

Acceptance Speech of  
**PROFESSOR EDWARD OSBORNE WILSON**

Winner of the 2000  
King Faisal International Prize for Science

Sunday 14 May 2000 (10 Safar 1421H.)

Your Royal Highness, Prince Sultan ibn Abd Al Aziz  
Your Royal Highnesses  
Your Excellencies  
Distinguished Guests

I am deeply grateful for the distinctive honor of receiving this award. The King Faisal Prize for Science occupies a special place in honorific recognition. It is, of course, one of the major International science prizes, and gaining in reputation in that category. It has added prestige in being the major such award given from within the Islamic culture. Thus it recognizes a tradition of great advances in science that pre-date those of Europe.

The subjects in which I have conducted research are of concern across the great world cultures. The relation of biology to the social sciences and humanities, however it is eventually perceived and acted upon, will have a profound influence on how humanity perceives itself, with significant resonance in the future study of social behavior and institutions. It will, I believe, have a beneficial unifying effect in scholarship across cultures.

Similarly, the study and conservation of biodiversity, the world's fauna and flora, is of great ultimate concern to everyone. Whether natural ecosystems persist, and whether species live or die will affect generations for all time to come. We have, in my opinion, entered the century of the environment in science and economics, and the living

part of the planet should and will be a major concern of scholarship and moral reasoning.

Again, I thank you for this honor and for the privilege of attending this very special occasion.