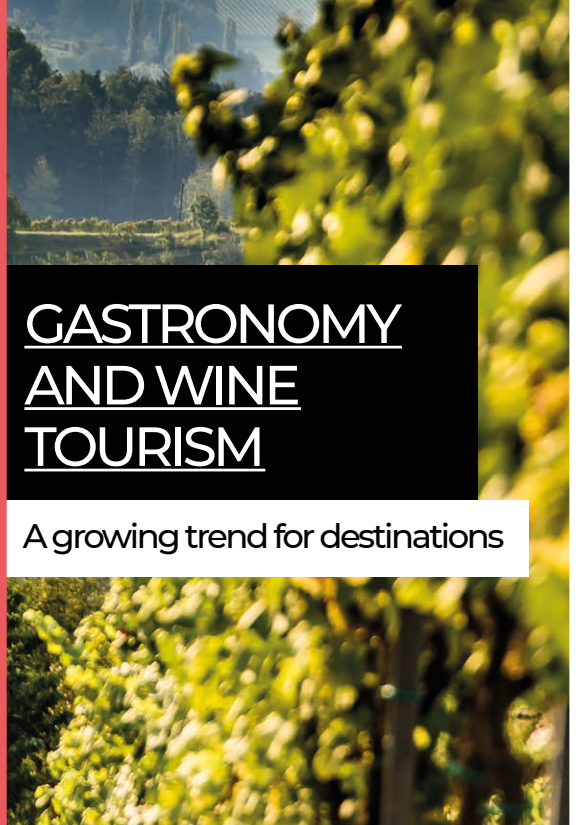


TOURISM NOW



GASTRONOMY AND WINE TOURISM

A growing trend for destinations



EDITOR

Annette Cardenas

Skål International Senior Vice President
PR, Communications & Social Media



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#TOURISMNOW290 CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

MESSAGE FROM THE SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT AND THE #TOURISMNOW EDITOR.

➤ Page 5.

MEET SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

A NEW ERA FOR SKÅL INTERNATIONAL.
ALFRED MERSE: SKÅL LEAGUE OF THE YEAR.
SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PHOTO CONTEST 2023.
SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF THE YEAR.
NEW AND REACTIVATED CLUBS IN 2023.

➤ Page 7.

GASTRONOMY & WINE TOURISM

#TOURISMNOW290 TOPIC

➤ Page 26.

MEET TRAVEL LEADERS OF THE INDUSTRY

MORENA ILEANA VALDEZ VIGIL, MINISTER OF
TOURISM OF EL SALVADOR

➤ Page 28.

CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TÜRKIYE AID FUND. SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS 2023 WINNERS.
BIOSPHERE: WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY
IMPORTANT IN BUSINESS?

➤ Page 32.

INDUSTRY EVENTS

SAVE THE DATES. LATEST NEWS ABOUT
TRADE SHOWS.

➤ Page 43.



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ANNETTE CARDENAS
Skål International Senior Vice President

AS THE YEAR COMES TO A CLOSE...

...it brings feelings of happiness for the accomplished tasks, nostalgia for the moments lived hoping they will continue or repeat themselves and, most of all, excitement and expectation for what the new year will bring.

Working with the PR, Communications & Social Media portfolio has been a wonderful experience for me, very fulfilling and most definitely a positive and rewarding learning trajectory which will be turned over to new leadership which I am certain will implant exciting content and wonderful opportunities for all our readers.

In this, our final magazine of the year we hope to bring you a little bit of what went on during 2023 and updates on our two projects: **Photography Contest and Skål International World Recipe Book**. Both of these are put in place as a simple and fun way to bring us closer together and help us learn a bit more about each other's cultures and destinations.

I hope you enjoy the results and send us feedback to continue making them better.

As I move on to new responsibilities, I wish to extend my appreciation for all the support given to our Media & Public Relations Committee, our agency MyRed and, of course, to all our staff at headquarters. You have been strategic allies and a big part of our success.

From all of us, a warm wish of happiness and joy during the upcoming holiday season – may you and your families build wonderful memories and may the Skål spirit always be present during the season.



ANNETTE CARDENAS
Skål International Senior Vice President

EDI TOR IAL



JUAN I. STETA

Skål International World President 2023

EDITORIAL

WE, THE PRESIDENTS OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL, ARE LIKE THE YEARS THAT GO BY

We rejoice when the new year eve arrives, and we evaluate and reflect what occurred in the year that is about to end.

Obviously, the year, as everything, has its moments of joy and dismay, moments of traveling and meeting great Skålleagues, moments of hard work and little rest, moments of surprises and frustrations, but I can assure you, I wouldn't have changed it for anything.

Working with my fellow Executive Board Members, with the Girls in the Office and, in this transition year, with the different Committees, especially, with the Co-Chairs of the Transition and the Statutes & By-Laws Committee has been more than rewarding. Special mention has to be made to my three Musketeers: Past President Hulya Aslantas, Past President Burcin Turkkan and Senior Vice President Annette Cardenas, who have given me their unconditional support.

As I have reiterated, this has been a year of **'Transition to enhanced continuity'**. The new governance model is now in place. Yes, some parts will need to be perfected, but we have managed to cross the bridge. The results of the 2023 AGA reflect this: The new Executive Board has been voted, the 10 Statutes and 62 By-Laws amendments required to implement the new governance structure were approved, we have now a system of Deputy Directors that ensures the Executive Board will

not lack members, the 12 Committees that have been incorporated lead us to increase our move to accomplish our vision and mission.

More Active and Young Skål International members have been incorporated. We have now 7 new Clubs and 15 more are in the process of completing the requirements.

My warmest thank you to all those Skål International Clubs that gave me the opportunity to visit them around the world: Panama, Santa Cruz - Bolivia, Málaga - Costa del Sol, Lanzarote, Bali, Hawaii, Los Angeles, Buenos Aires and Côte d'Azur; and within Mexico: Huatulco, Queretaro, Monterrey, Manzanillo, Los Cabos, Ixtapa - Zihuatanejo, Guanajuato, Puebla, Mazatlan, Rivera Maya and Puerto Vallarta.

I truly enjoyed meeting so many committed Skålleagues. The amicale, friendship and sense of belonging within the Clubs reflects the true Skål Spirit.

Thank you... Thank you for letting me serve you in this 2023.

I wish you all and your loved ones the very best in this Holiday Season and for 2024.

"Con un fuerte abrazo Skål"



JUAN I. STETA
Skål International World
President 2023



MEET o SKÅL INTERNATIONAL



SKÅL

INTERNATIONAL

Connecting Tourism Globally

Wishing you peace, joy,
and prosperity this holiday
season and in the coming
New Year 2024.

General Secretariat & Executive Board
Skål International

A NEW ERA

FOR

SKÅL

INTERNATIONAL



HÜLYA ASLANTAS

Advisor of the Skål International
Transition Committee

HOLLY POWERS

Co-Chair of the Skål International
Transition Committee

Skål International's 82nd World Congress held in Málaga, Spain, on 01-05 November will certainly be remembered as a milestone in our history, as we have embarked on a new era of growth and development with the new Governance plan that is set to revolutionize the way Skål International operates.

The new Governance plan aims to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency within Skål International. It is designed to streamline decision-making processes, strengthen communication channels, and ensure that the organization remains at the forefront of the tourism industry.

One of the key aspects of the new Governance plan is the introduction of a more inclusive and representative leadership structure. An **Executive Board with 14 Members elected by the Clubs in 14 Regions**, will ensure that all members from around the world will have a voice and an opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process.

Another significant change brought about by the new Governance plan is the establishment of clear and defined roles and responsibilities for the **12 Directors** (in addition to the President and President Elect) who are assigned to **12 Committees** that will form all together Skål International's leadership team.

This will enable effective delegation of tasks, improve efficiency, and foster a culture of accountability.

The implementation of the new Governance plan marks an exciting turning point for Skål International. It demonstrates the organization's commitment to adapt and evolve in an ever-changing industry. Skål International is determined to remain at the forefront of the tourism sector by embracing innovation, fostering collaboration, and empowering its members.

As Skål International enters this new era, it invites tourism professionals from all corners of the globe to join its global network and contribute to the collective efforts of rebuilding and reimagining the future of travel.

Together, we can create a stronger, more resilient, and sustainable tourism industry for generations to come.

MEET THE 2024 EXECUTIVE BOARD



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

EXECUTIVE BOARD 2024

PRESIDENT 2024

ANNETTE CARDENAS

REGION 4: ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, ECUADOR, PANAMA, PARAGUAY, PERU, URUGUAY, VENEZUELA.



VICE PRESIDENT 2024 & PRESIDENT ELECT 2025

DENISE SCRAFTON

REGION 12: AUSTRALIA.



REGION 1

(U.S.A.)

DIRECTOR:

ANDRES HAYES

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

RICHARD SCINTA

REGION 2

(CANADA, BAHAMAS)

DIRECTOR:

MARC RHEAUME

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

JEAN-FRANÇOIS COTÉ

REGION 3

(MEXICO)

DIRECTOR:

ENRIQUE FLORES

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

RICARDO CORDOVA

REGION 5

(GERMANY)

DIRECTOR:

TONI RITTER

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

FRANZISKA DÜRING

REGION 6

(SWITZERLAND)

DIRECTOR:

SONIA SPINELLI

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

JORGE DE LA TORRE KOCH

REGION 7

(AUSTRIA, BELGIUM, FINLAND, FRANCE, HONG KONG, INDONESIA, ISRAEL, IRELAND, LUXEMBOURG, NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, SWEDEN, UNITED KINGDOM)

DIRECTOR:

BERTRAND PETYT

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

KARI HALONEN

REGION 8

(ANDORRA, CROATIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, ESTONIA, HUNGARY, ITALY, MONACO, ROMANIA, RUSSIA, SPAIN)

DIRECTOR:

JOSÉ LUIS QUINTERO

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

IRENA PERSIC ZIVADINOV

REGION 9

(TÜRKIYE)

DIRECTOR:

ASUMAN TARIMAN

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

DENIZ ANAPA

REGION 10

(INDIA)

DIRECTOR:

MOHAN NSN

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

SANJAY DATTA

REGION 11

(AZERBAIJAN, BAHRAIN, GUAM, HONG KONG, INDONESIA, ISRAEL, JAPAN, KOREA, MACAU, MALAYSIA, NEPAL, PHILIPPINES, SINGAPORE, SRI LANKA, TAIWAN, THAILAND)

DIRECTOR:

KITTY WONG

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

KEVIN SYDNEY RAUTENBACH

REGION 13

(FIJI, NEW ZEALAND, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, VANUATU)

DIRECTOR:

BRUCE GARRETT

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

GRAHAM MANN

REGION 14

(ETHIOPIA, GHANA, KENYA, MAURITIUS, NIGERIA, SOUTH AFRICA, UGANDA, ZIMBABWE)

DIRECTOR:

OLUKEMI SOETAN

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:

FIONA ANGELICO

COMING SOON!

