

Recipients of the 2014 Ecological Society of America Awards



2014 Eminent Ecologist Award

Dr. Jane Lubchenco
Oregon State University

This award is given to a senior ecologist in recognition of an outstanding body of ecological work or of sustained ecological contributions of extraordinary merit. Nominees may be from any country and need not be ESA members. Recipients receive lifetime, active membership in the Society.

Dr. Jane Lubchenco, from Oregon State University, has made important contributions to the basic science of ecology. Dr. Lubchenco began her career by carrying out fundamental studies on the processes governing the structure of marine ecosystems. Her research on rocky sea shore dynamics continues to this day and has been widely influential, for instance in elucidating the nature of keystone species.

In her celebrated 1997 Presidential Address to AAAS she highlighted the “social contract” that scientists should have with the society we inhabit. This is a contract that goes beyond the quest for new knowledge to articulate applications of that knowledge and to share understanding across a wide arena. She has founded several institutions devoted to the task of facilitating scientific communication, notably the Aldo Leopold Leadership Program, which now plays a major role in training academics in how to translate their intellectual understanding of the ecological world into action.

She created a collaborative network among institutions on the west coast of the USA (PISCO, Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans), where comparable research activities are carried out over a wide geographical range, the findings of which are integrated and interpreted for policy makers and resource managers. Dr. Lubchenco has admirably and effectively served on several major scientific societies, including as President of ESA, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and many other high administrative positions in the federal government. Dr. Lubchenco truly exemplifies the ideal of science in the public service.