



UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

联合国环境规划署



Thai Student Wins Asia Pacific Prize for UNEP International Children's Painting Competition

Bangkok, 26 June 2013 – A Thai student's painting caught the eyes of judges, making it the Asia Pacific winner of the United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) annual International Children's Painting Competition. Thirteen-year old Nattamon Ninkham's painting, based on the



competition theme, "“Water: Where does it come from? - Water: The Source of Life”", beat more than 45,000 entries from Asia Pacific to make her the winner of this year's competition.

The UNEP Tunza International Painting Competition is an annual event that is jointly organized by UNEP, Bayer AG, the Japan-based Foundation of Global Peace and Environment (FGPE) and Nikon Corporation.

Nattamon's painting conveys the importance of clean water for people. "I would like to tell all the children around the world to help to maintain the quality of water. I would like to see clean water and green earth. I want to be an environment protector and support the project of our King" she said.

Nattamon's painting, along with other winning entries, will be exhibited at various venues in Japan and other countries and the websites of UNEP and Foundation of Global Peace and Environment (FGPE).

"We are happy to receive thousands of entries for the 22nd competition with a variety of expressions on the theme of "Water: Where does it come from?" A winner of Asia and the Pacific region made a supreme expression with a unique idea, composition and colors. It fantastically and impressively shows how the precious water is supporting all life on the planet and keeping our healthy life and communities. We hope that the selected artworks can widely enhance public awareness in the UN International Year of Water Cooperation" Ms. Tomoko Yano, Secretary General of FGPE said.

Nattamon's entry will move on to the global level, to compete with entries from other regions – West Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America. Each region chose a regional winner. The winners of the global competition will be announced at the Champions of the Earth Meeting in New York, United State of America on 18 September 2013.

"This year's competition offered children a way to think of actions to protect our environment and they have responded overwhelmingly by creatively showing simple actions we all can take. They have artfully shown that there are actions we can take now," said Mr. Young-woo Park, Regional Director.

Nattamon wins a US\$1,000 cash prize and all-expenses-paid trip for her and an accompanying adult New York, United State of America.

“Every year, we are very proud to see an increasing number of entries for our Children's Painting Competition. This Painting Competition is a core element of our partnership with UNEP and this year's theme, "Water: Where does it come from" has inspired the imagination of the children in Thailand as well as other countries in Asia-Pacific and encouraged them to reflect on the importance of this crucial resource. We must take the concerns and wishes of the children, as expressed in the wonderful paintings, very seriously. I encourage everyone to enjoy these paintings and think about the role of Water in our lives", says Celina Chew, Country Group Head of North ASEAN Region and Managing Director of Bayer Thai Co., Ltd.

“It was a pleasure seeing so many wonderful paintings submitted from over 20 countries in the Asia Pacific region. This year's theme is “Water” which is essential for nature, wild life, and our lives. By participating in this competition, I am sure that the children have realized how we are closely connected to the natural environment. Each painting was filled with creativity, uniqueness, and a strong sense of need to protect the earth. We hope that this competition will keep continuing in the future. We were truly honored to participate in this screening, and we are very excited to see the results for the global screening in June” said Nobuyuki Muraishi Managing Director & President, Nikon (Thailand) Co., Ltd.

The selection of the regional winner was done by a Jury Committee made up of UNEP staff, representatives from Bayer Thai Co. Ltd., Nikon and art students.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The regional winners of the Twenty-two International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment are being announced on World Environment Day, 5 June 2013. This year's theme was **“Water: Where does it come from? - Water: The Source of Life”**. Children aged 6 - 14 were invited to use their artistic skills to show the rich biodiversity contained in the world's forests. This year's painting competition attracted 61,009 entries from 109 countries, which received more than 44,990 entries from Asia Pacific.

This annual competition is jointly organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Japan-based Foundation for Global Peace and Environment (FGPE), Bayer and Nikon. The painting competition has been held since 1990 and in that time over a million entries from children in over 100 countries have received.

UNEP offices in Bahrain, Bangkok, Geneva, Panama, Washington DC, and Nairobi each chose their own regional winners and submitted a total of 3,000 paintings to the global selection.

The global winners will be chosen by a jury comprised of representatives of the competition organizers. These global winners will be announced at the Champions of the Earth Meeting in New York, United State of America on 18 September 2013.

All regional and global winners will receive a cash prize (US\$ 1000 for the regional winners, US\$ 2000 for the first prize winner) as well as an all-expenses-paid trip to the New York, United State of America on 18 September 2013.

A selection of winning paintings will be shown in exhibitions around the world. They will also be exhibited online and will be used for posters, post cards, calendars, and in publications to raise awareness of the need to conserve biodiversity.

The International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment is part of UNEP's TUNZA strategy for children and youth. TUNZA is a word in Kiswahili that means to "treat with care". The programme aims to increase young people's involvement in environmental issues through environmental activities such as Plant for the Planet, International Conferences and Global Youth Gatherings.