

Net Positive Hospitality Podcast transcript

Celebrating success – the World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards

28th April 2025

Valdemar Andrade (Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association) 00:13

Hi, I'm Valdemar Andrade. I'm the Executive Director for the Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association, and we manage the Turneffe Atoll marine reserve.

Awards Ceremony presenter 00:19

And you've just come off the stage and you've won this incredible award. How does it feel?

Valdemar Andrade (Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association) 00:25

It feels really good after 10 years of work and dedication by hard working and dedicated... [audio fades]

Becca (Podcast host) 00:31

This episode delves into the World Sustainable Travel and Hospitality Awards. We hear from the winners of the inaugural awards organisations and people who champion sustainable Travel and Tourism, drive community initiatives, reduce food waste, and safeguard our natural environment. The awards programme is run in partnership with the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, and we'll be hearing from the Alliance's CEO and the awards Executive Vice President, looking ahead to see what we can expect from the 2025 awards programme.

Justin Cook (World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 01:06

Hi, I'm Justin Cook. I'm the EVP of the world sustainable travel and hospitality awards.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 01:12

Hi, I'm Glenn Mandziuk, CEO for the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance.

Justin Cook (EVP World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 01:16

The World Sustainable Travel Hospitality Awards was announced at COP28 in Dubai, and it really set out a vision to recognise, celebrate and share the stories of the individuals and organisations that are accelerating change and making a really impactful contribution in sustainable travel and

NetPositiveHospitality

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tourism. We really felt that sort of, that storytelling aspect was missing in this industry. And we really wanted to, I suppose, shine a light on those individual organisations that really are driving that that impact. And, you know, we wanted to have as big an impact as an awards programme as possible. You know, we're lucky that the awards are part of the World Travel Awards family, which has been going on for 34 years now. But we really felt these awards needed to be special and different. And to have impact, we needed to find a partner, and really that's where the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance came in. They are a fantastic organisation, very kind of mission aligned to us and they have such incredible breadth and depth across the entire kind of hospitality sector. So when we first started talking, it was one of those conversations that just naturally kind of flowed from the moment we met. We progressed really fast and very quickly, got to a point where we were able to formalise our agreement, and I'm absolutely delighted, now more than a year in with that partnership and where it's going.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 03:01

I've had the great pleasure of knowing the World Travel Awards for a long time now, both in my current role and my previous role in destination management, and when we as an alliance were thinking about telling the story of what is happening in the industry so that we can actually showcase best practice, make it real and celebrate industry getting it right, and showcasing what we mean by Net Positive Hospitality and why the synergy came so quickly was because I had the great pleasure of knowing the World Travel Awards before and it is a family approach to celebrating best practice overall on our industry, for as as Justin just mentioned, over 30 years. And as such, we saw a great opportunity immediately. We were already thinking about establishing some kind of a recognition programme within the Alliance to actually showcase this, but we wanted to do it in partnership, and a partnership was just a natural evolution between the World Travel Awards, and I have to say, the first one was a tremendous success in a very short period of time, because we were able to assemble the right team, the right partners, the right advisors, to assemble a programme that actually had meaning, and that actually covered the entirety of what we mean by Net Positive Hospitality. And looked at over 21 categories, I mean. And when we came out with this, I remember Justin and we were thinking, will we get enough people applying for all of these categories? And I don't know, that was a big discussion. But oh my gosh, were we so pleasantly pleased to see we not only just covered the spectrum, it was an abundance of opportunity and applications that came towards that. And then the whole process of short listing and selecting was seamless. And that comes from the fact that we, we partnered as an alliance with a an organisation that understands this space really well in recognition and can do it at scale and can do it globally. And that's what produced, I think, a tremendous result. And I would say, very quickly, made this awards programme one of the leading awards programmes in the world today.

Agnes Pierce (Amadeus) 05:56

Agnes Pierce, I'm the Global Head of Sustainability for Hospitality at Amadeus.

Awards Ceremony presenter 06:02

And you've just come off the stage from the World Sustainable Travel and Hospitality Awards with two awards.

