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Submission for the

**POSITIVE AWARD  
2006**

**Filed by: BioTani Indonesia Foundation,  
Jakarta, Indonesia**

## BioTani Indonesia Foundation

Headquarters:	Jakarta, Indonesia
Established:	1996
Web site:	n/a
Number of employees:	6 full-time, 10 volunteers
Number of members:	5 board members
Area of activity:	Alternative and fair trade; the right to food
Main objectives:	As Indonesian member of the Pesticide Action Network (PAN), BioTani fights against the negative impacts of pesticides and biotechnology. The NGO supports participative agriculture and sustainable development.

### **Summary**

*The BioTani Indonesia Foundation fights against dangerous pesticide use and biopiracy. With its campaign against the cosmetics concern Shiseido, the Indonesian NGO fought the patenting of native medicinal plants by the Japanese corporation. The public pressure generated by the campaign led to Shiseido's withdrawal of its patents from the European patent office.*

### **Reasons for the submission**

International corporations are scrambling to patent genetic resources, in order to use them industrially as raw material. In the process, they often help themselves to the biological diversity of countries in the South. Which is exactly what happened when the Japanese Shiseido Corporation, a cosmetic and skin care concern, patented 11 different components of "Jamu" medicinal herbs, which help to lighten skin tone and give it a younger appearance.

As a member of the Pesticide Action Network (PAN), BioTani fights against dangerous pesticide use and biopiracy, and encourages sustainable and autonomous agriculture and fair trade. BioTani uses two different strategies [to this aim]: On the one hand, the NGO supports and advises farmers on alternative pest control, trading of seeds, and the conversion to fair trade production. Moreover it monitors compliance of strict fair trade rules. On the other hand, BioTani is engaged at the political level for national and international policies that take the needs of (small) farmers into consideration, forbids biopiracy, and promotes fair trade. For example, BioTani participated as an observer in the negotiations to the Right to Food at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). BioTani is also closely following the WTO negotiations on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement.

The deadline for the submission of the candidature was August 26<sup>th</sup> 2005. Later developments were considered in the summaries as far as known. 1

BioTani launched its campaign against the Shiseido Corporation in early 2000. In the end of the 1990s, the Japanese concern began to register patents on Jamu medicinal plants. Indonesian small farmers, who have grown Jamu as a medicinal plant for generations, were suddenly in danger of having to pay patent rights for “their” plants in the future. To avoid this, BioTani launched a wide-ranging campaign against bioprospecting. With public workshops, press conferences and intensive lobbying, BioTani fought in the name of small farmers against biopiracy. As a result, BioTani was in close contact with the Japanese press, which could exert pressure on Shiseido via a publicity campaign in its home market.

### **Results of the campaign**

In March 2002, the Japanese corporation gave in to public pressure and withdrew the patents on Indonesian medicinal plants from the European patent office. With numerous media announcements, Shiseido attempted to restore its image, which had been bruised as a result of BioTani’s campaign.

### **What happens next?**

In the future, BioTani hopes to increasingly work together with the affected rural population. Education programs should help ensure that farmers affected by biopiracy can better defend their interests.

**Detailed submission:** [www.publiceye.ch/nominierungen](http://www.publiceye.ch/nominierungen)