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**UNITED NATIONS  
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## UNU Will Celebrate International Biodiversity Day With a Symposium on 22 May

**Event:** International Day for Biological Diversity Symposium  
**Theme:** “Invasive Alien Species – Causes and Impacts”  
**Date/Time:** 22 May 2009 (Friday), 10:00 AM – 5:40 PM  
**Venue:** U Thant International Conference Hall, UN University Headquarters, Tokyo  
**Organizers:** National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), United Nations University Institute for Sustainability and Peace (UNU-ISP), Global Environment Information Centre (GEIC), Japan Ministry of the Environment (MOE)

### Background

- May 22 is observed annually by the United Nations as “International Day for Biological Diversity” to draw attention to the importance of biological diversity and its contributions to sustainable human development. The focus this year is on “Invasive Alien Species”.
- The term “alien species” refers to plants and animals that have been relocated from their native range. Those alien species whose introduction and/or spread threaten biological diversity are called “invasive alien species”. Such species can have social, economic and human well-being effects in addition to their ecological impacts. The main drivers of the spread of invasive alien species are not the species themselves, but human activities in global trade, transportation and tourism. Climate change and landscape change (such as deforestation, desertification or environment pollution) are interlinked with the establishment and spread of invasive alien species.
- Participants in this symposium will consider the future of biological diversity by sharing up-to-date information and scientific knowledge on invasive alien species and reviewing the activities and lifestyles that have threatened biological diversity.

### About the symposium

- The symposium will open with remarks by Masayoshi Yoshino, Vice Minister, MOE, and Konrad Osterwarlder, Rector, UNU.
- The keynote speakers in the morning session will be Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD); Kunio Iwatsuki, Professor Emeritus, the University of Tokyo; and Wojtek Solarz, IUCN Species Survival Commission, Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG).
- The afternoon session will include presentations and a panel discussion moderated by Kunio Iwatsuki. Panelists will include Fred Kraus, Bishop Museum, Hawaii, USA; Sri Sudarmiyati Tjitrosoedirdjo, Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Tropical Biology (SEAMEO BIOTROP); Franck Courchamp, Centre National pour la Recherche Scientifique, France; Masato Kaneda, Biodiversity Network Japan; Masahiro Mitsuhashi, Arysta Life Science Corporation; Koichi Goka, NIES; Tomoo Mizutani, Nature Conservation Bureau, MOE, Japan; Naoki Adachi, Response Ability, Inc.; and Junko Shimura, SCBD.
- The symposium will conclude with closing remarks by Shinichiro Ohgaki, President, NIES
- Simultaneous Japanese–English interpretation will be provided. For those unable to attend, the symposium will be webcast live (and archived) at <http://c3.unu.edu/unuvideo/?237>
- There will be a poster session in the foyer of the conference hall.

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend. Please contact Naoko Yano, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1311; e-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)) to confirm your attendance.

**MEDIA ADVISORY**