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天然状态下多年冻土区活动层厚度研究进展与展望

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摘要: 活动层作为多年冻土区水热物理和力学动态最活跃的近地表层, 是供给高寒植物生长所需水分和营养物质的关键区, 是多年冻土与大气圈、土壤圈进行能水和物质交换的主要通道, 也是微生物活动最频繁和生物地球化学循环最关键的冷生土壤层。近几十年来, 在气候变暖和人类活动增强影响下, 多年冻土区活动层厚度(ALT)普遍增加, 对寒区环境与冻土工程产生了不利影响。本文对影响天然状态下ALT空间分异的宏观地质地理和微观局地因子、ALT的野外测量和模拟计算方法、ALT对气候变化的响应特征进行了回顾, 并探讨了ALT变化对高寒生态环境的影响。研究表明: 太阳辐射及其重分布和下垫面的复合作用是ALT空间分异的主因, 在其他因素和条件一致时, 高程多年冻土下界和纬度多年冻土南界附近的ALT较厚; 近三十年来ALT积极响应气候变暖, 随气温升高而增加, 但区域差异明显, 中纬高海拔和山地多年冻土区ALT大部分呈显著增加趋势, 而高纬富含冰多年冻土区ALT因地下冰融化下沉, 一定程度上抵消了因气候变暖而增加的部分。本文还展望了ALT未来研究方向, 认为应聚焦ALT精准模拟制图、ALT变化的自适应机制、ALT变化对生物地球化学循环的影响和ALT变化对水文水资源的影响等四个方面。

关键词: 多年冻土; 活动层厚度(ALT); 气候变化; 空间分异; 生态水文效应

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0 引言

多年冻土区的活动层(以下简称活动层)是指位于多年冻土层之上、地表下一定深度内暖季融化、冷季完全回冻的近地表层^[1]。活动层为高寒地区的植物生长、微生物生理活动乃至动物生存等提供了可资利用的水分和营养物质, 是多年冻土层与大气圈、土壤圈进行能水和物质交换的主要通道, 也是多年冻土区内水文循环、成土作用、生物过程、生物地球化学循环和人类开展各类工程活动的主要

场所。除南北极高纬地区和极个别高山顶部[如安第斯山脉的奥霍斯德尔萨拉多山(Ojos del Salado)]之外, 全球多年冻土区近地表几乎无不经历季节冻融过程, 进而呈现出活动层厚度(active layer thickness, 以下简称ALT)的时空分异^[2-6]。在稳定气候环境下, 在连续多年冻土区, 活动层下为衔接型多年冻土, ALT通常被认为是一年内的最大融化深度; 在不连续多年冻土区边缘或融区下为深埋藏多年冻土时, 季节融化层与多年冻土上限不衔接, 此情况与季节冻土相似, 则可视作季节冻结深度^[6-8]。

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近几十年来,气候变暖和人类工程活动造成 ALT 增加^[9-15],对包括植被、土壤、微生物、水文水资源、人类社会经济活动等在内的寒区环境与冻土工程产生了深远影响,如:改变生物地球化学循环^[16-18],干扰生物过程、冰缘地貌形态及水文循环模式^[19-21],增加温室气体排放^[22-25],破坏寒区道路、管道工程等基础设施^[26-29],释放重金属污染物及远古病毒^[30-33],使社会经济可持续发展和公共卫生安全面临重大挑战。ALT 变化攸关寒区植物生理需水埋深^[34-36],由此制约地上地下生物多样性和生物量的分布^[37-38],打破了高寒植被与冻土环境之间的稳定适应性关系^[34],并可能进一步加剧冻融侵蚀造成荒漠化^[39]。ALT 增加最直接地作用了多年冻土上限下降和地下冰消融,引起地表沉降、热融沉陷、热融滑塌等,加速热融湖塘形成,使多年冻土层上水水位下降并引发一系列水文地质和生态环境问题^[40],造成多年冻土的快速和突然退化^[10,41]。因此,无论是活动层冻融过程中温度和水分的变化,还是季节冻深增加或季节冻深变浅,都将改变植被生境、水文循环、土地利用变化,引发和加剧高寒草地的三化(沙化、荒漠化、盐碱化)、“黑土滩”化和水环境变异^[42]。对气候变化极度敏感的厚度较薄的高温($\geq -1\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$)多年冻土,ALT 增加可能直接融穿冻土层,如位于瑞

典最北端的 Katterjokk 监测场地,1999—2006 年间因 ALT 增加造成多年冻土消失比例达 81%^[43],而位于青藏高原巴颜喀拉山南坡的一处多年冻土层也在 2013 年夏季因 ALT 快速增加被融穿^[44]。

鉴于 ALT 的关键生态水文效应及其对寒区构筑物、温室气体排放的重要影响,许多与冻土相关的国际科学计划都将其作为重要监测和研究内容之一。ALT 监测数据为冰冻圈科学及其与地貌学、水文学、生态学、生物化学和气候变化科学的耦合研究提供了关键信息。这些国际科学计划包括多年冻土热状态计划(TSP)^[41,45]、极地海岸动态计划(ACD)^[46]、国际苔原试验计划(ITEX)^[47]、极地系统科学计划(ARCSS)^[48]、多年冻土与碳库计划(CAPP)^[49]、环极地活动层监测计划(CALM)^[50]、全球陆地生态系统网络-多年冻土监测计划(GTN-P)^[51]、陆地-大气系统极地转换计划(ATLAS)^[52]等。CALM 计划是国际上最重要的活动层研究计划,最初隶属于世界气象组织的 GTN-P 计划,于 1991 年开始运作,至今已建立 265 个监测场地,形成了覆盖南北极和高山多年冻土区的全球性活动层监测网络^[2,50,53-57](图 1)。

