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TO DO! 2017: Award Winners from Myanmar and Uganda

Two outstanding examples of socially responsible tourism projects will be awarded at ITB Berlin; Bärbel Kofler will give the laudatory speech

Seefeld, 07/02/2017 – This year's "TO DO! International Contest Responsible Tourism" awards for the best projects go to Myanmar and Uganda. In the 22nd round of the award, 19 applications from 16 countries were submitted. An expert jury consisting of 14 members nominated two equal winners. Following the jury's decision, experts checked the projects on location. Both assessments were positive.

The two award winners fulfil above all the main TO DO! criterion – the participation of local people in the planning and implementation of projects – in an exemplary manner. They create alternative sources of income and strengthen their self-confidence with regard to their own culture and traditions. Furthermore, they explicitly encourage tourists to get close to the host country and its people and make first hand experiences, both touristic and intercultural.

Winner: CITPAR (Myanmar)

The project "Community Involved Tourism" in the Pa-O Region (CITPAR) near Inle Lake in the Southern Shan State of Myanmar was founded in 2014 and managed by the village communities. A kind of tourism that is adapted to their social, cultural and ecological settings is meant to improve their incomes and strengthen their cultural identity. This objective is in line with the national "Policy on Community Involvement in Tourism" for sustainable tourism which was adopted by the government of Myanmar in 2013. Food, accommodation and activities with the tourists are in the hands of the village community. The visitors can participate in the village life and gain valuable insights. The income is paid into a village fund. How it is used is decided by the community.

Participatory management methods, attractive offers and an effective organisation contribute to the success of the project. This is also reflected in increasing numbers of tourist arrivals.

The project successfully strives for openness and participation and makes an important social contribution after years under military regime.

Winner: KAFRED – KIBALE ASSOCIATION for RURAL and ENVIRONMENTAL DEVELOPMENT (Uganda)

The non-environmental organisation KAFRED was founded in 1992 and is in the hands of the local population. At the beginning, the plan was to conserve the Bigodi wetlands in the north of Uganda and to enhance their status as a tourist attraction, so that the income from tourism could be used to realise infrastructure projects in the Bigodi area. These projects were decided on, planned and implemented by and with the people of Bigodi and its surroundings. Participation of the local population, development of the region, education, training, wetlands conservation, sustainability, nature conservation and environmental protection are essential elements of the project. With the help of the tourism income that was reinvested in community projects, Bigodi has become one of the most successful community based tourism projects in Uganda.

The award ceremony will take place on Thursday, 9th March 2017 at 16:30 at Palais am Funkturm. Representatives of both projects will be present and will receive the awards. The laudatory speech will be given by Bärbel Kofler, PhD, Human Rights Commissioner of the German government. After the award ceremony, we will invite participants to enjoy a few snacks. There is a possibility to conduct interviews with the award winners.

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Studienkreis für Tourismus und Entwicklung (Institute for Tourism and Development) focuses on development related information and education in tourism. In this context it brings out publications, organises international contests, offers training and seminars for people employed in the tourism sector, carries out tourism research and consultancy, and is involved in dialogue on issues related to tourism development.

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