

Back in the forest

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Before starting to write this letter, I reviewed my message of a year ago and found that I described the global financial crisis and global climate crisis. Up to this time, I have not personally found any sign of recovery from the economic downturn nearby. My students are still having quite a lot of difficulty securing jobs. However, the newspapers mention some signs of recovery from the global financial crisis. Perhaps there is another crisis that should be addressed—one that shows no recovery? Recovery would seem to be almost impossible unless excess carbon dioxide were to vanish somehow from the atmosphere. I often wonder whether any good sign was forthcoming during 2009 for healing of the Earth from its climate crisis.

I did hear some interesting news about the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 2009. One laureate of that prize, Dr. Elinor Ostrom, received it for her study of the management of common natural resources such as forests. Mr. Adam Smith, Editor-in-Chief of Nobelprize.org, says, “Her research reveals that in many, but not all, cases, allowing users to develop their own rules to regulate the use of common property results in the most efficient solution for managing those resources”. This is intriguing to me. In my letter last year, I referred to the “Green New Deal”—an approach based on a standard market mechanism as an environmentally focused investment approach aimed at a sustainable and low-carbon world. On the other hand, the newly introduced management idea for natural resources might indicate a new solution for the climate crisis. That news appeared to be a good sign. However, 2009 eventually yielded only the “great disappointment” of the Copenhagen Climate Summit Meeting (COP15). The real world does not appear to be so easily manageable.

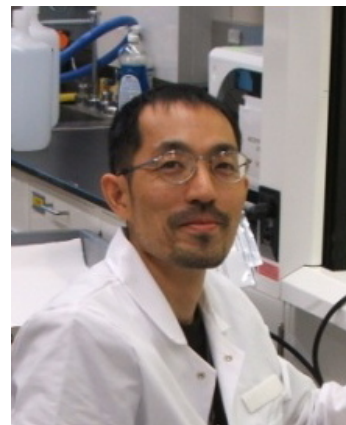
As for root studies, is there any movement? Yes. An important meeting for root researchers was convened in 2009: The Symposium on Root Research and Applications (Root RAP) held in Vienna (<http://rootrap.boku.ac.at/>). As a participant in this meeting, I found that many researchers who deal with tree roots were participating. This is also the case for recent meetings of Japanese Society for Root

Research (JSRR). Root studies are becoming more active *back in the forest*. There we will find some clues to the solutions to our looming climate crisis.

Regarding this Journal, we have entered the new term of 2010–2011. I have again been appointed to the position of Editor-in-Chief of the *Plant Root* for the new term by JSRR, with three new managing editors joining the Editorial Board. I want to express my gratitude to all authors for their contributions, all who have submitted manuscripts to this journal, and to our managing editors, subject editors, and reviewers. I would like to inscribe the Managing and Subject Editors’ names of the 2008–2009 term here on their behalf.



Ichirou Karahara
Editor-in-Chief – *Plant Root*



I. Karahara at
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