



## News Release

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Nine-year-old Russian girl wins international children's painting competition:

### Children's pictures challenge climate change

- Bayer and UNEP and other partners present prizes at the environment conference in Korea to children from all over the world who painted pictures on the subject of "Climate Change: Our Challenge"
- Record participation through increased number of entries from China: 2.4 million paintings submitted from 89 countries
- Motto of the next painting competition: Biodiversity

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**Daejeon, August 20, 2009** – Ludmila Balovneva beams as she holds up the two pictures she has painted of the planet Earth: In one of her pictures the Earth is surrounded by a threatening-looking black band and is crying, while in the other one it is encircled by flowers and is smiling. "I choose the happy life, do you?" is the title that nine-year-old Ludmila from Novosibirsk in Russia has given her painting, which was chosen as the overall winner of the 18th International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in cooperation with Bayer AG.

At a ceremony in Daejeon, Korea, on August 20, Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, Friedrich Gause, Senior Bayer Representative for Korea, and representatives of other project partners also presented prizes to Eesha Chavan (13) from India, who took second place in the global competition, and to six regional winners: Patricia Isabel Jesus Santos (14), Portugal (Europe), Alice Fuzi Wang (12), United States (North America), Renzo Marsino (13), Chile (Latin America and the Caribbean), Ramy Gamal Abd El Hamed Abd El Razik (13), Egypt (Africa), Ryan D'almeida (13), Bahrain (western Asia) and Li Pik Hei (14), China (Asia Pacific). The official award ceremony took place during the Tunza International Children and Youth Conference and was attended by the Korean Environment Minister Maanee Lee.

The theme of the competition, "Climate Change: Our Challenge", generated a huge response everywhere, especially in China, where participation grew significantly owing to the support of a local partner. In total, a record 2.4 million entries were received from children from 89 countries.

The nine-year-old winner from Russia impressed the jury with her message, which can be interpreted as an exhortation to the community of states to reach a workable agreement on climate protection when they meet in Copenhagen at the end of this year for the UN Climate Change Conference. "What we see in these paintings is that children are aware of the challenges facing the planet," said UNEP head Steiner. "Given the opportunity, they can contribute to solutions. We can all learn a great deal from the insight children have about our world and our responsibility."

Michael Schade, head of Corporate Communications at Bayer, is delighted at the steadily increasing number of children's pictures submitted from around the globe. "The painting competition is a central project in our partnership with UNEP. The pictures are painted messages that have already been helping to fix the need for increased climate protection firmly in the minds of people all over the world for some years." The motto for next year's competition shifts the focus to an issue which can also be directly affected by climate change – Biodiversity. Entries can be submitted to the UNEP regional offices up to April 15, 2010.

In addition to the trip to Korea with chaperone, the global and regional winners also received a sum of money and other prizes. The ceremony was attended by numerous politicians, representatives of international environment organizations and by the 350 or so children aged between six and 14 from over 100 countries who were in Daejeon from August 17 to 20 to develop ideas for global climate protection. The children's conference is followed by the youth environment conference on August 20-23, when some 250 young people aged 15 to 24 will come to Korea from all over the world. In view of the importance of climate protection on the international agenda, UNEP decided, with Bayer's support, to stage both the children's and the youth conference this year. The first Tunza International Youth Conference to be held in western and central Europe was hosted by Bayer in Leverkusen in 2007.

An exhibition of high-quality prints of 60 or so selected paintings is being premiered in Daejeon and will then go on a tour of the globe during the coming months.

Note to editors:

Photos of the award ceremony and of the paintings of the global and regional winners and a short animated film of Ludmila's picture can be viewed on the Internet at [www.press.bayer.com](http://www.press.bayer.com).

For further information on the painting competition and the Bayer/UNEP partnership go to [www.unep.bayer.com](http://www.unep.bayer.com).

Children aged between six and 14 can submit entries for next year's competition to:

UNEP/Regional Office for Europe  
International Environment House  
11-13 Chemin des Anémones  
1219 Châtelaine – Geneva  
Switzerland  
6th Floor A & B Blocks

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