

## Sasakawa International Environment Prize

The United Nations General Assembly approved in 1972 the establishment of the International Environment Prize recommended by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1972. Such a prize was first awarded in 1976. In 1982 the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), at its Commemorative Session of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, accepted an endowment of US \$1,000,000 from the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation to finance the Prize.\* It was subsequently well-said by the UN Secretary-General that 'Those involved with environment movements do not work for awards or rewards; it is entirely fitting that we now have such a way to recognize outstanding contributions'.

The Prize was later named the Sasakawa International Environment Prize,\* and is continually administered by UNEP. It is quite one of the most prestigious environmental awards in the world, being conferred on individuals or institutions of any nation for outstanding contributions and achievements in the protection and management of the environment. The annual award of US \$50,000 was increased to \$200,000 in 1990, making it also the world's most valuable strictly environmental prize.

Since its inception, the Sasakawa International Environment Prize has been awarded to leading international environment institutions and has also recognized the work of individuals throughout the world. The prize encourages environmental achievements in the broadest sense — in environmental health, resource management, food and agriculture, population, wildlife, pollution- and hazardous materials-control, education, information, and legislation.

The inaugural prize was conferred posthumously on Dr Aurelio Peccei, the Italian industrialist, as one of those who had pioneered debate on environmental degradation and the need for sustainable use of natural resources. In announcing the Prize to Dr Peccei, UNEP's Executive Director, Dr Mostafa K. Tolba, said 'Our global environment is a shared home. We have only one Earth. If respected, our Earth nourishes a marvellous gift of life. If abused, humanity and all other life is at risk.' These words remain the inspiration of the Sasakawa International Environment Prize.

Since its inception in 1984 the *Sasakawa International Environment Prize* has been awarded (sometimes divided) to the Italian industrialist Dr Aurelio Peccei (posthumously), the eminent American geographer Professor Gilbert F. White, the College of African Wildlife Management in Tanzania, the German-born ocean conservation activist Mrs Elisabeth Mann Borgese, the botanist-ecologist Professor Nicholas Polunin, the Saudi Royal Commission of Jubail and Yambu, the World Commission on Environment and Development, the American writer Lester R. Brown, and the Brazilian martyr Francisco 'Chico' Mendez Filho (posthumously).

The 1990 Selection Committee consisted of: Dr M. Pastrana Borrero (Chairman), Judge Manfred Lachs,

Professor Wangari Maathai, Dr Abdulbar A. A.-Gain, Dr Russell W. Peterson, and Lord Clinton Davies.

### Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Persons eligible to make nominations include, but are not limited to:

- Specialists in the environmental sciences; academies of science, engineering, research, and their members.
- Universities, professional institutions and their members; governments; trade unions; nongovernmental organizations; the United Nations system.

Nominees can be associated with any field of the environment. Nominated institutions can be universities, foundations, corporations, or other types of organization, involved with environmental activities.

As regards selection criteria, the prize is awarded for the protection, maintenance, or improvement of understanding, of the environment.

### Deadline for Nominations and Length of Candidacy

Nominations for the Prize must be received no later than the last day of November in each year for the next. Related credentials, supporting materials, and letters of reference, must be received at the same time.

Nominees will be considered for two years. A new letter of nomination and updated description of achievements will be required after two years.

### Nomination Procedures

*Identification of Nominee:*— If a person, please include name, professional and home mailing addresses, present occupational title, and institutional affiliation. Enclose a *curriculum vitae* or resumé.

If an institution or corporation is nominated, identify the administrative officer of the organization or the subgroup responsible for the environmental accomplishments cited.

*Summary of Accomplishment:*— Provide a brief statement (one–two pages) of the individual's or institution's achievements in the field for which the award is proposed. Be precise and factual throughout.

*Description of Contributions:*— Provide a detailed explanation of the contributions and explain why each is valuable and effective. Describe how each was accomplished. Mention any significant involvement of others.

*References:*— Prove three letters of recommendation from individuals who can assess the nominee's contributions. Identify three additional referees who might be contacted by the Selection Committee.

*Evidence of Achievements:*— The Selection Committee reserves the right to request examples of publications, or other evidence, which demonstrates the candidate's contributions. Material will be retained by UNEP unless otherwise requested.

Nomination forms for the Sasakawa International Environment Prize may be obtained from UNEP Headquarters, to which requests should be addressed as follows:

THE SECRETARY  
SASAKAWA INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT PRIZE  
c/o United Nations Environment Programme  
PO Box 30552  
Nairobi  
Kenya.

The Cable Address is: UNITERRA NAIROBI, the telephone number is 333930, the Telex is 22068 UNEP KE, and the Fax number is 520711.

\*Having been present as a guest at the time, we well remember how Mr Ryoichi Sasakawa, Chairman of the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, mounted the platform of the assembly hall in Nairobi and announced this splendid donation. So it seems most fitting that the prize should bear his name — officially as above, though on our own illuminated certificate from the Secretary-General of the United Nations it is indicated as 'The International Sasakawa Environment Prize' (*sic*), and on the tall crystal-glass emblem received from the Japanese Ambassador to Kenya but dominated by the UNEP emblem, as the 'Sasakawa Environment Prize... 1987 UN Environment Programme.' — Ed.