



## Winners of the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2012 awarded at a high level event of CBD COP11

*Hyderabad, 17 October 2012* – The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2012 was awarded at a ceremony held in Hyderabad, India, at the ministerial luncheon hosted by the Government of India during the high-level segment of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP11) in the presence of Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of Environment and Forests, Government of India and COP 11 President.

The MIDORI Prize is a biennial international prize organized by the AEON Environmental Foundation in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to honour individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at global, regional or local levels.

The winners of the 2012 Prize are: Dr. Juan Carlos Castilla, Professor of Marine Ecology at Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile; Dr. Rodrigo Gamez-Lobo, President of Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (INBio) and; Dr. Vo Quy, Honorary President at the Center for Natural Resources Management and Environmental Studies (CRES), Vietnam National University, Hanoi.

Each winner was awarded a wooden plaque, a commemorative gift and a monetary prize of \$100,000 US dollars to support their work in safeguarding biodiversity by Mr. Takuya Okada, the Chairman of the AEON Environmental Foundation. Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity was present representing the co-organizer of the prize.

Dr. Castilla said: “On facing marine conservation, biodiversity and sustainability of resources there are two corner stones: knowledge and realism that would provide novel solutions. Simple, top-down conservation recipes (networks of exclusive no-take areas) will not work, since it is essential to integrate users, stakeholders and society.”

“The sustainability of socio-ecological systems depends on governance and ethical grounds. It is within this framework that in the past 40 years I developed in Chile novel marine management and conservation tools for the sustainability of coastal resources, integrating local small-scale fisher communities. In the Anthropocene era the new marine sustainability paradigm is the comprehensive melting and integration of conservation and management tools into a single enterprise.”

Dr. Gamez said: “Based on the premise that the best way to conserve biodiversity is to “know it” and “use it” sustainably, in an intelligent way, for spiritual, intellectual or

economic purposes, INBio complemented the first and necessary "save" step of creation of a national system of wild protected areas conducted by the Government. The "save", "know", "use" trilogy of Costa Rica's conservation strategy was thus born."

"If the Midori Prize is a recognition of the privileged role I played in the exciting adventure of guiding INBio these years, I wish to take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the AEON Environmental Foundation, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Prize Jury and those responsible for my nomination. What you are recognizing is an effort in the human quest of peace with nature."

Dr. Vo Quy said: "As we know, we all depend on biodiversity to survive. But today, species loss is accelerating as our population growth and resource consumption put increasing strain on habitats and wildlife. The question is whether we can successfully find a way to survive and develop within the limits of our natural capital. This is time for action now. Delay will only increase the seriousness of the problem we need to resolve."

"There is no single solution that will solve the problem. Every member of the global community has a role to play: some doing big things, some doing small; but each contributing to the whole. I think we should all cooperate to solve this problem, otherwise all of us will suffer, because we all share one planet – the Earth. "

Ms. Jayanthi Natarajan, Minister of Environment and Forests, Government of India and COP 11 President said: "As COP11 President, I am very honoured to host this award ceremony and happy to have these distinguished winners at COP11, who have made outstanding contributions to implementation of CBD. I believe their inspiring works will help attract people's attention to biodiversity issues through this MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity"

Following the award ceremony, lectures by the winners will be held at Hyderabad International Convention Center, Hyderabad, India, from 18:15 to 19:15 of Thursday 18 October. Also, Winners' Forum will be held in Tokyo, Japan on Monday 22 October 2012 at the U Thant Hall of the United Nations University.

The MIDORI Prize was established by the AEON Environmental Foundation in 2010, during the International Year of Biodiversity. The year 2012 is the second time the MIDORI Prize is being awarded.

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### *Notes for editors*

#### **(1) The 2012 Midori Prize Winners**

**Dr. Juan Carlos Castilla (Chile)** – Professor, Department of Ecology, Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile

Dr. Juan Carlos Castilla is a marine scientist who has succeeded in translating the findings of his research into national policy to enable the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. His work with governments, coastal and more marginalized artisanal fisher communities who are among the most vulnerable

ecologically and economically in the face of biodiversity loss and adverse impacts of climate change, is commendable. He proved that the small scale Marine Protected Area is effective for sustainably developing the community as well as improving the livelihood of small sized fishermen. His achievements can be regarded as an integration model of science, policies and capacity development, and indicate the possibility of growing a Green economy. With more community-based researchers and practitioners like him to ensure ecosystem based management in communities around the world, there is hope that the Aichi Targets will be met.