Agnes Pierce (Amadeus) 06:07

Yes absolutely, I'm very happy about it. So one is for the World Leading Sustainable Education and Training Programme with our programme Travel 4 Impact. And the other one is the World Leading Sustainability Leader, which is for myself.

Awards Ceremony presenter 06:23

Congratulations. What does it mean to win these awards?

Agnes Pierce (Amadeus) 06:26

Well, it's absolutely great. I mean, it's the first one of these awards, and so it means a lot to me, and means a lot to my company... [audio fades]

Justin Cook (EVP World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 06:39

Choosing one winner from, you know, the nearly 1000 entries we had and the hundreds of nominees that we had, and is really tough, I have to say. But I guess if you really were to put me on the spot, I would, I'd have to kind of probably sort of answer, kind of with my, with my heart, with my stomach, and with my with my brain, I suppose, in a way, and and I say that because I will never forget the moment when chill, my own products won their award. This is a really, I think, a kind of a MBA style case study and story that should be known by the whole world. Wonderful Mayan family business that is at the very centre of its its community in Belize, that really takes the concept of sort of farm to table and beyond, you know, kind of to the very heart of its of its business model that works with folks that are neurodiverse, that are outside of the kind of the kind of traditional societal kind of structures, those that have kind of, perhaps no longer in employment or in education, women who are seeking refuge and seeking employment to ensure that their children kind of get into education. But of course, much more than that, I suppose, is the quality of the product. And as I said, the taste of the product as well. And we were lucky to see them come onto the stage and win the award. We saw how much it meant to them. It certainly meant a lot to us, and we've done a really, really important job, I think, of telling that story since they became winners. But also we were lucky enough to have actually some of the products actually at the awards themselves and during the buffet, the incredible farm to table buffet that we had during the ceremony, guests were able to actually experience the product. And I think everyone there, even if they're hearing this podcast right now, would be licking their lips and just seeing if they could get themselves another piece of that, that gorgeous balision Mayan chocolate.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 09:01

It's a great description of what what it means about making the stories come alive. And some of these things don't happen or we don't find out about them until we shine a light on them. And that's why these awards, really, you know, bring to light those leaders. And you know, if I was to say that, of course, we've had, there are so many amazing companies in our membership in the Alliance, for example, that are engaged in sustainability. And it was so good to see some of those recognised, whether it be Soneva or Six Senses, for example, who have shown long standing leadership in sustainable hospitality. The one that really struck me, though, was SASANE Sisterhood Trekking and Travels. You know, it's a, it's a Nepal based company, that empowers female survivors of

human trafficking, basically by training them to be tour operators and trekking guides in the Himalayas. And, you know, at those and those culturally rich cities that you find in Nepal, of course, you know, they worked on infrastructure development. They looked at, you know, developing alternative income opportunities and, of course, tourism promotion to vulnerable regions. So you're, you're getting a double whammy with this project, but really SASANE strives to combat and ultimately eliminate trafficking, gender based violence and child marriage in communities it serves. And you know, it was really amazing is that they offer trekking experience, you know, two day excursions, seven day real pilgrimages in the area. But you know, ultimately, it's about a women led travel operator that takes pride in its mission, empowering employment opportunities and placing women at the forefront of the conversation. I had no knowledge of this organisation prior to this awards programme, and now we can be able to really rise up and showcase again initiatives like this that are really something that can inspire other parts of the world and other people to take on a similar opportunity. And I think what's really important about the awards is not it's not a point in time recognition. What we do is we take those stories and then we showcase it throughout the year and shine again a light year every so this is what's really exciting about the programme that we've developed here. We didn't think of just, let's just create an award and a trophy. This is about Award, a real recognition, yes, a celebration, which is really important. We want people to celebrate, come to an event and really, you know, see each other and network with each other, and celebrate that outcome, but at the same time, then those that couldn't be at the event, we want to be able to tell that story. And what we've done is we've leveraged that communication within the Alliance, within the partnership with the World Travel Awards and its network, and we continually tell that story. And quite frankly, that's what this podcast is all about, shining light on that.

