

NEWS RELEASE

IMVELO RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS – WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The winners in the 2008 Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards programme, organised by the Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) in partnership with Absa, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the Tourism Empowerment Council of South Africa and the Industrial Development Corporation have been announced.

The awards were made in Johannesburg today (Wednesday, 12 November 2008). Running for the seventh year, Imvelo recognises tourism and hospitality businesses that make a real, measurable and sustained contribution to responsible tourism.

FEDHASA CEO Brett Dungan said the overall winner, selected from the six category winners, is the Drakensberg Sun Hotel. The judges saluted the property's outstanding understanding of the interdependence of all aspects of an effective environmental management system and its excellent waste management programme.

In the category Best social involvement programme the group winner is Sun International Zambia and the independent winner is Stormsrivier Adventures. Other finalists in this category were the Wild Coast Sun, Accor Hospitality Southern Africa and Voluntours, a Gauteng based volunteer project management organisation and tour operator. Entrants were judged on examples of corporate and social responsibility like community investment initiatives, local outsourcing, community health, welfare and education activities, promotion of local SMME enterprises as well as local HIV/Aids and other social programmes

In the category Best practice - economic impact the group winner is the Wild Coast Sun and the independent winner is Pafuri Camp in the Kruger National Park. Other finalists in this category are the Vineyard Hotel & Spa in Cape Town, AWOL Tours, Stormsrivier Adventures and Shiluvuvari Lakeside Lodge in Limpopo. Entrants were judged on local purchasing and economic practices, employment equity, Black Economic Empowerment, employee training and development of and adherence to general and industry-specific legislation.

The Wild Coast Sun walked away as the winner in the category Best overall environmental management system. Other finalists were Stormsrivier Adventures, the Drakensberg Sun Hotel, Sun City Resort and Oubaai Golf Estate on the Garden Route. Entries were judged on combined environmental issues including management systems and procedures, conservation activities, social and economic initiatives, communication systems and overall awareness creation.

In the category Best single resource management programme – energy management the winner is the Southern Sun Cape Sun Hotel. The other finalists were Sun City Resort, Paradise Touring, the Sandton Convention Centre and The Table Bay Hotel.

The Table Mountain Aerial Cableway Company is the winner in the category Best single resource management programme – water management, while the Sandton Convention Centre is highly commended in this category. The other finalists are the Southern Sun Cape Sun Hotel, Sun City Resort and the Fish River Sun.

In the category Best single resource management programme – waste management the group winner is the Drakensberg Sun Hotel and the independent winner is White Shark Projects. The other finalists are Sun City Resort, the Southern Sun Cape Sun Hotel and the Peninsula All-Suite Hotel.

The FEDHASA Chairman’s Award was made to Voluntours for its commitment and achievements towards responsible tourism practice in South Africa. This award is independent of the other awards and may be made to any organisation or individual making a meaningful contribution to responsible tourism.

Dungan said this year’s entries were of a very high standard and that a record of 134 category entries was received, compared to 96 last year.

“It is clear that after seven years, Imvelo is certainly making a huge impact on tourism in South Africa, creating significant awareness of environmental management issues in the industry. With tourism being South Africa’s new gold, Imvelo will continue to create awareness of the potential - but also the responsibility – of sustainable tourism.”

Stewart Lumka, General Manager: National Government at Absa Corporate and Business Bank said both FEDHASA and Absa are committed to building sustainable growth, prosperity and true empowerment. “Absa is proud to be associated with the Imvelo awards not only because it acknowledges excellence in one of our fastest growing industries, but because the entrepreneurs running these businesses are making a real and sustainable contribution to our economy.

“I believe that our partnership with FEDHASA in awarding excellence and environmental responsibility in tourism is making a significant impact on the industry. This year’s finalists are truly the cream of the crop.”

Imvelo – which means ‘nature’ in South Africa’s Nguni languages - forms part of an ongoing hospitality industry campaign to encourage industry members to accept voluntary guidelines promoting responsible tourism. The awards are in line with the responsible tourism guidelines for the South African hospitality industry and the UN World Tourism Organisation’s code of ethics, and are supported by the Heritage Environmental Rating Programme.

Imvelo is supported by the Johannesburg Tourism Company, Results Media and Sun International.

For more information visit www.imveloawards.co.za

(Ends)

Released by:	Martin van Niekerk Junxion Communications Tel 012 804 8812
For:	Brett Dungan FEDHASA Tel 011 467 5009
Date:	12 November 2008