FROM SKÅLLEAGUES
TO SKÅLLEAGUES



WORLD RECIPE BOOK

2023 EDITION

FLAVOURS, AROMAS & TECHNIQUES
REFLECTING SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
CLUBS DIVERSITY

SKÅL LEAGUE OF THE YEAR

ALFRED MERSE

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF, HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL AND WHAT IS YOUR BACKGROUND IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY?

I joined the Skål International Hobart in 2007 and had been active at committee level before being elected Club President in 2013, a position I held for 3 years. In 2017, I was elected to the Skål International Australia Executive where I focused on membership development. In 2019, I was elected as National President of Skål International Australia.

I joined the workforce in 1973 when Wrest Point Hotel & Casino, Australia's first legal casino, opened in Hobart, Tasmania. Over my working career spanning 50+ years, 41 have been in travel and tourism in areas including hotel operations, accounting, destination marketing and my current role as Conference Sales Manager for the Federal Group, a private company with 5 properties in Tasmania.

In 2011, my partner and I developed a spa retreat/wellness sanctuary, **Harmony Hill**, on our 17 hectare property 30 minutes out of Hobart and this continues to grow as a successful business.

During my time as Skål International Hobart President, the Club was transformed by encouraging a younger cohort of members and encouraging a gender balance (we have had 2 female club Presidents since, and had a female Skål International Hobart member elected as Vice President on the National Executive).

Given Tasmania's reputation as one of the world's pristine natural environments (48% of Tasmania is protected for eternity as World Heritage Area), and the rapid growth in eco-tourism operators in Tasmania delivering world class experiences, I encouraged one of our members, Pennicott Wilderness Adventures, to enter the Skål International Global Sustainability Awards and they were awarded the Global Marine Tourism Award in 2014-2015.

I was delighted when Skål International Hobart was recognised for these initiatives by being declared the Skål International Club of The Year in 2014-2015!

I have attended 10 Skål International World Congresses, the first in Budapest in 2015 (my heritage is Hungarian) and that really opened my eyes to how Skål International membership can help grow business but also how Skål International can make a positive impact on the travel & tourism industries through its global network.

In 2022, I was invited to join the Advocacy, Global Partnerships and Trade Shows (AGPTS) Committee where I was able to focus on one of my major interests, a sustainable tourism industry, and I remain on that committee which has successfully delivered a suite of projects.

In early 2023, I was invited to join the Transition Committee as a co-chair to work on the implementation plan for the new governance model, a major task that absorbed much of my 'free' time during 2023.



ALFRED MERSE
Skål International Hobart.

WHAT DOES SKÅL INTERNATIONAL BRING TO YOU AS A TOURISM PROFESSIONAL?

Skål International is a global network of industry professionals that can provide advice, mentoring and business connections and opportunities in a spirit of friendship and amicale.

When I travel overseas, I have found the network of tremendous value and can recall being warmly welcomed and assisted in Cochin in India, Helsinki in Finland, Bali in Indonesia and Budapest simply by reaching out to the clubs in those cities who have assisted me in making appointments, booking accommodation or simply just providing advice on what to see and do.

This is an invaluable benefit of Skål International membership that few members take advantage of.

As Skål International continues to evolve and grow under the new governance model I see the profile of Skål International rising considerably in the world of travel and tourism which will ultimately result in Skål International membership once again becoming a highly prized accolade.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE NAMED SKÅLLEAGUE OF THE YEAR 2023?

To be named 'Skålleague of the Year' was a great honour, completely unexpected but greatly appreciated... especially when I look at the calibre of those who have been similarly honoured in previous years.

It has certainly elevated my profile in the industry and has encouraged me to continue to contribute to the future growth and development of Skål International.

WE KNOW THAT SUSTAINABILITY IS ONE OF THE KEYS TO THE PROJECTS YOU ARE INVOLVED IN. WHAT PROJECTS DO YOU HAVE IN MIND FOR THE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM?

Yes, I have been involved in promoting sustainability for a number of years. My interest in this area was aroused when, I think it was at the World Congress in Seoul, the Sustainability Manager of Diversey (when Diversey was a major Skål International sponsor) made a presentation on the various projects they were involved in in the developing world. On returning home, I was inspired to approach my company on the issue of soap recycling to reduce the waste stream and also to save resources... and was delighted when the company joined the Soap Aid project.

I was also motivated to encourage our Club Skål International Hobart to take on a sustainability project and after considering various options, we settled on a clean-a-beach project as the waterways around our island State of Tasmania are a vital part of our tourism infrastructure. Over a 5 year period, our annual clean up day attracted around 45 Club members and their families and a significant volume of rubbish/detritus was removed from the beaches around Hobart.

Our Club is now planning a tree planting project to rehabilitate degraded land in proximity to some of our major tourist attractions.

At the national and international level, I see great opportunities for clubs to encourage members to participate in the **Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards** and to twin with other clubs to inspire and support sustainability initiatives. I would like to see every club have at least one entry in the annual Sustainability Awards program.

I am also an advocate for the Skål International 'Sustainability Champions' project and would like to see every club nominate a champion who will drive sustainability initiatives. I would also like to see every one of the 14 Skål International regions across the globe have at least one active member nominated to join the new Sustainable Tourism Committee under the new governance model that comes into effect in January.

I also see a great opportunity to build the relationship between Skål International and the **International Institute For Peace Through Tourism (IIPT)**. Australia currently has 5 Peace Parks/Promenades established and I see no reason why every club cannot embrace a Peace Park project. After all, tourism is the best way to promote peace in the world!

HOW CAN THE REST OF SKÅLLEAGUES OR THOSE INTERESTED IN THESE AMAZING INITIATIVES HELP?

The answer is simple: Get motivated and take action! A great starting point for all clubs is to access the **Skål International Sustainability Manual** which has a multitude of suggestions, examples and case studies of what can be, and is being, done across the Skål International world...

This presents a great opportunity to attract new younger members into your club who are concerned about the future of our planet, in reducing green house gasses and carbon emissions, in supporting developing countries and improving the livelihoods of their people and preserving their cultures.

Reach out and ask for assistance... There are a vast range of resources available to assist in getting a project underway.

My favourite quote is "If it's got to be it's up to me"... so I encourage every Skålleague to take action to make our industry more sustainable!

HOW DO YOU SEE THE TOURISM INDUSTRY EVOLVING 5 YEARS FROM NOW?

The tourism industry will continue to grow globally driven partly by the rapidly growing middle classes in China and India. This will present many challenges to destinations that will be exposed to what has become known as 'over tourism'. We already see push backs in cities such as Venice, in some of the resort islands around Thailand and Indonesia, and in countries such as Bhutan.

The emphasis on sustainability will continue to grow and will become an even more important decision-making factor in helping people decide where to travel and where to spend their much needed tourism dollars.

I see a growing demand for products and experiences that are authentic and embody the culture of a place or community, and for what is called 'special interest tourism' to continue to grow strongly.

As the need for more tourism infrastructure grows, there will be even more pressure on preserving our environment, our natural forests and waterways, and flora and fauna.

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PHOTO CONTEST 2023

We present the winners of our second edition of the 'Skål International Photo Contest' for Skålleagues in the following categories:

- Destination Image.
- Skål International Moment.

The Skål International Media & PR Committee has selected **the 10 winning photographs captured by our members** and Tourism Now is pleased to share these with our readers.

Thank you to all who participated and congratulations to the winners.



CATEGORY

DESTINATION IMAGE

#1

AUTHOR: MICHAEL GRUENDEL

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL TAMPA BAY | U.S.A.



DUBAI MOSQUE.

CATEGORY

DESTINATION IMAGE

#2

AUTHOR: ANDREW STEWART

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL NELSON MANDELA BAY | SOUTH AFRICA



SUNSET LIGHTHOUSE.

CATEGORY

DESTINATION IMAGE

#3

AUTHOR: VIJVER JONCK

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL GARDEN ROUTE | SOUTH AFRICA



KING OF THE JUNGLE.

CATEGORY

DESTINATION IMAGE

4

AUTHOR: MARGARITA ARROYO SPAMER

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL BAHÍAS DE HUATULCO | MEXICO



LA PEÑA MÁGICA DE BERNAL.

CATEGORY

DESTINATION IMAGE

#5

AUTHOR: LLOYD EDWARDS

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL NELSON MANDELA BAY | SOUTH AFRICA



INDO-PACIFIC BOTTLENOSE DOLPHINS, ALEXANDRIA DUNEFIELDS, ALGOA BAY.

CATEGORY

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL MOMENT

#1

AUTHOR: TANIA HERRERA SALAS

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ISLA MUJERES - PUERTO MORELOS | MEXICO



MEXICO, PERU & CROATIA. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION.

CATEGORY

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL MOMENT

2

AUTHOR: PREETISH MUTHA

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL PUNE | INDIA



UNITY IS STRENGTH.

CATEGORY

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL MOMENT

#3

AUTHOR: MAGADA HAILY MIRIAM
SKÅL INTERNATIONAL KAMPALA | UGANDA



RECRUITING YOUNG SKÅLLEAGUES.

CATEGORY

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL MOMENT

4

AUTHOR: HUBERT NEUBACHER

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL HAMBURG | GERMANY



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL HAMBURG MEETS SKÅL INTERNATIONAL NEW YORK CITY AND SKÅL INTERNATIONAL NEW JERSEY.

CATEGORY

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL MOMENT

5

AUTHOR: JOSÉ MARÍA MANZANARES TENDILLA
SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CIUDAD DE MÉXICO | MEXICO



WORLD SKÅL DAY. HAPPINESS! GOOD HEALTH! FRIENDSHIP! LONG LIFE!

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

NAIROBI

CLUB OF THE YEAR

Skål International Nairobi President, Liz Tapawa, comments on how the Club has managed to achieve its goals and excel to become the best 2023 Skål International Club.

WHAT IS YOUR RECIPE FOR SUCCESS?

I get everyone involved. I know what each Committee member is good at, therefore I give them an opportunity to thrive in their areas of expertise. This makes it easy for them to complete tasks and also have fun while they are doing it.

HOW DOES YOUR CLUB ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS AND HOW DO YOU RETAIN THEM?

We invite visitor at every event then collect contacts which are followed up by the committee member in charge of membership. I also make personalized follow up as the president. This way we ensure that our visitors are able to be converted into membership by the 3rd visit.

WHAT METHODS DO YOU IMPLEMENT IN YOUR CLUB THAT ENCOURAGES ATTENDANCE TO YOUR MONTHLY FUNCTIONS AND KEEPS THIS EXCITEMENT AND PARTICIPATION ALIVE?

We realized that our Club has got a wide diversity in terms of age. At the beginning of 2023, we decided to introduce evening events which would attract our younger generation and this has really made our events vibrant. We have been able to host cocktails on some occasions. We did our Ramadhan Iftar dinner in April which was graced by our then CS of tourism, our lunches have now become very corporate events which we host when we want to attract the company executives. It is important to ensure that a club is hosting events that cater to all its member's needs.

DOES YOUR CLUB HAVE ANY EXTRAORDINARY PROJECT THAT YOU ARE WORKING ON AT PRESENT?