Jeny Pokharel (SASANE Sisterhood Trekking and Travels) 12:25

My name is Jeny Pokharel, and I am the Founder of SASANE Sisterhood Trekking and Travels. SASANE is a social company. We basically work with female human trafficking survivors, and we ensure sustainable employment as well as empowerment of these survivors, using tourism as a field of empowerment, like we provide them employment opportunities and training so that they can, they could fit in the tourism industry. SASANE basically provides life skill training. It's related to hospitality tour and trekking, porter, cooking classes, culinary skills and also basic English speaking skills. So once the survivors approach SASANE, we interact with them, wanting to know what their interests are in. So once we know in which area they are interested, we make sure to train them on that, and then we give them internship, and we also coordinate with other companies or organisations who offer similar kind of services so that they can fit into the market and understand about it and become independent. SASANE won the Female Empowerment Initiative title, so it's a very prestigious award for SASANE as we work with very vulnerable communities that that is the survivors of human trafficking who are very young. Most of them are below 30 years of age, so they need constant motivation, encouragement, acknowledgement, so that they can go forward and they can enjoy what they are doing. So this award has been a huge source of motivation, encouragement for these girls. So it's like recognising the work they have been doing and how they have been, you know, giving their input in the tourism industry. So it's, like a boost of morale for these girls to keep going forward. So that's this award has been a huge thing for SASANE, and for the girls, they were very, very happy once they knew that SASANE won the title. So for SASANE, it's a very prestigious thing, and the girls are now even more encouraged to go forward and to receive similar awards in the future, and they are very grateful for the appreciation and acknowledgement they have received. So they are very happy, and yes, it's like a sentimental thing that Sasani has received from this award, especially for the girls. So whenever they are low in the. Steam, or they have their past traumas coming back to them. They remember the award they

have received, and they're again, back on track, very happy. So yeah, it's kind of a sentimental and very emotional thing that we won this, this award. It's kind of awareness raising thing as well, because not all people, not even the government of Nepal was totally aware about how SASANE was using survivors in tourism and in hospitality industry, and how it's like enabling survivors to become independent. So this message has been transferred now. So there are many companies who are willing to work in partnership with Sasani and are willing to provide further employment opportunities for these survivors so that they don't have to just get the training and remain isolated or don't get job. Now they have various options, and we even have travellers who approach us saying that they want to learn more about this approach and how we get connected with the survivors, how they can be of help. So it's kind of awareness, awareness related to human trafficking has also been taking place now, and even travellers are like interested to understand about the approach. And yes, it's like a very, you know, a good thing that even the government now is taking consideration about this, which was not there before. We want to expand the work of SASANE even in the international sector or international area, hopefully, because there are other issues as well, which is the cause of human trafficking, whether it's unsafe migration or refugee related issues which like triggers human trafficking. So we also want to get, like, involved in these issues and have people or survivors from these issues as well, so that we, like, cover up the entire cause of human trafficking and try to end it from the very root, using tourism as a model. So I think it's, we plan to expand it to international sectors, and we also want to add in concept of restaurants and cafes, so that youths now who study social work or want to engage in social activities can actually come and practically see, like, how human trafficking survivors are working in the field of tourism, and how they can help - what kind of activities needs to be done to, like, create awareness on this very, very serious issue, as Nepal is a source country of trafficking, and with the issues of the economic crisis or COVID or these things, always like, makes the rate of human trafficking increase a lot. So I think that this is the plan of SASANE. We want to expand it in expand as well as have other fields as well, like restaurants, cafes, a Knowledge Hub kind of thing. Um, so I think human trafficking is a very, very serious issue, and all of us should like join hands to end it, because now the young girls, even from age 10/11, are are vulnerable to being trafficked. So if we can use tourism or hospitality as a tool to help protect or empower these survivors, it would like mean it would be a very good place for young girls. They can achieve what they want to achieve. They don't have to be discriminated, so I think we all should join hands and get connected on the serious issue.

