

Jury Report for the CIPRA Award 2018

Every year, CIPRA awards a main prize for sustainable development in the Swiss Alps and a solidarity award for similar activities in a mountain region in Central Asia, Africa, India or Latin America. Recognised activities should be innovative and groundbreaking – not to mention creative or visionary – and serve as an incentive for a sustainable future in the Alps. Furthermore, they should radiate with positivity and lead by example.

As in the two previous years, the theme of the CIPRA Award 2018 is ‘Sustainable Tourism’, and it is given out in cooperation with the Swiss Tourism Federation and the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts’ Institute of Tourism ITW. Along with CIPRA Switzerland, Swiss Alpine Club SAC and Mountain Wilderness Switzerland provide financial contributions.

Jury and Selection Procedure

The jury consisted of Fabian Weber from the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts’ Institute of Tourism ITW, Robert Zenhäusern from the Swiss Tourism Federation, Reto Solèr from Mountain Wilderness Schweiz and Patrik Schönenberger from CIPRA Switzerland.

The four jury members evaluated all submitted projects according to the criteria of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts’ ‘Sustainable Tourism Offers’ code of practice. The projects were evaluated based on the information and application documents that were submitted, as well as the corresponding websites. Additionally, the jury discussed whether the projects could already prove to have concrete experience and a degree of durability in addition to their visionary character, and if they encouraged networking between different sectors. The extent, to which the various pillars of sustainable development are equally considered, was also examined.

The jury is pleased to honour two outstanding international projects and one Swiss-born project for 2018.

Winner of the CIPRA Main Award 2018

The jury has decided to give the CIPRA Main Award 2018 to Kompotoi and rewards the project with CHF 3000.00. Kompotoi develops and sells various composting toilet systems, which are especially suitable for mountainous areas. Kompotois do not require water and electricity connections, do not pollute or use drinking water and are made entirely of wood – all features that make them a highly ecological disposal solution. They are an alternative to chemical toilets and simple pit latrines in remote locations, but can also be used at common starting points for hikes or for temporary events. In this respect, they represent an interesting alternative to conventional sanitary facilities – especially in tourist areas in the Alps – and can contribute to the sustainability of Alpine tourism. Kompotoi is available to tourism organisations that wish to supplement or improve their sanitary facilities. Kompotoi delivers the toilets and also offers comprehensive maintenance.

The jury was impressed by the idea, which, although not entirely new, is being rolled out with new verve and fresh packaging and is committed to an all-round environmentally-friendly approach. The jury wishes Jojo Linder of Kompotoi all the best for the future and hopes that the compost toilet will continue to prove itself and spread – especially in Alpine tourism. Congratulations to the winner of the Main Award.

Winner of the CIPRA Solidarity Award 2018

CIPRA Switzerland actively aims to show solidarity with concerned people and groups in less privileged mountain regions outside the Alps. For 2018, the jury is honouring two international projects with the CIPRA Solidarity Award; each project will receive CHF 2000.00.

The project '**Uravu Bamboo Grove**' in South India is a project of Uravu Eco Links that is closely connected with the non-profit organisation Uravu Indigenous Science and Technology Study Centre (Uravu). It is an ecological tourism project in the Western Ghats mountain range in Kerala, South India. The resort consists of four bamboo cottages that are surrounded by a beautiful lake and bamboo grove. Uravu Bamboo Grove aims to act as an innovative ecological – and locally anchored – model of ecological tourism.

About 200 people (mainly women) work with Uravu in about 20 small units. The cottages were built using local materials, especially bamboo. By combining traditional craftsmanship with modern design, bamboo – often seen as an inferior material – can be made respectable again. The three pillars of the project are the involvement of the local population, innovative design and environmental justice.

Today, the tourism project provides income for more than 30 families. For example, there are six cooking teams to cater for the guests; they use local products to prepare local dishes. Five percent of the income goes to a village development fund, and this money is used for cultural activities and education.

Uravu Bamboo Grove has acquired a great deal of know-how in the field of bamboo architecture and has enriched the know-how of local craftsmanship with modern knowledge from the University of Bern and others. The cottages are very ecologically built and operated. Ecological solutions have been implemented in the form of natural building materials, ecological water management that utilises rainwater, a hot water system with biomass, composting and more. Bamboo is regularly planted to compensate for CO₂.

The '**Rural Community Tourism Cusco**' project in Peru is aimed at women from four communities in the ministry of Cusco in Peru. Its aim is to create jobs in rural areas. The women are trained and looked after by the 'Centro Bartolomé de las Casas' team. The training covers many areas, some of which include accommodation and catering with local products, leisure and cultural activities, and the manufacture and sale of handicrafts.

The main goal of the project is to provide the women with an opportunity to earn money in their villages while respecting the environment and culture. From Cusco, one drives anywhere from 1-3 hours to reach the four municipalities, and each one has slightly different priorities according to their possibilities. The income that is generated is evenly distributed among all participants. Women's positions are enhanced by making a contribution to the household.

The 'Centro Bartolomé de las Casas' (CBC), founded in 1974, is committed to marginalised demographic groups and facilitates encounters between cultures, disciplines and worlds. Through research, education and the transfer of knowledge, it promotes the development of a democratic and intercultural society. The CBC works closely with farmers in the Andes to work out joint proposals for development alternatives.

We send our heartfelt congratulations to both award winners.

These two examples can truly serve as models for sustainable initiatives in the Alpine region. The jury was very pleased with the comprehensive, ecologically-oriented initiatives. We wish both projects continued success and congratulate the winners of the Solidarity Awards.

Bern, 4 April 2018