Yes, this festive season, we are partnering with the Purity Foundation who are ambassadors of dignity for the old people in Kenya. We are donating care packages which consist of food items and a blanket. As you know, many old people in our society are confined at home due to the current heavy rains in the country. While some are even abandoned due to lack of resources.

Skål International Nairobi is targeting to give 100 care packages through the foundation.

HOW DO YOU PROMOTE THE MANY MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS TO YOUR MEMBERS AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS?

As we commemorated our 73rd anniversary In May 2023, we came up with our flyer '10 reasons to join Skål International Nairobi, Kenya'. This flyer summarizes what our member benefits are, and we share this with all prospective members and also make personal calls to all prospects.

HOW DOES YOUR CLUB CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOCAL TOURISM INDUSTRY AS WELL AS TO THE SKÅL INTERNATIONAL NETWORK?

We collaborate with the Kenya Tourism Board to promote our 'Magical Kenya' through hosted tourism events. The just concluded East African tourism Regional Expo is one such event and I was honored to attend the award ceremony hosted at KICC by the Kenya Tourism Board Chairman Mr Francis Gichaba.

On Skål International every year our Club is at the forefront in contributing to the Florimond Volckaert Fund. We have also been sensitizing our members on the benefits of downloading the new Skål App which has so many podcast that provide for good learning material.

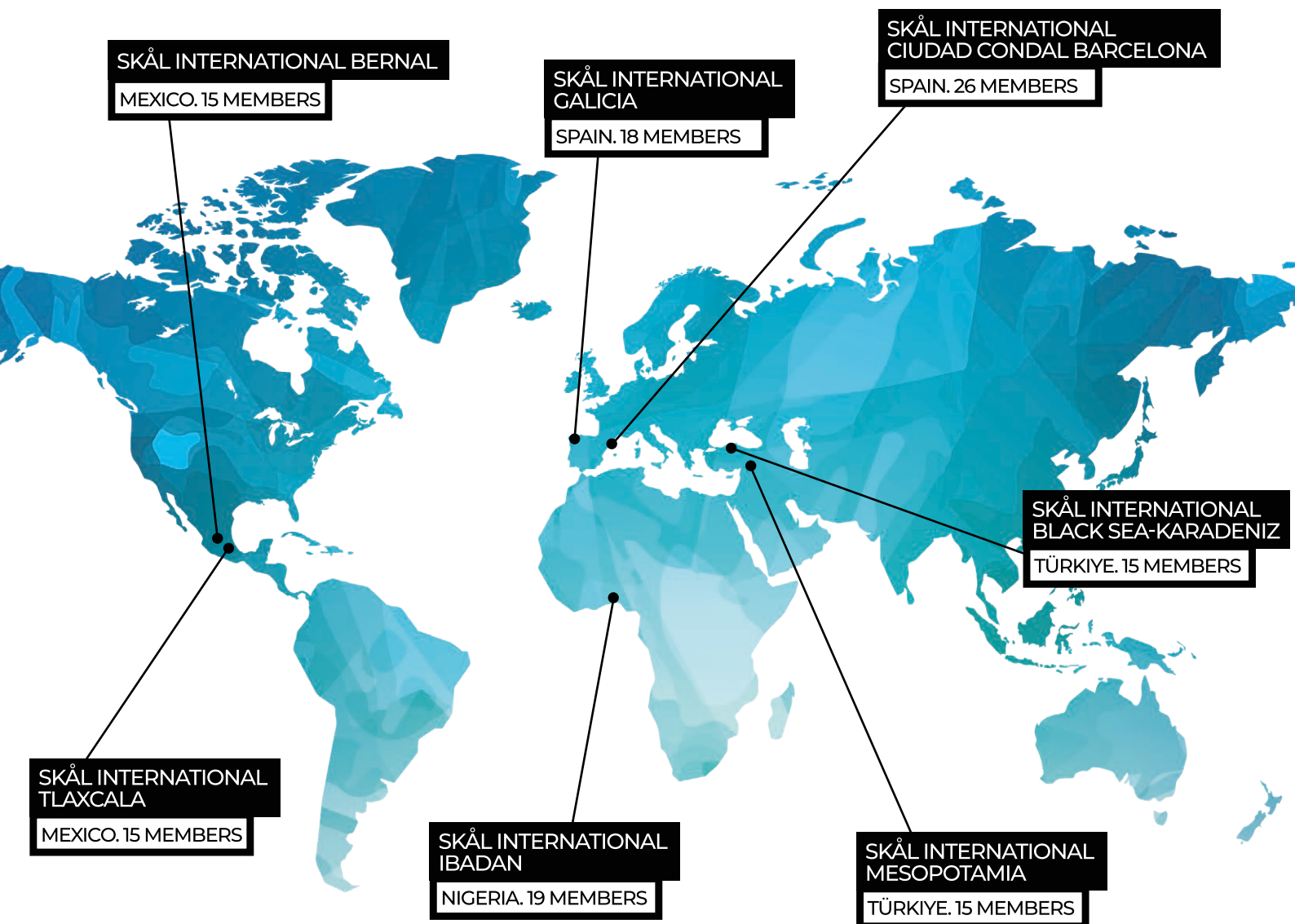


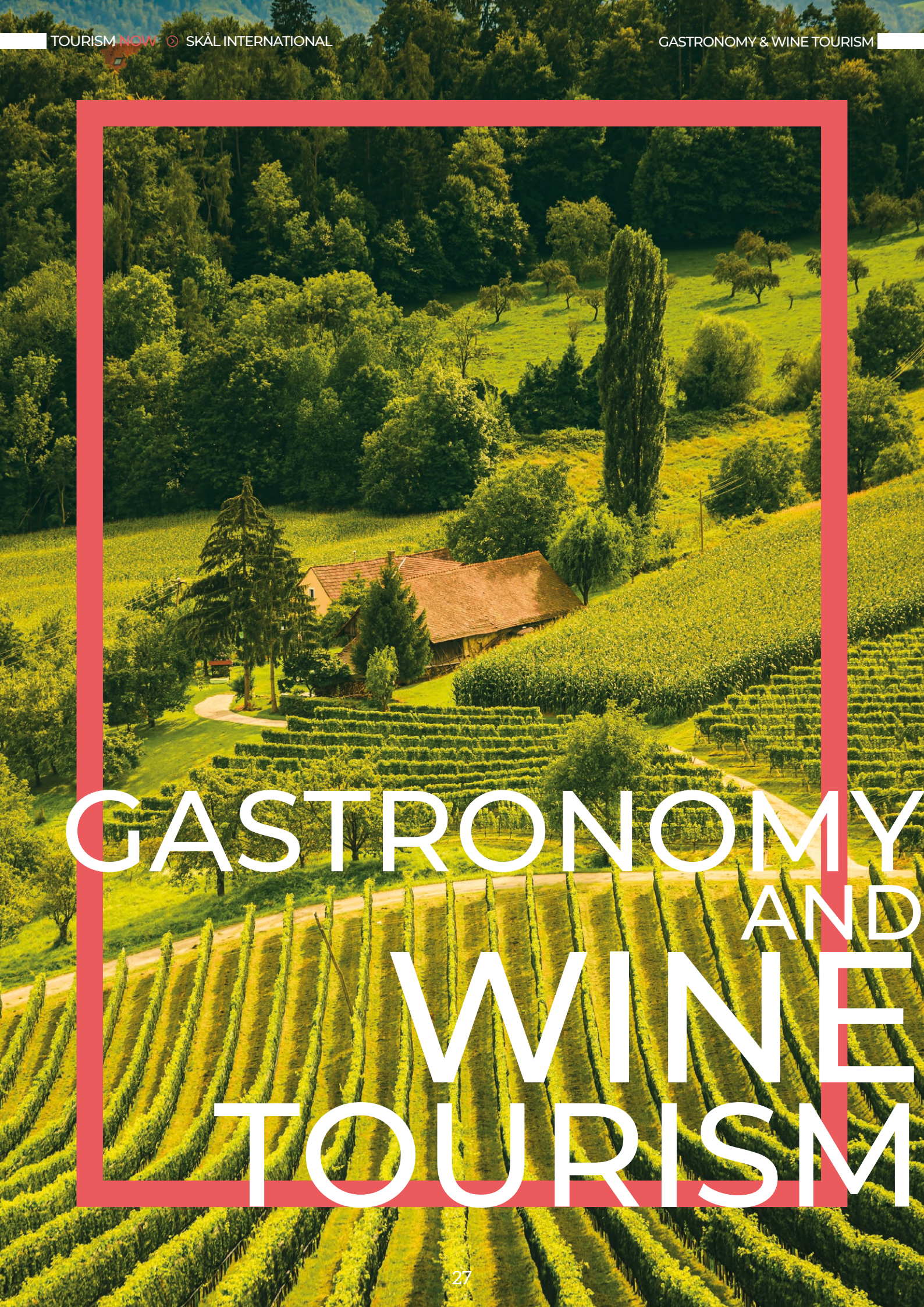
Skål International Nairobi President
Liz Tapawa with Trophy.

NEW & REACTIVATED CLUBS IN 2023

During 2023, **7 clubs** have been created or reactivated around the world, enriching Skål International's membership with **123 new members**.

From Mexico to Türkiye, from Spain to Nigeria, Skål International keeps growing with great professionals in the travel industry.



An aerial photograph of a lush green landscape. In the foreground, there are neat rows of grapevines in a vineyard. A dirt road winds through the middle ground. In the background, a traditional house with a brown tiled roof is nestled among trees. A tall, slender poplar tree stands prominently near the house. The entire scene is framed by a thick red border.

GASTRONOMY AND WINE TOURISM

GASTRONOMY AND WINE TOURISM

Gastronomy and wine tourism are two types of tourism that have gained great relevance in recent years, both because of their growing demand and their constant recognition by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

These types of tourism are based on the enjoyment of food and wine as cultural, identity-based and sustainable elements of destinations.

The UNWTO has promoted various global events to promote the development and innovation of wine and gastronomic tourism, such as the [8th World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism](#) and the [7th Global Conference on Wine Tourism](#), held in 2023 in Spain. These events have served to share best practices, generate strategic alliances and create business opportunities among industry players.

Gastronomy and wine tourism represents a **value proposition for destinations**, as it allows them to diversify their offer, differentiate themselves from the competition, attract market segments with high purchasing power and build visitor loyalty. In addition, wine and food tourism contributes to the integration, preservation and enhancement of local resources, such as cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity, agri-food products and culinary traditions.

In conclusion, **gastronomy and wine tourism is a growing trend that offers multiple benefits for destinations**, as long as it is managed in a responsible and sustainable manner.

It is therefore necessary to continue to focus on quality, innovation, cooperation and training in this area, with the support of the UNWTO and other relevant entities.

“

AS GLOBAL TOURISM IS ON THE RISE AND COMPETITION BETWEEN DESTINATIONS INCREASES, UNIQUE LOCAL AND REGIONAL INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE BECOME INCREASINGLY THE DISCERNING FACTOR FOR THE ATTRACTION OF TOURISTS.

