

COMMUNIQUÉ

2010 Winners Announced for the Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award

Montreal, 12 March 2010 – To recognize excellence in the sustainable use of biodiversity in tourism operated in areas managed by indigenous and local communities, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in collaboration with the leading sustainable travel web portal Planeta.com, and with the generous support of the Heidehof Foundation is pleased to announce the winners of the second annual **Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award**.

The award, presented to indigenous tourism operators for websites that promote sustainable practices and educates visitors about cultural protocols and biodiversity conservation, complements the CBD workshop series on indigenous tourism, biodiversity and web-based technologies supported by the Government of Spain.

As stated by Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention, the Award is “a unique way to reward the efforts of indigenous and local communities (ILC) promoting and embodying traditional lifestyles to integrate biodiversity in their tourism operations. Particularly during 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity, this initiative contributes to the global efforts to raise public awareness of the unacceptable rate of biodiversity loss.”

By highlighting the world’s best indigenous and local community-owned and operated tourism services, the Secretariat of the Convention helps motivate operators worldwide to improve their online communication on biological and cultural diversity, highlight best practices in managing tourism and to raise operators and the public’s awareness on biodiversity.

Winner of the judged 2010 ITBW Award

- **Nutti Sami Siida** (www.nutti.se), a company that arranges nature and culture tours based on the Sami culture. Owners Nils Torbjörn Nutti and Carina Pingi are both Sami from Gabna Sameby, Sweden.

Winner of the popular count 2010 ITBW Award

- **TIME Unlimited Tours** (www.newzealandtours.travel) from New Zealand, operated by the Maori-European couple Ceillhe Tewhare Teneti Hema Sperath and Néill Sperath, and providing personalized and interactive Auckland & Maori Indigenous Cultural Tours.

Other finalists were:

- Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre (www.brambuk.com.au), which introduces visitors to the Grampians National Park (Gariwerd) in Victoria, Australia;
- Kakadu Culture Camp (www.kakaduculturecamp.com), which is owned and operated by Fred and Jenny Hunter, Aboriginal people from Australia's Kakadu National Park;
- Chalalan Ecolodge (www.chalalan.com), which is 100 per cent run and owned by the indigenous community in Bolivia;
- Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre (www.slcc.ca), which shares the cultures of two distinct indigenous cultures in a visionary partnership on shared traditional territories in Canada;
- Te Urewera Treks (www.teureweratreks.co.nz), which strives to operate in a sustainable manner in accord with Maori principles and values in New Zealand ;and
- Xe Pian National Protected Area (www.xepian.org), which features tours and accommodation owned and managed by local communities in Xe Pian NPA, southern Laos.

Applications were received from 10 countries (Australia, Bolivia, Canada, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mexico, Micronesia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Sweden). Over 400 people cast their vote, examining the 14 websites that fit the ambitious criteria set on Planeta.com's wiki site (www.planeta.wikispaces.com/itbw). Additionally, a jury composed of six internationally recognized experts in indigenous and sustainable tourism voted using the same criteria.

ABOUT THE AWARD

The Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award is a collaborative effort between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (www.cbd.int) and the leading sustainable travel web portal Planeta.com (www.planeta.com), with the generous support of the Heidehof Foundation (www.heidehof-stiftung.de). Plans are ongoing for an expanded 2012 award.

Winners will receive the award on 23 April 2010 at a tourism trade fair, the Reisepavillon, in Berlin. The Reisepavillon (www.reisepavillon-online.de) has, since 1991, been a global focal point for responsible tourism. The Secretariat of the CBD will organize, together with leading German tourism trade associations, an awards ceremony featuring the Executive Director of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and executives from Germany's GTZ. The Secretariat will assist winners and runners up in meeting leading German operators and agents dedicated to sustainable tourism. Winners will also receive technical support and participate in a workshop, on 24 April 2010, on innovative Web 2.0 tools for marketing and communications, facilitated by Planeta.com founder Ron Mader. A publication about the award, its nominees, winners and the lessons learned, will be distributed at the event and posted online in April.

For more information: www.cbd.int/tourism/wstour-01.shtml
