

WTM World Responsible Tourism Awards launches regional Africa awards

One of Africa's most inspiring responsible tourism initiatives has a new platform to highlight their work through the WTM World Responsible Tourism Awards 2021, which for the first time has introduced regional awards.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

Launched in 2002, the awards seek to recognise and reward businesses and destinations which are contributing to a more sustainable and responsible tourism industry, based on the simple principle that all types of tourism, from niche to mainstream, can and should be organised in a way that preserves, respects and benefits destinations and local people.

Winners will be chosen by a group of industry experts, led by Harold Goodwin, WTM's Responsible Tourism Advisor.

The competition is broken down into four regions – Africa, India, Latin America, and the Rest of the World – with Gold and Silver Awards given to the first and second-placed entries in each category in each region.

The panel will also name one business in each category and region as 'one to watch'.

Each region also has a discretionary 'Judges Award' available for businesses whose area of expertise falls between the categories or who have been previous winners.

This year, all the Gold winners will have a chance to win an inaugural WTM World Responsible Tourism Global Award. Each of the six categories will have its own Global winner, chosen from the four regional winners.

This year's categories reflect the relationship between tourism, responsibility and Covid-19:

- Decarbonising travel & tourism
- Sustaining employees and communities through the pandemic
- Destinations building back better post-Covid
- Increasing diversity in tourism: How inclusive is our industry?
- Reducing plastic waste in the environment
- Growing the local economic benefit

The same assessment process is followed across all regions and categories to ensure that each entry is judged on the same basis. Businesses can enter on their own behalf or be nominated by partners, peers or customers.

Entries can be submitted by 31 August 2021. Entries must be submitted [online](#).

The regional Gold and Silver Awards recipients, and the new Global winners, will be announced at WTM Virtual, taking place digitally between 8-9 November this year. Meanwhile, WTM London is returning as a physical event, taking place at Excel London from 1–3 November.

Megan Oberholzer, Reed Exhibitions South Africa portfolio director - travel, tourism and creative industries say that Africa's leading role in the responsible tourism space has an opportunity to shine. "We are looking forward to seeing African tourism products and experience claim their well-deserved spot on the global responsible tourism stage and the role we can play in highlighting the ways in which our continent is building back better for the benefits of communities and conservation."

According to Harold Goodwin, WTM's Responsible Tourism Advisor, says the World Responsible Tourism Awards have grown in prestige. "Every year, remarkable new examples of responsible businesses and destinations are 'discovered' and recognised through the awards. In 2021 for the first time, we are launching global awards for each category, selected from the Gold winners in each of the regions. Only those that enter can win, you've nothing to lose by applying or encouraging someone else to do so," concludes Goodwin.

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