

For Immediate Release

JX Nippon Oil & Energy Corporation
Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd.

Development of technique to cleanse contaminated soil using phytoremediation

**Received the FY2012 Environment Minister Award for
the Model Initiatives on Environment Measures**

In recognition of the development of a technique to cleanse contaminated soil using phytoremediation*, JX Nippon Oil & Energy Corporation (President and Representative Director: Seiichi Isshiki; Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) and Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Akira Ichikawa; Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) announced that they received the FY2012 Environment Minister Award for the Model Initiatives on Environment Measures.

This award was first established in 2011. The objective is to help prevent pollution caused by industrial activities in Japan by commending companies that are implementing exemplary actions to prevent pollution and extensively introducing these activities. The technique developed by JX Nippon Oil and Energy and Sumitomo Forestry was highly commended for its innovativeness and achievements.

The purification and improvement of soil contaminated by oil was previously conducted using techniques that involved excavation and removal or chemical agents. Issues included the vast amount of energy necessary to transport the contaminated soil to treatment plants or to implement purification, and the environmental impact, such as from the waste treatment process.

In fiscal 2008, JX Nippon Oil and Energy began testing this technique at the former sites of gasoline stations and factories, with the aim of commercializing the technique, which is easier to implement, and has a lower environmental impact and cost than conventional purification and improvement techniques. Through these field tests, it was discovered that the *Zoysia japonica* (Japanese lawn grass), a “burning field” variety developed by Sumitomo Forestry, is highly resistant to oil and easy to maintain as it resilient to dry weather. The award was in recognition of the technique, which was jointly developed by the two companies.

Going forward both companies plan to contribute to the spread and promotion of a safe and secure environment by utilizing their proprietary technologies, including this technique.

*The word is a combination of “phyton” (plants) and “remediate” (to improve).

The technique uses the natural cleaning ability of plants to cleanse contaminated soil.