国内外一些学者综述了活动层的概念、影响因素及其与气候和多年冻土的关系^[6,58],但当前尚缺

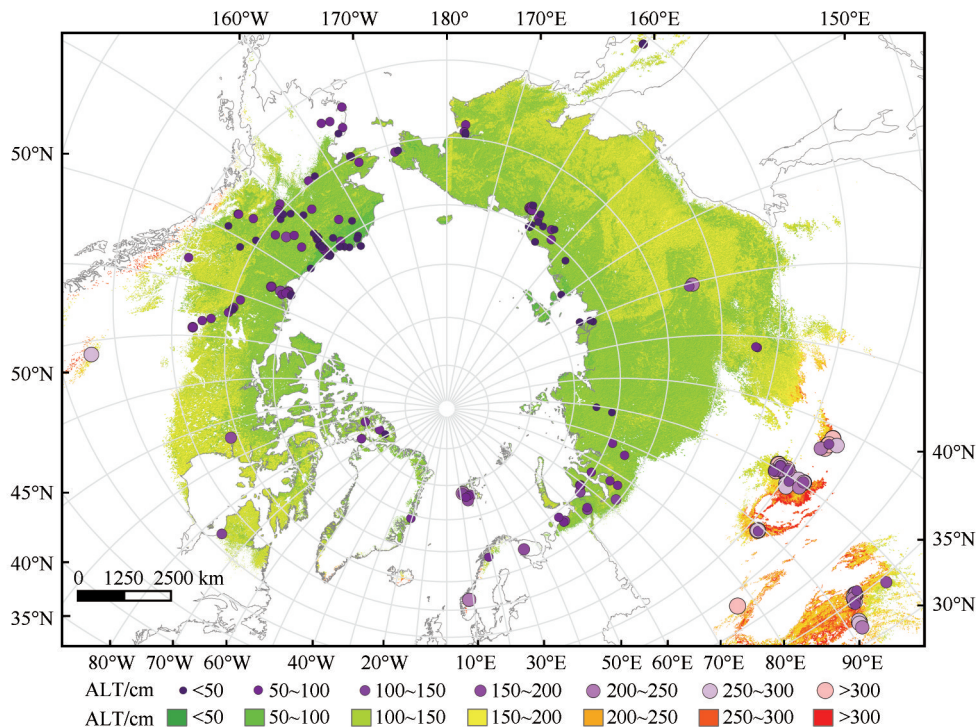


图 1 环极地活动层监测网(CALM)中北半球多年冻土活动层监测分布(图中活动层厚度(ALT)空间分布图来自于文献[59])

Fig. 1 Spatial distribution of the active layer measurements across the Northern Hemisphere within the CALM program
(The background map of active layer thickness (ALT) is derived from Reference [59])

乏对 ALT 研究进展的系统综述和展望。有鉴于此,本文在文献回顾的基础上,概述了地球上多年冻土区天然状态下 ALT 的空间分异规律及其影响因素,ALT 的调查监测和计算模拟方法,ALT 对气候变暖的响应规律和特征。结合自身认识展望了 ALT 研究方向,认为应加强 ALT 的精准模拟制图及其对气候变化响应的适应机制研究,加深 ALT 及其变化与高寒地区生物地球化学循环和水文水资源相互作用的认识,以促进多年冻土区工程构筑物安全施工和运维、冰冻圈生态环境管护和修复,也为相关决策提供更准确的 ALT 本底资料和科学依据。

1 ALT 空间分异规律

ALT 的空间分异主要受宏观地理因子、局地因子及两者复合的影响。包括纬度、海拔、水文、地形地貌、土壤质地、冻融历史、工程活动、植被和积雪等多种自然和人为因素的共同作用,造成了地球上截然不同的 ALT^[8,50,60-62],使其呈现不同的空间尺度效应。Nelson 等^[63]从微尺度(micro, $10^1\sim 10^2$ m)、局地尺度(local, $10^2\sim 10^3$ m)、中尺度(meso, $10^3\sim 10^5$ m)、区域尺度(regional, $>10^5$ m)等研究了阿拉斯加中北部

ALT 空间分异特征,指出 ALT 的空间分异尺度因受气候梯度影响在滨海平原区为 100~300 m,在山前缓坡地带受地形影响而小于 3 m。这种尺度划分主要考虑了 ALT 自身的空间分异特性,较为适合气候和局地条件不太复杂的多年冻土区,而在研究特定地区 ALT 空间分异规律时还需考虑各类因子的复合作用。本文综合考虑 ALT 空间分异的各类因素,认为其影响因素大致可分为宏观地理因子和局地因子。

1.1 宏观地理因子的影响

太阳辐射及其在地球表面的重分布引起了地-气系统能量平衡的差异,进一步造成近地表温度的空间分异^[64-65]。近地表温度在高海拔和山地主要受海拔和植被、积雪等局地因子的复合影响,而在高纬的北极、亚北极和北方地区主要与纬度、植被和积雪等相关^[2]。气温作为一类重要的近地表温度,是太阳短波辐射和地面长波辐射地理分布差异的综合度量,随季节、海拔、下垫面类型、气象条件等的变化而变化,因气温差异而在地球上形成了不同气候分带。活动层冻融过程及其厚度变化首先决定于气温高低波动^[66],纬度和海拔越高,年均气温越低,ALT 就越小(图 2)。年均气温低至 $-10\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ 或以

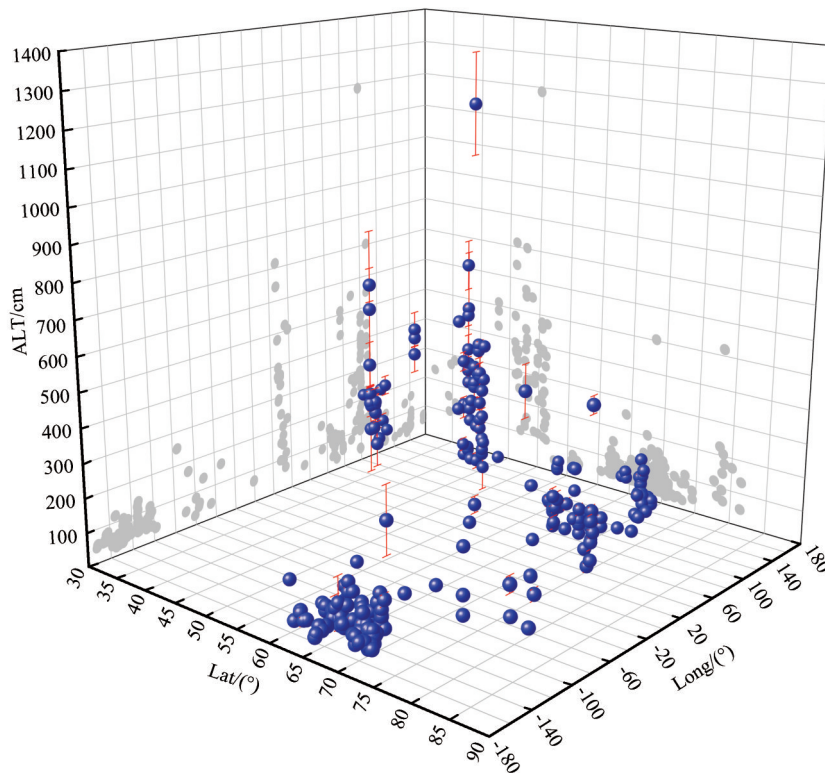


图2 北半球多年冻土区 ALT 与经度、纬度的关系[图中,ALT 为活动层厚度(m),Lat 为纬度($^{\circ}$), Long 为经度($^{\circ}$),灰色圆点为 ALT 投影]