MORE INFO 





MEET TRAVEL LEADERS OF THE INDUSTRY

INTERVIEW

MORENA ILEANA VALDEZ VIGIL

MINISTER OF TOURISM.
EL SALVADOR.



ABOUT MORENA ILEANA VALDEZ VIGIL

Academic researcher, business administrator, communicator and public relations specialist who has devoted her life to the deep study of marketing and advertising, but oriented, above all, to exalt the image of El Salvador both nationally and internationally.

Valdez Vigil is a business administrator by profession, specializing in project

management, marketing, advertising and institutional communication, committed to the training of new generations through university teaching, as well as the accompaniment and evaluation of academic research work.

In 2017 she was appointed National Director of Nation Brand El Salvador, and since 2019 she leads the Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of El Salvador.

In 2023, El Salvador is positioned within the top five inbound tourism destinations with the highest annual growth compared to 2019 and pre-pandemic records. According to the November 2023 edition of the [World Tourism Barometer](#) published by the [World Tourism Organization \(UNWTO\)](#), El Salvador registered +35% in arrivals from January to September 2023 compared to the same months in 2019.

EL SALVADOR HAS BEEN POSITIONING ITSELF FOR SEVERAL YEARS AS A COMPETITIVE MARKET AND ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE DESTINATIONS AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL THANKS TO AN AMBITIOUS STRATEGY TO ATTRACT INFRASTRUCTURE AND GREATER PRIVATE TOURISM INVESTMENT TO THE COUNTRY. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT?

Since June 2019, with the government of President Nayib Bukele, El Salvador began a historic transformation and one that the whole world is recognizing. Security has been key to achieving the country's objectives. Without security there is no tourism, there is no investment. So we have bet heavily on this issue. Then, we bet on transforming public spaces into worthy destinations, first class for national and international tourists.

Through Surf City El Salvador, as an anchor to attract tourism, we have managed to promote the country through its waves, but also to demonstrate that we have the logistical capacity to attend major world events such as surf tournaments and Miss Universe, for example.

WHO ARE THE MAIN ACTORS IN THIS CHANGE AND WHAT ARE THEY WORKING ON TO ACHIEVE IT?

The leadership of President Nayib Bukele and his vision of turning El Salvador into a new country has been key to achieve what the country is now.

This leadership has allowed all government institutions to work in a coordinated manner, as never before with the private sector and Salvadoran society.

IS TOURISM A DEVELOPMENT ENGINE FOR EL SALVADOR?

Definitely yes. This has been expressed by the President of the Republic, Nayib Bukele, who in 2022 announced the second impulse to grow the economy, which focuses on strengthening tourism in the country, which will bring development to the sectors.

The above, taking as a starting point that tourism is a very large economic dynamizer that benefits the entire value chain of the entire sector and other complementary ones.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OR OBJECTIVES SET FOR TOURISM IN THE COUNTRY?

The strengthening of the productive sector, the specialization of human resources, and the main challenge of attracting foreign investment that will generate quality jobs and improve the lives of the population in the country's tourist destinations.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES EL SALVADOR FACES TO POSITION ITSELF AS A QUALITY TOURIST DESTINATION?

The challenge we face is to strengthen human resources. The country is attracting specialized tourists with travel experiences and quality must be a priority.

Therefore, as a government we are focused on encouraging professional training in various areas

such as tour guides, customer service, languages, quality management systems, among others.

WHAT ARE EL SALVADOR'S STRENGTHS AND POTENTIAL?

El Salvador has become a safe destination to visit, invest and live. We have a high quality natural wave environment to carry out international tournaments like the leading countries in the tourism sector such as Portugal, Spain, Brazil and Mexico.

Other strengths of the country are its short distances, where the national and international tourist can travel in a short time sun and beach in the morning, climb a volcano at noon and tour its renovated Historic Center at night.

WHAT ARE EL SALVADOR'S MAIN TOURISM PRODUCTS, AND IS EL SALVADOR POSITIONED IN ANY OF THEM IN PARTICULAR?

Waves, volcanoes and coffee. Surf City El Salvador, is the main product we are promoting. We have constant waves all year long, warm water, no sharks and like other tourist destinations no matter if you like surfing or not, sun and beach connected with nature, adventure and gastronomy, closes the virtuous circle that El Salvador offers in an eternal summer that offers throughout the year. All this in a short time to enjoy the tourist destinations of the country.

WHAT IS THE TOURIST PROFILE OF VISITORS TO EL SALVADOR?

The main country of residence of the tourists who visit us is the United States, Guatemala, Honduras and Canada. More than 60% are between 25 and 44 years old.



According to our statistics, 40% choose the country for its beaches; 10% for its nature; and 10% for its towns and cities.

WHAT NATIONALITIES DEMAND EL SALVADOR AS A TOURIST DESTINATION TODAY? ARE CHANGES EXPECTED?

43% of our visitors come from the United States, 23% from Guatemala and 15% from Honduras. It is important to highlight that since 2021, post pandemic, El Salvador has changed its market share; and also, to turn around the type of tourists that visit us, prior to the pandemic, most of them came by land from our brothers in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Nowadays, the percentage has changed, 56% enter by air, coming from the United States and Canada. The remaining 44% come from Guatemala and Honduras.

According to our projections and to continue positioning the country as a good destination to visit, we will be receiving a higher percentage of visitors from South America, Europe and Asia with the objective of exceeding not only the entry of visitors between tourists and excursionists to the country, but also to get these tourists to spend and stay more in the country.

WHAT WOULD BE THE TOURISM SCENARIO THAT YOU WOULD LIKE EL SALVADOR TO BECOME IN THE NEXT THREE 5 YEARS?

To turn the tourism sector into a fundamental pillar of El Salvador's Gross Domestic Product, generating more quality jobs and moving from the emerging destination that we are today to a leading country in the Latin American region from the tourism sector.

HOW DO YOU FORESEE THE REGIONAL TOURISM DESTINATION PERFORMING IN THE FACE OF THE BOOMING TOURISM AND ECONOMY IN EL SALVADOR?

Through tourism, Central American countries can achieve greater development of their respective populations. From El Salvador we are promoting each one of the destinations of the other Central American countries, convinced that the youngest tourists prefer the multidestination friendly with the environment, respecting the cultures and enjoying the gastronomy of the destinations they visit. Being the Central American region a multidestination that

allows sun, beach, mountains, volcanoes, culture, history, people in a favorable climate for travel.

INVITE OUR READERS TO GET TO KNOW EL SALVADOR, HOW WOULD YOU DO IT?

Welcome to The Land of Hosts. Here we are the world champions in making you feel special, from the moment you arrive, until you leave, if you ever leave.

We share waves, volcanoes, historic towns and assure you a five thousand star experience. Because this land has more hosts per square kilometer than any other country in the world. El Salvador, Land of Hosts.





CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

TÜRKIYE AID FUND

On behalf of all the Skålleagues in Türkiye, we would like to once again convey our sincere appreciation and thank to each and every member and Club from around the world for their most valuable donations to help the victims of the Earthquake disaster that struck the South Eastern part of our country in February 2023.

We are indebted to President Juan I. Steta and the Executive Board of Skål International for sharing our grief and immediately initiating an Aid Campaign. We have received grants from several individual Skål International members, some of whom wanted to stay anonymous. Clubs have also contributed individually or through their National Committees considerable sums which reached approx. 24.000 €.

We have to name and commend Skål International Mexico who alone contributed € 8.474 for which we are most grateful and very much touched.

As we did not receive all the payments at once, we had to wait to make a meaningful donation

that will help the recovery along the way. We are happy to share now, that **we have used 1/3 of the fund for a Tourism School in the area;** to 'Ulucinar Tourism Lyceum' in Arszuz to provide their damaged equipment in the service workshop hall and the IT centre. With this donation we have bought them 5 new computers and several bar and restaurant service equipment including ice machine, coffee machine, cutlery, plates, bar utensils, cocktail tables, etc. Until recently, as the school buildings were damaged, students were attending courses online. In the meantime, 50 students were provided the opportunity to do their internship at Aqua World Belek Resort, whose GM is Mr Cuneyt Kuru, SG of SI Türkiye NC. Hotelier Skål International members have also expressed their commitment that graduates will be assisted to find jobs at their properties.

After restoration, students returned to continue their education in November. Skål International Türkiye President Mr Orhon Atameriç, together with Vice President Cüneyt Kuru, Skål International Çukurova President Gökhan

Kardeş, and Past President Yasar Atesoglu attended a ceremony at the School on November 27, to present the two Skål International plaques that were placed at the entrance of both classrooms. The ceremony was attended by the students, faculty members, and the Director of Education of the Province. All expressed their sincere appreciation to Skål International and its members for their contribution.

This donation is a long-term investment helping 540 tourism students, between ages 14-18 and Skål International will always be remembered with gratitude. As to the remaining fund, we are working with the school management to identify their further needs to continue investing to make this institution fully functional again.

Skål International solidarity is second to none, thank you dear Skålleagues.



HULYA ASLANTAS
Co-Chair of the Türkiye Aid Fund

ORHON ATAMERIC
Skål International Türkiye
National President



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS WINNERS



We have pleasure in featuring the winners of the 2023 Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards and Skål-Biosphere Special Award.



It is heartening to see companies and organizations dedicated to making a positive impact on the tourism industry and our planet through their sustainable practices. Let's learn more about our winners through an interview in which they are sharing their contribution to sustainability with us.

Congratulations again and thank you for your passion, contribution and dedication to our industry!

CATEGORY 'COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT PROJECTS' WINNER

TE PAE CHRISTCHURCH CONVENTION CENTRE
NEW ZEALANDWEBSITE **What is your mission to make this world a better place?**

Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre sits at the heart of Ōtautahi Christchurch, in the centre of the South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Some of the world's most spectacular natural landscapes are part of what makes a visit to our region so memorable. We have an absolute obligation to ensure it remains that way for generations to come, sustainable operations are simply the right thing to do.

Te Pae Christchurch is a key project in the urban regeneration of our city, so for us, sustainability goes beyond just measuring waste and offsetting carbon emissions. We work closely with clients and suppliers to minimise the impact of the events we host. It's about legacy – what we leave behind for future generations, and how we instil values that will ensure we are not only environmentally sensitive but leading the way for years to come.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

It is difficult to choose just one signature SDG but certainly our people are important to Te Pae Christchurch. While the award-winning building is one of the most beautiful convention centres in the world, it is our people that make a difference.

Te Pae Christchurch is the city's gathering place. Built on a site of cultural and historical significance, the location of our venue has

been a meeting place since the region's earliest settlement. Te Pae Christchurch is a venue that builds lasting social, cultural and economic connections between the region and the world. In that way we represent the SDG "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".

It is all about our hospitality, which in New Zealand we call our *manaakitanga*. We want visitors to experience our special way of making people feel welcome and safe in our venue and our city, and together we can create impactful experiences.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

At Te Pae Christchurch we view all significant decisions through an environmental lens, balancing commercial needs with the environmental effect of our actions.

