



MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR CHEMISTRY



Indonesia honors fire ecologist Johann Georg Goldammer

High-ranking award of the Republic of Indonesia for services to the country presented at the World Climate Change Conference to Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Johann Georg Goldammer, Head of the Global Fire Monitoring Center.

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Indonesia's President Joko Widodo awarded Johann Georg Goldammer the “Bintang Jasa Utama Republic of Indonesia” Order of Merit, established in 1963, as the first non-Indonesian citizen for his outstanding commitment to the preservation of Indonesia's cultural and natural landscapes.



From left to right: Dr. Alue Dohong, Vice Minister for Environment and Forestry, Prof. Dr. Bambang Hero Saharjo, Head of the Southeast Asia Regional Center in Bogor, Indonesia, Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Johann Georg Goldammer and Arif Havas Oegroseno, Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia in Berlin. The Bintang Jasa (Star of Service) is a high-level honor of the Republic of Indonesia. The order, founded in 1963, is awarded by the President to people who have rendered civil courage and courage in difficult times. Professor Goldammer was the first non-Indonesian citizen to receive this Order of Merit of the highest class.

Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia

The highest version of the “Service Star” is awarded to people who – according to the foundation's purpose of the Order of Merit – “have made a name for themselves for moral courage and courage in difficult times”. The president thus honored the commitment of the scientist, who since 1985 has been researching basic principles in Indonesia on the consequences of the application of fire in land use.

The focus is on the conversion of natural rainforests and wetlands into agricultural use or the development of agro-industrial plantations. The constant direct dialogue with political decision-makers was particularly

important for the state in order to transfer scientific knowledge directly into political decisions and, above all, into concrete application.

In its laudation at the official presentation of the order on the occasion of COP-26 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry highlighted the progress that the country is making in translating scientific principles into rule of law and practical measures by law. The ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia in Berlin, who took part in the ceremony, pointed out the good scientific and technical cooperation between the two countries. Measures to prevent or avoid fires in the natural and agricultural landscapes of Indonesia are essential so that the Indonesian government can achieve the goals it has set itself to reduce net carbon emissions from forests and land use.

Integrated Fire Management in the Tropical Rainforests of Indonesia



Johann Georg Goldammer receives the Order of Merit Bintang Jasa (Star of Service) from the Republic of Indonesia.

Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Republic of Indonesia

At the beginning of the 1990s, Goldammer initiated the world's largest development project to date devoted to "Integrated Fire Management", which was implemented at the time by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and with staff from Mainz and Freiburg. Based on scientific and socio-economic principles, together with Indonesian scientists, he developed the now internationally applied guidelines for integrated fire management in tropical forests in Indonesia and worldwide.

Most recently, Goldammer built up further capacities in research and knowledge transfer between 2017 and 2021 with funds from the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL): One of the eight GFMC regional centers set up by Goldammer worldwide – the *Regional Fire Management Resource Center South East Asia* – is hosted by the Agricultural University of Bogor on Java and advises the Indonesian government on the implementation of scientific knowledge in politics and application.


Goldammer has been researching at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry since 1990. During this time he built up the fire ecology working group and founded the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC), which is

located at the Faculty for Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Freiburg. The GFMC primarily ensures the transfer of scientific knowledge from fire ecology and related research fields such as biogeochemistry, atmospheric chemistry and climatology into political decisions and especially into practical application. The topicality of this scientific work is shown on the one hand in the landscape fires that are currently escalating due to climate change, such as this year in the Euro-Mediterranean region, in Central Asia and North America, and on the other hand in the excessive use of fire in the conversion of natural ecosystems into other forms of land use, such as in the tropical rainforests of Brazil.

The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) has been funding research and development projects at the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry in the field of fire ecology and fire management for more than ten years through the "Sustainable Forestry and International Forest Conservation" department. In Indonesia, collaboration between 2017 and 2021 was promoted through capacity building in research and knowledge transfer. The competence center established by BMEL and MPIC in Indonesia is one of eight regional centers (Regional Fire Management Resource Centers) that the GFMC has set up at universities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

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