Fig. 2 Relationships between active layer thickness (ALT) and longitude, latitude across the Northern Hemisphere (Lat denotes latitude, Long denotes longitude, and the grey dots are the projections of ALT in XZ and YZ panels)

下的极地亚极地和极高山峰,ALT多不足1.0 m,最浅只有几厘米^[5-6,67-73]。而年均气温较高的中纬山地ALT大多在1.0 m以上,有的厚达几米;地球上最厚的ALT超过了20 m^[6,74]。青藏高原的ALT通常大于1.5~2.0 m^[2,9-10,75],据观测或计算的ALT平均值为2.30 m^[2]、2.34 m^[22]或2.46 m^[15];阿尔卑斯山ALT为0.5~8.0 m^[62],西天山(哈萨克斯坦)ALT达3.2 m以上^[76],东天山乌鲁木齐河源ALT在1.3 m以上^[77]。

南半球的多年冻土研究相对较少,当前有关其分布面积和范围均存在较大争议^[78],但其一般发生规律应与北半球大体相同,即主要受地-气系统能量平衡的影响,表现为多年冻土发育程度和存在概率随纬度和海拔升高而提高或增大。地-气系统能量平衡甚至使南纬5°以内的赤道地区由于海拔较高而发育多年冻土,如在海拔4 884 m的新几内亚岛查亚峰(Mount Carstensz)以及位于西非坦桑尼亚、海拔5 895 m的乞力马扎罗山(Mount Kilimanjaro),均在峰顶发现了多年冻土和与之相关的活动层。值得一提的是,包括赤道地区在内的中低纬ALT可能受气温的日内变化影响颇大^[79-80]。纵贯8° N至55° S的地球上最长山系——安第斯山,其约30处海拔超过6 000 m的高海拔山峰多分布于南半球中低纬地区,不少已证实多年冻土的存在,但其ALT可能较薄。如地球上海拔最高的火山——奥霍斯德尔萨拉多山纬度为27°06′32.4″ S,其最高峰海拔6 893 m,植被稀疏,尽管因气候极为干旱而较难形成冰川甚至稳定积雪,但年均气温低于-10℃,且由于低纬地区昼夜长短年较差不大的光照特征,光照仅略微偏离垂直方向,气候主要呈现日内变化而非季节变化的特征,因而那里的浅表层土壤可能难以融化,ALT长期保持0 cm左右^[5,71-72]。这些气候特性意味着地球上最浅的ALT除了出现于极端寒冷的高纬地区,也出现在高海拔山区甚至赤道地区的非洲、新几内亚和南美高山附近^[6,71,73]。

不同多年冻土区ALT的巨大分异与其近地表面温度的年均值和年较差及其影响下的冻融起始和结束时间密切相关。通常而言,由于长期负温、冻结期长,高纬地区ALT比中纬高山地区的要小。图3显示了纬度最高的CALM监测站点——加拿大北极群岛北海岸埃尔斯米尔岛的Tanquary Fiord(81.40072° N,76.70937° W)和位于中纬度的青藏高原多年冻土区活动层冻融过程和ALT的差异。

前者地表植被为匍匐灌木,气温年均值-13.8℃,温度年较差达60℃;后者位于青藏高原东北部黄河源头区哈日穷谷地(35.02° N,97.57° E),地表覆被为低矮的高寒草原,气温年均值-3.2℃,温度年较差为31℃^[81-82],仅约相当于前者的一半。然而,Tanquary Fiord监测点冻结过程始于8月底至9月初,融化开始于5月底至6月初,融化持续时间平均为94天;而哈日穷谷地由上向下的冻结过程始于10月底,融化开始于5月上中旬,融化持续时间平均长达172天。融化持续时间越长,融化指数可能就越大,从而活动层越深,因而Tanquary Fiord的ALT约为80 cm,而黄河源头区ALT约为230 cm,是前者的2.9倍。由此可见,ALT的空间分异归根结底受土中累积热量净值季节波动影响^[83],而大气融化指数指示了夏季长度与正温累积量^[84],因而尽管大气融化指数计算标准各异^[62,85],多数研究均表明了其与ALT较强的正相关性^[9,66,86-88],即ALT随大气融化指数增大而增加。

活动层达到最大融化深度的时间随气温由高纬向低纬降低而相应延后。一般而言,极地亚极地通常为夏末秋初^[41,68,89],青藏高原迟至秋末冬初^[90-91],而东天山为冬初^[92]。气温特别是<0℃气温的出现时间,是何时利用钎探或物探方法开展ALT野外调查的依据^[50]:青藏高原为9月底10月中下旬^[60],大兴安岭在9月中下旬^[93],北半球高纬地区在7月底8月上中旬^[50,94-95],南极大陆外缘则常为1—2月^[96-98]。

1.2 局地因子的影响

植被、积雪、土壤质地、微地形地貌等是ALT分异的重要局地因子。微地形地貌调节了近地表水文循环和能量交换过程,造成排水不畅的大湖或湖塘旁、含水量低的高地等的ALT更大^[63,86,99-102]。植被和积雪是影响高纬和高海拔地区ALT分异最重要的局地因子,土壤热物理性质差异通过热量的吸收、存储和传导过程影响ALT。以下分别就影响ALT分异的植被、积雪和土壤质地因子进行阐述。

1.2.1 植被的影响

植被通过截留降水,积雪重分布,调节径流、辐射和风场的作用等影响近地表水热过程及热平衡,进而制约ALT,其中植被结构(种群、高度、覆盖度、叶面积指数等)在表层土壤有机质形成与土壤结构塑造方面的作用不容忽视^[68,103-104]。事实上植被结构本身也是气温、土壤有机质、固液态降水等综合地理环境的反映^[100,105-106]。研究表明,植被的有无及