We apply sustainable policies throughout our business to ensure we use environmentally friendly packaging, energy efficient technologies, local suppliers, dehydrate food waste into soil food, and transform water into a chemical-free cleaning solution. We strive to be industry leaders for delivering impactful conferences and we're passionate about partnering with clients for green events to meet sustainability goals.

Te Pae Christchurch holds Toitū Enviromark Gold certification, New Zealand's highest accreditation, and is continuing to work through

our implemented control systems and setting goals that will allow us to run a more sustainable and environmentally conscious business. The Enviromark programme has recognised the strong environmental management system in place at Te Pae Christchurch and will continue to assist us in managing risks to achieve long-term success.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

Te Pae Christchurch is incredibly proud of being awarded the 2023 Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award in the Community and Government Projects category. This international recognition is a credit to the entire Te Pae Christchurch team and our commitment to foster a culture of environmental excellence.

This award reinforces that the work we are doing on our sustainability journey is not only worthwhile, but also making a difference. To be recognised on the global stage is inspiration for our team to continue our journey and that is why we are determined to make our operations carbon neutral by the end of 2024.

We are focused on continual improvement in our sustainability journey, to enrich the delegate experience and to deliver a sense of pride that we are creating meaningful change for future generations.

CATEGORY 'COUNTRYSIDE AND BIODIVERSITY' WINNER

ECOGUERREROS SC DE RL DE CV MEXICO

[WEBSITE !\[\]\(0f848bbd71cef6b345273b16f905912a_img.jpg\)](#)

What is your mission to make this world a better place?

Our mission is the conservation of Mexico's biocultural heritage through the creation of a sustainable transition model in rural areas of Mexico. From an economic diversification approach, we develop projects that promote the conservation of natural areas and achieve economic and social development in rural areas.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

For the project, the main objective is #8: decent work and economic development.

We seek to generate sustainable economic activities and new job opportunities for all the people in the communities that currently make up the Camino del Mayab project. We have also made an important effort to promote local consumption and generate micro-economic networks in the region where the project is being carried out. We want these sites to be a model of social, environmental and economic prosperity for the people who live in the territory.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

Today, the project is made up of 37 community-based organisations and a technical team, with a total of 249 people directly involved in the project.

A Regional Advisory Council of the Camino del Mayab was created for participatory decision-making and governance of the territory.

We have created a mechanism for conservation that secures more than 4,000 HA as a Natural Protected Area.

We have provided training and donated specialised equipment so that inhabitants of the territory can carry out environmental monitoring and adequate fire control.

More than 2,000 visitors have been educated about environmental education.

We have generated diagnoses and resilience protocols to promote better environmental practices and mitigate the effects of natural disasters and climate change.



Six apiaries and nine community vegetable gardens have been promoted.

The conservation and recovery of Mayan traditions and culture is actively promoted through tours and events.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

We are very proud of the award and it shows us that the project is on the right track. Being part of an international ecosystem that promotes the actions we carry out is invaluable and motivates us to continue our journey, in a collaborative and fair way, respectful of the species with which we share this planet. This will allow the business proposal to be strengthened and we will be able to replicate the model in other regions.

Thank you to the entire Skål International community for this great opportunity.

CATEGORY 'COMMUNITY AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND MEDIA' WINNER

MANKIND DIGITAL AUSTRALIA

[WEBSITE !\[\]\(aceb1790ece33f2eac474d4a9431c6d6_img.jpg\)](#)


What is your mission to make this world a better place?

By promoting sustainable, responsible and regenerative tourism and travel, we are creating a brighter and fairer future for communities, the environment and the tourism sector overall. We aim to transform the tourism landscape through educating, inspiring, and influencing individuals, organisations and government agencies to embrace tourism and travel experiences that are environmentally

conscious, culturally respectful and economically beneficial to local communities and destinations.

Every aspect of our business operations has been designed to support the tourism sector towards a more sustainable and regenerative future. We specialise in providing effective education and training, developing marketing and communication programs and creating content. We use these strategies to unlock the barriers that prevent tourism professionals and visitors from moving towards

more responsible tourism and travel choices. We also partner with like-minded organisations and destinations to promote their products and services because we understand that this is the key to driving significant change that will affect the future of our planet.

Through our strategic alliances, partnerships and clients, we continue to educate and inspire travellers to choose the sustainable, responsible and regenerative tourism and travel products, services and experiences that will

make positive, lasting changes for communities, destinations and the environment.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

Goal 4: Quality education. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

The power of education to drive positive change for individuals, communities, destinations, businesses and the planet cannot be underestimated. Our industry and consumer education products create a strong demand for sustainable and regenerative tourism experiences, services and products delivered in more responsible ways—this underpins everything we do, and in turn benefits all.

To demonstrate our commitment to education and promoting sustainability in tourism, we have diversified the support we offer our clients and partners, and are now based internationally. Over the past 12 months, new services in our portfolio include customised training, courses and workshops in sustainable and regenerative tourism to complement our existing digital marketing training solutions.

We also support tourism businesses and destinations who have completed sustainability certification and accreditation, developing resources, guides and tool-kits to help them tell their sustainability stories effectively.

At Mankind Digital, our own marketing and brand enhancement strategy focuses on educating the tourism sector. We do this by developing educational content shared via our websites, social

media and broadcast media for radio and podcasts, along with promoting the content we create for our clients.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

Mankind Digital was established as a specialist provider of tourism marketing and communications support for sustainable, responsible and regenerative tourism organisations and destinations. We have shown that a business built on these principles can flourish, while having inherent advantages and transformative benefits for people, planet and place. Promoting sustainable, responsible and regenerative tourism organisations and destinations worldwide forms the foundation of our organisational business model and service offering. Whilst we are a business, Mankind Digital focuses on purpose over profits. We continue to positively influence the tourism sector, whilst contributing to the environment, communities and local economies of the regions we operate within. Our brand identity reflects this at every level and we attribute our success to being a purpose-driven organisation.

With over a century of collective experience, our team is highly skilled in tourism, education and training, digital marketing and content creation. This profound understanding and hands-on experience has positioned us as a catalyst for change within the tourism sector. Our expertise and unique point of difference compared to other tourism marketing companies lies in effectively communicating sustainability in

tourism with both the tourism sector and travellers in ways that are easy to understand and implement.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

Gaining industry recognition for our efforts for the second year in a row is confirmation that what we do and how we are doing it is working. Our back-to-back wins at the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards confirms that purpose-driven, ethical businesses can flourish—we are proof that sustainable tourism organisations can drive positive change to create a world where nature, communities and economies thrive.

Over the coming year, Mankind Digital will therefore focus on continuing to strengthen long-term partnerships and relationships with our key stakeholders to better achieve our shared goals. We are also developing and expanding our international network of workshop facilitators who deliver training, workshops and courses under the Mankind Digital brand and through our partner alliances globally.

In order to better target our education and training delivery, we will continue to develop strategic content partnerships with those who have a strong reputation in the market. We will maintain our strategy to collaborate with other industry professionals that share our values, and we plan to expand our network of brand ambassadors internationally. In doing so, we anticipate the continued positive growth of our brand's influence in the tourism sector, and the resultant positive changes this will bring.

CATEGORY 'MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTIONS' WINNER

THE SOUTH AFRICAN ANIMAL SANCTUARY ALLIANCE
SOUTH AFRICA

WEBSITE 



What is your mission to make this world a better place?

Our mission is to make this world a better place through educating visiting members of the public about the threats and challenges faced by wildlife and about conservation issues more generally and how they can contribute. Our guided walking

tours are a vehicle to educate people about the adverse effects of keeping wild animals as pets, on the individual animals but also on the security of the species.

We strive to encourage understanding of, and a commitment to, the conservation of wild animals. We also aim to help

people make informed choices about the wise use of natural resources in their daily lives.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

The world is currently facing the greatest species extinction event since the dinosaur age.

We strive on all of our educational walking tours to increase the public's awareness of the threats to wildlife caused by climate change, the pet trade and deforestation.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

We work hard to contribute towards a number of the SDGs. Our contribution to Goal 15 is noted above.

We employ primarily from our local communities and provide specialist training, for example, training them to become sanctuary guides.

These training and employment opportunities contribute directly to SDGs 1, 2 and 8.

In addition, we recycle plastics, cardboard and glass at our sanctuaries and provide facilities for visitors to do the same.

We also make use of solar power and rain water.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

We will continue to strive to be as sustainable as possible in all current and future projects.

Our Sustainable Tourism Award will inspire us to refer directly to the SDGs with any new projects to ensure we are doing all we can to maximise our sustainability and to contribute to the global achievement of the SDGs.

CATEGORY 'MARINE AND COASTAL' WINNER

SIX SENSES LAAMU
THE MALDIVES

WEBSITE 



What is your mission to make this world a better place?

My mission is to make a lasting positive impact on the conservation of our oceans, through creating opportunities for individuals to connect to it. One of my favorite quotes is by Baba Dioum (1968): *"In the end, we will conserve only what we love; we will love only what we understand, and we will understand only what we are taught."* Ultimately, I would love to be able to shape a future where tourism is inherently linked with education and sustainability, urging everyone to embrace the challenge of becoming an ocean steward, striving to leave this beautiful and unique part of the world better than how we found it.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

If I were to choose one, it would be SDG 14: Life Below Water. This goal resonates deeply with me, given my profound respect for the ocean and its crucial role in sustaining life on Earth.

Years ago, when I started diving, the ocean became a sanctuary from all the stresses of the world, a sort of meditative space. Since then, through the diving community, I have embarked on countless dives in unforgettable places and met remarkable underwater photographers and conservationists, who I now consider friends. These friendships and experiences have heightened my respect for the incredible diversity of life beneath

the water's surface.

SDG 14, which focuses on conserving oceans and marine resources, aligns with my passion for preserving marine ecosystems, as exemplified by the work carried out by the Maldives Underwater Initiative by Six Senses Laamu in Laamu atoll. Championing SDG 14, my goal is to contribute to leading the tourism industry in safeguarding marine life. This involves advocating for sustainable fishing, promoting marine conservation, and raising awareness about the interconnectedness of our actions with ocean health. The well-being of life below water is not a distant concern; it impacts us all. By prioritizing SDG 14, I believe we can make a lasting, positive impact on our planet's future.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

The most substantial impact that Six Senses Laamu has made in terms of sustainability is undeniably the development and establishment of the Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI). As the first of its kind in the Maldives, MUI represents a collaborative effort involving marine biologists from the resort and three NGOs: Manta Trust, Blue Marine Foundation, and Olive Ridley Project. What began with a single marine biologist employed by the resort has evolved into MUI, a leader in national marine research and education, dedicated to driving meaningful conservation efforts for

this truly magnificent country.

Through long-lasting partnerships, I take pride in highlighting that MUI has positioned itself as a key player in Maldivian marine research, fostering multiple international collaborations with leading researchers worldwide. In 2022, Laamu atoll received the esteemed designation as a Hope Spot by Mission Blue, a recognition earned through the gathering of ecological data, garnering community support, collaborating with local government, and establishing sustainable and profitable livelihoods for the surrounding islands.

