



■ Press Release ■

Dr. Sandra Díaz Awarded 2017 Premi Ramon Margalef d'Ecologia

- The Jury highlights her contribution to a greater understanding of biodiversity's role in ecosystems
- The Catalan Government has been awarding this prize since 2004 in memory of Professor Ramon Margalef, considered one of the world's leading exponents of ecology

The Jury of the Premi Ramon Margalef d'Ecologia grants the thirteenth award to Dr Sandra Díaz, a renowned Argentinian researcher who is an expert on the impact of global environmental change on plant biodiversity in regional ecosystems.

Considered one of the world's most influential scientists, the Jury has recognized **“her leading role as a pioneer in the theoretical development and practical implementation of the concept of functional diversity”**, as well as **“the tools she has developed for the methodological implementation of the concept and its empirical application”**. The Jury therefore recognizes her contribution to advances in fundamental ecology and refers to her as one of the world's leading experts in the field. The award ceremony will be held in autumn this year, in Barcelona.

Sandra Díaz earned a PhD in Biological Sciences (*cum laude*) in 1989 from the Universidad Nacional de Córdoba. Since 1994, Díaz is professor at this University and a high researcher of the National Council of Scientific and Technical Researches at the Institute for Multidisciplinary Plant Biology (IMBIV). She is also a member of the Science Committee of the Future Earth, an integrated initiative of the International Council for Science (ICSU) and is co-President of the Global Evaluation on Biodiversity and Ecosystemic Services (IPBES).

Global plant trait database

As a driver of international research initiatives in the areas of biodiversity, global environmental change and ecosystems, Sandra Díaz has led groups of scientists from different countries and backgrounds. One of her greatest achievements, in conjunction with a small group of colleagues, was the development of TRY, the



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largest global database of functional plant traits ever compiled. She is the founder and director of Nucleus DiverSus, an interdisciplinary network for primary research and synthesis on biodiversity and sustainability, with an emphasis on Latin America and global projection.

Díaz has also received several national and international awards, as the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, awarded to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), in which she worked. She is member of national academies of science of several countries, such as the National Academies of Sciences of the United States and of France.

She is recognized for her leadership in international initiatives on biodiversity and global environmental change. In this sense, she worked on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) from 1994 to 2007, and was one of the leading authors in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment project. Díaz has been a prominent member of the DIVERSITAS Scientific Committee and performs leadership roles in the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystemic Services (IPBES).

Recognizing leaders in ecology

The Catalan Government created the Premi Ramon Margalef d'Ecologia in 2004 to recognize outstanding work done by individuals in the field of ecological science. The award honours the memory of Barcelona-born Professor Ramon Margalef (1919-2004), considered one of the world's leading exponents, recognized for his contribution to scientific and academic work in the modern ecology.

University institutions, schools of higher education, research centres, academies of sciences and academies with scientific research divisions, as well as other institutions of the kind, submit nominations every year to the award, which is endowed with an award of €80,000 and a trophy dedicated to the memory of Ramon Margalef.

Previous winners of the prize have been scientists Paul Dayton, John Lawton, Harold Mooney, Daniel Pauly, Paul Ehrlich, Simon Levin, Juan Carlos Castilla, Daniel Simberloff, Sallie Chisholm, David Tilman, Robert E. Ricklefs and, last year, Josep Peñuelas.

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