

af News

2012 Research Grant Presentation Ceremony

In the morning of June 12, the Asahi Glass Foundation held the ceremony at Keidanren Hall to present research grants for the year 2012. Chairman Tetsuji Tanaka opened the ceremony with a speech, followed by Dr. Hachiro Nakanishi, the chairman of the Selection Committee, who delivered the report on this year's selection process. Chairman Tanaka then presented the certificate to each grant recipients.

Mr. Junpei Watanabe, director of the Scientific Research Aid Division of the Research Promotion Bureau of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, then



offered words of congratulations.

Representing the grant recipients, Associate Professor Akira Mori of Yokohama National University responded with appreciation to close the ceremony. A reception followed the ceremony.

This year, 80 research projects were selected to receive the domestic grants. Combined with another 21 projects carried over from the previous year, the total grant provided in Japan amounted to 261 million yen.

[The Foundation's website lists the new grant-supported projects selected this year \(Research Grant Program > Grantees\)](#)



2012 Seminar on Grant-Supported Research Findings in Japan

On August 1, the seminar for the presentation of 83 grant-supported research projects that had been completed, along with interim report presentations on 9 on-going projects with large grants, were held at Hotel Grand Hill Ichigaya. In addition to the presenters, other researchers who currently hold grants, Selection Committee members, guests, and numerous other relevant people attended the seminar.

The seminar opened with a speech by Chairman Tetsuji Tanaka, and then Prof. Terunobu Miyazaki (Tohoku University), the chairman of the Selection Committee,

described the aim of the seminar. Each presenter later gave a three-minute speech accompanied by a poster presentation. Speeches and presentations were given in three separate sessions according to their field of research. The event lasted until the early evening.

Researchers from various fields gathered in front of the posters and discussions took place. This was a valuable opportunity as researchers discussed not only their accomplishments thus far but also a wide range of other matters such as the direction of their future studies, which resulted in new academic collaborations.

After the presentations, all attendees attended the social function.



A three-minute speech



Attendees view the posters

2012 Overseas Research Grants: Grant Presentation Ceremonies and Seminars on Research Findings

Chulalongkorn University (CU, Thailand)

On July 3, the research grant presentation ceremony and the seminar on research findings were held in the Montien Hotel located near Chulalongkorn University. Following a speech by CU President Dr. Pirom, Chairman Tanaka presented certificates to each of the 13 grant recipients of this year. Prof. Thanawat Jarupongsakul then delivered a keynote lecture on Thailand's 2011 floods context. The attendees then separated to listen to the two research findings' presentation sessions, with each session held in a different room. Presentations were made on a total of 9 research projects.



Grant recipients, President Dr. Pirom and Chairman Tanaka



Keynote Lecture by Prof. Thanawat

King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT, Thailand)

On July 3, Chairman Tanaka and Dr. Sakarindr Bhumiratana, president of King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) signed the memorandum of understanding on a three-year research grant project between the Asahi Glass Foundation and KMUTT. KMUTT became a new recipient of the Foundation's research grants, and the research grant presentation was held on the next day, July 4 at KMUTT. At the ceremony, Vice President Bundit Thipakorn gave opening remarks, followed by Vice President Bundit Fungtammasan reporting the selection process. After Chairman Tanaka gave a speech, certificates were presented to each of the 6 grant recipients. The recipients gave panel presentations at the same venue.



Exchange of the memorandum on the research grant
[Senior Executive Director Samejima, Chairman Tanaka, President Sakarindr, Asst. Prof. Anak]



Chairman Tanaka presents a certificate



Grant recipients and associated people from KMUTT and the Asahi Glass Foundation

Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB, Indonesia)

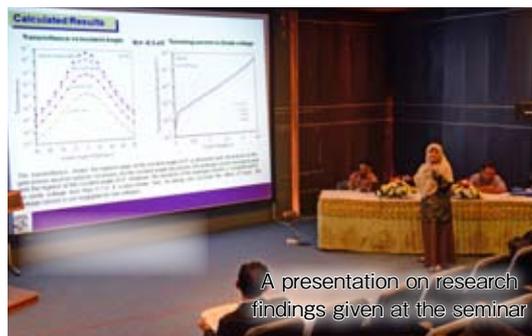
On July 6, the grant presentation ceremony and the seminar on research findings were held in the auditorium of Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB). Following speeches by ITB Rector Dr. Akhmaloka and Senior Executive Director Samejima, certificates were presented to 16 grant recipients. In the seminar on research findings, 16 grantees adopted in previous years presented their results.



