



belize



World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards (“WSTHA”) Advisory Board unveils categories ahead of inaugural ceremony in Belize on World Tourism Day 2024



Image shows Glenn Mandziuk (CEO, Sustainable Hospitality Alliance), Justin Cooke, (Executive Vice-President, WSTHA) and Evan Tillet (Director of Tourism, Belize Tourism Board) sharing a group handshake during the announcement of the WSTHA categories at ITB Berlin.

ITB Berlin, Germany, 5 March 2024: The World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards (WSTHA) has unveiled [21 categories](#) for its inaugural global programme, which aims to recognise and share the stories of individuals and organisations making an impactful contribution in sustainable travel and tourism.

The categories have been selected by an Advisory Board made up of 11 leaders in sustainable travel and tourism to reflect the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and net positive framework of People, Planet, Place, Prosperity and Partnerships.

The categories range from conservation, energy efficiency and community engagement to education and leaders of tomorrow. Three categories will be open to Belize-based individuals and organisations. Individuals and organisations around the world will be invited to enter the Awards from 18 March.

The announcement was made at ITB Berlin by Evan Tillett, Director of Tourism, Belize Tourism Board, the Official Host Destination of the inaugural WSTHA Gala Ceremony, which will be held on 27 September 2024.

Justin Cooke, Executive Vice-President, WSTHA says: "It is often said that we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. With the help of our incredible Advisory Board we hope that these categories reflect the breadth and depth of the sustainable travel and hospitality sector, enabling us to recognise and tell the stories of those accelerating change and making a sustainable impact on our planet for the next generation."

As Official Host Destination of WSTHA 2024, Belize holds responsible tourism at its core and develops projects that encourage travellers to engage with its rainforests, reefs and unique culture in a sustainable manner. This includes developing sustainable initiatives such as creating community-based tourism clusters that preserve Indigenous Communities. Belize is also internationally recognised for the preservation of its UNESCO World Heritage Site, The Belize Barrier Reef, the second largest reef globally, home to hundreds of species of coral and fish.

Anthony Mahler, Minister of Tourism, Belize, adds: "The Advisory Board, WSTHA and Belize have been working together to ensure the categories recognise, celebrate and showcase the stories of organisations and individuals that are making significant steps in sustainable travel and tourism. The 21 categories are extensive and also includes three categories that are open to submissions from Belize, including cultural heritage, marine conservation and community engagement - three areas that Belize holds at the core of our tourism model and is leading the way in."

The WSTHA programme is run in partnership with the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance with CEO, Glenn Mandziuk, also serving as Vice-Chair on the WSTHA Advisory Board.

Glenn Mandziuk, CEO, the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, comments; "In an era where sustainability is not just a choice but a necessity, it is crucial to highlight and celebrate the remarkable initiatives and accomplishments within our sector. The awards categories announced today reflect on the cornerstone elements of our Net Positive framework, honouring those who are making a substantial impact and driving change in sustainable travel and tourism. As WSTHA Vice-Chair of the Advisory Board, I am privileged to collaborate with industry leaders, and eagerly anticipate sharing the achievements that tell the important narratives of sustainable progress."

In another world first for the Awards, entries will be analysed and vetted by students of sustainable business from the Nova School of Business and Economics in Lisbon.

Graham Miller, Professor of Sustainable Business, Nova School of Business and Economics, says: “I am delighted that students from Nova School of Business and Economics are able to support these awards. Having future leaders involved in reviewing applications from current leaders is an excellent example of collaboration across generations and widening the diversity of how decisions are made.”

The WSTHA Advisory Board comprises leading authorities, academics and dignitaries in driving net positive hospitality. Members include Chris Imbsen, World Travel & Tourism Council; Susan Hooper, Chapter Zero; Juha Jarvinen, Virgin Atlantic; Patricio Azcárate Díaz de Losada, Responsible Tourism Institute; Fran Brasseur, International Council on Hotel, Restaurant & Institutional Education; Hon. Anthony Mahler, Belize; Prof. Dr. Willy Legrand, IU International University of Applied Sciences Germany; Isabel Novoa, International Social Tourism Organization; Prof. Graham Miller, Nova School of Business & Economics, Lisbon; Xenia zu Hohenlohe, The Sustainable Markets Initiative.

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Media Information

For further information about the World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards, contact pr@wstha.com

About WSTHA

Launched in 2023 at COP 28 in Dubai on World Tourism Day, The World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards serves to recognise, celebrate, and share the stories of individuals and organisations that are accelerating change and making an impactful contribution in sustainable travel and tourism.

<https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/wta-partnership/>

About the Sustainable Hospitality Alliance

The Sustainable Hospitality Alliance brings together engaged hospitality companies and the wider hospitality value chain, along with strategic partners, to address key challenges affecting the planet, people and places around the world.

Through their strategic initiatives and global networks, they develop practical programmes and resources to create a prosperous and responsible hospitality sector that gives back to the destination more than it takes.

Their members represent over 50,000 hotels spanning 270 brands – totalling over 7 million rooms – and include world-leading companies including Accor, Choice Hotels International, Hilton, IHG Hotels & Resorts, Marriott International, and Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, as well as regional brands. Their network also includes other parts of the hospitality value chain, including owners, investors, suppliers, educational institutions and other partners to further drive joined up action on sustainability, and

accelerate the industry on the path to Net Positive Hospitality.

<https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/>

About the Belize Tourism Board

The Belize Tourism Board (BTB) is a statutory body within the Belize Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation, and it is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation. The BTB works in conjunction with members of the private sector - including the Belize Hotel Association, Belize Tourism Industry Association, and Belize National Tour Operators Association - and is dedicated to building tourism in the most economically and environmentally sustainable manner. As a part of its responsibilities, the BTB promotes Belize as a premier tourism destination for both in-country and international consumers. Among its outreach to the international travel market, the BTB markets the country's unique attractions to travellers, members of the travel trade industry, and media outlets in key markets. The BTB is also dedicated to developing and implementing tourism programs that will help strengthen and grow the Belizean tourism industry; promote good destination stewardship; and instil high-quality standards for accommodations and travel experiences. For more information on the BTB and its services, visit www.travelbelize.org.