Recent variability of avalanche activity and snowfall in the Italian Alps

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The study of the snow cover variability is fundamental for alpine countries for many reasons, specifically winter tourism, hydro-electricity production, avalanche activity/forecasting, and for its potential in shaping the mountain ecosystem. There is also an open debate in the scientific community on the relationship between snow cover variability and climate change both as direct feedback and as indirect ones. The aim of this work is to publish an up-to-date record of avalanche observations of the last 25 years (1985-2009) together with the record of avalanche fatalities from 1966 to 2009 in the Italian Alps.