Coastal and marine biodiversity, also addressed at Rio+20, is an internationally growing concern. It has been the theme for this year's International Day for Biological Diversity and will be a major agenda item at COP11. Dr. Castilla's pioneering activities in the marine field will call attention to the urgency of actions needed to reduce pressures on coastal and marine biodiversity.

**Dr. Rodrigo Gamez-Lobo (Costa Rica)** – President, Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (INBio)

Prior to the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, Drs. Rodrigo Gamez-Lobo and Daniel Janzen founded Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (INBio) in 1991 in order to organize the inventory of biodiversity. Dr. Gamez has contributed to the organization of the inventory in Costa Rica through training of parataxonomists, and has made significant efforts for thoroughly introducing biodiversity into the school and university curricula. He has headed the INBio since its establishment and presented the importance of biodiversity in a unique and concrete way. His achievements are outstanding. He has also been successful in providing ecotourism income more valuable than agriculture to Costa Rica through designating a stable set of national parks covering 25% of Costa Rica, a country of mega-diversity. He has demonstrated a good model of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to tropical countries that have problems of development and conservation. Thanks to his persistent commitment, his research activities facilitated policy which is now the foundation of lifestyle and nature tourism and a pathway to economic development, and put biodiversity on Costa Rica's national agenda. Among his numerous contributions, his work has shown that good science can and does lead to good policy and governance. His contributions to major issues of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Global Taxonomy Initiative and access and benefit sharing, are also highly evaluated.

**Dr. Vo Quy (Viet Nam)** – Honorary President, Center for Natural Resources Management and Environmental Studies (CRES), Vietnam National University, Hanoi

War is often said to be one of the main drivers of environmental degradation. The Vietnam War is one such war of which the country still bears the scars. Dr. Vo Quy devised an ambitious master plan for rehabilitating 50% of the country's

forests from severe environmental devastation. This plan, underpinned by his scientific expertise, was adopted by the government as the National Conservation Strategy, and he has steadily implemented the plan. He has also contributed to heightened public awareness and capacity building by making efforts to foster young researchers and community involvement. His work to regenerate the forests seriously devastated by adverse effects of Agent Orange is a living testimony to one man's commitment to using science to work with communities to rehabilitate the degraded environments around them, restore habitats and increase biodiversity. His achievements are influential at national and regional levels and a model to other developing nations of the conservation and rehabilitation of nature, offering hope that lands devastated by urbanization or warfare can be regenerated. War and its impacts aside, forest degradation and increased biodiversity loss is a challenge faced by communities worldwide and the example led by his lifework could potentially contribute to forest regeneration and biodiversity conservation activities beyond the borders of Viet Nam.

## **(2) The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity**

The year 2010 was a milestone in fields related to biodiversity. The United Nations declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity. Also, the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10) was held in Nagoya, Aichi, Japan. In commemoration of this important year, the AEON Environmental Foundation, which also celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2010, established “The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity.”

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity is a biennial international prize established in 2010, honouring individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at global, regional or local levels. The aims of this prize are to extend the developmental influence of the individual’s efforts to various projects relating to biodiversity throughout the world, and to raise awareness about biodiversity.

For more information visit: [www.midoripress-aeon.net/prize/index.html](http://www.midoripress-aeon.net/prize/index.html)

### ***Selection Process***

Announcement of the prize was made through media including the website of the prize ([www.midoripress-aeon.net](http://www.midoripress-aeon.net)). Nominations were accepted from the MIDORI Prize website and from academic advisors, and 145 candidates were nominated from March 1 (Wed.) to June 30 (Sat.). Nominees came from more than 50 countries. Through preliminary examinations by the Selection Committee, consisting of researchers and experts, the final selection was conducted by the Judging Committee Meeting.

### ***Criteria***

The recipients of the Prize are expected to have made outstanding contributions to the conservation of biodiversity from a global perspective and to make further contributions in future activities related to biodiversity. Also, by honoring the recipients, we expect

dissemination and promotion of such activities at a global level. In order to select such recipients, applications were 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 and
- Efficacy/Influence.

### ***Organization of the Prize***

Organization: AEON Environmental Foundation

Co-organization: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Support: Ministry of the Environment, Japan

The Asahi Shimbun Company

### **(3) 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.

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### **(4) 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](http://www.cbd.int). For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at [david.ainsworth@cbd.int](mailto:david.ainsworth@cbd.int); or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at [johan.hedlund@cbd.int](mailto:johan.hedlund@cbd.int).

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