In my perspective, MUI has played an instrumental role in demonstrating that sustainability and tourism can not only coexist but thrive together. Undoubtedly, MUI stands out as having the most significant impact on sustainability.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

The Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award serves as a powerful source of inspiration for Six Senses Laamu in shaping our future projects. This recognition for the fourth year validates our commitment to sustainable practices and responsible tourism. It fuels our passion to continue innovating and implementing initiatives that not only enhance the guest experience but also contribute positively to the environment and local communities.

The honor of receiving this award motivates us to raise the bar even higher in terms of sustainability and conservation. It instills a sense of responsibility to further integrate sustainable technologies, conservation programs, and community engagement into our operations. This acknowledgment from Skål International acts as

both a motivation and a challenge, encouraging us to explore new avenues, collaborate with like-minded partners, and consistently enhance our practices to establish new benchmarks in sustainable tourism.

Moreover, the award serves as a reminder of the positive impact our efforts can have on the broader

tourism industry. It inspires us to share our knowledge and best practices with others, fostering a culture of sustainability within the hospitality sector. Ultimately, the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award acts as a catalyst for innovation and a compass guiding us towards a more sustainable and responsible future in tourism.

CATEGORY 'TOUR OPERATORS - TRAVEL AGENTS' WINNER

KHIRI REACH THAILAND

WEBSITE 



What is your mission to make this world a better place?

Our mission at Khiri Reach is to try and help improve the lives of communities and support nature conservation projects in Asia. We strive to do this by providing access to essential resources and empowering them to become self-sufficient, as much as possible. Listening is vital as we want our projects to be 'bottom up' and inclusive. We try to address the root causes of poverty, inequality and lack of opportunity through sustainable and impactful interventions. We try to protect wildlife, biodiversity and the sanctity of forests and water. We often work with local partners. We aim to be culturally sensitive. Khiri reach also helps with emergency responses to negative events such as floods, earthquakes or Covid impacts. Our Khiri Reach 'ambassadors' are usually Khiri Travel staff members who have a close or personal understanding of the afflicted community or a nature reserve under threat. The ambassadors are the bridge between the local community and Khiri Travel's international resources and networks.

Another way to make Khiri Reach projects sustainable is to link them to tours and experiences, so that Khiri Travel's guests can experience these. While this is not always practical, it's important to remember that sustainability isn't just about people and the planet. There needs to be sustainable levels of profitability within to implement projects. Happily, we've managed to support dozens of positive interventions since Khiri Reach was founded in 2007. Meanwhile, Khiri Travel itself covers 100% of all overhead costs, so all donations go directly to the projects.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

That's a difficult one. All 17 SDGs are laudable. Many of them overlap.

If push came to shove - and looking at Khiri Reach's track record - I think it would be a toss up between No. 1 - poverty reduction - and No. 15 - life on land. Indeed, it is very likely that the sustainable development goal of life on land will feature even more strongly in Khiri Reach projects in 2024 onwards. We're looking at supporting reforestation projects in Cambodia and are working on other environmental projects in Thailand and Sri Lanka. We're doing the due diligence right now and will hopefully make an announcement soon.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

Khiri Reach has helped earthquake and flood victims in Laos and Lombok, assisted with gibbon and turtle rehabilitation in Phuket and Myanmar, supported tourism workers during the Covid years, built water wells in the arid zone of central Myanmar, and helped set up community-based tourism in Sambor Prei Kuk in Cambodia. Maybe if I had to pick one, it would be helping over 60 unemployed tour guides and tourism workers in Myanmar during the Covid years.

Over the years we have had invaluable support from our tour operator partners in Europe and North America. We used that support and our Khiri Travel network upcountry in Myanmar to deliver funds to out-of-work tour guides, nearly all of them with families to support. People need rice in their

bowl to survive. Tour guides in Myanmar were really hurting badly. As if Covid impacts weren't bad enough, the guides also had to cope with a military coup, with all the implications for tourism that that brings.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

Skål International is a travel association dating back almost a century, so recognition from Skål International is of huge importance. It acts as both confirmation that we have been doing things right. And it gives all of us motivation, not just to keep going, but to become more ambitious in our giving-back efforts. Receiving the Skål International award energises us further.

The award makes it easier for us to make proposals to communities, NGOs and potential donor partners. The Skål International award helps because our charitable efforts have been acclaimed by highly experienced judges. They looked at our 16 years of projects and gave us a seal of approval. Third party endorsements are vital. And for that we're grateful.

Importantly, I also believe the Skål International award will empower our younger Khiri Reach 'ambassadors' - the Khiri Travel staff members who take ownership of a charitable initiative and drive it forward. I believe it will embolden them to be more self-confident in their community outreach programmes. Mind over matter is important. The Skål International award reinforces our can-do approach to making a positive difference.

CATEGORY 'URBAN ACCOMMODATION' WINNER

THE PARKSIDE HOTEL & SPA
CANADAWEBSITE **What is your mission to make this world a better place?**

At The Parkside Hotel & Spa, we lead with a mission of hospitality with a core focus on sustainability. To make the world a better place, we strive to build a strong collective of guests, partners and our greater community while being deeply committed to our sustainable initiatives, from continuously re-evaluating our operations to involving and educating guests and other businesses.

As a Carbon Neutral, Biosphere Certified property, we proudly hold the distinction of being the first urban hotel in the world to join Beyond Green—a diverse portfolio of hotels and resorts that offer a range of experiences in unique locations globally, all centered around purposeful travel.

We're proud of the physical aspects of our property, which were meticulously crafted with sustainability at the forefront. But, what truly distinguishes us is our exceptional team—a group of individuals who embody warmth, inclusivity, and genuine care.

Together, we continuously reassess our core values, aiming to provide an excellent experience for our guests while nurturing a vibrant and creative environment for our associates.

If you had to choose one SDG as your signature goal, which one would it be and why?

SDG 12, which focuses on responsible consumption and production, is the top SDG for The Parkside Hotel & Spa.

The tourism industry generates an alarming 35 million tons of solid waste annually (Juvan, E., Gruin, B & Dolnicar, S., 2023), significantly impacting the environment.

Tourists tend to generate more waste while on vacation compared to their habits at home. And hotels, with an extensive supply chain including linens, furniture, toiletries, and food and beverage items, contribute to excessive waste as well. It's crucial to recognize that a staggering 8 million tons of plastics find their way into our oceans annually, and a significant portion of tourism occurs in coastal communities.

To effect positive change, we collaborate with our supply chain partners, advocating for responsible purchasing practices and actively seeking ways to minimize packaging, especially single-use plastics. Engaging our customers is equally important—we empower them to participate in waste reduction initiatives like in-suite compost bins.

By aligning our efforts with SDG 12, we pledge to address these challenges, aiming for a more sustainable and conscientious approach to consumption and production within the tourism industry.

What is the greatest impact your company created in relation to sustainability?

Our greatest impact lies in successfully creating a profitable business model deeply rooted in sustainability. This model not only drives our operations but also serves

as an example of best practices for businesses worldwide. It extends beyond our own success.

We have a larger impact by sharing knowledge to help guide other businesses toward more sustainable practices.

We believe that collective efforts toward sustainability benefit everyone involved—and we're all better off for it.

How will the Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award inspire you for your future projects?

The Skål International Sustainable Tourism Award highlights the importance of showcasing urban hotels as sustainable entities.

There's a common misconception that sustainability in the hospitality industry is synonymous only with eco-tourism experiences, often associated with yurts, tree houses, or remote accommodations.

However, this award helps challenge that perception, showing that a business model focused on mass tourism can still operate sustainably.

Receiving the Skål International award motivates us to continue sharing our story. It reinforces the idea that sustainability is achievable within an urban hotel setting. Most importantly, it allows us to learn from other stories within the industry, providing inspiration for our ongoing sustainability efforts.



RESPONSIBLE
TOURISM
INSTITUTE



BIOSPHERE

CONNECT WITH MORE RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERS

Expand your reach to conscious travelers by ensuring your sustainability.



Allow your clients to check, in real time, the sustainable practices of your entity in an adapted understandable language.



Communicate your sustainability with the distinctive **materials we provide you!**



Make it easier for potential consumers to find you by your sustainable attributes, demonstrated and guaranteed in a transparent way.

➤ +25 years of experience building the concept of sustainable tourism.

➤ Works jointly with the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)

➤ Unique International System of continuous improvement processes for assessing the contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

✓ Unique methodology worldwide to connect DMOs, businesses and citizens and link them to the 17SDGs

✓ Easy, exciting and common learning methodology to share your responsible practices.

✓ Awarded on numerous occasions and recognized as the best sustainability management and certification tool in the world.



MORE INFO:
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WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT IN BUSINESS?



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Sustainability has become a priority in today's business world, and it is not difficult to understand why.

According to the 'Report on Sustainable Rural Tourism Trends' prepared by **EscapadaRural** and **Biosphere**, 52% of the surveyed citizens look for eco options, with sustainable certifications and/or services with options to offset their carbon footprint when organising a trip.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the same study, focusing on the sustainable traveller generates a positive impact on the business according to 70% of rural accommodation owners. These figures show that **sustainability has become a fundamental value for society** and that its importance continues to grow.

Is it really beneficial?

Corporate sustainability recognises that a business does not operate in vain but has an impact on the community and the planet. From large corporations to the smallest shops, they need to approach management that respects the natural and social environment around them. Not only to care for their context, but also to stand out in a highly competitive market and to be able to maintain and attract increasingly demanding customers.

Therefore, if you are looking for real success stories, here are some **accommodations with positive experiences by investing in sustainability**:

Sències Can Girona

In one of the oldest farmhouses in Sitges, Barcelona, connecting with the territory and understanding its singularities makes Sències Can Girona a unique place to enjoy the rural world and the sea.

With a tradition of three generations, the **care for the environment has been one of the foundations of the project since its beginnings**. For example, in its gardens and orchards, local plants are cultivated; being a bird preservation area, they keep the swallows' nests during the winter so that they can find them in March, they also create nests for bats and their pond is a breeding place for ducks.

On the other hand, the Biosphere certificate "*also accompanies us through its improvement action plan to implement tools for greater energy efficiency and accommodation as free of waste as possible*", says Agnes Zander, director of the farmhouse.

Quinta dos Trevos

Ladoeiro, Portugal, is home to Quinta dos Trevos, a project that began in the youth of the founders, Maria Celsa Herrero and João Ludgero Moreira dos Santos. After acquiring the land, **their dream of living in the countryside, working as artisans and caring for the natural environment began to become a reality**.

Through workshops for the production of decorative candles, recycled paper, initiation to carpentry and other crafts, the rural accommodation manages to involve its guests in the traditions and care of the environment in all its aspects.

For Maria Celso, the Biosphere certificate "*was a recognition of all the practices that have always been present in our lives*". In this way, the terms sustainability and resilience are "*very easy to apply*" to the accommodation.

The Codina Tower

Located in Tàrraga, in Lleida, a 17th century building emerges as rural accommodation surrounded by history and nature. The rural accommodation is Biosphere Certified, **ecological and self-sustainable, located in the Granyena Protected Natural Area**.

