



WTTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards announce 2015 Finalists

The [World Travel & Tourism Council \(WTTTC\)](#) has revealed the 15 finalists for its 2015 Tourism for Tomorrow Awards. With categories covering destination stewardship, community benefit, environmental management, workforce development and innovation, and a rigorous judging process, these Awards provide the highest accolade for sustainability in the global Travel & Tourism industry.

The Awards aim to transform the Travel & Tourism industry, based upon sustainable tourism principles, by educating and inspiring travel & tourism businesses and destinations about how to improve the sustainability of the sector. Applications were received from 57 countries across all continents. In the first stage of a comprehensive three step judging process, a committee of independent expert judges carefully evaluated and selected award entries against established sustainable tourism criteria including the protection of natural and cultural heritage, social and economic benefits to local people and environmentally friendly operations. The second phase of judging will now involve an on-site evaluation of each finalist carried out by international sustainable tourism experts. These experts will make in-depth first hand assessments of the organisations and businesses in practice. They will then be assessed by a further panel of sustainability experts, who will select the winner for each category. Winners will be announced during the 15th WTTTC Global Summit, Madrid, Spain on 15/16th April 2015.

Awards Lead Judge, Graham Miller, Professor of Sustainability in Business and Head of School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, The University of Surrey, says; "The calibre of applications this year was exceptionally high and the judges were particularly excited by the diversity of organisations who applied. This year, the finalists include excellent examples of a slum tour, city and accessible tourism, as well as eco-lodges which have been leading the way in sustainable tourism development for many years."

The Finalists of the 2015 WTTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards are:

Community Award finalists, whose organisations are committed to sustainable tourism leadership in local community development, empowerment and cultural heritage

- Fenyan Ecolodge, Jordan
- Grootbos Nature Reserve, South Africa
- Reality Tours & Travel, India

Destination Award finalists, who show commitment to supporting and delivering sustainable tourism best practices in their destinations:

- Ljubljana, Slovenia
- Northeast and Yilan Coast, Taiwan
- Sozopol, Bulgaria

Environment Award finalists, whose organisations and companies achieved environmental best practice through biodiversity conservation, protection of natural habitats, addressing climate change, and green operations:

- Laguna Lodge Eco-Resort & Nature Reserve, Guatemala
- Rivers Fiji, Fiji
- Soneva, Thailand

Innovation Award finalists, who provided innovative solutions to overcoming the challenges faced by Travel & Tourism in implementing sustainability in practice:

- ABTA Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism, United Kingdom
- RED Sustainable Travel, Mexico
- TripAdvisor GreenLeaders, USA

People Award finalists, who are dedicated to the development of capacity building, training and education to build a skilled tourism workforce for the future.

- Confortel, Spain
- Global Travel & Tourism Partnership, USA
- Mountain Shepherds Initiative, India

The Winner Selection Committee is chaired by Fiona Jeffery OBE, Chair of the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards and includes:

- Jonathon Porritt, Founder Director & Trustee, Forum for the Future
- Hugh Riley, Secretary General of the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO)
- Mandip Singh Soin FRGS, Founder & Managing Director, Ibex Expeditions Pvt Ltd, India, Mountaineer, Explorer, Eco pacifist, Adventure Travel & Ecotourism expert
- Graham Miller, Awards Lead Judge, Professor of Sustainability in Business and Head of School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, The University of Surrey

Fiona Jeffery OBE said; “I am delighted and honoured that Jonathon, Hugh and Mandip will join Graham and myself on the Winner Selection Committee. They bring many years of dedication to sustainability and sustainable tourism from different parts of the world and they are all leaders in their field. This year’s finalists are maximising social and economic benefits for local people, reducing negative impacts to the environment and supporting the protection of cultural and natural heritage in destinations, wherever they operate, and selecting the winners among them will be a tough job. ”

David Scowsill, President & CEO of WTTC said; “It is vital that we learn best practice from each other and raise the sector’s ethics to the highest order. The Awards, now in their 11th

year, showcase the companies and organisations who are breaking new ground in sustainable tourism development. This year's finalists demonstrate that, when carefully managed, tourism can be a powerful force for improving livelihoods and protecting our planet for future generations. We want their stories to inspire others in the sector to follow their example. This year, for the first time, the ceremony will be live-streamed so that not only our delegates but the world at large will be able to hear the winners' stories first hand."

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For more information about the Awards and to interview key awards spokespeople or any of the finalists, please contact:

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<http://wttc.org/tourism-for-tomorrow-awards/>

Notes to Editors:

- More details on the Awards and the application process can be found at <http://wttc.org/tourism-for-tomorrow-awards/>
- Tourism for Tomorrow, "the WTTC Perspective" sets out how applicants need to demonstrate how they are actively engaged in a successful programme of sustainable tourism practices and management, including maximising social and economic benefits for local people, reducing negative impacts to the environment, and supporting the protection of cultural and natural heritage in destinations where they operate. It can be downloaded at: <http://wttc.org/mission/tourism-for-tomorrow/tourism-for-tomorrow-the-wttc-perspective/>
- **Sponsors:** AIG, Amadeus, AVIS, Enterprise Holdings, LVCVA Las Vegas, VISA
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The World Travel & Tourism Council is the global authority on the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism. It promotes sustainable growth for the industry, working with governments and international institutions to create jobs, to drive exports and to generate prosperity. WTTC's annual Global Summit brings together over 1,000 delegates to discuss the opportunities, challenges and issues facing the industry, while its Tourism for Tomorrow Awards recognise the industry's power to be a positive force in sustainability.

The industry is a key driver for investment and economic growth globally. In 2013 Travel & Tourism accounted for 266 million jobs (1 in 11 of all jobs in the world) and contributed 9.5% of global GDP (nearly US\$7 trillion). For more than 20 years, the World Travel & Tourism Council has been the voice of this industry globally. Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading, private sector Travel & Tourism businesses. These Members bring specialist knowledge to guide government policy and decision-making, raising awareness of the importance of the industry as an economic generator of prosperity.