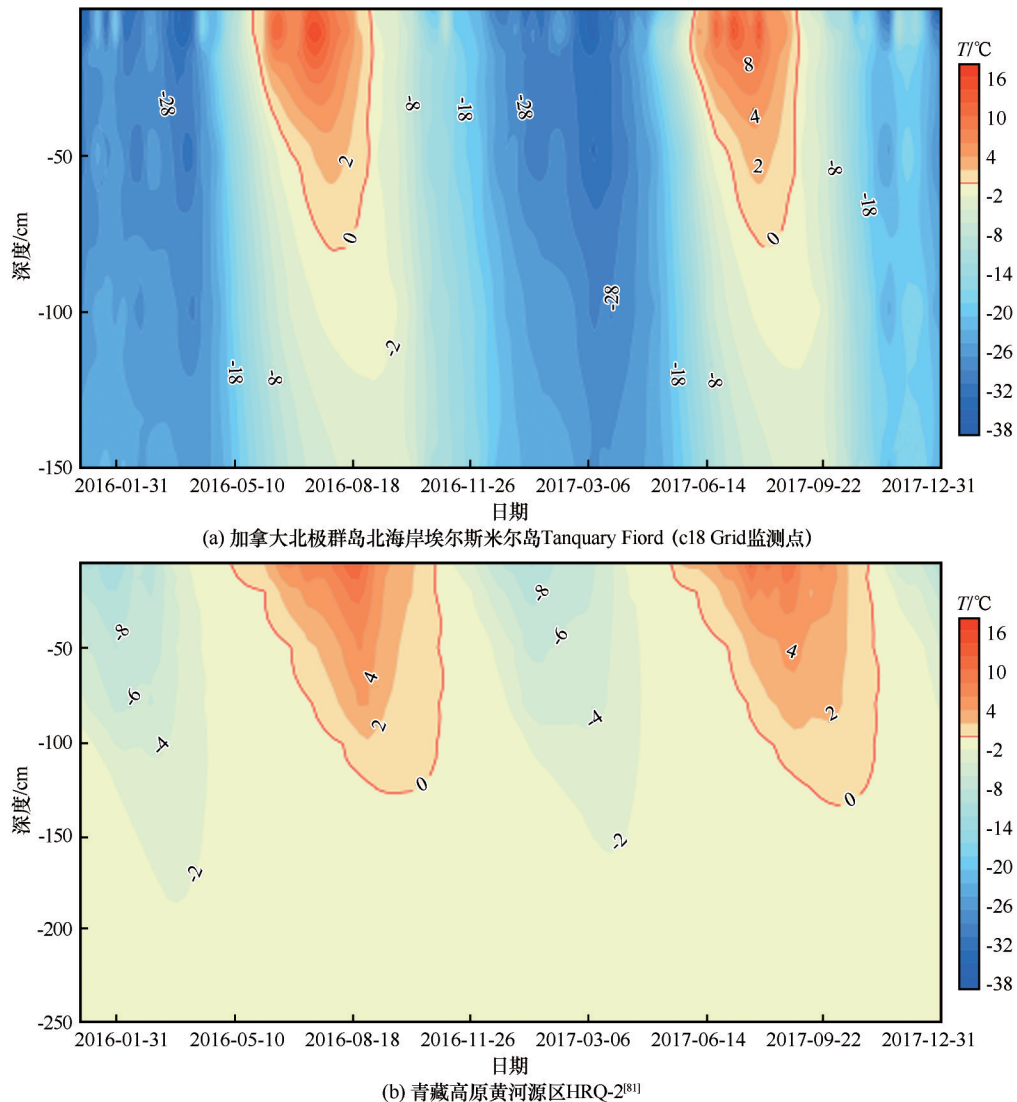


图3 2016年1月1日至2017年12月31日加拿大北极群岛北海岸埃尔斯米尔岛 Tanquary Fiord(c18 Grid监测点)(a)和青藏高原黄河源区 HRQ-2^[81](b)活动层冻融过程和厚度差异

Fig. 3 Comparisons of seasonal freezing and thawing processes and the active layer thickness from January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2017 at one site in the High Arctic of Canada (c18 Grid site in CALM) (a) and another site in the Headwater Area of the Yellow River, Tibetan Plateau^[81] (b)

其类型差异、地上生物量的高低均可导致 ALT 的极大分异^[68,107-110],使得 ALT 的局地分布特征颇为复杂。尽管高寒植被的反照率低于积雪,但仍能有效反射太阳辐射,其在夏季对浅表层土壤起遮阴作用,导致有无苔藓覆盖的场地土壤温差可达 10~15 °C^[111]。较高的植被覆盖能有效抵御啮齿类动物干扰,有利于保护冻土环境^[103]。因此,当下垫面类型由高寒沼泽草甸向高寒草甸、高寒草原、高寒荒漠转变时,植被覆盖度逐渐降低,ALT 也渐次增加^[12,96]。另外,植被覆盖度高的场地凋落物更为丰富,其根系和草毡层腐殖质含量较高,比表面积和亲水基团远高于矿物质土壤含量高的植被稀疏或

裸土地,土壤有效持水量更大,导致暖季导热系数减小、冷季导热系数增大^[112],植被通过调节导热系数等热物理性质而改变热量累积和冻土热状态平衡,进而使得不同植被类型下 ALT 差异较大。比如,地衣苔藓层在夏季干燥时导热系数较小,可大幅减小外界热量摄入,而在冬季饱冰时冻结导热系数较大,因而促进土壤热量向外散失^[103,113]。

1.2.2 积雪的影响

积雪通过反射太阳辐射、融化升华等水热交换和相变过程影响地表水热平衡,是公认对高纬 ALT 空间分异影响最重要的局地因子之一,其影响程度几乎与气温及其派生的融化指数一样高^[65,81,114-115]。

