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AEON Environmental Foundation

## **80 Asian University Students gather for an academic exchange about the environment** **The Third Asian Students Environmental Platform 2014 to be Held in China**

The Aeon Environmental Foundation (Chairman: Takuya Okada, Honorary Chairman and Advisor of Aeon Co., Ltd.; hereafter, "the Foundation" ) will host the Third Asian Students Environmental Platform (ASEP) 2014 in China over eight days starting Monday, August 4, 2014.

Today, environmental issues exert serious impact on a global scale, beyond the boundaries of countries and regions. Given such circumstances, the Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Nagoya-shi in October 2010 to cooperate in the promotion of environmental education and implementation of tree planting.

Based on this MOU, the Foundation started ASEP as a ten-year project from 2012, with the aim of promoting the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity that began in 2011 and developing human resources capable of contributing in environmental fields from a global perspective. ASEP invites university students from Asian countries to learn about the differences in the natural environment, history and culture, and values between countries, while exchanging views on biodiversity from a global perspective. With adding new countries each year, the Foundation intends to expand the forum, hosting attendees from throughout East Asia including all ASEAN nations in next ten years.

Last year, 80 students from China, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam gathered in South Korea to discuss and examine the theme, "The Environment and Humans." This year, the third ASEP will invite 80 students from five countries including Malaysia as a new participant. Attendees will learn about biodiversity and deepen exchanges through fieldwork at wetlands, deserts, and the Dujiangyan Irrigation System, a World Heritage Site, under the theme of "Human and Water". Furthermore, the Foundation will also engage in tree nurturing activities at the Great Wall of China to maintain the trees, planted as part of the Foundation's tree-planting initiative launched in 1998. The number of trees planted at the site reached 1 million in 2009.

In addition to the ASEP, the Foundation has other undertakings to promote preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity such as tree-planting activities in Japan and abroad and awarding contributions to biodiversity with the Japan Awards for Biodiversity (for domestic activities ) and the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity (for global activities) in alternate years.

Aeon will continue to undertake a wide variety of initiatives to deliver beautiful water and greenery for the next generation and achieve a future full of hope, living in harmony with nature.

### [The Third Asian Students Environmental Platform (ASEP) 2014]

1. Date and time: August 4 (Mon) to 11 (Mon), 2014
2. Venue: China (Beijing, Tianjin, Inner Mongolia, Chengdu)
3. Sponsored by: AEON Environmental Foundation
4. Co-sponsored by: Tsinghua University, Waseda University
5. Participants: Total of about 80 students from: Tsinghua University (China), Waseda University (Japan), Korea University (South Korea), University of Malaya (Malaysia), and Vietnam National University, Hanoi (Vietnam)
6. Schedule: August 4 (Mon) Opening ceremony  
5 (Tue) to 10 (Sun) Fieldwork, lectures, group discussions  
11 (Mon) Presentation of accomplishments, Closing ceremony

◆ Program Outline (Study tour destinations)

- August 4 (Mon) Opening ceremony
- 5 (Tue) Tianjin Urban Planning Exhibition Hall, wetlands (Tianjin)
- 6 (Wed) Beijing Olympic Park (Beijing), grasslands (Inner Mongolia)
- 7 (Thu) Deserts, artificial forest (Inner Mongolia)
- 8 (Fri) Dujiangyan Irrigation System, Chengdu Water Park (Chengdu)
- 9 (Sat) Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding (Chengdu)
- 10 (Sun) Tree nurturing at the Giant Wall of China, Aeon Beijing International Mall Shopping Center (Beijing)
- 11 (Mon) Presentation of accomplishments, Closing ceremony



ASEP 2013 held in South Korea

[Promoting the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity]

◆ The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity (for global activities)

In 2010, the Foundation established the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity in commemoration of the UN International Biodiversity Year as well as its own 20th anniversary. The MIDORI Prize is presented to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at global, regional, or local levels. In addition, by introducing distinguished accomplishments to the public, the Foundation aims to support proactive activities for biodiversity and enhance awareness.

This fiscal year, a presentation award ceremony will be held in Pyeongchang, South Korea in mid-October to coincide with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

◆ The Japan Awards for Biodiversity (for domestic activities)

This award was established in 2009 in commemoration of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in 2010. The aim is to promote the preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. This award being a domestic award and the MIDORI Prize being an international award, the two awards are presented in alternate years.