



7 July 2026

AEON Environmental Foundation
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Laureates of the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2026 Announced

Award Ceremony and Laureates Forum to be held in Tokyo on 27 August

The AEON Environmental Foundation (Chairman: Motoya Okada, Director, Chairman and Representative Executive Officer, AEON Co., Ltd.; hereinafter ‘the Foundation’) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Executive Secretary: Astrid Schomaker; hereinafter ‘the SCBD’*) are pleased to announce the two laureates of the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2026. To honour the laureates and share their achievements with a wider audience, the Award Ceremony and Laureates Forum will be held in Tokyo.

[Laureates]

In alphabetical order by surname

Lisa Paguntalan – Marte (Philippines)

Executive Director, Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (PhilBio)



[Citation]

For more than 25 years, Lisa Paguntalan-Marte has dedicated herself to biodiversity conservation in the Philippines. She has made outstanding contributions to the research and conservation of threatened species, including the rediscovery of the Philippine Bare-backed Fruit Bat, once thought to be extinct, and the conservation of endangered species such as the Visayan Hornbill. She has also led the local implementation of the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP) and established mechanisms to integrate biodiversity conservation into local government planning and budgeting, thereby advancing its mainstreaming. In addition, she has championed initiatives that respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and promote the participation of women, establishing a sustainable conservation model that bridges policy and local communities.

Alexandra Zimmermann (Germany)

Chair, IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group



[Citation]

As conflicts between people and wildlife continue to intensify around the world, Prof. Alexandra Zimmermann has been a global leader in advancing human-wildlife coexistence as a key priority for biodiversity conservation for more than 25 years, driving research, practical implementation, and policy development. She founded the IUCN SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict & Coexistence Specialist Group, leading the development of international guidance and the establishment of a global network of practitioners. She has also pioneered the application of knowledge and approaches from peacebuilding and conflict resolution to biodiversity conservation. Furthermore, she has fostered international collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, helping to establish human-wildlife coexistence as a key priority in biodiversity policy.

*The SCBD is based in Montreal, Canada, and supports the implementation of the Convention.
(For further details, please see: www.cbd.int)

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity

The Prize was established in 2010 to commemorate the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10), held in Nagoya, Japan, and the 20th anniversary of the Foundation. Co-organized biennially by the Foundation and the SCBD, the Prize recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to biodiversity conservation, the sustainable use of biodiversity, and the realization of a sustainable society. Each laureate receives a monetary award of USD 100,000 to advance their biodiversity conservation activities. To date, 21 individuals from 20 countries have received the Prize. In collaboration with past laureates, the Foundation has also undertaken tree-planting activities in Jakarta, Indonesia, since 2011 and near Hanoi, Vietnam, since 2014, and has facilitated the participation of students from Vietnam National University, Hanoi, in the Asian Students Environment Platform (ASEP) since 2013 and in the International Youth Conference on Biodiversity (IYCB 2024) held in Yokohama, Japan. The Foundation will continue to strengthen its collaboration with the laureates and expand its environmental initiatives. (For further details, please see: <https://www.aeonkankyozaidan.or.jp/en/prize/>)

Award Ceremony and Laureates Forum

Date and time: Thursday 27 August 2026, 16:00–17:30

Venue: Imperial Hotel Tokyo, Peacock Room West

Organised by: AEON Environmental Foundation, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD)

Nominal Support: Ministry of the Environment, Government of Japan,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Registration: <https://www.aeonkankyozaidan.or.jp/2026midoriprizeforum/>



The Foundation and the SCBD are committed to advancing biodiversity conservation and other environmental initiatives to pass on a beautiful planet rich in life to future generations.

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[Reference]

AEON Environmental Foundation

Established in 1990 by Takuya Okada (Honorary Chairman of the Foundation and Honorary Chairman and Advisor to AEON Co., Ltd.), the Foundation is Japan's first private-sector foundation dedicated exclusively to global environmental issues. The Foundation operates under AEON's core philosophy: "Pursuing peace, respecting humans, and contributing to local communities, always with customers as our starting point." Since its establishment, the Foundation has focused on four core programs: Tree Planting, Environmental Grants, Environmental Education and Joint Research, and Awards.

(For further details, please see: <https://www.aeonkankyozaidan.or.jp/en/>)

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international treaty adopted at the Earth Summit in 1992 and which entered into force in 1993. Its objectives are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources.

Currently, 196 countries and territories are Parties to the Convention, signalling almost universal membership of countries as the world's preeminent international framework on biodiversity. Parties to the CBD passed a historical global agreement in 2022, the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), to halt and reverse biodiversity loss through ambitious targets to 2030, and goals towards 2050 with a vision of a world living in harmony with nature.

■ Past Laureates of the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity

Affiliations are those held at the time of the award.

2010 (1st Award)

- Jean Lemire (Canada)
Biologist, Explorer and Filmmaker
- Gretchen C. Daily (USA)
Professor, Stanford University
- Emil Salim (Indonesia)
Chairman, Indonesian Presidential Advisory Council; Former Minister of Population and Environment
- Special Award: Angela Merkel (Germany)
Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

2012 (2nd Award)

- Juan Carlos Castilla (Chile)
Professor, Pontifical Catholic University of Chile
- Rodrigo Gámez Lobo (Costa Rica)
President, National Biodiversity Institute (INBio)
- Vo Quy (Vietnam)
Honorary Director, Centre for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies, Vietnam National University, Hanoi

2014 (3rd Award)

- Kamal Bawa (India)
Founder and President, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)
- Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana)
Chairman, Ghana Biodiversity Committee
- Bibiana Vilá (Argentina)
Director, Vicuña, Camelids and Environment Interdisciplinary Project; Principal Researcher, National Scientific and Technical Research Council

2016 (4th Award)

- Alfonso Aguirre-Muñoz (Mexico)
Executive Director, Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (GECI)
- Yury Darman (Russia)
Director, WWF Russia Amur Branch
- Vandana Shiva (India)
Founder and President, Navdany

2018 (5th Award)

- Kathy MacKinnon (United Kingdom)
Chair, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas
- Assad Serhal (Lebanon)
Director General, Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL)
- Abdul Hamid Zakri (Malaysia)
Former Science Adviser to the Prime Minister of Malaysia

2020 (6th Award)

- Paul Hebert (Canada)
Professor, Department of Integrative Biology, University of Guelph
- Melinee “Meli” A. Sakiyama (Brazil)
Co-founder, Global Youth Biodiversity Network
- Wirsiy Emmanuel Neba Nguiffo (Cameroon)
Founder, Cameroon Gender and Environment Watch (CAMGEW)

2024 (8th Award)

- Vera Voronova (Kazakhstan)
Executive Director, Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan
- Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos (Peru)
Founder and CEO of Sumak Kawsay, environmental enterprise