The energy consumed in the house is generated by photovoltaic panels and a wind turbine. After being stored in batteries, it is distributed via a domotic control system. Heat accumulators and a biomass boiler are also used for thermal energy. These actions have achieved significant cost reductions.

These companies work to achieve not only the wellbeing of their natural environment, but also that of their customers, promoting traditions, care for the environment and good practices in sustainability, **attracting a new niche market that is increasingly looking for sustainable options**.

Collaboration between Biosphere and EscapadaRural.

INDUSTRY EVENTS



SAVE THE DATES

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
LATIN AMERICA AREA
CONGRESS

SANTA FE, ARGENTINA
24-28 APRIL 2024

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
NORTH AMERICA AREA
CONGRESS

WINNIPEG, CANADA
2-5 MAY 2024

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
ASIA AREA
CONGRESS

BAHRAIN
23-26 MAY 2024

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS

IZMIR, TÜRKIYE
16-21 OCTOBER 2024

Trade fairs where Skål International intends to
have visibility in 2024



FITUR

MADRID
24-28 JANUARY

SATTE

INDIA
22-24 FEBRUARY

WTM AFRICA

CAPE TOWN
10-12 APRIL

IPW

USA
3-7 MAY

ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET

DUBAI
6-9 MAY

IMEX

FRANKFURT
14-16 MAY

IMEX AMERICA

LAS VEGAS
17-19 OCTOBER

WTM

LONDON
5-7 NOVEMBER

IBTM WORLD

BARCELONA
19-21 NOVEMBER

WTM LONDON 2023 SEES ATTENDANCE SOAR BY 22%



World Travel Market London 2023, the world's most influential travel & tourism event, saw attendance numbers rise by more than a fifth year on year.

The three-day event took place from Monday 6th - Wednesday 8th November, with 43,727 attendees - an increase of 22% on the 35,826 who attended in 2022.

The event hosted 4,560 qualified buyers, and facilitated 29,077 pre-booked meetings, enabling the industry to plan, network and do deals for 2024 and beyond.

Over three days at London's ExCel, World Travel Market London welcomed 1,976 representatives of the world's media - up by 31% on 2022.

The number of exhibitors rose by 23% year on year, up to 3,875 - and the event was 5.3% larger than the pre-pandemic show in 2019.

World Travel Market, an RX event, provides a suite of **digital tools** to capture and manage business leads and profiles at its event. Every exhibitor and visitor have the opportunity to use this suite and in our 2023 edition 99,355 business connections were recorded.

The Ministers' Summit at World Travel Market in association with the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) - now in its 17th year - took place on Day One instead of Day Two as it aimed to help set the agenda for discussions during the whole event.

There were 53 ministers in attendance at World Travel Market, supporting their NTO's and discussing how to transform tourism through education.

The sector's future workforce was also in the spotlight on Day Two, with the Institute of Travel & Tourism (ITT) Future You Conference taking place.

WTM London landed a host of innovations based on changing traveller trends and feedback from attendees in 2022.

Day One saw the release of the exclusive **WTM Global Travel Report** - compiled alongside Tourism Economics - which uncovered fascinating insights into changing behaviour any key emerging markets.

The Media Summit and Influencers' Programme launched, with bespoke conference content as well as a networking lunch. The Influencers' lunch welcomed 200 guests, made up of pre-qualified travel content creators and exhibitors wanting to discuss collaborations. The new informal Networking Party took place in North & South Community Hubs; the Hubs designed to provide impromptu meeting opportunities as well as an anchor and base for busy visitors.

Overall, more than 70 conference sessions took place on three new stages which were named Discover, Elevate and Innovate - a reflection of their goals.

The sessions heard from major brands such as Hilton, TUI, easyJet Holidays and Virgin Atlantic, as well as niche specialists, start-ups, and destinations across the globe. WTM London's Responsible Tourism Advisor Harold Goodwin heard about sustainability innovations and over tourism,

which is back in the spotlight as travel volumes return to pre-pandemic levels.

Important deals signed at the event include an agreement between Jet2.com and WTM's Premier Partner, the Moroccan National Tourism Office to help drive tourism growth in the country, as well as a tourism partnership between Brazil and South Africa to foster collaboration.

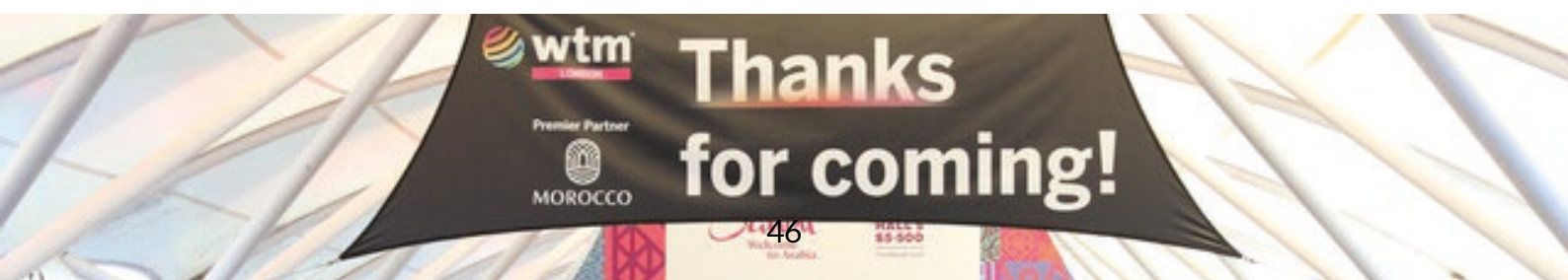
Other debates looked at the tourism benefits of hosting major sporting and cultural events, and the importance of diversity and inclusion.

The event wrapped up with keynote speaker TV documentary maker Louis Theroux reflecting on the value of cultural interactions around the world.

Juliette Losardo, WTM London Exhibition Director, said:

"We're thrilled to see delegate numbers rise by more than a fifth on last year. It is a really encouraging reflection of the confidence and optimism in travel and tourism. The challenges we all face were debated at many sessions but, despite these issues, there was a very positive mood among visitors and exhibitors. I'm delighted that our innovations over the three days have helped to improve the experience for visitors. These figures confirm that WTM London is the best place for executives in our sector to network, find out about the latest trends and seal deals that will help travel and tourism flourish in 2024 and beyond".

WTM London 2024 will run from Tuesday 5th - Thursday 7th November.



IMEX AMERICA ANNOUNCES POST-SHOW STATISTICS FOR BUMPER 2023 EDITION

Personalization trend shines bright

The full scope of IMEX America 2023 has been revealed in the breakdown of post-show statistics.

The market-leading trade show for the global business events industry took place October 17 - 19 at Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas and welcomed a record 15,029 participants. They included 5,364 buyers - both hosted buyers and buyer attendees - in what was IMEX's biggest ever show. Over 4,000 of these were hosted buyers - 45 per cent of which control budgets of \$5million and above. The 3,443 exhibiting companies made for a favorable ratio of buyers to exhibitors, fuelling the business momentum that was evident across the show floor.

Further statistics from the 12th edition of IMEX America can be found here, including buyers by nature of business, buying power and country.

Figures from several other sources reflect an industry increasingly

craving a more personalized, community-centered experience:

- Over 200 people joined a new first-timer's tour on the opening day of the show. The tour - held for the first time this year - included a musical warm up and facilitated ice-breakers before participants were taken on a guided walk around the main features of the show floor.
- Nearly 4,000 people (and counting!) downloaded and completed Storycraft Lab's Experience Profiles™ quiz. Buyers were invited to complete a quiz to reveal their Experience Profiles type followed by a personalized guide to the show based on how they interpret information, engage with others and new experiences. Feedback shows that this was particularly appreciated as a fresh idea for planners to incorporate into their own events.
- Over 2,000 people attended education sessions at the show's biggest ever Inspiration Hub,

sponsored by WebEx. Attendees could 'pick and mix' to suit their learning needs across a variety of topics ranging from the personal - how to manage personal and team members' mental health - to future trends and forecasts from across the globe and industry sectors.

Carina Bauer, CEO of IMEX, says: "Our biggest ever show was not only large in terms of size but also value created. It certainly felt as if the whole of our global industry was in attendance. The sheer scale of the show means that it provides an accurate reflection of the current state of our industry - and it was good to see such buoyancy and confidence evident in the many business connections across the show floor".

The show's success has generated positive momentum and confidence ahead of IMEX in Frankfurt 2024 held 14 - 16 May, and the business event community can register their interest [here](#).



BUSINESS IS BACK AT IBTM WORLD IN BARCELONA

ibtm[®] WORLD

2023 edition cements reputation as leading smart event.

IBTM World 2023 has enjoyed its most successful show yet. With over 132,000 connections made and a significantly higher adoption of the show's sophisticated lead scanning technology, the 2023 edition has cemented the show's credentials as the meetings and events industry's leading smart event.

The show opened its doors to 2,250 exhibitors from over 150 countries, as well as almost 4,000 buyers.

Utilising the power of new technology to enhance the experience of attendees, IBTM World's smartest event yet elevated its ability to deliver targeted, insightful, and profitable connections. This included introducing a new guidance tool, WalkMe, to its market-leading matchmaking platform, opening up the platform to visitor buyers for the first time, and launching the innovative Exhibitor Dashboard which enabled exhibitors to evaluate the tangible impact of their connections in real time.

Yugashnee Naicker, Group Manager (Sales) at Peermont said: "IBTM has always been a very successful show for us – we meet with serious buyers here and can really see the return on our investment. The buyers who we've met with know what they want, they know what they're looking for, and they come with specific requests. In the first two days of the event, I've already issued two contracts and have four further excellent leads. It was especially good to see a lot of corporate buyers because it shows the industry really is in full swing again. It's been a great show and wonderful to see that all markets are present from around the world".

Unparalleled opportunities

The leading global trade show has been a celebration of the role event professionals play in shaping culture and driving the future of business. Recognising these changemakers, and their imaginative, dynamic and forward-thinking ideas, has been the essence of this year's #CultureCreators campaign.

With inspiring and impactful speakers taking to the stage, the 2023 edition has showcased how embracing diversity and inclusion (D&I), cultivating community, and championing the power of innovation can steer the events industry into a bright and prosperous future and bring better business results for all.

Yassine Belamine, a Hosted Buyer and Founder of Quantum Corporate, comments: "This year marks my fifth year at IBTM World and the event has been remarkable. It's become an annual tradition to connect with industry professionals, many of whom have become like family over the years. Each year we gather here to exchange valuable knowledge and ideas about the wider events industry. The connections and suppliers we've met at this event have consistently led to significant business opportunities. I have no doubt that this year's event will yield similar fruitful collaborations".

Market-leading content

This year saw a reinvigoration of the show's education programme with new theatres and features included to better address the different needs of attendees. The Impact Stage, in partnership with The Business of Events, made its debut as a best-in-class showcase of

the exciting work that destinations, hotels and tech suppliers are doing in areas including sustainability, D&I, experience, and design. Attendees made the most of Workplace Revolution, a welcoming, campfire-style space where delegates continued conversations with inspirational figures in a relaxed atmosphere. A hub for wellbeing, 'Refuel', in partnership with EventWell, also provided attendees with a zen-like space to relax and recharge their physical and mental batteries.