Grant recipients, Rector Dr. Akhmaloka and Senior Executive Director Samejima



Senior Executive Director Samejima presents a certificate



A presentation on research findings given at the seminar

Joint Paper by the Blue Planet Prize Laureates

This year, with the Blue Planet Prize commemorating its 20th anniversary, the laureates decided to draft a joint paper. The laureates gathered in London for the preliminary session on February 8-10. Fourteen of them gathered including Dr. Syukuro Manabe, winner of the first Blue Planet Prize. Discussions were held based on individually pre-submitted papers and eventually compiled into the joint paper titled *Environment and Development Challenges: The Imperative to Act*. A press conference was held on February 10, the final day of the session, and Dr. Robert Watson (UK) revealed 12 key messages.

Dr. Watson announced the joint paper at the 12th UNEP Governing Council Meeting held on February 20 in Nairobi. A discussion session featuring three laureates, including Dr. Watson, and other participants was held as a separate side event.

In March, Dr. Watson gave a lecture at Planet Under Pressure, an international conference of environment-related academic societies that was held in London. On June 17, in Rio de Janeiro, Dr. Watson and other Blue Planet laureates gave lectures on the paper, followed by discussions with participants. This session was held after the press conference to announce this year's winners of the Blue Planet Prize.



For details on the joint paper, visit “Blue Planet Prize Laureates’ UNEP Paper,” a page on the Foundation’s official website (click on the banner at the right on the top page).





2012 Blue Planet Prize Winners Announced

On June 17 (local date), the press conference to announce the winners of the 21st Blue Planet Prize was held at the Japan Pavilion of Rio+20, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, in Rio de Janeiro, with Chairman Tanaka, Dr. Yoshihiro Hayashi (chairman of the Selection Committee) and Senior Executive Director Samejima in attendance.

Followed by a speech by Chairman Tanaka as the organizer, Chairman Hayashi of the Selection Committee introduced the winners of the year, who participated in Rio+20 and were present at the press conference venue.



Press Conference



Chairman Hayashi shaking hands with Dr. Lovejoy, one of this year's winners

Professor William E. Rees (Canada) of University of British Columbia, who is also Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (FRSC), was awarded jointly with Dr. Mathis Wackernagel (Switzerland), President of the Global Footprint Network. The other winner was Dr. Thomas E. Lovejoy (USA), Professor in environmental science and policy at George Mason University.

Nominators from around the world nominated candidates, who were carefully screened by the Selection Committee. The Presentation Committee held discussions on the candidates and the winners were subsequently decided at the Board of Directors and Councillors Meeting held in April this year.

Winners introduced by Chairman Hayashi took the stage and gave their acceptance speeches. At the question-and-answer session held later, members of the media asked many questions and engaged in lively discussion with the winners.



One of this year's Blue Planet Prize winners speaking on stage



This year's Blue Planet Prize winners and chairman Tanaka



Japan Pavilion

Winners of the 2012 Blue Planet Prize Introduction of the Recipients

Professor William E. Rees (Canada) Dr. Mathis Wackernagel (Switzerland)

[Professor Rees]
Professor, University
of British Columbia,
FRSC (Fellow of the
Royal Society of
Canada)

[Dr. Wackernagel]
President, Global
Footprint Network



Selection Rationale

Flying without a fuel gauge is dangerous. Yet most nations operate without knowing how much “nature” they have and how much they use. By developing Ecological Footprint accounting, William Rees and Mathis Wackernagel have provided a natural resource “fuel gauge” to nations and the world. Ecological Footprint calculations show that currently most countries are in an ecological overshoot. It now takes our Blue Planet one year and 6 months to replenish what humanity uses each year. The Footprint is a unique metric that allows anyone to compare people’s demand for biologically productive ecosystems with how much is available. The graphic power of the Footprint metaphor in many languages has helped make the Footprint the world’s bestknown and most-used sustainability metric. The Footprint is backed up by detailed accounts that vividly underscore today’s life-threatening sustainability gap, and suggest what we must do to close it.

Dr. Thomas E. Lovejoy (USA)

Professor, Environmen-
tal Science and Policy,
George Mason
University



Selection Rationale

Through pioneering and creative fieldwork conducted in the tropical Amazon rainforest, Dr. Lovejoy made a great achievement by shedding light on the fact and the major mechanism of species decline when the biodiversity concept was still in its infancy. Through this fieldwork, he became the first person to academically clarify how human caused habitat fragmentation and propelled biodiversity toward crisis. Based on profound insights into ecosystems obtained through series of research, Dr. Lovejoy became the first to publish the report *A Projection of Species Extinctions*. From there, he has continued to indicate and propose measures for curbing the rising rate of endangered species, significantly influencing numerous academic institutes and societies and helping lay the foundation for protecting the natural environment based on biodiversity, which is now a mainstream concept.



The Awards Ceremony and the Commemorative Lectures of the 2012 Blue Planet Prize

The awards ceremony will take place on October 31, 2012 (Wednesday), at Tokyo Kaikan (Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo). The commemorative lectures will be given by the prize recipients at the United Nations University (Shibuya Ward, Tokyo) on November 1(Thursday).

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