积雪反照率介于0.60~0.85,新雪达0.90以上,可大量反射太阳辐射;积雪在热红外波段的比辐射率一般为0.96~0.99,可有效降低雪面温度。同时,由于导热系数较小,积雪是热的不良导体,据研究,雪深在40 cm左右时隔热效果较好^[114-116]。通常而言,较厚且长时间的积雪阻止冬季地表热量散失,导致冻土温度比外界环境温度更高,ALT可能较大,积雪增厚甚至造成ALT增加并加速多年冻土退化^[115]。积雪厚度本身也受微地形和风速风向的影响,特别是在地形开敞和背风条件下因重分布而积雪较厚^[89]。Mazhitova等^[99]指出,当降雪或由负地形堆积而形成较厚积雪时,其与地面之间达到热量平衡,因而活动层较厚。冬季较薄的积雪对ALT影响较小,如在南极罗斯半岛的监测表明,尽管积雪对近地表20 cm深度以内的地温影响较大,但其对深层地温和ALT的影响较小^[98]。然而,积雪物理属性(密度、雪龄、雪水当量等)存在较大的时空分异,降雪过程也存在不确定性,因而其与ALT的空间相关性十分复杂^[48]。如在南极的另一项研究表明,1月中旬的暴雪形成深度38 cm的积雪,导致其土壤温度比相邻无雪场地低5℃左右,ALT减小约20%^[116]。而在难以形成稳定积雪的青藏高原多年冻土区,积雪对ALT的影响与其造成的气温和地面温度的差值,及频下频消引起的相变潜热释放和吸收有关^[9,82,87],故其对多年冻土和ALT的影响似不能因为积雪较薄且不稳定而予以忽略。对同样位于中纬度的阿尔卑斯山勃朗峰的研究就可以表明,早春初夏积雪期的延长缩短了活动层的夏季融化时间,显著减小了ALT^[117]。

1.2.3 土壤质地的影响

土壤质地和含水量的高低在更小的微尺度上影响ALT,浅表层土壤含水率与ALT呈负相关关系^[100-111,107]。Shiklomanov等^[118]指出,降水引起的土壤含水量增加,会延长冬季冻结完成时间,从而增加季节融深^[119]。王家澄等^[107]对不同土类ALT的研究表明,卵砾石场地的ALT最大,碎石亚黏土、亚黏土和草炭亚黏土的ALT依次减小。并且,当浅表层土壤为细颗粒质地、高含水量且植被覆盖较好时,ALT对气候变化响应速率也较慢。细颗粒土壤有较好持水性,其含量与ALT负相关,即随细颗粒组分含量增大,土壤透气透水性能减弱,ALT减小^[14]。富含有机质的泥炭层主要由细颗粒组分构成,其地下冰含量高,细粒松散土和有机土ALT较小,可能

对多年冻土对气候变化的响应有一定缓冲作用^[69,99-100,105]。不同土壤质地的ALT对气候变暖响应幅度可能也有差异,如当细颗粒和黏土层ALT增加0.1~0.2 m时,而粗颗粒和透水透气性强的ALT增加达0.3~0.5 m^[111]。相比于微地形地貌和土壤含水量的变化,有机质含量变化对ALT影响可能更大^[120-121],而且有机质含量高低本身也是水文气象、微地形地貌和土壤含水量等综合环境要素的度量。

2 ALT的测量和模拟计算方法

国内外冻土学者基于野外调查、统计分析、数值模拟,长期以来形成了三大类ALT调查研究方法,分别是:①直接法:钻探、坑探、触探、融化管等^[50];②计算法:温度插值^[9,90]、Stefan经验公式^[3,11,64,118,122]、Kudryavtsev公式^[123-125]、热传导方程^[61,126-127]、陆面过程模型等^[128];③地球物理方法:冷生构造判断法和电测法等地球物理勘探法等^[2,8,10-11,50,129-130]。

在典型样地布设规则格网单元(如100 m×100 m),通过各种方法获取区域ALT空间分布是研究其对气候变化长期响应的常规手段^[50,131]。在格网单元内获取ALT主要有三种方法:钢钎触探法(ALT<1.5 m)、温度测量法和冻结/融化管法(冻土器)^[50,53]。钢钎触探法在ALT<1.0 m的北极、亚北极多年冻土区较为适用,这些地方的浅表层土壤在冻融状态和不同含水率条件下导热系数数值大(热半导体效应);在ALT>1.5 m的高山多年冻土区,常通过温度连续观测并以0℃等温线穿透的最大深度确定ALT,或以探地雷达测量的土壤介电常数与实际资料验证相结合来确定ALT。我国ALT一般在2.0 m以上,其调查研究多基于钻探和坑探对含冰土层的揭示与判断,以及对活动层温度连续观测的插值,这些场地多位于有实际工程需求的大型寒区工程附近^[8-10,132-133]。近年来,随着高寒生态与活动层协同研究的发展,活动层温度和水分在我国其他无工程覆盖区域的监测也大大增多^[81,87,90,104]。

Stefan经验公式将土壤水热物理性质(即土壤因子 E)、陆表温度变化与土层冻融过程结合起来考虑以计算冻结缘的移动,输入的参数包括直接计算或将融化 N 因子与大气融化指数相结合计算得到的地面融化指数,以及土壤因子 E 。但在计算时假定土壤热容量可以忽略,公式中的土壤热物理性质^[64]或对土壤热物理性质予以概化的土壤因子 E 只针对

均质土壤层^[11,15],因而其结果容易夸大对冻结或融化的模拟^[134]。近年来一些学者在计算 ALT 时分层考虑土壤热物理性质,将 Stefan 方程应用到非均质土壤中,计算精度有了明显提升^[122,134]。Kudryavtsev 公式是 Stefan 问题的替代解决方案,由苏联冻土学家 Kudryavtsev 提出^[84,135],用于估算最大年融化深度和活动层底部年平均温度。该公式定量地考虑了植被在夏季的遮阴作用和积雪在冬季的保温效果,以此减小了从气温到地面温度和地温的年振幅,并将植被、积雪和活动层作为传热介质层和单一缓冲层而开展模拟计算^[67,84]。Stefan 方程及 Kudryavtsev 公式作为计算 ALT 的半经验模型,其计算结果的准确性取决于对植被、积雪和土壤热物理性质的精准获取,由于无需考虑复杂的物理过程,所需参数较少,计算方便且较准确,应用十分广泛,当前,在北美阿拉斯加、俄罗斯西伯利亚及我国青藏高原等地 ALT 空间分布变化模拟研究中都有应用^[22,67,123-124,136]。冻土热传导方程的数值求解,需在求解土壤温度随深度和时间呈正弦变化(调和解)和土壤温度随地面温度变化(步长改变)的策略中,考虑土壤水相变中热量的大量释放和吸收,其上边界条件通常为随时间正弦波动的陆表温度,下边界条件为来自地中的大地热流^[76,84,126]。陆面过程模型(CLM)充分考虑了包括太阳辐射分量、降水蒸发、风温湿压等在内的地表能水交换分量,对孔隙度、导水率等呈现空间异质性的土壤热物理参数的考虑也较为全面^[128],但在模拟各深度土壤温度时所需参数较多。通过冻土热传导方程和陆面过程模型模拟可获得计算域内任一时间和深度土壤温度的变化,而 ALT 以 0℃等温线在年内穿透的最大深度来确定。

