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Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

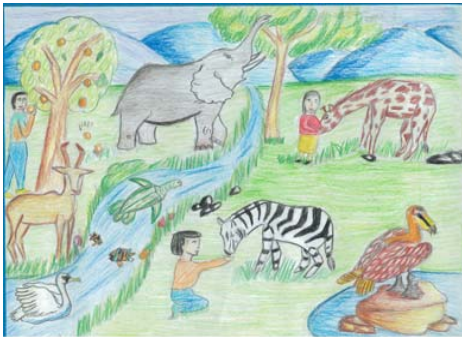
Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде

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UNEP Announces Top African Winner for its 19th International Children Painting Competition



Nairobi (Kenya), 5 June 2010 – A painting by a ten-year-old boy from Nairobi has been chosen from among hundreds of entries to win the United Nations Environment Programme's African Children's Painting Competition on the Environment.

Under this year's theme 'Biodiversity: connecting with nature', children aged 6 to 14 were invited to focus on our beautiful Earth full of different life forms, and to depict through art what they can do to protect it.

The winner, Gowtham Vigneshwar, a student at the Oshwal Academy Nairobi Primary, was announced on 5 June 2010 to mark World Environment Day. The painting was chosen among 420 entries from ten countries around all of Africa by a jury made up of representatives of the competition organizers – UNEP, Bayer, Nikon and the Foundation for Global Peace and Environment.

Gowtham's painting depicts the richness of African biodiversity and the interconnectedness between its different forms in a beautiful world.

Gowtham Vigneshwar said: "My thoughts, while painting, were to show people how these wonderful animals live and how gradually their young ones will be like their parents. Those plants that give us life should be taken care of. The plants save us when we are in need, since they give us food, and we also help them to survive. In Kenya, in order for us to learn about the environment, each and every school should start teaching children to become great environmentalists. This will help make Kenya and the world a better place."

Mounkaila Goumandakoye, UNEP's Regional Director for Africa, said: "UNEP's vision is that art is not just a medium, but also a vibrant and dynamic culture that can be used effectively to communicate messages and to prompt action on biodiversity protection and sustainable development. We are very happy that African children have really used this special opportunity to capture, illustrate and promote the continent's unique and rich biological diversity."

Along with the other Regional Winners, Gowtham Vigneshwar will receive a cash prize of US\$1,000 and an all-expenses-paid trip to the Tunza International Children Conference in Nagoya (Japan) from 20 to 26 October 2010. The Global Winner of the International Children's Competition, who will win US\$2,000, will be announced during the Nagoya Conference.

The global winners will be selected by a Jury made up of representatives of all the organizers. This year's global painting competition attracted 558,216 entries from 88 countries, including all the entries to all the Regional Painting Competitions.

A selection of winning paintings will be shown in exhibitions around the world. They will also be exhibited on the Internet and used for posters, postcards, calendars, and in publications to raise awareness and actions to conserve biodiversity

Note to editors:

Every year, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) joins hands with the Japan-based Foundation for Global Peace and Environment (FGPE), Bayer and Nikon, to recognize and encourage the rich artistic talents of children around the world through the International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment.

Launched in 1990, this worldwide event has produced an impressive number of local competitions, and received over a million entries from children in over 100 countries.

Each UNEP Regional Office (Bahrain, Bangkok, Geneva, Mexico City, Washington DC, and Nairobi) chooses regional winners and submits paintings to the global selection. These global winners will be announced in October 2010 at the Tunza International Children's Conference in Nagoya, Japan.

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.

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