

**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY EXPANDS  
SCIENTIFIC AND CONSERVATION GRANTMAKING IN CHINA**

*With support from Alibaba Group, Society announces  
National Geographic Air and Water Conservation Fund*

**BEIJING, April 26, 2012** — The National Geographic Society announced today the expansion of its Global Exploration Fund to Asia with the newly established National Geographic Air and Water Conservation Fund.

With support from founding partner Alibaba Group, a global e-commerce leader and the largest e-commerce company in China, this program specifically expands National Geographic's grant-making capabilities in China. It is designed to challenge and bring forward the best and most creative scientific and conservation talent in the country and encourage their efforts on solving problems confronting China's water and air resources. Grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000 will be given to on-the-ground projects at the cutting edge of research, technology and conservation, including those that investigate risky or unproven approaches. The fund is open to resident citizens of mainland China doing work in the country.

"This partnership with Alibaba Group will enable National Geographic to continue to work toward its goal of extending grants to deserving scientists and conservationists throughout the world," said Terry Garcia, executive vice president for Mission Programs at National Geographic. "Further, the Air and Water Conservation Fund will support cutting-edge projects with practical applications for China's future, ensuring a lasting legacy for the program."

The Air and Water Conservation Fund is part of National Geographic's Global Exploration Fund, a global initiative modeled on National Geographic's century-long approach to funding science, research, exploration and conservation projects through targeted grant programs. National Geographic launched the Global Exploration Fund last year in Sweden to expand its support of scientists and explorers from a particular geographic area who are advancing research and exploring solutions for the benefit of the planet. Each Global Exploration Fund will operate at the regional level and assemble a cross-section of scientific and innovation experts to serve on an advisory board that will help guide the program to achieve regional priorities. The Funds will employ a peer-reviewed process to identify and evaluate projects that need funding in each designated region.

The Air and Water Conservation Fund includes a scientific advisory board — currently comprised of five renowned Chinese experts — that will review grant applications and help raise awareness of the Fund within the scientific and conservation communities to attract results-based projects.

“Alibaba Group encourages our customers, partners and employees to take action toward a cleaner environment, especially when it comes to clean water and better air,” said Susan Jin, managing director of corporate social responsibility, Alibaba Group. “The National Geographic Society has a long history of facilitating impactful projects worldwide, and we are happy to be supporting such meaningful work in China.”

Creation of this fund is consistent with Alibaba Group’s environmental conservation strategy of focusing on clean water and improving air quality. The company’s decision to support this new fund was also centered on helping build scientific and environmental capabilities within China to positively impact the lives of billions of people in the region.

Since 1890, the National Geographic has funded grants to every corner of the Earth — filling gaps in human knowledge, sometimes in spectacular ways. Late in 2011, the total number of National Geographic grants reached 10,000, representing a combined value of \$153 million. Scientific field research, exploration, conservation and adventure are the backbone of National Geographic’s grants, which have led to countless discoveries that continue to shed light on the planet’s rich variety and diversity — and help preserve it. The results from field work are shared with audiences around the world through an array of National Geographic media, including print, broadcast and online outlets as well as events, exhibitions and educational platforms.

Past and current grantees include polar explorer Robert Peary; Hiram Bingham, excavator of the lost Inca city of Machu Picchu; anthropologists Louis and Mary Leakey; primatologist Jane Goodall; Robert Ballard, underwater explorer and discoverer of the sunken *Titanic*; anthropologist Wade Davis; marine biologist Sylvia Earle; high-altitude archaeologist Johan Reinhard; and Chinese paleontologist Xu Xing, who has advanced understanding of the origin of bird flight.

Additional information about the new Global Exploration Fund and how to apply for a grant is available at [www.nationalgeographic.com/GEF/China](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/GEF/China). Further information about the Global Exploration Fund initiative can be found at [www.nationalgeographic.com/GEF](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/GEF).

### **About the National Geographic Society**

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Founded in 1888 to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge," the Society works to inspire people to care about the planet. It reaches more than 400 million people worldwide each month through its official journal, National Geographic, and other magazines; National Geographic Channel; television documentaries; music; radio; films; books; DVDs; maps; exhibitions; live events; school publishing programs; interactive media; and merchandise. National Geographic has funded 10,000 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geographic literacy.

### **About the Alibaba Group**

Alibaba Group is a global e-commerce leader and the largest e-commerce company in China. Since it was founded in 1999, Alibaba Group has grown to include the following core businesses: Alibaba.com (HKSE: 1688; 1688.HK), Alibaba Group's flagship company and the world's leading B2B e-commerce company; Taobao Marketplace, China's primary C2C online shopping destination; Tmall.com, China's leading B2C online marketplace for quality, brand name goods; eTao, China's most comprehensive shopping search engine; Juhuasuan, China's most comprehensive group shopping platform; Alibaba Cloud Computing, a developer of advanced data-centric cloud computing services; and China Yahoo!, one of China's leading Internet portals. Alipay, China's largest third-party online payment service, is an affiliate of Alibaba Group.