

Grassroots Environmental Leaders From Around the World Win \$125,000 Goldman Environmental Prize

April 20, 2007

Farmer jailed for fighting Shell Oil's illegally-approved gas pipeline and entrepreneur working on innovative fishing rights buyouts in the North Atlantic among six winners of world's largest prize for grassroots environmentalists

SAN FRANCISCO, April 22, 2007— An Irish farmer jailed for his work in opposing Shell Oil's natural gas pipeline through his land and an Icelandic entrepreneur saving North Atlantic wild salmon by brokering innovative fishing rights buyouts with North Atlantic governments and commercial interests are among the winners of this year's prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize.

"This year's Prize recipients have succeeded in combating some of the most important environmental challenges we face today," said Goldman Prize founder Richard N. Goldman. "Their commitment in the face of great personal risk inspires us all to think more critically about what ordinary people can do to make a difference."

The \$125,000 Goldman Environmental Prize, now in its 18th year, is awarded annually to six grassroots environmental heroes and is the largest award of its kind in the world. The winners will be awarded the Prize at an invitation-only ceremony Monday, April 23, 2007 at 5 p.m. at the San Francisco Opera House and will also be honored at a smaller ceremony on Wednesday, April 25 at the National Geographic Society headquarters in Washington, DC.

This year's winners are:

North America: Sophia Rabliauskas, 47, Canada: Working on behalf of the Poplar River First Nation, Rabliauskas succeeded in securing interim protection for a portion of the boreal forest of Manitoba, effectively preventing destructive logging and hydro-power development while calling on government and international agencies to permanently protect the region.

Africa: Hammerskjoeld Simwinga, 45, Zambia: In Zambia's North Luangwa Valley, where rampant illegal wildlife poaching decimated the wild elephant population and left villagers living in extreme poverty, Simwinga created an innovative sustainable community development program that successfully restored wildlife and transformed this poverty-stricken area.

Asia: Ts. Munkhbayar, 40, Mongolia: Munkhbayar successfully worked with government and grassroots organizations to shut down destructive mining operations along Mongolia's scarce waterways. Through public education and political lobbying, Munkhbayar has effectively protected Mongolia's precious water resources from additional unregulated mining.

South & Central America: Julio Cusurichi Palacios, 36, Peru: In the remote Peruvian Amazon, Cusurichi secured a national reserve to protect both sensitive rain forest ecosystems and the rights of indigenous peoples living in voluntary isolation from the devastating effects of logging and mining.

Europe: Willie Corduff, 53, Ireland: In the small farming community of Rossport, Corduff and a group of fellow local residents and landowners successfully forced Shell Oil to halt construction on an illegally-approved pipeline through their land.

Islands & Island Nations: Orri Vigfússon, 64, Iceland: With business savvy and an unwavering commitment to reverse the near-extinction of wild North Atlantic salmon, Vigfússon brokered huge international fishing rights buyouts with governments and commercial interests, helping bring to an end destructive commercial salmon fishing in the region.

About the Goldman Environmental Prize

The Goldman Environmental Prize was established in 1990 by San Francisco civic leader and philanthropist Richard N. Goldman and his late wife, Rhoda H. Goldman. It has been awarded to 119 people from 70 countries.

Prize winners are selected by an international jury from confidential nominations submitted by a worldwide network of environmental organizations and individuals.

Previous Prize winners have been at the center of some of the world's most pressing environmental challenges, including seeking justice for victims of environmental disasters at Love Canal and Bhopal, India; leading the fight for dolphin-safe tuna; fighting oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; and exposing Monsanto's role in introducing the rBGH hormone into the US dairy industry.

Since receiving a Goldman Prize, eight winners have been appointed or elected to national office in their countries, including several who became ministers of the environment. The 1991 Goldman Prize winner for Africa, Wangari Maathai, won the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize.