

2018 African Responsible Tourism Awards finalists announced

The finalists for the 2018 African Responsible Tourism Awards have been announced, competing in five categories as well as for the much-coveted 'Overall Winner'. Following intense debate on judging day, the panel of nine expert judges shortlisted nine organisations from across Africa, including Swaziland, Namibia, Botswana, Kenya, South Africa and Seychelles.

Who will take the top spots?



Guests at Wilderness Safaris' camps get filtered water in reusable bottles. (Image Supplied)

The finalists are:

- [Abang Africa Travel](#) (South Africa)
- [All Out Africa](#) (Swaziland)
- [Basecamp Explorer Kenya](#) (Kenya)
- [Marine Dynamics Tours](#) (South Africa)
- [Nande Junias Explorer Cultural Tours](#) (Namibia)
- [North Island](#) (Seychelles)
- [Peak East Africa](#) (Kenya)
- [Spier](#) (South Africa)

- [Wilderness Safaris](#) (in Botswana, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Rwanda)



A local guide leads this Peak East Africa cycling tour in Tanzania. (Image Supplied)

The judges are

The judging draws on the expertise of carefully chosen professionals from throughout the tourism industry in Africa.

- [Prof. Harold Goodwin](#): Emeritus Professor Responsible Tourism at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) and Founder of the International Centre for Responsible Tourism
- [Darryl Erasmus](#): Chief Quality Assurance Officer, South African Tourism
- [Dr. Alison Kock](#): Marine Biologist, SANParks
- [Thembi Kunene-Msimang](#): CEO – Acting and Executive of Marketing and Communications, RETOSA
- [Chardonnay Marchesi](#): Portfolio Director of the Travel, Tourism and Sports Portfolio: Reed Exhibitions
- [Greg McManus](#): Heritage Environmental Management Company and Event Greening Forum
- [Sadia Nanabhay](#): Operations Manager, African Responsible Tourism Awards
- [Dawn Robertson](#): CEO, The Constitution Hill Human Rights Precinct
- [Heidi van der Watt](#): Managing Director, Better Tourism Africa and Institute of Development Studies, Massey University

"There are many excellent organisations on the shortlist for the Awards and there was much debate among the judges about each of the categories. It is an achievement to be on the shortlist and to be a finalist of the African awards as they are part of the prestigious and competitive World Responsible Tourism Awards run by World Travel Market," said Professor Goodwin, chair of the judging panel and WTM Responsible Tourism advisor.

"The judges had in mind global standards in responsible tourism when making their decisions. Our ambition is for the Awards to challenge, inspire and educate others in the industry to take responsibility for achieving sustainability. We have inspiring Gold and Silver winners but there were some surprisingly weak categories. The judges can only award from among those who are nominated and complete the entry process. The categories for ARTA19 will be announced at the end

of the Awards ceremony.”

[See the 2017 winners here.](#)



Spier is committed to a great guest experience - and making employees agents of change. (Image Supplied)

Changemakers and innovators

Commenting on the finalists, Heidi van der Watt, managing director of Better Tourism Africa, said: “This year’s finalists are worthy examples of changemakers who bravely use tourism to create positive change for Africa’s people and environments. From a safari camp group showing strong leadership in saying no to bottled water to a wine farm with forward-thinking work conditions – the shortlist has a lot to say about where responsible tourism on the continent is, and where it is going next.”

Tim Harris, Chief Executive Officer of Wesgro, said: “The African Responsible Tourism Awards is a source of pride to us, and Africa as a whole. We applaud the forward-thinking and innovative organisations that make it to the last round. They are true examples of how the tourism industry can reach new heights – in a sustainable way. We congratulate the finalists for this year’s awards and look forward to celebrating with the winners at the awards ceremony on 18 April at WTM Africa.”

The African Responsible Tourism Awards are part of the responsible tourism programme at WTM Africa. The responsible tourism programme includes panel discussions on new business models in sustainable tourism, issues around wildlife and tourism and a panel on carbon, water and certification.

The 2018 African Responsible Tourism Awards winners will be announced during WTM Africa at an awards ceremony to

be held on Wednesday 18 April 2018 at 4.30 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre, Cape Town, South Africa.

The 2018 African Responsible Tourism Awards is sponsored by Wesgro and organised by Better Tourism Africa.

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