



Green Cross and United Nations call for nominations to 2017 environment and emergency awards

Geneva – 28 June 2016: Nominations for the 2017 Green Star Awards, celebrating outstanding efforts to address the environmental and humanitarian impacts of disasters and conflicts, were called for today by the United Nations and the non-governmental organisation Green Cross International.

The biennial Green Star Awards, first presented in 2009, are a collaborative initiative between the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Green Cross International (GCI), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Various types of emergency can have severe impacts on the environment, human health and livelihoods. The Green Star Awards recognize individuals, organizations, governments and companies that demonstrate remarkable achievements in raising awareness, building capacity, and effectively responding to such crises.

The Green Star Awards emphasize the nexus between the environment and the need to safeguard communities from the environmental impacts of emergencies – including industrial accidents, extreme weather events, and protracted crisis.

“When communities and the environment on which they depend are hit or threatened by disasters, we count on partners with specialised skills and abilities to help. The Green Star Awards showcase leadership and innovation in tackling environmental emergencies and we look to these partners for inspiration and action,” said Stephen O’Brien, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

Alexander Likhotal, President of Green Cross International, said: “Environmental disasters often trigger and then snowball into humanitarian catastrophes, and the effects will only deepen further as climate change and ecological crisis increase. We need new ideas and innovative practices to deal with the growing number and scale of environmental emergencies, so it is essential to recognize excellence in this field.”

“The Green Star Awards recognize the efforts of leaders whose work ultimately contributes to the stability of post-crisis societies,” said UNEP Deputy Executive Director Ibrahim Thiaw. “The links between environmental degradation, natural resource depletion and tensions that can evolve into conflicts is becoming ever clearer to the international community and will become ever more challenging.”

Nominations for the Green Star Awards will be accepted until the end of January 2017. Winners will be announced in June 2017 during the Environment and Emergencies Forum in Nairobi, Kenya. The Forum is a biennial global meeting that brings together stakeholders from around the world to improve preparedness, response and overall resilience to environmental emergencies as well as to integrate environment in humanitarian action.

In 2015, the Green Star Awards were presented to three organizations for their contribution to dealing with global environmental emergencies: Ambatovy (a private company from Madagascar), for effectively preventing environmental emergencies and reducing disaster risk through removal of chemical hazards; CEDRE – Centre of Documentation, Research and Experimentation on Accidental Water Pollution (an association of public and private organisations from France), for its deployment of experts and technical advice to field response missions in the Philippines in 2013 and Bangladesh in 2014; and Women’s Refugee Commission (a non-profit organisation from the USA), for spearheading and implementing the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) Initiative and producing the first-ever guidance on safe access to energy in humanitarian settings.

For full details on the nomination process (including nomination form), **please visit www.greenstarawards.net**

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