

## NEWS RELEASE

### IMVELO RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS - DEADLINE LOOMS

Tourism and hospitality businesses have until Friday, 14 August to enter the 2009 Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards programme.

Imvelo, running for the eighth year, recognises businesses and hospitality establishments that make a real, measurable and sustained contribution to responsible tourism.

Organised by the Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) in conjunction with Absa, the Department of Tourism, the Tourism Empowerment Council of South Africa and the Industrial Development Corporation, Imvelo is open to any type of tourism and hospitality business.

FEDHASA CEO Brett Dungan says Imvelo has made a huge impact on tourism in South Africa, creating significant awareness of environmental management issues in the industry.

“These environmental issues,” he says, “do not only relate to the natural environment. In fact, there is a strong emphasis on the social and economic environment in which businesses find themselves, especially in the context of modern-day South Africa and the realities around the infrastructure developments and other preparations leading up to 2010.”

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.

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](http://www.imveloawards.co.za).

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