

PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association)

Background

PATA has a long history in identifying the need for, and supporting the philosophy of sustainable tourism in the Asia Pacific region.

In recent years, the PATA Board has established a dedicated Sustainable Tourism Committee consisting of international volunteer members from a range of membership categories. The Committee meets twice a year in conjunction with the PATA Board of Directors meetings at the PATA Annual Conference and PATA Travel Mart.

Through the Committee, PATA remains committed to building awareness within the Asia Pacific tourism sector of the concepts of and the need for sustainable tourism.

Boosted by the outcomes of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and reinforced by the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, the United Nations retains the issue of a sustainable planet as one of its core goals.

As one of the largest, and growing industries on the planet, travel and tourism is increasingly being called upon to make its contribution in the global sustainability agenda. (Agenda 21).

In late 2003, the world's leading inter-governmental agency for tourism, the World Tourism Organisation, became a specialised agency within the wide-ranging UN organizational structures.

It is expected that over the next five-10 years, the UN, through the WTO and other agencies, will be looking for the global travel and tourism industry to increase its role in delivering upon the UN Millennium Goals, particularly in the area of sustainability and poverty reduction.

Given the recent historic shift on international visitor arrival flows which now sees, for the first time, the Asia Pacific region becoming the second region (after Europe) to attract international visitor arrivals, the issue of sustainable travel and tourism practices within the Asia Pacific becomes even more important for global tourism.

PATA's Commitment

"Since 1951, PATA has been developing the largest travel and tourism network in Asia Pacific. It can and will play a continuing vital role over the next five decades and more to advance the cause of sustainable tourism."

Mr Peter de Jong, President & CEO, PATA

PATA Gold Awards

The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Awards recognise exceptional achievement in a variety of endeavours, bringing acclaim to the best the Asia Pacific's travel industry has to offer. The winning projects set industry standards for excellence and innovation, serving as examples for others to follow.

In 2007, in addition to the 24 Gold Awards, PATA presented up to four Grand Awards for "best of show" entries in the following broad categories: Environment, Education & Training, Heritage & Culture and Marketing Campaign. Entries were judged by travel industry experts.

All award recipients were honoured during a special luncheon at PATA Travel Mart 2007, Bali, Indonesia, September 28, 2007.

Winning a PATA Gold Award greatly enhances the winner's marketing and public relations profile. The winning entries were featured in the PTM Daily newspaper and a PATA press release, which attracted a lot of positive travel industry media coverage.

All winners also received complimentary copies of the PATA Gold Awards 2007 Winner's Showcase, a booklet summarising the highlights of each winning entry.

Gold Awards

Environment

Environmental Education Programme

Soneva Nature Trip Soneva Fushi Resort, Maldives

Since opening in 1995, Soneva Fushi Resort, a Six Senses property, has collaborated with local NGO EcoCare to increase environmental awareness among guests, hosts and local communities. One of the main outcomes of this collaboration is the annual Soneva Nature Trip, a week-long interactive programme for local school children.

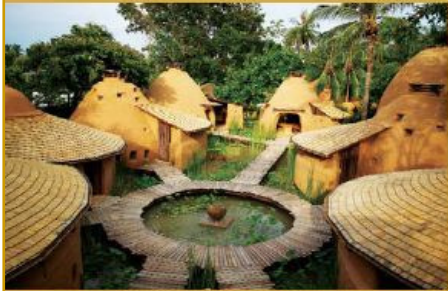
Most of the 70 students who participate come from the Maldives' capital, Male, which is one of the most densely populated cities in the world. The children learn about local and global environmental challenges, while experiencing the natural assets of their country first-hand.

"The programme offers excellent links to the local community. The goals of the programme are well communicated to a local and national audience." – Judge's comment

"An excellent example of how a high-end resort can have significant impacts in sensitising communities to the importance of their environment." – Judge's comment



Grand Awards



Environment

Social and Environment Conscience Programme Six Senses Resorts & Spas, Thailand

Six Senses' Social and Environment Conscience Programme aims to enhance the social and environmental performance of Six Senses' managed properties, including Soneva Fushi Resort in the Maldives, a winner of a 2007 PATA Gold Award for its environmental education programme.

A full-time executive, entitled the "Social and Environment Conscience", develops and oversees the corporate environmental programme, which includes environmental awareness and management, corporate partnerships and a "Social and Environmental Responsibility Fund".

In the marketplace of perceptions, the programme has reaped for Six Senses an important position; more than 85% of Six Senses' guests highlight "environmental initiatives" when filling out satisfaction surveys.

"With a senior management position dedicated to corporate social responsibility, Six Senses' programme benefits from detailed policies, implementation procedures, a broad mix of partnerships, and the excellent marketing of and communications about the programme's initiatives and achievements." – Judge's comment.