

## Preface

This volume is edited in honor of Associate Professor Shuichi Oka on his retirement from Tokyo Metropolitan University in March 2009.

Professor Shuichi Oka was born at Tokyo in February 1946. He graduated from the Department of Geography, Tokyo Metropolitan University in 1968. After finishing his master course in March 1971, he entered his professional career as a high school teacher of science at Nagayama Tokyo Metropolitan High School in 1972. Some of his high school students entered the Department of Geography, Tokyo Metropolitan University. He was invited to Research Associate at the Department of Geography, Tokyo Metropolitan University in 1976 and promoted to Associate Professor in 1996. He was awarded his Doctoral Degree in Science at the Department of Geography, Tokyo Metropolitan University by the thesis entitled “ Climatological and Vegetational Studies on the Forest Limit in Japanese Mountains ” in March 1991. He also served as Visiting Professor at Hosei University, Nihon University, Tsuru University, Yamanashi University, The University of Tokyo, Chiba University, Yamagata University, Senshu University, and Meiji University.

His research covers wide area of environmental geography, in particular, forest formation processes at Mt. Fuji, vegetation structure in the coastal deserts of the western part of the continents, vegetation landscape and its relationship with forest dynamics and environmental changes, and published number of research papers. He also devoted himself on nature conservation issues in the World Heritages in Japan, for example, in Shiretoko and Kumano, conservation of forest landscape in Tama Hills near the Tokyo Metropolitan University campus. He was awarded as Leading Professor of Education in Geography in March 2008, by his excellent educational activities in Tokyo Metropolitan University.

His activity also covers wide ranges of social activities. He was representative of the Association of Japanese Geographers from 2004 to 2007. He has served as a member of Slope Vegetation Conservation Committee of Hachioji City since 2006.

Professor Oka examined 2 doctoral theses on environmental geography as an examiner in chief. He always encourages young researchers, and enjoys his research, in particular, field survey. His passion on environmental geography has captured many researchers to join Laboratory of Environmental Geography, Tokyo Metropolitan University.

Finally, we wish Professor Oka long years of active academic work and good health.

March 21, 2009

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