Justin Cook (EVP World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 18:23

When you think about, how can we possibly beat 2024, I mean, as Glenn said in this chat, I really still can't believe we pulled off what we did in such a short amount of time. I mean, it was incredible teamwork. We had such a fantastic kind of sense of momentum. So in all honesty, I think kind of looking forward to 2025, a slight degree of interpretation, if I'm honest. But you know, we've, we've really buckled down, and we're really committed to kind of raising the bar this year. So in terms of expectations, we have an incredible, incredible destination partner. We have an incredible venue. The venue is the Terra Pavilion. Now Terra, for those that don't know it, was the sustainability pavilion of the Dubai Expo 2020, now, as I said at the beginning of this conversation, we announced these awards at COP 28 in Dubai. So for us, this somewhat feels like we're coming home, but, my goodness, we're coming home to the OG, the iconic Terra Sustainability Pavilion. Now if you don't know about this place, you have to Google it while I'm talking here. This is the most incredible benchmark for sustainable architecture and environmental innovation. It's designed by Grimshaw, who are world famous architects. It's got LEED Platinum certification, which is the highest standard in green building design. It's got this incredible canopy, it looks like it's kind of landed from some other world, 130 metre wide canopy, and there's more than 1000 solar panels

on this canopy. And then it's got these 18 sort of Martian looking rotating energy trees, and they provide gigawatts, four or so gigawatts of electricity annually, which is enough to charge nearly a million mobile phones. They've got this incredible grey grey water recycling and atmospheric humidity programme that reduces water usage by 75%, it even condensates water that produces 3000 litres of water per day, and it's set in this incredible, exciting, visionary part of Dubai, which is going to become very soon, the absolute kind of epicentre of the next chapter of Dubai's vision, and Dubai Expo city is leading the charge. So that is really the venue we couldn't have asked for a better sort of sequel, I suppose, in a sense, to Belize in many ways. We have a, you know, a stronger and even more impressive advisory board, advising us on the categories that we should be considering, the criteria that we should be using. We have an array of new partners as well, which is, which is really fantastic. Fresh on Table - which is one of the the United Arab Emirates' leading suppliers of sustainable food to the hospitality sector and beyond - is our culinary partner. They're going to be putting together a zero waste net positive five course Michelin star gala dinner for all of the lucky attendees of the event. We have a partnership with the incredible organisation, The Bench, which powers some of the leading travel and hospitality events around the world, including AHIC and Future Hospitality Summit. Again, to Glenn's point, really helping us amplify and share those stories of the nominees and the winners. So a great new partner there. We've reconfirmed our partnership with the Nova Business School from Lisbon. We've extended that partnership to include research dissemination from an academic point of view, but also, and some of those students are sustainable business that are going to be reviewing every single entry that comes in to the awards - they're going to be reviewing each one of those, they're going to be using that, that data, as part of their dissertations and their thesis, to really try to understand, you know, from an academic and research perspective, really kind of the impact that these organisations are having, and how that's trending over time. We have a whole array of other partnerships, including Pinwheel, which enables us to make a commitment as an awards programme to a number of different sustainability projects going on around the world. And of course, we have an education partnership with Travel Uni, media partnerships galore. And so really, I think you know, for us, you know, 2025 is, is now looking like a significant kind of step up on 2024 as if that was possible.

Julio Saqui (Che'il Mayan Chocolate) 23:35

My name is Julio Saqui, and I'm from Maya Center village, and I work at the Che'il Mayan Chocolate - myself and my wife, Eledora, runs a small Chocolate Factory from farm to table.

Awards Ceremony presenter 23:50

And you've just won a World Sustainable Travel Hospitality award. How does it feel?

Julio Saqui (Che'il Mayan Chocolate) 23:55

It feels great. It is a wonderful feeling. It's a feeling that gives us the energy to continue to do more. It makes me feel like we should do a lot more. So the feeling is great. It's unexplainable, but really, really good.

Awards Ceremony presenter 24:09

Tell me about the project.

