

Crisis and opportunity

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The year 2008 ended in economic gloom and doom because of the current “once in a century” global financial crisis. Invariably, science will be influenced by this economic downturn. People might seem to forget, or might have no choice but to forget, about global warming while facing this severe recession, although the larger problem of the environment continues to build rapidly.

However, confronting such a one-two punch by fate, the fabulous idea has been proposed of setting these two monster problems in a fight against each other: an environmentally focused approach referred to by some as a “Green New Deal”. This approach promotes public investment in so-called “green jobs”, aiming at a sustainable and low-carbon world, instead of making stereotypical recession-ending investments such as those in transportation infrastructure. This approach remains a new frontier for us; we human beings will have to rack our brains to explore it. Scientists must play the most important roles in creating and realizing new technologies. Scientists should not forget their promise of letting people dream for a better future.

How then can we, as root scientists, take part in that work to achieve a brighter tomorrow? In addition to the many authentic, or literally speaking, “green jobs” in the agriculture sector, can we transform them and make them more “green” in this world context? Luckily, this year, we “root scientists” will have an important international symposium “Root Research and Applications (Root RAP)” to be held during September 2–4 (<http://rootrap.boku.ac.at/>). It will be a great chance to deepen the discussion of our role

against ongoing global issues. For making our better world of the future, I humbly welcome your ideas and encourage you to tell them to the world. Why not realize and publicize your new ideas through Plant Root (<http://www.plantroot.org/>) first, before presenting them to administrators or politicians?

During the last year, 10 interesting root research papers were published in the Plant Root. I would like to express my gratitude to all authors for their contribution to this journal. Please remember that this is the only journal devoted specifically to the research of plant roots. If you think of yourself as a root scientist, why not come and join us in making history?

To show my appreciation to our managing editors, subject editors, and reviewers, who are all sincerely contributing to running this journal, I would like to inscribe the managing and subject editors' names here on their behalf.



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



I. Karahara at SPring-8, the world's largest third-generation synchrotron radiation facility

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