

International Symposium on Miyawaki Forests

-Towards Nature-Based Solutions for Sustainability-

7 – 10 November 2026

Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok

&

Rai Cherntawan International Meditation Center, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand

1. Background

A Miyawaki forest is a human-created forest designed to imitate the structure of a natural forest, restoring degraded land into a natural forest ecosystem within a short period of time. The method and techniques were developed by Professor Akira Miyawaki, a world-renowned botanist and ecologist, former Professor of Yokohama National University and former director of the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japanese Center for International Studies in Ecology (IGES-JISE), Japan.

Professor Miyawaki conducted extensive research on potential natural vegetation in Japan and around the world. He proposed the use of suitable native plant species to restore forests to their original ecological condition. The Miyawaki method involves planting a mixture of native species, mainly canopy trees plus, sub-canopy trees, shrubs, and ground cover plants together. Saplings grown from seeds are planted densely and in mixed diversity. Weed control and regular watering are provided for 2–3 years, after which the forest is allowed to develop naturally. This technique has a high survival rate, promotes rapid tree growth, can establish a forest within 10 years, restoring ecosystems and biodiversity from the first year of planting.

In 2024, the G20 Global Land Initiative under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), together with the Morino Project of Japan, organized the first International Symposium on Miyawaki Forests in Yokohama City, Japan, on 10–14 October 2024. Participants involved in Miyawaki forest creation exchanged knowledge, experiences, practical applications, and value-added approaches for Miyawaki forests. The symposium resulted in the Yokohama Declaration on Miyawaki Forests, which emphasized that Miyawaki forests are a powerful tool for addressing global climate change and building a sustainable future for humanity.

Rai Cherntawan Foundation was one of the representatives from Thailand that participated and presented at the symposium in Japan. Recognizing urgent global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, seasonal irregularities causing flash floods, landslides, severe heat and drought, and forest fires

particularly the natural disasters that recently affected Chiang Rai Province the foundation, together with Thai Beverage Public Company Limited and other organizations, are organizing the International Symposium on Miyawaki Forests during Sustainability Expo (SX) 2026 at the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok, and Rai Cherntawan International Meditation Center, Chiang Rai Province, from 7 to 10 November 2026.

The symposium aims to disseminate knowledge and techniques for creating Miyawaki forests. Thailand has been establishing Miyawaki forests for more than 30 years, with over 60 sites nationwide. Many of these sites have developed into learning centers for students, educators, government officers, and private organizations to study biodiversity in Miyawaki forests. Some sites have also become local ecotourism attractions. This symposium will present Miyawaki forest experiences from various countries to promote understanding, awareness, and expansion of Miyawaki forests as one approach to sustainable environmental solutions through Nature-Based Solutions (NBS). As Professor Miyawaki once stated, “Protecting the environment means protecting life.”

2. Objectives

2.1 To disseminate knowledge and techniques for Miyawaki forest creation as a nature-based solution and to demonstrate successful applications worldwide.

2.2 To provide a platform for exchanging knowledge, experiences, and ideas for sustainable development, including promoting research related to Miyawaki forests.

2.3 To strengthen a global Miyawaki forest network for addressing natural disasters, climate change, urban heat island effects, and biodiversity loss.

3. Target Participants

3.1 Government and local authority personnel

3.2 Scientists and forestry specialists

3.3 Educational personnel, teachers, lecturers, and students

3.4 Private sector organizations, foundations, NGOs, and interested individuals

4. Date and Venue

Date: 7 – 10 November 2026

Venues:

- Sustainability Expo (SX) 2026, Queen Sirikit National Convention Center, Bangkok (7 - 8 November 2026)
- Rai Cherntawan International Meditation Center, Huai Sak Subdistrict, Mueang District, Chiang Rai Province (9 - 10 November 2026)

5. Program Schedule

7 November 2026

08:00 – 09:00 Registration

09:00 – 09:10 Opening Ceremony

09:10 – 10:00 Keynote Lectures

1. “History and Concept of Miyawaki Forests from Japan to the World”

by Prof. Dr. Kazue Fujiwara, Professor Emerita of Yokohama National University and Professor of Yokohama City University, Japan.

2. “Potential Natural Forests - and what is a forest?”

by Prof. Dr. Elgene O. Box, University of Georgia, USA.

10:15 – 12:15 Session 1: Lessons Learned and Scientific Data from Miyawaki Forests

Chaired by Prof. Dr. Kazue Fujiwara, Japan

13:15 – 15:15 Session 2: Multiple Benefits from Miyawaki Forests

Chaired by Prof. Dr. Elgene O. Box, USA

15:30 – 17:30 Session 3: Miyawaki Forests in Landscaping

Chaired by Associate Prof. Dr. Angsana Boonyobhas, and Dr. Sirin Kaewla-ierd, Thailand

8 November 2026

08:30 – 10:30 Session 4: Miyawaki Forests as School and Community Activities
Chaired by Dr. Grey Coupland, Australia

10:45 – 12:30 Session 5: Other Miyawaki Forests Activities and Documentary.
Screening of the documentary 'Making of Mini Forest'
by film maker Angelina Lee
Chaired by Dr. Grey Coupland, Australia

