

## NEWS RELEASE

### IMVELO RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS – FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

The finalists in the 2009 Imvelo Responsible Tourism Awards programme, organised by the Federated Hospitality Association of Southern Africa (FEDHASA) have been announced.

Imvelo, running for the eighth year, awards tourism businesses that demonstrate sustained responsible practice in their operations in terms of their natural, social and economic environments.

A record number of 183 category entries were received this year.

Brett Dungan, Chief Executive Officer of FEDHASA says 26 tourism businesses made it to the finals in this year's awards programme.

The finalists are Abang Africa Travel & Trust, a tour operator in the Bo-Kaap, African Impact, a tour operator in Sun Valley near Cape Town, ATKV Klein Kariba near Bela-Bela, Avis Rent a Car, Drakensberg Sun Lifestyle Resort, Emzini Tours, a township tour operator in Knysna, Khwa ttu San Culture and Education Centre at Yzerfontein, Forever Resorts South Africa, Garden Court – Hatfield, Le Franschoek Hotel, Nkomazi Game Reserve near Badplaas, Sabi Sabi Private Game Reserve, Shamwari Private Game Reserve, Simunye Zulu Lodge, a natural heritage site in Zululand, Sheraton Pretoria Hotel, Southern Sun – Newlands, Stay Easy Emalahleni (Witbank), Sun City Resort, Sun International Zambia, The Peninsula All Suite Hotel, The Table Bay Hotel, Ulusaba Private Game Reserve, Vineyard Hotel & Spa, Wild Coast Sun, Windmill Casino & Entertainment Centre in Bloemfontein and Zulu Mphohameni Tourism Experience, a community tourism organisation in Howick.

According to Dungan Imvelo is now firmly established as a benchmark for responsible tourism practice in South Africa. “We are truly pleased with the impact that Imvelo continues to make in the tourism industry. Environmental issues are becoming vitally important across all sectors and because of its huge employment and social upliftment potential, tourism should be at the forefront.”

Imvelo – which means ‘nature’ in South Africa’s Nguni languages - encourages 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, Best single resource management programme – for energy, water and waste, 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.

Winners will receive their awards at an awards ceremony to be held in Johannesburg on World Responsible Tourism Day, 11 November.

The 2009 awards are supported by Absa, the Department of Tourism, the Tourism Empowerment Council of South Africa and the Industrial Development Corporation.

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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