homeowners, commercial, auto and others) reported by various insurance companies through press releases or various public media outlets.

Damage estimates are obtained from various public media sources, including news websites, publications from insurance companies, financial institution press releases and official government agencies. Damage estimates are obtained from various public media sources, including news websites, publications from insurance companies, financial institution press releases and official government agencies. Economic loss totals include any available insured loss estimates, which can be found in the corresponding event text.

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