Julio Saqui (Che'il Mayan Chocolate) 24:13

It's all about sustainability. It's all about using what we have around us. It's all about using chocolate, not only as a treat but medicinal for us, but at the same time, selling chocolate through our culture, the Maya people, and also sell culture through chocolate. So it goes both ways, and using that as as as a form of injecting economic sustainability within my community is a wonderful thing. So the project is not only run... [audio fades]

Justin Cook (EVP World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 24:48

Glenn said, The awards were born to be as accessible as possible. There's no cost to answer these awards. So they are genuinely open to everyone, irrespective of size. In terms of this year, I really feel that sort of, we're going to see more of the same. I think, you know, we've done a really good job, as Glenn said, about sort of continuing to kind of tell the story, you know, throughout the year. And so, you know, we've already been bombarded with kind of keen, you know, entrants to this year's programme. I think there's going to be a higher volume of entries. I think we're going to see more of the same in terms of, you know, whether it's the kind of the leading kind of hotel and hospitality brands, the technology companies, the academic institutions, the small community groups, you know, I think, I think generally, kind of awareness has grown. So, you know, we hope that will be, you know, really kind of becoming even more global than we were last year. I think we had entries from something along the lines of 150 different countries last year. But I think, I think we're going to have a larger volume of entries. I think the standards are, you know, we hope going to continue to kind of improve. I think, you know, what I'm looking for, I suppose, in a sense, is, is evidence of progression, you know. So, you know, great if you entered last year. Well, enter again this year. But tell us what you've done in the last 12 months. Tell me more about, you know, how you've evolved, how you've made your own sustainability programme sustainable, right? So I think that's definitely kind of what I'm sort of really excited about. I think, you know, we are also trying to, you know, reflect where the world is today, and also on some lessons that I think we've learned thanks to our advisory board, we're certainly going to be looking at how we can be recognising and celebrating organisations of every size. So in some cases, there may well be some categories which are linked to the size of the organisation or the size of the destination, just to make sure that we, we don't sort of in any way restrict, you know, those that are entering by by the size of their entity, or the size of their destination, so looking to sort of really support that broader, wider kind of group of individuals.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 27:18

Well, you know, and I think what you've just heard here, you know, what Justin has shared is extraordinary, not only have we thought about inclusion and ensuring that we think about size of business, size of community, and in our reflection of how we evolve, the awards, and this is beautiful, is that we are really taking the steps necessary to assess what we did last year. It started off with the farm foundation transparency, making sure our programme had had solid grounding when it came to the format and how we applied, make it an inclusive to make it like as as Justin pointed out, free to enter because we don't have any barrier to entry for people to get involved and showcase their story. And we capture all the stories, whether you win or lose, it doesn't really matter. There's everybody's a winner here in getting this collaborative effort of getting the information into the programme where I think we're going to see some real growth is, you know, in parts of the world that we probably didn't see as enough response or a low response. In North

America, can you believe it, needed to see more response? We saw tremendous uptake in Africa and Europe and and Southeast Asia. But, you know, we want to see and even South America, but we did not see it a lot in in North America. So we know we have to get the word out a lot stronger into this opportunity. So we'll see some tremendous growth in and Justin said it right. We're going to see a lot more applications, because we as an organisation have seen a lot of requests saying, 'when is the next one?', 'where is it?', 'when can we apply?' - so we know that's happening. Where this comes is net positive get showcased because we're able to look at the categories we really drill down on those categories to see how that lined up with what we meant by net positive and I think we achieved that in a great way that produces as the examples we shared with you just a few moments ago exemplify. And so we continue to say, if we're going to ask businesses to be net positive, yes, we created a pathway to net positive. Yes, we've created tools for academy training and development and and business simulators. Yes, we're working on overall standards of measure of progress, but those are all you know, things that happen. This is the real thing. This is where real action takes place, and we're able to shine a light on action, and that's what makes net positive a reality. And so again, if there's anything I want to leave the audio. Here is that we're extremely proud of our partnership with the World Travel Awards and the ultimate creation of this global awards programme as an alliance, because we knew going into this there was a tremendous opportunity and a need, and we just needed to execute and last year exemplified what could be accomplished in a very short period of time. Now we've had a little bit more time to reflect and now lay the groundwork for the next - Dubai is going to be an amazing backdrop to what we we firmly believe will set the benchmark for now, awards programmes, that anybody wants to think about into the future. Because, you know, we had 500 applications last year, and over 10,000 people had an opportunity to vote for those finalists. That's engagement. That's real engagement, and we can only expect more for the year to come.

