

Press Release

MAY BE PUBLISHED ON 13 FEBRUARY 2017 AT 10:30 A.M.

Professor of the Year – professor Erik Bonsdorff

The Finnish Union of University Professors has named Erik Bonsdorff, the professor of marine biology from Åbo Akademi as the Professor of the Year 2017. The honour was announced on Friday at the seminar *Professorit itsenäisyyttä rakentamassa* [Engl. trans. Professors building independence] on Science Forum 2017 in Helsinki. The Professor of the Year title comes with an award of 20,000 euro.

The Professor of the Year, Erik Bonsdorff, has a deep and extensive experience in the fields of marine biology and environmental research, both in Finland and abroad. He is the country's leading expert and the most quoted marine biologist with over 145 scientific publications.

“In the work of professor Erik Bonsdorff, we see the merger of an internationally significant scientific research and its tangible effect, for example, on the improvement of state of the Baltic Sea, and the state of the world's seas in general,” states Kaarle Hämeri, Chair of the Finnish Union of University Professors, as the grounds for Bondorff's selection.

Bonsdorff (aged 62) has been the professor of marine biology in Åbo Akademi since 1999. Before that, he worked as the professor of the same field in Umeå University, Sweden. He has also worked as the visiting professor in the University of Gothenburg. Nordic co-operation, for example, with Baltic Sea research, has always a significant part of Bonsdorff's work.

Bonsdorff mentions operating in international research networks as his most important working method. In addition to the Baltic Sea, he has done research on seas globally, the arctic sea areas, the European coastal zones and the subtropics, amongst others.

In Åbo Akademi, professor Bonsdorff is the head of a large international research group. The biggest part of the group's funding comes from external funding sources. Bonsdorff is also a respected supervisor of doctoral studies. Over 25 doctoral dissertations have been completed under his supervision, both in Åbo Akademi and abroad.

Erik Bonsdorff is an active popular communicator of his own field. He has written columns in daily newspapers and popular books both in Finnish and in Swedish. His book *Itämeren tulevaisuus* [Engl. trans. The Future of the Baltic Sea] was a Non-Fiction Finlandia Prize contestant in 2010. Bonsdorff is a member of the selection committee of the Non-Fiction Book of the Year 2016. In the Science Forum 2017 on Saturday, he chairs the Endangered Baltic Sea panel.

In professor Bonsdorff's work, social efficacy and activity are noticeable also in his memberships in various scientific societies both in Finland and in Sweden. He has high esteem for the freedom of scientific discourse.

For additional information, please contact:

Professor Erik Bonsdorff, 040 536 3539;

Chair of the Finnish Union of University Professors Kaarle Hämeri, 040 568 4487;

Head of Communications Kirsti Sintonen, 040 5622 965;

Photographs: Communications Assistant Nuppu Pelevina, 050 5481 593, nuppu.pelevina@professoriliitto.fi