近三四十年来,计算机科学与技术、遥感科学与技术、地理信息科学与技术的发展,大大促进了 ALT 空间分布模拟制图实践的发展^[15,48,123-124,127]。在掌握 ALT 空间分异规律及其尺度效应的基础上应用空间自相关技术,对于 ALT 空间采样距离的设置极具借鉴意义,在野外实际调查时可减少重复操作,且可为基于历史气候再分析和未来情景资料驱动相关模型模拟 ALT 的空间分布变化提供依据。空间自相关是指一个区域单元上的某种属性值与邻近区域单元上同一属性值的相关程度,主要依据 Tobler^[137]提出的地理学第一定律,即所有地理要素都存在关系,但距离较近的地理要素比距离较远的

地理要素关系更紧密。Brenning 等^[138]在研究雪底温度(BTS)采样距离的合理性时指出,距离小于 200 m 时 BTS 存在空间自相关关系,若 BTS 采样间距设置不合理将导致高山多年冻土分布及其下界研究的不确定。Nelson 等^[48]基于空间自相关技术研究了阿拉斯加北坡 ALT 的空间分异,指出局地地形、土壤含水量及质地以及近地表水文过程的空间分异导致 ALT 呈现极强的空间异质性。ALT 空间分异规律的获得,有赖于在 1 km×1 km、100 m×100 m 的规则格网内对地形、植被、积雪、局地水文等特征的详细调查,并进一步基于地统计方法获取更大尺度上的空间分异规律。在青藏高原多年冻土区,李元寿等^[139]尝试利用克里格插值和分数维研究了活动层 0~40 cm 土壤含水量的空间分异规律。

3 ALT 对气候变化的响应

近几十年来,以气温升高和降水变化为主的气候变化,一方面不断影响冰冻圈系统各要素,另一方面也影响高寒植被生境及其结构变化,从而改变地表能水交换过程和模式。对气候再分析资料的研究表明,全球多年冻土区气温升温速率远高于非多年冻土区,其中高纬多年冻土区比高海拔多年冻土区升温更快^[140-141]。众多监测和模拟表明,近几十年来全球多年冻土区 ALT 的增加趋势多与气候变暖相关^[2-3,11,124,142-144],另外,降水增多、植被结构和积雪模式的改变等也影响 ALT 变化。CALM 计划的监测表明^[2],北半球 ALT 对气候变化的空间响应十分复杂,其中中纬度高海拔山区如青藏高原和蒙古高原 ALT 增幅普遍较大,而北极亚北极只有约一半场地的 ALT 在增加^[2]。阿尔卑斯山和青藏高原 ALT 的变化率分别达到了 5.20 和 1.95 cm·a⁻¹,相比其他多年冻土区的 ALT 变化更大,而加拿大和阿拉斯加的较小(图 4)。这表明,最大的 ALT 变化并不出现于气候变暖最剧烈地区,高纬地区 ALT 的变化率相比中纬高山多年冻土区更小,其原因一是 ALT 绝对值更小,二是大量分布的富冰多年冻土因地下冰消融部分抵消了由气候变暖造成的 ALT 增加。然而,以 ALT 的变化率与其均值的比值分析其变化敏感时发现,阿尔卑斯山脉(1.46)和北欧(1.27)的场地最为敏感,阿拉斯加(0.93)和青藏高原(0.91)次之,而加拿大(0.25)的敏感度相对较小。高纬多年冻土区地下冰含量较高,活动层在多年冻土退化和地下冰消融下发生热融沉陷,其热融沉陷与 ALT

成反比^[95],即热融沉陷的场地垂向位移越大,ALT就越小,而热融沉陷在很大程度上又与地下冰含量高度正相关。阿拉斯加北坡一些场地的长序列观测结果表明,尽管当地变暖显著,但富含冰过渡层地下冰融化固结引起“各向同性融沉”,使地表微地形地貌和生态景观未显著变化,ALT观测值也未随气候变暖而大幅增加,相反显得十分“稳定”^[145-147],甚至有的场地ALT呈减小趋势^[2]。这种ALT趋于稳定乃至减小的现象在富含冰多年冻土并不罕见^[95,145],但这并不表明该地多年冻土对气候变暖的响应不够敏感,其对微生物活动、碳氮等生物地球化学循环、工程构筑物稳定性的影响反而更值得重视^[148-150]。今后应结合遥感技术、实地监测、模型模拟等,特别是将InSAR技术与长序列实地观测结合,针对气候变暖、火灾和人类工程活动等协同作用下的富含冰多年冻土区的活动层,加强冻土退化、融化固结与ALT变化的互作研究^[151-155]。

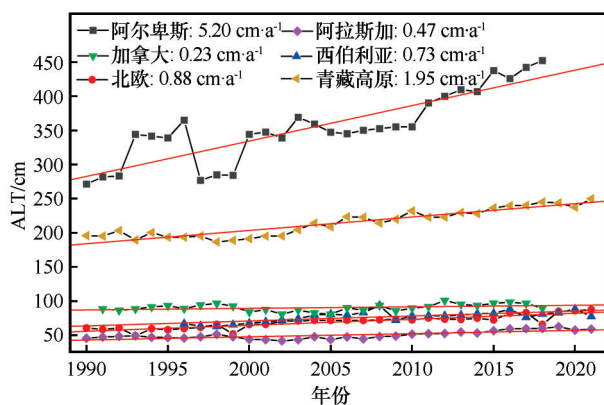


图4 北半球部分场地活动层厚度变化趋势[青藏高原活动层厚度引自文献[156],其他场地活动层厚度数据来自CALM监测网(<https://www2.gwu.edu/~calm/>)]

Fig. 4 Temporal variations of active layer thickness (ALT) ranging from 1990 to 2021 for parts of the Northern Hemisphere [The ALT in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is from Reference [156], while data of other sites are from the CALM network (<https://www2.gwu.edu/~calm/>)]

近年来高纬地区和高海拔山区的灌丛化日益突出,其对ALT的作用存在正反两方面影响^[157-159]:既在冬季“捕获”积雪从而增加保温效果,也在夏季通过遮阴降低浅表层地温^[160],故高寒植被颜色、种类、盖度、高度等物候和其他特征的改变对ALT的综合影响,尚需系统和定量研究。理论上,植被通过反射入射太阳辐射和截留固态降水^[60]削减进入地中的热量,而其与驻留积雪的相互作用也延长

