

NEWS RELEASE

WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY – TIME TO SHOW COMMITMENT IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

The Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) appeals to the tourism industry to show its commitment to the environment by entering the annual Imvelo Responsible Tourism awards.

FEDHASA Chief Executive Officer Brett Dungan says World Environment Day – tomorrow, 5 June – is the ideal opportunity for any business in tourism to showcase its sustained and measurable contributions to responsible tourism.

World Environment Day was established by the UN General Assembly in 1972 to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and has been celebrated annually ever since.

The World Environment Day theme for 2009 is ‘Your planet needs you – UNite to combat climate change’ and reflects the urgency for nations to agree on a new deal at the climate convention in Copenhagen later in the year.

“Imvelo supports these initiatives as they are in line with the principles of the awards,” says Dungan, “and we believe there many local examples of world-class responsible tourism practices, also related to climate change.”

Imvelo means ‘nature’ in South Africa’s Nguni languages.

Running for the eighth year, Imvelo is organised by FEDHASA in conjunction with the Department of Tourism, Absa, The Tourism Empowerment Council of South Africa and the Industrial Development Corporation and is open to any type of tourism and hospitality business.

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

Awards will be made in the categories Best social involvement programme, Best practice – economic impact, Best overall environmental management system and Best single resource management programme, Most empowered tourism business and Investor in people. An overall Imvelo winner will be selected.

A Chairman’s Award could be made at the discretion of the FEDHASA chairman to any Imvelo entrant or any other organisation in the tourism industry that made a significant contribution to responsible tourism over the past year.

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Entrants may enter in more than one category but entries must stipulate the category/categories that apply.

Entries should reach the organisers by 14 August 2009. They will be judged by a panel of specialists in responsible tourism practice and finalists will be visited personally to verify and evaluate their entries.

Winners will receive their awards at an awards ceremony to be held in Johannesburg in November.

For more information contact Lynda Bacon on telephone 011 467 5009 or visit www.imveloawards.co.za.

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