

Lilizela-Imvelo Awards finalists announced

Sustainability in the tourism industry is making great strides in the right direction, as reflected in the record number of entries to the 2013 Lilizela-Imvelo Awards for Responsible Tourism, the sustainable development category of the Department of Tourism's inaugural Lilizela Awards.

This year's entries to the Lilizela-Imvelo Awards reached a record high of 406 category entries from 148 establishments. The six categories related to best social, environmental and economic practices and were open to large and small establishments in southern Africa.

Record entries

The highest number of entries in a single category was 70 entries in the 'Best Social Involvement Programme' category which assesses examples of corporate and social responsibility. The second highest number was 62 entries in the 'Best Single Resource Management Programme - Energy' category, which relates to businesses operational efforts to save energy. The 'Best Overall Environmental Management System' category followed with 59 entries.

The 'Investing in People' category attracted 53 entries. Here establishments needed to give evidence of best practice training, education and development of individuals in tourism to show the practical steps taken to develop the people in their businesses.

The remainder of the entries were divided fairly equally between the 'Best Economic Impact' category (45), 'Best Single Resource - Waste' (43) and 'Best Single Resource - Water Management' (42).

The category 'Most Empowered Tourism Business' (32) represents the processes of transformation that establishments are undergoing to create a more competitive industry - embracing previously marginalised participants. Entrants needed to demonstrate their contribution to issues of empowerment and also to a globally competitive, demographically representative tourism industry.

A change in the categories from last year is that the Chairman's Award has been replaced by a Minister's Award, which will be the highest tourism award in the country.

Finalists

The finalists in each category are:

Best Social Involvement Programme - Big

- Turtle Bay Beach Club (Kenya)
- Sun International Zambia (Zambia)
- Umngazi River Bungalows and Spa (Eastern Cape)

Best Social Involvement Programme - Small

- Gorges Lodge (Zimbabwe)
- Bomani Tented Lodge (Zimbabwe)
- Prana Lodge Private Beach Estate and Spa (Eastern Cape)
- The Angel's Place Boutique Hotel (Gauteng)

Best Practice - Economic Impact - Big

- Riverside Sun Resort (Gauteng)
- Sun International Zambia (Zambia)
- Zambezi Queen (Western Cape)

Best Practice - Economic Impact - Small

- Gorges Lodge (Zimbabwe)
- Makgabeng Farm Lodge (Limpopo)
- Rivera on Vaal Hotel and Country Club (Gauteng)

Special Judges Recommendations

- Platter Golf (Pty) Ltd (Western Cape)
- Garden Court South Beach (KwaZulu Natal)

Best Overall Environmental Management System - Big

- Leriba Hotel & Spa (Gauteng)
- Cape Town International Convention Centre (Western Cape)
- Sandton Sun (Gauteng)
- Intercontinental JHB Sandton Towers (Gauteng)
- Protea Hotel Umhlanga Ridge (KwaZulu Natal)

Best Overall Environmental Management System - Small

- T&T Bed & Breakfast (KwaZulu Natal)
- La Fontaine Guest House (Western Cape)
- Garden Court Ulundi (KwaZulu Natal)

Best Single Resource Management System - Water - Big

- V&A Waterfront (Western Cape)
- ATKV Natalia (KwaZulu Natal)
- Riverside Sun Resort (Gauteng)

Best Single Resource Management System - Water - Small

- Mosetlha Bush Camp & Eco Lodge (Gauteng)
- Tshulu Trust (Limpopo)
- Southern Sun Bloemfontein (Free State)

Best Single Resource Management System - Energy - Big

- V&A Waterfront (Western Cape)
- Emperors Palace Casino (Gauteng)
- Courtyard Hotel Port Elizabeth (Eastern Cape)

Best Single Resource Management System - Energy - Small

- Three Trees At Spioenkop (KwaZulu Natal)
- Southern Sun Bloemfontein (Free State)
- Southern Sun Newlands (Western Cape)

Best Single Resource Management System - Waste - Big

- CSIR International Convention Centre (Gauteng)
- V&A Waterfront (Western Cape)
- Hilton Cape Town City Centre (Western cape)

Best Single Resource Management System - Waste - Small

- Edge of Africa (Eastern Cape)
- Nirabritz Nature Guide & Tours (Western Cape)
- Midlands Saddle & Trout Resort Share Block (KwaZulu Natal)

Investing in People - Big

- Garden Court Hatfield (Gauteng)
- Magalies Park (Northwest)
- Riverside Sun Resort (Gauteng)

Investing in People - Small

- Garden Court Ulundi (KwaZulu Natal)
- Garden Court Polokwane (Limpopo)
- Garden Court Eastgate (Gauteng)

Most Empowered Tourism Business - Big

- Garden Court Hatfield (Gauteng)
- Zambezi Queen (Western Cape)
- Red Carnation Hotel Collection (Western Cape)

Most Empowered Tourism Business - Small

- Protea Hotel Bloemfontein Central (Free State)

Judges

The judging panel with the daunting task of choosing the finalists and winners was headed by Lorraine Jenks, consultant in the environmental and conservation tourism industry.

Other panellists included Allison MacDonald, global account director with Ireland-Davenport; Erwin van der Weerd, CEO of Perfect Places; Jeunesse Park of Food and Trees for Africa; Kinesh Chetty, CEO of Greener Future; Rosy Mogotsi, deputy director of Domestic Tourism with the Department of Tourism; Busisiwe Tshabalala of the Department of Water Affairs; Sibusiso Tshabalala, acting manager for Residential Municipality Sector & Integrated Demand Management Department at Eskom; Christine Engelbrecht, head of Tourism Strategic Business Units with the IDC; Paula Bester, manager of Finance and Administration with TEP; Faith Zwane, Tourism and Travel Services Chamber coordinator with

Cathseta; Steven Zwane, head of Africa Employability Programme, Absa; and Tshidi Mkhosana, GM, FEDHASA Inland. All are specialists in driving sustainable and responsible tourism.

Fedhasa's key partners in the Lilizela-Imvelo Awards include the Department of Tourism, Eskom, Department of Water Affairs, Absa, and the Industrial Development Corporation.

"It was exceptionally encouraging to have a record number of entries in our first year in partnership with the Department of Tourism as the Lilizela-Imvelo Awards," says Eddy Khosa, chairman of FEDHASA.

"These awards, which form part of the NDT's Lilizela Awards in the sustainable development category, will be announced on 12 September. The awards recognise and reward members of the tourism industry who have gone some way towards growing South Africa's global destination competitiveness, which by necessity includes sustainability in tourism which is fundamental to the growth of our tourism industry."

Khosa says the tourism industry in South Africa is showing a commitment to progress that augurs well for a holistic approach to development within our industry in the future. "These awards comprehensively applaud excellence across the entire spectrum of the industry and inspire those establishments not yet entering or winning to up their game and be the best that they can be. We look forward to the Lilizela award ceremony on 12 September, when we salute our heroes in the field of sustainable tourism."

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>