



Nagao Natural Environment Foundation



Nagao Natural Environment Foundation (NEF)

Miyano Building 3rd Floor, 4-20-9 Midori, Sumida-ku

Tokyo 130-0021 JAPAN

Phone +81-3-6659-2070

Fax +81-3-6659-2272

URL <https://www.nagaofoundation.or.jp/e/index.html>

E-mail secretariat@nagaofoundation.or.jp



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About NEF

The Nagao Natural Environment Foundation (NEF), founded in 1989, is dedicated to promoting nature conservation in developing countries, mainly in the Asia-Pacific region. To achieve this, the Foundation provides scholarship programmes for university students and grant programmes for researchers.

Scholarship Scheme

This scheme offers financial support to university students who are willing to study subjects related to environmental conservation but who lack sufficient financial resources. Scholarship recipients are expected to major in the field of natural sciences, acquire knowledge about nature and conservation, and apply that knowledge in their future work and life. Since the scheme began in 1991, about 8,800 students in nine countries have been supported. As of July 2024, scholarships are offered to students in Vietnam, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Bangladesh in cooperation with each country's counterpart.

Grant Opportunities

Research Grant Scheme

To strengthen the research capabilities of young researchers and accumulate information necessary for conservation measures in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, the Research Grant Scheme offers financial support to implement research and publish findings in the form of scientific papers and books. Over 580 research projects have been approved as of July 2024. Application deadlines are twice a year, in April and October.

Research Grant Programme

This programme offers financial support for young researchers or PhD students to conduct scientific research deepening knowledge of nature and contributing to conservation works. Grants are available only for individual researchers and not for team projects. Research projects should be completed in one to two years, with a maximum grant of 1,000,000 Japanese yen.

Grant recipients of the programme have another opportunity to apply for funds to publish their findings in peer-reviewed journals. This grant is up to 1,000 US dollars per research project.

Publication Programme

This programme financially supports scientists to publish their research work in book form to spread knowledge of nature conservation. The maximum grant amount is 1,000,000 Japanese yen.

Commemorative Grant Fund for Capacity Building of Young Scientists (CGF)

The CGF Programme, which started in 2016, aims to help young scientists in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region grow to be world-leading scientists in the areas of, or related to, conservation of wildlife and ecosystems in their own countries. CGF supports researchers who work at universities or research institutions in their home countries (Qualification A) and international students who enrol in doctoral courses at Japanese universities (Qualification B). The maximum grant amount varies from 1,500,000 to 2,500,000 Japanese yen per project, depending on qualification type and research location. A Project Scientist (applicant) is requested to implement the project with the adequate support of, and collaboration with, a Project Coordinator who has excellent achievements in the relevant field and, as a general rule, has work experience in a Japanese university or research institution as a scientist.

Application deadlines are twice a year, in January and July. The CGF Management Committee is responsible for the screening process. As of July 2024, 27 research projects have been supported

Nagao Wetland Fund (NWF) in Cooperation with the Ramsar Convention

The Ramsar Convention's mission is the conservation and wise use of wetlands, which are among the world's most diverse and productive ecosystems. The NWF was established in 2016 with the aim of helping local governments, researchers, non-governmental organisations and local communities of developing countries in the Asia-Oceania region to implement the Convention, and in particular the goals and targets of the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016–2024. The NWF prioritises projects concerning the conservation, restoration and wise use of wetlands, including communication, education and awareness. The NWF has supported 19 projects from 2016 to 2023. For more information about the NWF, please visit the Nagao Wetland Fund on the Ramsar Convention website:

URL: <https://www.ramsar.org/nagao-wetland-fund>

Comprehensive Programme for Conservation Research and Activities

Since starting in 2006, this programme has conducted research and conservation activities in Southeast Asia in collaboration with local communities, officials, researchers and Japanese experts. To lay the groundwork for scientific research and conservation efforts, the programme not only gathers and documents the biodiversity of the regions but also nurtures young researchers.

Two three-year projects have currently been implemented in Lao PDR and Vietnam since 2023. The first is "Plant diversity assessment in limestone karsts in Laos and Vietnam," led by Associate Prof. Shuichiro Tagane, Kagoshima University. This project aims to elucidate plant species diversity in limestone areas, build a database of plant specimens and train young researchers in the field of botany. The second is "Species diversity of terrestrial vertebrates in the mountains of Indochina," led by Prof. Masaharu Motokawa, Kyoto University. This project aims to understand the species diversity of terrestrial vertebrates in the mountains, improve specimen storage infrastructure and train the next generation of researchers.

Two feasibility studies began in 2024. "Research and conservation of the fishing cat in inland wetlands of northeastern Bangladesh," led by Dr. Ai Suzuki, Ritsumeikan University, is to obtain scientific data on the fishing cat together with local students, forestry department staff and residents. The project will also design and implement conservation measures using that data. The other project, "Preliminary survey to establish collaborative research on diadromous fish fauna of the Philippines," led by Dr. Ken Maeda, Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology, will establish a collaborative research system among researchers in the Philippines and Japan to clarify the fish fauna in Philippine rivers and the dispersal mechanism of fish larvae along the Kuroshio Current.