



COMMUNIQUÉ

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity at the service of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Montreal, 23 December 2011– Under the strategic partnership between the AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), the 2012 MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity will be a key instrument at the service of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Under the leadership of the Chairman, Takuya Okada of the AEON Environmental Foundation has decided to establish, in partnership with the Secretariat, the 2012 MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity. At the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in Nagoya in October 2010, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the AEON Environmental Foundation and the SCBD with a view of promoting public awareness and engaging youth and children in the context of *The Green Wave* initiative as well as the celebration of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity.

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity was established in 2010 at the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the AEON Environmental Foundation, which coincided with the historical celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity. (see “Winners of the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity announced at the United Nations” (www.cbd.int/doc/press/2010/pr-2010-09-30-midori-en.pdf) “German Chancellor Angela Merkel awarded special biodiversity prize” (www.cbd.int/doc/press/2010/pr-2010-10-29-cop-midori-en.pdf)).

The MIDORI Prize honours three individuals who have made outstanding contributions to conservation and sustainable use at local and global levels, and who have developmentally influenced various biodiversity-related efforts, as well as raising awareness about biodiversity. Each of the three recipients will receive US\$ 100,000.

The first meeting of the steering committee of the 2012 MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity was held in Tokyo on 20 December under the chairmanship of the Chairman of the AEON Environmental Foundation and the participation of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The steering committee agreed to organize the award ceremony in conjunction with the High level segment of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012. It will be followed by a MIDORI Prize Forum to be held in Tokyo with the participation of the three winners. The winners will be announced in September 2012 at multiple press conferences, tentatively scheduled for Tokyo, Montreal and New York.

Mr. Takuya Okada, Chairman, AEON Environmental Foundation, said: “Based on the MOU signed by AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of CBD, we would like to make our collaboration with SCBD stronger than ever through promoting the MIDORI Prize and continuing our efforts toward environmental education and tree planting activities. Our Foundation would also like to contribute to promotion of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets approved at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, which started in 2011.”

Prof. Shiro Wakui, Tokyo City University, and a member of the steering committee, stated: “The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity not only contributed to the success of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties: continuing to award this prize helps encourage key persons who are working towards achieving the targets globally by 2050, and provides people with an important opportunity to understand the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity. The years following 2020 will be a crucial turning point, as they will decide whether or not we can ensure a sustainable future. Hence, I am strongly convinced that the MIDORI Prize is very significant and meaningful.”

Dr. Daizaburo Kuroda, Senior Councillor, Ministry of the Environment of Japan, and advisor to the steering committee, said: “It is wonderful, through promoting the second MIDORI Prize, to have the opportunity to commend and introduce the people who have put much effort into biodiversity-related issues and achieved remarkable contributions. I expect this prize will stimulate and encourage people working on biodiversity throughout the world, and that it will lead to progress with regards to global conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity.”

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: "The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity is a fantastic contribution of the AEON Environmental Foundation at the service of the three objectives of the Convention as well as the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity is the new name of the Nobel Peace Prize.”
