



Press Information

Volvo awards protection of biodiversity

The Volvo Environment Prize 2005 is awarded to two outstanding conservationists from the southern hemisphere who have made extraordinary contributions to conservation. Their work in these biodiversity hotspots has built strong public support and has enhanced global understanding of the importance of protecting biodiversity.

For the first time in the history of the Volvo Environment Prize, two women are sharing the award: Dr Mary Kalin Arroyo who works in Chile, and Professor Aila Keto whose work takes place in Australia.

Dr Mary Kalin Arroyo is a professor of biology at Universidad de Chile. She has combined research on the reproductive systems of plants with the study of complete communities and applied this information to conservation. Her studies have led to the design of an improved system of protected areas in Chile, one of the world's most important biodiversity regions.

Dr Arroyo is the head of the Independent Scientific Commission of the Rio Condor Project. This is a joint effort between the Chilean scientific community and the forestry industry, with the aim of generating the necessary knowledge to use Chile's mostly temperate forests for sustainable development, providing mandatory safeguards for conservation of biodiversity in the region. Based on her work, 68,000 hectares of the Condor River drainage basin in Chile have been protected.

Professor Aila Keto has worked since 1982 as President of the Australian Rainforest Conservation Society to build support for the conservation of the natural heritage of Queensland. As a research scientist, she has identified numerous natural value in the rainforests of Queensland. She has made important contributions to at least three World Heritage Sites in north-eastern Australia. Professor Keto's work led to the protection of more than 1.5 million hectares of Queensland's rainforest.

Her most recent achievement is the negotiation of a historic agreement signed by the Queensland Timber Board, the Queensland Government, and three major conservation groups that will ensure the conservation of the native forests of Queensland, serving as something of a national precedent for work of this kind.

This is the sixteenth consecutive year in which the Volvo Environment Prize is being awarded to internationally renowned experts and researchers. The prize was established in 1988 to support and recognize environmental research and development. Since then it has gained the status of being one of the world's most prestigious environment prizes.

The prize totals SEK 1.5 million and will be awarded at a ceremony to be held in Stockholm on 26 October. The award will be handed over by Mrs. Mona Sahlin, Minister for Sustainable Development, Mr. Leif Johansson, CEO and President of the Volvo Group and Mr. Fredrik Arp, President and CEO of Volvo Car Corporation.

More information about the Environment Prize and its winners, including photographs, is available at the Volvo Environment Prize website:
www.environment-prize.com.

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