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PRESS RELEASE

Nominations open for the 2012 MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity

Montreal, 1 March 2012 – Takuya Okada, Chairman of the AEON Environmental Foundation and Honorary Chairman of AEON Co., Ltd., announced today the opening of nominations for the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity.

The MIDORI Prize is a biennial international prize, established by the AEON Environmental Foundation, in 2010, during the International Year of Biodiversity, that honours individuals who have made outstanding contributions for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at global, regional or local levels. The prize aims to permit the winners to extend the developmental influence their biodiversity projects throughout the world, and to raise awareness about biodiversity.

The prize is co-organized with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and supported by the Ministry of Environment of Japan. The year 2012 will be the second time the MIDORI Prize is awarded.

The first MIDORI Prize was presented during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity was held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan.

The recipients in 2010 were Mr. Jean Lemire (biologist, explorer and film-maker, Canada), Dr. Gretchen C. Daily (Professor, Stanford University, United States of America) and Dr. Emil Salim (Chairman of the Advisory Council to the President of Indonesia and former Minister of State for Population and the Environment, Indonesia) who have made great efforts to protect the world's biodiversity and the health of the ecosystem. German Chancellor Angela Merkel was selected as the recipient of the Special Prize for the International Year of Biodiversity. This prize was especially established to mark the 2010 International Year.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Secretary to the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: "The Secretariat is pleased to be a partner in the foundation and granting of the MIDORI Prize, an effective instrument that not only promotes public awareness, but also encourages activities in support of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. I would like to convey my respect and appreciation for the unique and generous contribution of AEON Environment Foundation that has made the Prize possible."

Takuya Okada said: "Today, the prevention of global warming and conservation of biodiversity are recognized as two challenging issues at the global level. In order to resolve such issues, we would like to contribute to promotion of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, approved at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, which started in 2011, through making diverse efforts."

Nominations are solicited from all over the world. In order to select distinguished recipients from a broad range of fields, nominations will be accepted through the MIDORI Prize website and from academic advisors.

Notes for editors

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity

“Midori” translates from Japanese as “green” and evokes the image of trees and plants. In a wider sense, this term also represents the environment. This word is intrinsically linked with AEON Environmental Foundation’s continuous planting activities, and as such, this Prize was named in the hope that such activities could ‘take root’ and grow steadily into the future much like trees.

Organized by the AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity with the support of the Ministry of the Environment of Japan

Criteria: Biodiversity issues at global and local levels can be addressed through promoting the combination of actions: *Think* (research and science)-*Make* (policy & enlightenment)-*Act* (implementation), with the participation of various stakeholders and multidisciplinary cooperation. In order to resolve biodiversity issues, it is important for various stakeholders such as citizens, governments, international organizations, NGOs, researchers and the private sector to work together. In order to select recipients from such perspectives, applications will be judged based on the following criteria:

- International contribution
- Contribution to conservation and sustainable use
- Social contribution
- Long-term viewpoints/Continuity
- Creativity/Originality
- Civic mindedness/Broad viewpoints
- Efficacy/Influence

Conferment of the Prize: The MIDORI Prize is awarded to three individuals, in principle. Each prize winner is awarded a certificate, a commemorative gift and a monetary prize of 100,000 United States dollars.

Period for Nominations: 1 March – 30 June 2012

Nomination form: available on the website www.aeon.info/ef/midori/prize/

Judging Committee (Honorifics omitted, alphabetical order)

Chairman: Takuya Okada, Chairman, AEON Environmental Foundation

Judge: Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity

Judge: Kunio Iwatsuki, Director, Museum of Nature and Human Activities, Hyogo, and Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo

Judge: Daizaburo Kuroda, Senior Counsellor, Ministry of the Environment, Japan

Judge: Anne McDonald, Professor, Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Sophia University

Judge: Keiko Nakamura, Director General, JT Biohistory Research Hall

Judge: Shiro Wakui, Professor, Tokyo City University

Advisor: Ashok Khosla, President, Society for Development Alternatives; President, International Union for Conservation of Nature

Award Ceremony: The 2012 prize will be awarded at an Award Ceremony to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012, in conjunction with the high-level segment of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Following the Award Ceremony, the recipients will be invited to Tokyo to give lectures at the Winners’ Forum in October 2012.

AEON Environmental Foundation

The AEON Environmental Foundation was established in 1990, based on a vision involving a quest for peace, respect for humans, and support to regions. Since its establishment, the foundation has made diverse efforts in planting trees in Japan and abroad, supporting environmental NGOs and NPOs, and organizing international congresses. Regarding the tree planting, the foundation, along with citizen volunteers, has planted about 1 million trees around the Great Wall of China. The number of trees they have planted throughout the world totals more than 1.8 million.

In 2009, the foundation established and organized “The Japan Awards for Biodiversity (domestic prize)”. This prize is also biennial as well as the MIDORI Prize and these prizes are awarded alternately.

In order to sustain our green planet for future generations, through its various activities the AEON Environmental Foundation will make further efforts toward supporting biodiversity.

AEON Environmental Foundation

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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 162 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

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