了消融过程和相变能量交换时间。高纬地区灌丛化和普遍性的“增绿”一方面意味着地表反照率可能减小,以此增加浅表层土壤对太阳辐射能量的摄入,但另一方面,植被增多和植株高度增加使更多枝杈从本应在冬季具有良好保温效果的积雪伸出,继而土壤热量通过所谓的“热桥”向外界传出,从而降低土壤温度^[161]。然而,无论多深的积雪,也无论坡度坡向如何,由灌丛化引起大量枝杈突出雪面的结果是融雪提前,灌丛化植被的无雪季提早实现,由此活动层融化起始时间提前,融化季延长。而大范围的灌丛增高及其生境范围的增加,积雪减少,使整个北极有更多枝杈突出雪面,由此增加ALT^[162-163]。相关模型研究也证实了灌丛化的冬季保温和夏季降温效果在两相权衡下整体以增温为主^[160]。北极的一些研究表明,与积雪的相互作用可使灌丛场地的冬季温度升高70%^[164],由此增加冻胀草丘之间的融化深度。此外,灌丛化除了改变植被结构,也在积雪增厚和弱透水多年冻土层的共同影响下,增加了连续多年冻土区近地表土壤湿度^[165],有的甚至形成贯穿融区,改变局地水文循环^[163];而在不连续多年冻土区,伴随着灌丛化和ALT增加,地表蒸散发也在增强,浅表层土壤趋于干化^[166],由此改变高寒植被生境和浅表层水热交换模式,进而影响ALT。

4 研究展望

冻土变化对寒区生物地球化学循环、水文水资源、各类构筑物等持续产生影响,其中大多数通过ALT变化实现。ALT的空间分布及其对气候变化响应与多地理要素交叉的研究,经历了单点、随机、定性分析到区域、定位监测、定量分析和数值模拟的发展历程,研究手段日趋规范化,研究方法日益多样化^[167-169]。在梳理ALT变化规律的基础上,本文建议多年冻土区ALT未来研究可加强以下方向。

4.1 ALT的精准模拟和制图

ALT精准模拟制图的参数优化有赖于其空间分异规律的认识。建立和应用模型模拟区域乃至半球尺度ALT的空间分布及其对气候变化的响应是冻土与生态环境互作研究的基础^[3,15,122-124,127,136,170],受观测数据限制,模型模拟时大多以单个节点(node)代表一定尺度(如50 m,1 km或5 km等)格网单元(grid),通过ALT与经纬度、海拔等的空间统计,或通过GIS环境调用计算与模拟程序,并基于空间插

值而获得 ALT 空间分布。然而,ALT 本身空间异质性极强,其分布特征和尺度效应受气温、海拔和局地因子等的复合作用,因此应加强 ALT 与相关要素的协同观测和耦合研究,获取与概化 ALT 空间分异规律的先验知识,减少计算误差的传递以避免空间分布制图精度和准确性的降低。

过去在 ALT 模拟时,模型一般只考虑多年冻土及活动层的热物理性质,而很少特意考虑上限附近过剩冰的巨大相变潜热效应。今后应改进广泛应用的经验模型如 Stefan 公式或 Kudryavtsev 公式,精细化考虑活动层不同深度土壤冻融热物理性质及其相变潜热,同时在模拟时考虑活动层和多年冻土上限附近不同层位间导热系数、容积热容量、相变潜热的差异。而在应用冻土热传导、陆面过程模型以及近地表能量过程数值模型时,需着重开展对富含冰过渡层热物理性质的参数化,以减小多年冻土及 ALT 长期变化的模拟偏差。

4.2 ALT 变化的自适应机制

ALT 在气候变暖和强烈人为活动影响下普遍增加的趋势已为业界熟知。但在多年冻土层彻底消失前,ALT 并不能无限增加,否则随着第四纪以来冰期和间冰期的巨大气候波动,ALT 变化幅度理论上可达数十米甚至数百米。由于缺少 ALT 百年以至更长时间尺度的监测,故无法由实测揭示 ALT 对气候变化长期响应的模式。若以空间换时间的思路,将高纬较小 ALT 至中纬高山地区较大 ALT 看作其随气温升高而发生退化的序列,可知 ALT 最大就 20 m,即其增加存在上限。事实上,尽管北极亚北极许多场地的 ALT 小于 1.5 m,但青藏高原的 ALT 大多也不过 2.0~3.0 m,即使是受极度干旱和粗块砾石影响的蒙古高原热扩散系数较大,其 ALT 最大也不过十几米^[2](图 2)。因此,ALT 在对气候变化响应中可能存在一定的自适应机制。

Shur 等^[171]认为 ALT 除受太阳辐射影响外,还受降水、风速、云量、土壤湿度和其他表面能量平衡分量周期性变化的影响,因此 ALT 和水文要素一样存在重现周期,多年平均值的出现概率最大。另外,多年冻土中地下冰的相变潜热效应,以及温度在土壤中传播时的阻尼效应,即地温年变化深度的存在,限制了季节融深的无限增加。一方面,活动层底板附近通常是重复分凝成冰作用发生的主要场所,且在局地土壤水文条件适宜时年复一年地形成厚层地下冰^[172]。地下冰巨大的相变潜热效应,导

致活动层底部在气候变化中需大量吸收或释放热量,形成地温较长时间处于 0 °C 左右的零点幕现象,缓冲了多年冻土对气候变化的响应。从野外监测结果来看,活动层底部土的含水量在极暖年的夏季可能由于形成了冰水混合物而急剧增加,但从地温插值来看,ALT 并未明显增加^[173]。另一方面,外界大气在向地中传播热量时,冻土层作为媒介会消耗和存储热量,并和来自地中的大地热流逐渐达到热量平衡,导致其温度年振幅随深度增加而减小^[44,174]。

4.3 ALT 变化与生物地球化学循环

活动层为植物生长提供水分、养分和介质,是多年冻土区微生物的主要栖息地和最活跃的层位,同时也是大量生物地球化学循环的主要发生场所。在长期的气候环境变化、地理地质变迁和局地因素作用下,植被凋落物及死亡动物残体等堆积在地表,在不断地冻融翻搅和沉积作用下封冻到较深层多年冻土中。由于多年冻土温度较低,土壤微生物的新陈代谢受到抑制,冻土中累积的动植物和微生物残体难以被大量分解,导致泥炭积累,多年冻土便冷藏了陆地生态系统最大的土壤有机碳库^[175-178]。在气候变暖和人类活动共同影响下,ALT 增加为老碳暴露提供了有氧条件,而与多年冻土完全融化相关的热喀斯特现象加剧了地面沉降、热融滑塌。过去几十年来,环北极地区野火频发、人类社会经济活动增强,触发了大规模热喀斯特现象^[179-180]。ALT 增加势必引起土壤有机碳的大量分解释放,增加大气中温室气体含量,从而加剧气候变暖^[22]。随着全球各国碳达峰、碳中和目标的提出,未来研究应加强 ALT 变化与碳氮等生物地球化学循环的相互关系研究,深入探索土壤有机碳的垂向和水平空间分异规律,及其温度敏感性与 ALT 空间分异和对气候变化响应的相关性。

