ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Awards Launched

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Major exposure planned for twenty winners. Applications close 15 August 2017

Caption: The theme of the first ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Awards is nature-based tourism. (Download images here)

Sustainable tourism operators in Southeast Asia can now enter the new ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Awards (ASTA), which have been launched as part of ASEAN's Tourism Strategic Plan 2016-2025.

Twenty sustainable tourism winners – two from each ASEAN member state – will receive a package of benefits that will raise their business profile substantially. Winners will be highlighted on their NTO's website and will receive exposure as a national best practice operator during press conferences and trade shows such as ATF, TRAVEX, ITB and WTM.

In addition, winners will be highlighted on ASEAN's website www.aseantourism.travel. They will be invited on stage to receive a trophy and recognition during the sustainable tourism awards event, which will be part of the ASEAN Tourism Forum in Chiang Mai, January 2018.

Some of the key objectives of the awards are to boost the profile and importance of sustainable tourism businesses in Southeast Asia, promote responsible tourism in all ASEAN countries, combat seasonality, and rebalance tourist flows towards best practice tourism experiences, said Mr Sounh Manivong, Director General of Tourism Marketing Department, Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR.

"The diversity and quality of ASEAN's sustainable tourism options are amazing," said Mr Manivong. "The aim of the awards is to prove it — and encourage green tourism practitioners to keep doing a great job."

Of the two winners in each country, one will be "rural", one will be "urban", to reaffirm that city operators can be sustainable as much as rural ones.

The awards will take place every two years with a dedicated theme decided jointly by ASEAN NTOs. The inaugural awards 2017-18, which are now open, is themed "nature-based tourism."

Mr Manivong said such a theme also applies to urban tourism businesses as they may include experiences such as cycling, educational visits to urban parks, walking tours, or tree planting, to name a few examples.

Applications will be assessed by NTOs in the applicant's country.

The deadline for submissions is 15 August 2017. Results will be announced in December and the award ceremony will take place during ATF 2018.

Applicants can read the full rules and regulations and download the entry form at

http://aseantourism.travel/content/asta. Alternatively email asta.asean@gmail.com.

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For editors, images of ASEAN destinations and tourism leaders can be downloaded here.

Further information
Visit www.aseantourism.travel

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