



**MESSAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION
ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
MR. BRAULIO FERREIRA DE SOUZA DIAS
on the occasion of
THE PRESS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE THE WINNERS OF
MIDORI PRIZE FOR BIODIVERSITY 2012
*20 September 2012***

The Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity is proud and honoured to co-organize the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity with the AEON Environmental Foundation. I am therefore delighted to have this opportunity to provide a message on the occasion of the press conference convened to announce the winners of the 2012 Prize.

The MIDORI Prize is a unique and powerful initiative to help raise awareness and encourage action for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the AEON Environmental Foundation for establishing this special prize for biodiversity, which can be called the “Nobel Prize for Biodiversity”, and to thank the all others involved for their excellent contribution to its organization. I would like to pay very special thanks to Mr. Okada, who serves as an example in so many respects.

Twenty years ago, the Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted in recognition that the planet’s biological diversity are the basis of our life and fundamental to sustainable development. Over those twenty years immense progress has been made. But despite this, the world’s biodiversity continues to decline and effective and urgent action is required more than ever. For this purpose, in 2010, in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, the 193 governments of the Parties to the Convention adopted an ambitious Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets.



**Convention on
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However, protecting life on earth, which is the basis of and closely connected to our daily life, is not only the responsibility of the ministries or agencies in charge of protection of the environment. It is the responsibility of each and every citizen. It is for this reason that the United Nations General Assembly declared 2011-2020 the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity to help engage citizens across the world in protecting life on earth.

The MIDORI Prize supports the objectives of the Decade by honoring individuals who have made outstanding contributions and, by showcasing their great works, hopes to inspire others. I have no doubt that this prize will become more and more influential and contribute to raising awareness on biodiversity throughout the decade.

Therefore, I would like to convey my sincere congratulations to the winners of the 2012 Prize. Among them we have three individuals who have variously succeeded in translating the findings of research into national policy; in establishing an exemplary national biodiversity institute; and in founding a national conservation movement. We are delighted to award the 2012 Prize to these remarkable winners and hope their outstanding contributions will help deepen people's understanding on the importance of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