13:00 – 14:30 Poster Session I:

14:45 – 16:30 Poster Session II:

9 November 2026

8:00 Travel to Chiang Rai Province and activities at Rai Cherntawan including:

- Lecture by Master Medhivajirodom (V. Vajiramedhi)
- Presentation by Dr. Sirin Kaewla-ierd and Dr. Anong Chanamool on applying Miyawaki techniques at Rai Cherntawan
- Forest ordination ceremony by Master Medhivajirodom (V. Vajiramedhi)
- Guided tour of a 3-year-old Miyawaki forest plantation
- Forest meditation session by Master Medhivajirodom (V. Vajiramedhi)
- Closing ceremony by Master Medhivajirodom (V. Vajiramedhi)
- Traditional Khantoke dinner and Lanna cultural performance

10 November 2026

Departure from Chiang Rai Province back to Bangkok.

6. Expected Outcomes

6.1 Participants will gain awareness and understanding of Miyawaki forest techniques that help restore ecosystems and increase biodiversity for sustainable environmental solutions in both urban and rural areas.

6.2 Opportunities will be created for international exchange of experiences and applications of Miyawaki forests, leading to a global cooperation network.

6.3 Public participation in disaster response, climate change adaptation, and the creation of economic value will be promoted through the application of Miyawaki forest techniques in communities, schools, and private lands.

6.4 A broad global cooperation network for forest creation and utilization of Miyawaki forests will be established and expanded worldwide.

Executive Committee:

1. Prof. Dr. Kazue Fujiwara, Professor Emerita of Yokohama National University and Professor of Yokohama City University, Japan
Email: kazue05fujiwara@gmail.com
 2. Prof. Dr. Elgene O. Box, University of Georgia, USA.
Email: boxeo1642@gmail.com
 3. Dr. Grey Coupland, Murdoch University, Perth, Australia
Email: Grey.Couplan@murdoch.edu.au
 4. Dr. Sirin Kaewla-ierd, Bangkok, Thailand
Email: skdrsirin@gmail.com
-

Call for abstracts:

- Session 1: Lessons Learned and Scientific Data from Miyawaki Forests
- Session 2: Multiple Benefits from Miyawaki Forests
- Session 3: Miyawaki Forests in Landscaping
- Session 4: Miyawaki Forests as School and Community Activities
- Session 5: Other Miyawaki Forests Activities

Abstract format:

- Arial font
- One A4 page
- Size 16 for Title
- Size 12 for Author Names
- Size 14 for Key words and Text.

Poster format:

- Includes: Title, Author Name, Introduction, Methodology, Results, Discussion, and Conclusions.
- Poster size: 0.8 m. width, 1.2 m. height

Important dates:

- Registration: 10 July-31 August 2026
- Deadline for abstract submission: 31 August 2026
- Notification of abstract acceptance: 15 September 2026
- Deadline for the oral presentation PDF File: 15 October 2026

Excursion fee and Location: only flight cost

Domestic flight round-trip from Bangkok to Chiang Rai Province

Location:

Miyawaki forest at Rai Cherntawan International Meditation Center,
Chiang Rai Province, 790 km from Bangkok.

Contact us: 1. Prof. Dr. Kazue Fujiwara	Email: kazue05fujiwara@gmail.com
2. Dr. Anong Chanamool	Email: dranong1960@gmail.com
3. Dr. Sirin kaewla-ierd	Email: skdrsirin@gmail.com

Remarks:

Expense support: Support will be provided for the first 100 foreign attendees, with funds allocated across all countries that submitted abstracts and were accepted for the symposium.

1. Cost support for attendees submitting abstracts will include the following:
 - 1.1 Accommodation costs: 1 person, 1 abstract
 - 1.2 Accommodation includes: 1 room for 2 people (Participants who wish to stay in a single room will be responsible for paying the additional cost difference.)
 - 1.3 Food during the symposium
2. All participants must pay the domestic airfare from Bangkok to Chiang Rai to Bangkok themselves. (The Secretariat team will contact the ticket agency and make bookings for you)

Expense support for the Executive Committee will cover accommodation, food and an economy ticket.

Flight Schedule Bangkok – Chiang Rai Route Monday, 9 November 2026				
No.	Airline Name	Flight No.	Time	Arrival Airport
1	Thai VietJet Air	VZ-130	06:30 - 7.55	Suvarnabhumi International Airport
2	Thai AirAsia	FD-4150	6.50 - 8.10	Suvarnabhumi International Airport
3	Thai Airways	TG-130	8.10 - 9.40	Suvarnabhumi International Airport
4	Thai AirAsia	FD-3199	6.55 - 8.15	Donmueang International Airport DMK
5	Thai Lion Air	SL-532	8.20 - 9.45	Donmueang International Airport DMK

Additional information:

10:00 am. Transportation from Mae Fah Luang - Chiang Rai International Airport, to Rai Cherntawan International Meditation Center

Transportation will be organized by the Secretariat team - 45 minutes journey.

If you miss the bus organised by the Secretariat team, you will need to arrange transportation yourself by taxi or car rental.

Please note, there is no public transport from the International Airport to Rai Cherntawan International Meditation Center.