Clyde Cassar, MICE Manager at Grand Hotel Excelsior, said: "IBTM World has been absolutely fantastic this year. I have attended many before, but this has been the best one by far. I've had approximately 40 meetings and they have been very productive. I've met a bunch of wonderful people and I think we're going to get some fabulous requests for the near future. I've met people from lots of different corners of the world and it's been an absolute pleasure to be here under one roof. It's very much a networking environment".

The launch of multiple reports revealed a fascinating insight into the future of the industry, as well as its latest market trends. This included the IBTM World 2023 Culture Report, which explores the increasing pressure event professionals feel in today's work-from-home culture, and the impact of this on the events industry.

The annual IBTM World Industry Trends Report, authored and presented by Alistair Turner, Managing Director of Eight PR & Marketing, took a deep dive into the shifting demographics of the events landscape, the growing impact of

AI and personalised technology on the industry, and the importance of diversity and inclusion in aiding creativity and attracting talent, amongst much else.

The Business of Events, a global think tank and policy platform for the business events industry, also launched its annual Global Destination Report. Its highlights, amongst other key insights, included the economic importance of business events, a collective need for increased advocacy and government understanding of the value of the sector, and the necessity of nurturing business event legacy. This is as well as identifying common threats to the sector such as climate and sustainability, economic factors, political unrest, and geographical accessibility.

Looking to the future

During the show, IBTM announced the long-anticipated launch of IBTM World Asia-Pacific. With its inaugural edition due to take place in Hong Kong in spring 2025, the show will bring together some of the region's best-known suppliers and event planners for two exhilarating days of pre-arranged, one-to-one business meetings.

Claudia Hall, IBTM World Event Director, said: "Experiencing my first IBTM World as Event Director during such a successful edition has been incredibly exciting. The event plays a pivotal role in bringing together the business and professional events community to network, do business, share successes from the past year and plan for the future. The wonderful delegates, exhibitors

and buyers I've had the privilege of engaging with over the last three days have been inspiring in their ideas, energy and positivity for the events industry. Our pioneering speakers have challenged, stimulated and inspired us with a passion and commitment that is infectious.

"I would like to extend my warmest thanks to Barcelona Convention Bureau and Fira, Barcelona, who have been outstanding venue partners over the last 19 years and, without whom, IBTM World wouldn't be what it is today. I can't wait to do it all again next year".



FITUR 2024



With Ecuador as Partner Country, IFEMA MADRID will host the 44th edition of the International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR) from January 24 to 28, 2024.

A new edition with many new features in official representations of countries, tourist destinations, companies and content with an interesting program of seminars for professionals and activities during the weekend.

FITUR 2024 also brings its specialized sections, which reflect global trends in the tourism sector. FiturTechy, which presents the application of disruptive technologies such as Artificial Intelligence or virtual reality in tourism; FiturCruises,

a segment highly committed to environmental sustainability, the protection of destinations and the positive impact on their communities; Fitur LGTB+, which encompasses more than 10% of tourists worldwide and 16% of total travel spending; Fitur Woman, which, aligned with the SDGs, contributes to the promotion of female leadership; Fitur Know How & Export, a space for Spanish tourism companies to showcase their potential, products and services, and which this year brings as a novelty the contest 'The AI for Tourism Awards 2024, organized by Segittur; Fitur Sports, the meeting point between tourism and sport; Fitur Screen, with more and more followers visiting the sets of our favorite movies and series; Fitur Talent, a monographic that, together with Educación 3.0 focuses on people, talent, education and

professional training; and Fitur Lingua, the space that addresses language tourism opportunities. With sustainability as a common thread, the FITURNEXT Observatory is the FITUR platform that promotes best practices in tourism and works throughout the year to identify and analyze initiatives implemented around the world by companies, organizations and destinations capable of generating a positive impact.

We cannot forget FITUR Live Connect for those professionals who cannot attend, which allows access to online networking tools beyond the five days of the fair at IFEMA MADRID.

In short, FITUR 2024, thanks to the support of the industry, will present a large and diverse offering that will make a very complete and growing edition.





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**Impulsamos el mundo.
Somos turismo.**



24-28 2024
Ene
Recinto Ferial
ifema.es



TOURISM AWARD OPPORTUNITIES AT AFRICA TRAVEL WEEK 2024



Don't miss your chance.

Does winning awards actually help your tourism business?

In short, yes, but it also depends on their credibility. Earning recognised accolades can elevate your reputation and make you stand out from the crowd, so it's important to be discerning with the ones you pursue.

As Africa's leading B2B tourism trade show, Africa Travel Week (ATW) features the most valuable award opportunities attracting a competitive field of applicants. Held annually in the official host city of Cape Town, next year's event is scheduled from 10 to 12 April, at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC).

In 2024, ATW celebrates its 10-year anniversary and is currently inviting applications for two sets of awards: the prestigious WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Awards and the ATW Media Awards – a brand new category recognising media professionals and content spotlighting Africa's tourism landscape.

But what do these awards entail, and why should you enter?

WTM AFRICA RESPONSIBLE TOURISM AWARDS

What? This awards category needs little introduction as one of the most sought-after opportunities for tourism businesses and initiatives driving impactful change. Spearheaded by Harold

Goodwin, the Managing Director of the Responsible Tourism Partnership, the Responsible Tourism Awards showcases the best of the best in responsible tourism, and is known for its high calibre judging requirements. Free to enter, the 2024 edition features six categories, with Gold winners automatically entered into the Global Responsible Tourism Awards.

Why? Participating in this award guarantees ample networking opportunities and partnership prospects with global industry leaders. It opens many doors, even for category finalists, further drawing a considerable degree of admiration and international recognition.

The WTM Africa Responsible Tourism Awards 2024 submission closing date is 1 March 2024. Interested participants are encouraged to submit their applications via the WTM Africa website [here](#).

ATW MEDIA AWARDS

What? As its inaugural year, there is plenty of buzz surrounding the ATW Media Awards 2024. Featuring four categories, it recognises all media practitioners, including journalists, bloggers, videographers, and photographers producing high-quality content related to African tourism. These awards further highlight the subject matter (i.e., destinations, initiatives, people) featured in submissions.

Why? As a winner or finalist, participating in these awards provides an opportunity to enhance your reputation, be recognised for your hard work, and network with industry leaders from around the world. There are no other awards celebrating professionals focusing solely on tourism in Africa, making this one highly respected and valued.

Entries close on 30 January 2024. Interested participants can view the category criteria and submit their applications via the Africa Travel Week website [here](#).

As we countdown to a new year Megan de Jager, Portfolio Director: Travel, Tourism & RX Africa Marketing, extends a special invitation to Skål members to apply: *"We'd be honoured to have the Skål community participate in our awards. Don't underestimate yourself and don't hesitate to pay it forward by encouraging someone you admire to submit an application. They could walk away with a reputable award celebrating their hard work while benefitting from the acclaim that goes along with it"*.

Registration for ATW 2024, which includes WTM Africa and ILTM Africa, is open for exhibitors, hosted buyers, Buyers' Club members, the media, and travel trade professionals. Click [here](#) to save your spot.



AFRICA
10 – 12 April 2024, CTICC

10 YEARS

Celebrating a decade of tourism industry success

From 10-12 April, The City of Cape Town hosts WTM Africa for it's 10th edition. The event is Africa's leading and only B2B exhibition for both inbound and outbound travel and tourism markets, presenting a diverse range of destinations and industry sectors to travel professionals across the globe.

Through its industry networks, global reach, and regional focus, WTM Africa creates personal and business opportunities providing our customers with quality contracts, content, and communities.

WHY VISIT?

- One-on-one meetings
- Speed networking
- International media
- Content sessions
- Engaging workshops
- Associations and media partners
- Ministerial round table
- Networking events & experiences
- Hosted buyer program
- Annual Trend report
- Cutting-edge systems & platforms
- Product launches
- Sister suite of niche events

HOST CITY:



CITY OF CAPE TOWN

BUILT BY:



PART OF:



MEMBER OF:



MATKA 2024 WELCOMES TO HELSINKI 18-21 JANUARY 2024



MATKA TRAVEL FAIR IS THE NORTHERN EUROPE'S LARGEST TRAVEL INDUSTRY EVENT ORGANIZED ANNUALLY IN JANUARY AT HELSINKI EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTRE IN FINLAND.

Matka is the place to be whether it comes to business or leisure travel or searching new partners.

Over 850 exhibitors from 70 different countries ensured an impressive start for the travel year in January 2023 and over 50 000 consumers and travel trade professionals visited the fair.

"We are expecting Matka 2024 with refined arrangements to enable all professional visitors to make business meetings and networking even more effectively. There are many new or returning exhibitors and we expect to see more professionals especially from the Nordics", says Noora Haatainen, business manager of Matka travel fair.

Pre-event Matka Workshop Day: Global workshop simultaneously with Meet Finland

Matka provides a platform for travel trade professionals and b2b exhibitors to develop their professional expertise, grow business and network in a productive and efficient manner. In addition to independently scheduled meetings, Matka offers

the possibility to find latest novelties in the pre-event Matka Workshop Day with over 200 suppliers from over 32 countries and Matka Business Forum during the first trade day.

How to participate?

If you represent a tour operator, travel agent, OTA, distribution channel or MICE operator and you are involved in initiating or authorizing purchasing decisions on travel-related products and services, you are welcome to join the Matka Workshop Day as a registered **buyer**. Exhibiting at Matka Travel Fair provides suppliers with the opportunity to purchase access to the Workshop Day.

Join an exclusive network of validated buyers by applying for a registration to our upcoming Matka Workshop Day! Gain access to a handpicked community of esteemed buyers, where your participation is not just welcomed but valued!

Matka Business Forum - the place to reach travel management decision makers

Matka Business Forum is an exclusive gathering tailored

for companies specializing in global travel management services. In collaboration with the Finnish Business Travel Association (FBTA) this special area offers direct access to industry decision-makers in a refined and focused environment.

Among the highlights of this year's b2b forum are:

Business travel agencies, Domestic and international Destination Management Companies (DMCs), Airlines, Hotel chains, Payment solutions, Meeting services as well as System providers featuring travel booking software, video conferencing services, and travel tech solutions.

While participation in the Matka Workshop Day requires separate registration, registered visitors gain complimentary access throughout the entire event, ensuring continuous engagement in business activities and networking opportunities.

Join us in Helsinki this coming January to delve into a world of possibilities where networking converges with tailored business opportunities!



**THE LARGEST GLOBAL
TRAVEL INDUSTRY EVENT
IN NORTHERN EUROPE**

**MATKA TRAVEL FAIR
18-21 JAN 2024**

**Helsinki Expo and
Convention Centre,
Finland**

**Matka is THE Meeting Place for travel trade
professionals – develop, grow business and
network in Matka!**

- » B2B and B2C target groups from several different markets.
- » Meet buyers from Nordic, Baltic and Europe.
- » Over 50 000 professional travel trade and public visitors.



In cooperation with:



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