Arnfinn Oines (Soneva) 31:03

I'm Arnfinn Oines. I'm Social, Environmental Conscience for Soneva, as well as the Secretary of the Soneva Foundation. The Soneva Foundation is a UK registered charity set up in 2010 it's founded by Soneva, who also then founded Soneva Resorts. It's a foundation that works on trying to provide sustainability project with impact - impact investing principles, trying to have both our environmental and social impact, as well as if possible, giving some financial returns that then could go back into the foundation to invest in more projects. Well, it was a very nice recognition for the work that we put in. It's always great to be recognised. We always try to do our best in terms of driving sustainability. We see it as an integral part of the business, the way we do business, and then also with the foundation setting up that is to try to do even more so be recognised for that is really nice to see that the work we are doing is noticed and appreciated. When it comes to renewable energy, we opened last year our third property in the Maldives - the Soneva Secret. There we are in the process of setting up a floating solar system, with including batteries that should take that property up to 90 to 95% on renewable once we get that set up. So that's the plan this year to get that set up. So that's a quite exciting thing on the renewable. We also have a very exciting coral restoration project going on. Where we have set up one of the largest coral restoration facilities - the largest in the Indian Ocean. So where we propagate and grow corals that then we are out planting. So this is an exciting project that we have. So yeah, quite a few, few things going on.

Justin Cook (EVP World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 33:28

Where do I see the awards in five years time? I think what I kind of really want to be able to evidence, I think is, is kind of the the impact that we've had on really, I think, you know, recognising and celebrating and sharing the stories of those in our industry that are actually accelerating change and making an impact. And I think if we can be shining that light, and if we can be demonstrating that impact that they are having, then I think we are making, you know, a small contribution towards building this sustainable, net positive future that we're all so committed and driven to achieve. And I think if we can play that role, and we can work with partners in the way that we are today, with Glenn and other amazing organisations to really lift all the boats, then I feel that sort of that is something that's a future that I'm signed up to. And, you know, in five years time, you know, if we could be able to kind of show how small things that we did made a big impact on the world of sustainable travel and tourism that I think we've, we've delivered somewhat on our vision and our mission. But we know that this is an ongoing journey, and five years is is a blink of the eye in many terms. And we won't stop there, you know. We'll be looking to 2050 you know. And long after I've gone, you know, 2070.

Glenn Mandziuk (the Alliance) 35:02

If you think about it, we'll have over 100 winners who are recognised as leading the space that we could really share the story, and probably five to 10,000 applicants showcasing this evolution in that period of time, and that's where it really becomes real. Because people have to come together and write these things down and collect their progress, showcase how we can do this. That's what's going to build momentum. We need to build momentum towards net positive, and the awards programme provides a real, fundamental way of achieving that.

Justin Cook (EVP World Sustainable Travel & Hospitality Awards) 35:41

So if you want to get involved, we're ready for you. You can visit WSTH.com, and find out everything you need to know about the awards. The call for entries closes on the 30th of June. As we talked about today, entries are free, so get ready to enter. The voting period, of course, it's really important to get out and vote - and the voting will start on the 14th of July and close on the 30th of August. And of course, come along, come along and support the awards on the 29th of October. Attend. And if you can't attend, then follow us online. Follow us on socials. And of course, if you want to partner with us, then get in touch with Glenn or myself, and we'd be delighted to talk to you more about how we can, we can really work together in the true spirit of partnership.

Becca (Podcast host) 36:33

We'll be covering the winners of the 2025 awards later in the year. Now, in our series focusing on the industry's future leaders, we can hear from one woman who is embarking on a career to make hospitality and travel and tourism more sustainable. Our Voice of the Future in this episode talks about the importance of diversity and inclusion and climate injustices.