4.4 ALT 变化的生态水文效应

特殊的水理性质使多年冻土起着弱透水层和固体水储的作用,是高寒地区重要的水源涵养主体。ALT 变化影响冻结层上水储水空间、水文径流过程,进而对冻土区生态水文过程产生深远影响^[21,34-35,181-182]。ALT 的增加改变了多年冻土水文结构和功能,使冻结层上水的水位下降,增大了冻结层上水储水空间;使地下水径流路径加深、延长,排泄基准面下降,基流增加和径流过程平缓化,甚至补排倒挂;ALT 增加最极端的情况是多年冻土的消

失,其结果就是隔水效应弱化甚至消失,多年冻土层上水直接补给多年冻土层下水。今后可分别从不同级别流域单元加强 ALT 变化与水文径流量和径流过程的相关性研究,摸清 ALT 时空分布与水量平衡各要素的相互作用机制,掌握 ALT 增加对水文过程和水文地质结构的影响机理,揭示多年冻土水力联系变化和对流域水系统的贡献。

ALT 与高寒植被生态需水埋深密切相关,不同生态景观的水源涵养功能不一,不同根系高寒植物对 ALT 的适应也存在差异。在 ALT 变化超过生态需水埋深时,高寒植物因无法适应变化环境而发生植被演替,进而植被种类、植株高度、植被覆盖度、叶面积指数等植被结构发生变化,对大气降水的截留和蓄水作用改变,由此影响蒸散发、感热和潜热交换等地表能水平衡过程。在今后研究中,也应关注 ALT 与高寒植被特别是其根际微生态相互作用的研究和长期监测。

5 结论

多年冻土是冰冻圈系统的重要组成要素,在气候变暖和人类活动增强影响下不可避免地会发生退化,严重影响了高寒生态环境稳定、水文水资源循环和各类构筑物的安全修筑和运维。活动层作为多年冻土区水热物理和力学动态最活跃的近地表层,其冻融过程和厚度增减最直接地反映了多年冻土变化。本文概述了天然状态下多年冻土区 ALT 分异的宏观和微观因子,ALT 的调查和模拟计算方法,以及对气候变化的响应规律。太阳辐射及其在地表的重分布影响地-气系统能量平衡,是 ALT 空间分异的主因;局地尺度上的高寒植被结构、降水和积雪模式、土壤质地等对 ALT 变化具有复合影响;多种因素的共同作用导致高纬地区和富冰多年冻土区的 ALT 较小,而中纬度高山多年冻土区和少冰多年冻土区的 ALT 较大。ALT 的变化率与其值本身有一定对应关系,即 ALT 越大,变化率就越大,青藏高原 ($1.95 \text{ cm}\cdot\text{a}^{-1}$) 和阿尔卑斯山 ($5.20 \text{ cm}\cdot\text{a}^{-1}$) 的 ALT 变化率大于阿拉斯加、西伯利亚等地。富含冰多年冻土因地下冰融沉部分抵消了因气候变暖导致的活动层加深。本文还展望了 ALT 未来研究,认为应加强 ALT 空间分异规律的认识以促进冻土精准模拟制图,在相关模型和方法中考虑多年冻土上限附近地下冰相变潜热效应以促进 ALT 对气候变化的自适应机制研究,另外还应加

强 ALT 变化对生物地球化学循环和水文水资源变化影响的研究。

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Active layer thickness (ALT) in permafrost regions under natural/undisturbed state: a review

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Abstract: The active layer is the most thermodynamically active near-surface soil layer in the permafrost regions. It is vital to the permafrost eco-environments as it serves as the critical zone for the supply of water and nutrients for the growth of alpine/northern plants, as well as the habitats for most frequent microbial activities and critical biogeochemical cycles. It also plays an indispensable role in the exchanges of water and energy between the atmosphere and the near-surface ground. Recently, the active layer thickness (ALT) under natural and undisturbed conditions had been prevalently increased under the dual influences of climate warming and increasing anthropogenic activities, which poses significant adverse influences on the cold environment and frozen ground engineering. In this paper, we reviewed the influencing factors of the ALT under natural and undisturbed conditions in the aspects of macro-scale geology and geography and micro-scale local factors, the measurements and simulations of ALT, as well as the response characteristics of ALT to climate change. Moreover, we also discussed the impact of ALT change on the alpine ecological environment. The past modeling and observations demonstrated that the spatial heterogeneity of ALT was primarily attributed to the redistribution of solar radiation and its complex interactions with the underlying conditions. Presuming no differentiation in climate and local factors, the thicker ALT is always found in the vicinity of the lower limits of elevational permafrost or of the southern/northern limits of latitudinal permafrost. In the past three decades, ALT has increased sensitively to cli-

mate warming, which is characteristic of increasing with the rise of air temperature. The increase of ALT shows an obvious regional differentiation, among which the ALT at most of the mid-latitude alpine and mountainous permafrost regions, such as in the Tibetan Plateau and the Alps, has shown significant increasing trends, while the deepening of ALT to a certain extent was offset by the melting of ground ice and ensued thaw settlement or ground surface subsidence at high-latitude ice-rich permafrost areas. Therefore, not all sites at high latitudes have experienced significant increasing trends as revealed by the observations. However, when analyzing the sensitivity of ALT by the ratio of its changing rate to its average value, we have found that the sites in the Alps (1.46) and the Nordic regions (1.27) were the most sensitive, followed by the sites in Alaska (0.93) and on the Tibetan Plateau (0.91), while those in Canada (0.25) had relatively low sensitivity. We conclude that the future research directions of ALT should focus on the precise simulation and mapping of ALT, the adaptive mechanisms of ALT to climate changes, the impact of changing ALT on the biogeochemical cycles, hydrological processes, and water resources and structures in cold regions, among many others.

Key words: permafrost; active layer thickness (ALT); climate change; spatial differentiation; eco-hydrological effects

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