NUS don gets global award for ‘green’ law

By IAN POH

A NATIONAL University of Singapore (NUS) law professor has received an international award for achievements in the field of environmental law.

Emeritus Professor Koh Kheng-Lian received the 2012 Elizabeth Haub Prize for Environmental Law for “pioneering” contributions to the development of the field in Singapore and the Asean region.

She is the second Singaporean to be made a laureate after Ambassador-at-large Tommy Koh, who won the prize in 1996 for his accomplishments as a United Nations negotiator.

The prize, established in 1973, is given out annually by the International Council of Environmental Law and Stockholm University to individuals who have made significant contributions to the development of the field.

Prof Koh Kheng-Lian has presented papers at conferences held in numerous countries and published extensively, including a two-volume book entitled Asean Environmental Law, Policy And Governance.

Speaking on Nov 14 at the award ceremony in Murnau, Germany, she said Singapore had succeeded in its greening efforts even as it pursued the “politics of economic survival” after independence in 1965. “Perhaps no other country... has had such political will of greening and cleaning the environment at the start of an urbanisation and industrialisation process.”

Calling Prof Koh Kheng-Lian a “true pioneer” in the field, NUS law dean Simon Chesterman said the award was a “tremendous honour” for the faculty.