



PRESS RELEASE

Winners of the 8th MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2024

01 October 2024 – The AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) are pleased to announce the winners of the 2024 MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity:

- *Ms. Vera Voronova, Executive Director, Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan; and*
- *Ms. Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos, Founder and CEO of Sumak Kawsay, an environmental enterprise, Peru.*

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity is a prestigious biennial international prize organized by the AEON Environmental Foundation and the CBD Secretariat. It is awarded to biodiversity champions in several sectors of activities and from local to global levels.

The prize reflects the need for the whole-of-society approach that underpins the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its 23 targets for achievement by 2030. Today's announcement brings to 19 the number of individuals from 17 countries who have received the prize. Each winner is awarded a commemorative gift and a plaque, and a monetary prize of USD 100,000 to support their work in safeguarding biodiversity.

The founder of the prize, Takuya Okada, Honorary Chairman of AEON Environmental Foundation and Honorary Chairman and Advisor, AEON Co., Ltd., said: “The conservation of biodiversity and the prevention of climate change are considered two of the most important environmental issues of the present day. The Foundation hopes that this prize will contribute to these global environmental issues and to achieving the global goals set forth in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in December 2022.”

Astrid Schomaker, CBD Executive Secretary remarked: “It is crucial to take tangible and innovative actions that demonstrate how the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through a whole-of-society approach can become a reality. This year's winners have developed initiatives



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that can benefit people and nature, at the local and international levels. Congratulations to Vera Voronova and Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos whose groundbreaking solutions epitomize the commitment we need to fulfill the vision of humanity living in harmony with nature”.

The Prize will be awarded on 29 October 2024, from 18:30 to 19:00 local time, in the Multi-stakeholder Auditorium of the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia. Winners will also be recognized during the high-level segment of the Conference on 30 October 2024, between 15:00 and 18:00 local time.

The 2024 MIDORI Prize Winners



Vera Voronova (Kazakhstan)
Executive Director, Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan

Vera Voronova is the exceptional leader of ACBK, Kazakhstan’s national civil society organization dedicated to nature conservation and restoration. She collaborates with multiple governments and conservation organizations to restore species, establish protected areas, and improve conservation legislation not only in Kazakhstan but throughout Central Asia. Particular focus is placed on the recovery of endangered mammal populations in the steppe regions, restoration of migration corridors, and protection of the Central Asian Flyway. Her initiatives have directly improved the livelihoods of rural communities, educated the next generation on environmental and conservation issues, and contributed to the conservation of migratory animals that cross national borders. Her approach serves as an exemplary model of engagement at all levels, employing whole-of-government and whole-of-society strategies. The project is expected to have further international impacts.



Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos (Peru)
Founder and CEO of Sumak Kawsay, an environmental enterprise

Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos, founder and CEO of Sumak Kawsay, effectively leads conservation efforts aimed at halting and reversing pollinator decline while fostering socio-economic development in local communities, especially Indigenous women and youth. Her “Bee Honey Route” project promotes agrotourism, using honey production from native stingless bees and tourism revenue to fund ecosystem restoration, native plant reforestation, research, and conservation. The work yields tangible benefits for biodiversity and ecosystems, supports sustainable livelihoods, and advances gender equality. The environmental enterprise has created an innovative business model that benefits both biodiversity and civil society, supporting economic development and Indigenous rights. Recognized internationally, her initiatives serve as a model for holistic societal approaches.

Notes to editors

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity

The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity raises public awareness of the importance of biodiversity to human wellbeing and global issues, such as climate change, and contributes to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the KMGBF. It supports action and inspires others by honoring and bringing attention to the achievements of individuals who have made major contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity was established by AEON Environmental Foundation to commemorate its 20th anniversary in 2010, which coincided with the UN International Year of Biodiversity and the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10), held in Nagoya, Japan. Nineteen Prize winners have been selected so far and their work is relevant around the world. For more information: www.aeon.info/ef/en/prize/

AEON Environmental Foundation

Established in 1990, AEON Environmental Foundation implements activities that respond to environmental issues in a changing world. In 2009, before establishing the MIDORI Prize with the CBD Secretariat, the Foundation and Japan's Ministry of the Environment established a domestic award, the Japan Awards for Biodiversity. On the occasion of the Foundation's 30th anniversary, the two biennial awards were unified as the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity. Today the Foundation is promoting activities with stakeholders in four areas: Tree Planting, Environmental Grant Program, Environmental Education and Joint Research, and Award. Representative of AEON Environmental Foundation activities is tree-planting, carried out with volunteers worldwide, with more than 12.7 million trees planted to date. In this and many other ways, the Foundation continues to promote activities to pass on our beautiful planet, full of life, to future generations. Please visit: www.aeon.info/ef/en/

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Entering into force in 1993, the CBD 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 196 Parties, the CBD has near universal participation among countries. It seeks to address threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services 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 and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the CBD. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force in 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 173 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol.

The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. Since entering into force in 2014, it has been ratified by 141 Parties.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

The KMGBF aims to catalyze, enable and galvanize urgent and transformative action by Governments, and subnational and local authorities, with the involvement of all of society, to halt and reverse biodiversity loss,



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to achieve its Vision, Mission, Goals and Targets, and thereby contribute to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and to those of its Protocols.

For more information: www.cbd.int.

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