Tia Chauhan (Beyond Bamboo) 36:52

My name is Tia Chauhan, and I work for Beyond Bamboo as a Client Services Manager. So Beyond Bamboo is a sustainable procurement company that predominantly works with the hospitality industry in kind of making sustainable swaps, but we also kind of do so much more beyond that, in terms of consulting, a rating and accreditation system, more recently, launching a

social enterprise called Beyond Credits. So a little bit about my career. I started off with Beyond Bamboo a few years ago as the Procurement Lead. My new role will be the Global Head of ESG partnerships, and I will be directly heading up the social enterprise that Beyond Bamboo has created - Beyond Credits. And so the Beyond Credits essentially works, where, when hotels purchase through Beyond Bamboo, a certain amount of their order, however much it costs, will essentially go towards one of our projects, no extra cost to the client whatsoever. But they also get a personalised report at the end of the year in terms of the impact they've created through just purchasing with Beyond Bamboo. So, yeah, I'm really excited to be able to establish that and kind of get it set up, and work with some amazing projects around the world, really, and kind of see what we can do to support them and provide them with funding and exposure, and I think it's a really good step in the right direction in terms of not only are hotels not able to purchase sustainably, but they're also able to give back at no extra cost. I recently had the opportunity to also write a blog post for the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. I loved it. I mean, I was able to write about a topic that I was passionate about, and that's about diversity within the hospitality industry. And it kind of stemmed from being on the youth panel at the autumn Summit in 2023 for the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, where sort of young people with a core focus, and it really highlighted that diversity is such a key part in this Pathway to Net Positive, where in order to kind of achieve those goals that we're setting, we can't get there unless you consult with everybody that it will impact, you know, and so it's, it's not a hidden fact that, you know, things like climate change and the effects of climate change are impacting ethnic minorities and people from low economic countries. And so yet, you know, at the decision-making table, they aren't there. And so really it kind of brings the question about of, how are we going to achieve those goals if we don't have that diversity in the decision making process in order to enable the solutions we're putting forward and implementing are the best there, and have been consulted with everyone to know that it's really going to work. So yeah, in the blog post, I kind of touch upon what the actual issue is. Why do we even need this diversity within kind of climate change and the decision making processes, but also about sort of what the hospitality industry themselves can do to kind of implement more diversity. So even things like, for example, consulting with the local community. You know, if you set up a hotel in a region where you think that, let's say, flooding is the biggest problem, you think, and so you kind of do local initiatives to support that, actually, for the local people, it might be something like droughts that's the bigger problem, but you're not going to know unless you consult the locals. So yeah, it's kind of packed full of little things that the hospitality industry can do and implement to kind of ensure that they are working towards that net positive in a efficient way that's inclusive of all different ages, races, genders, etc, to really get the full picture of kind of what the issue is and how we can solve it, so in terms of the diversity side of it, and why we need to consider it. I mean, I briefly touched upon it anyway, but I think it just kind of reinforces the fact that we're never going to get to the kind of goal that we're all aiming for if there's not a consultation of everybody. And you know, if you take the stereotypical example of, you know, everyone at the table is a white male. You've excluded ethnic minorities, women, young people, the people who can kind of bring a fresh, new perspective and mindset to the situation. It is to do with the fact that ethnic minorities and working class people don't really have that seat at the table, even though they are those affected the most. It does stem from climate injustices, and that's what I use it as a climate injustices. And the climate gap that exists is linked to kind of historical injustices surrounding colonialism, racism, wealth, power and so these in, you know, historical injustices are so deep rooted within society that it kind of plays out in modern day now, where environmental organisations, programmes, the hospitality industry, if we fail to consider or attend to their concerns and their expertise. Um, because, you know, climate change isn't just an environmental problem that's kind of the core of it, but it spans into so many different aspects of social systems, privileges, injustices and so everybody is affected by climate change in a different way. And so you're never going to solve climate change unless you consult all those different perspectives and mindsets.

Becca (Podcast host) 43:13

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