## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Date: July 16, 2007

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## PHILADELPHIA ECOLOGIST RECEIVES TOP MONGOLIA HONOR

PHILADELPHIA — The land of legendary warrior Ghengis Khan has bestowed its Friendship Medal on a veteran scientist whose climate-change studies have contributed to the growing understanding of global warming.

Dr. Clyde Goulden, Director of The Academy' of Natural Sciences Institute for Mongolian Biodiversity and Ecological Studies, received Mongolia's highest honor for foreigners who have made outstanding contributions to promoting the central Asian nation's development. In a ceremony in June in his office in the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar, President Nambariin Enkhbayar awarded Goulden the Friendship Medal for helping develop relations between the U.S. and Mongolia and for helping develop the natural and environmental field of research in Mongolia. Other Friendship Medal winners include Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the Communist Party of the former Soviet Union.

Goulden's relationship with Mongolia stems back to 1966 when he visited Lake Baikal, the world's largest lake (in volume), as part of a cultural exchange program. But it was an appeal from a Buddhist lama in Buryatia, an autonomous Russian republic next to Mongolia, that prompted Goulden

to return to the sparsely populated, former Soviet-aligned country. The lama and his followers were concerned about the economic development effects on lands

## **SCI-FACT**

For information on the Lake Hovsgol project, go to http://www.ansp.org/research/biodiv/mongolia/index.php

the Buddhists considered sacred. In 1994, Goulden, an aquatic ecologist and then curator of the Academy's Patrick Center for Environmental Research, visited Lake Hövsgöl in northern Mongolia, along with Academy Senior Fellow Robert McCracken Peck, and recognized it as a treasure to be researched and protected. At least 2 million years old, Lake Hövsgöl is about 100 miles long and 20 miles wide and is one of the most pristine lakes in the world.

"I was stunned at how beautiful and clean the lake was and at how much we still had to learn about this lake," said Goulden.

In 1995, Goulden helped found The Institute of Mongolian Biodiversity and Ecological Studies to support research into the environmental and economic forces challenging the nation. Mongolia, which last year celebrated its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary, faces enormous challenges not only from an encroaching global economy but also from climate change that threatens its mountains, taiga forests,

wetlands, streams and steppes, which host numerous rare and endangered species of mammals, birds and plants.

Steadily rising average temperatures are a subject of intense analysis, and the pristine nature of the Lake Hövsgöl watershed makes it ideal for climate change studies. With funding from the National Science Foundation and private foundations, Goulden and his Mongolian colleagues have found that climate change already is damaging grazing lands of nomadic herders and appears to be linked with a recent gypsy moth outbreak.

In 2006, Goulden, along with scientists from Mongolia, Russia, Japan, and the U.S., published "The Geology, Biodiversity and Ecology of Lake Hövsgöl, Mongolia," which includes descriptions of several new species and describes unique characteristics of the lake. He has been the International Consultant for a Global Environment Facility grant implemented by the World Bank to study the impacts of nomadic pastoralism and climate change on the Hövsgöl Watershed. He has worked with UNESCO Mongolia to designate Lake Hövsgöl National Park as a World Heritage site, and is trying to encourage eco-tourism around the lake. He has been honored as an Honorary Professor by the National University of Mongolia and has received an Honorable Environmental Officer award from the Ministry of Nature and the Environment and a Diploma of Merit from the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. He has trained young Mongolian research scientists and facilitated international exchanges to build ecological research in Mongolia.

Dr. William Brown, President and CEO of The Academy of Natural Sciences, said Goulden's remarkable achievements are a springboard for expanding the institution's biodiversity research further into Asia. "We are beginning discussions with other Asian nations, including China, that offer similar problems and related opportunities for solutions as Dr. Goulden is addressing so well in Mongolia," said Brown. "Drawing from these, we are moving forward to establish an Asia Center at the Academy."

The Academy, the oldest natural history museum in the Americas, also has conducted field surveys of fish, aquatic insects and rotifers (microscopic animals) in Mongolian waters that have yielded previously unknown species.

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The Academy of Natural Sciences is Philadelphia's natural history museum and a world leader in biodiversity and environmental research. The mission of the Academy is the encouragement and cultivation of the sciences.

The Academy is located at 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway and is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and weekends until 5 p.m. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$8 for children ages 3-12, students with college I.D. and military personnel, \$8.25 for seniors, and free for children under 3. There is a \$2 fee for Butterflies!