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## WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL AWARDS BUCUTI & TARA BEACH RESORT FOR ACHIEVING CLIMATE CARBON NEUTRALITY/NET ZERO

*Former U.S. President Barack Obama keynotes, Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort's CEO presents*

EAGLE BEACH, Aruba – April 4, 2019 – Today in Seville, Spain, the [World Travel & Tourism Council](#) (WTTC) announced [Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort](#) of Aruba, as the winner of the Climate Action Award at the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards ceremony. The Awards, now in their 15<sup>th</sup> year, took place at a special ceremony during the WTTC Global Summit, to celebrate inspirational, world-changing tourism initiatives from around the globe.



WTTC represents the global private sector of Travel & Tourism. Its Global Summit is the most important event in the sector worldwide each year. The annual gathering includes heads-of-state, CEOs across industries and hospitality and tourism professionals. This year's keynote speaker was former U.S. President Barack Obama.

### **Winner of first-ever Tourism for Tomorrow Climate Action Award**

Bucuti & Tara is the winner of the first-ever Climate Action Award. Resort owner and CEO Ewald Biemans addressed the Summit's prestigious crowd of influential global government leaders and executives. While a key focus on this award was Bucuti's years of sustainability initiatives and August 2018 achievement of carbon neutrality/net zero, Biemans vowed in his acceptance speech that Bucuti's "environmental journey just started, and we will continue working towards a better world."

Biemans presented "The Path to Carbon Neutrality/Net Zero" at the Tourism for Tomorrow day on April 2 as part of the WTTC Global Summit. The materials shared the vision, initiatives and outcomes of achieving net zero. With easy to replicate, proven actions, Bucuti is focused on showing others and encouraging them to do the same. Biemans emphasized, "there is no excuse for hotels not to work towards carbon neutrality/net zero in this day and age."

### **Told becoming carbon neutral/net zero was impossible**

Ten years ago, Biemans was told becoming carbon neutral/net zero was impossible. This only made Biemans more determined to make it happen. He devoted himself to researching and implementing a plan of initiatives

to offer a better, healthier vacation experience to his guests. As the Caribbean's most eco-certified and awarded resort, seven years ago, Bucuti embarked the most intensive stretch of the carbon neutral/net zero process. By August 2018, the resort was the first in the Caribbean to achieve net zero certification.

"It has been a journey and one that continues as we work together to combat climate change and promote health and wellbeing of all living things," says Ewald Biemans. "I have tremendous appreciation for our Green Team and the work we have done together since opening Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort."

Although guests enjoying the adults-only resort's laidback, luxury hospitality on the white sands of Eagle Beach may not realize it, this is the Caribbean's only certified carbon neutral/net zero resort. For more than 30 years, its environmentalist owner, Ewald Biemans, has worked towards proving that sustainability, guest satisfaction and profitability can go together.

While the resort has always been green-minded, the journey towards carbon neutrality/net zero began just seven years ago. Rather than rely on carbon offsets, Bucuti & Tara's Green Team took a meticulous approach towards reducing emissions operationally. Since 2016, the resort's 618 photovoltaic solar panels combined with local wind and solar sources, produces 40 percent of its energy needs. Other efforts include installing an in-room energy management system, low-flow shower heads and toilets, and using an ozone-based laundry system.

#### **What it means to be a WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Award Winner**

The 2019 WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Award Winners are highly commended and recognized for business practices of the highest standards that balance the needs of 'people, planet and profits' within the Travel & Tourism sector. The 2019 Winners promote inclusive growth and illustrate a strong commitment to supporting change and transformation in business practices and consumer behavior towards a more environmentally conscious sector.

The Climate Action Award seeks to recognize innovative actions through either behavior change of guests and employees, policy changes or the introduction of technology, to reduce the scale and impacts of climate change.

The Awards are judged by a panel of independent experts, led by Prof. Graham Miller, Executive Dean, Professor of Sustainability in Business, University of Surrey. The panel included academics, business leaders, NGO and governmental representatives who narrowed down the list of 183 applications to just fifteen finalists. The three-stage judging process included a thorough review of all applications, followed by on-site evaluations of the Finalists and their initiative.

The Winner of each category was determined by the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards 2019 Winners' Selection Committee, chaired by Fiona Jeffery OBE, Founder & Chairman, Just a Drop, and composed of Wolfgang M. Neumann, Non-Executive Director and Strategic Advisory, Global Hospitality, Travel & Tourism Sector; John Spengler, Akira Yamaguchi Professor of Environmental Health and Human Habitation, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; and Louise Twining-Ward, Senior Private Sector Specialist, Global Tourism Team, World Bank.

**Gloria Guevara, President & CEO, WTTC**, commented: "The finalists in this year's Tourism for Tomorrow Awards showcase the many ways in which our industry is dedicated to sustainable growth. In 2018, the Travel & Tourism sector contributed 10.4% of global GDP and supported 319 million jobs across the world. It is therefore essential that we continue to grow in the most sustainable and responsible way possible. The new award categories for

this year are aligned with WTTC strategic priorities and illustrate that all members of this industry play a key role in driving the sector forward to a more responsible future. I congratulate them all on their fantastic accomplishments and leadership.”

**Fiona Jeffery, OBE, Chair, WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards**, said: “The aim of the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards is to showcase some of the most exceptional examples of sustainable tourism practices in the world, and inspire and encourage our industry to make a positive impact for both current and future generations. Over 15 years, we have seen the industry make great strides towards achieving these goals and we can see positive change happening. Our recent survey results show that 67% of travellers would consider a travel company’s sustainability agenda when booking a trip, whilst 48% of travellers would now pay more money to travel sustainably. Whilst there is still more to be done, we must harness the momentum for change to protect the product that sustains our very own industry.”

**Jeff Rutledge, President and CEO, AIG Travel, Headline Sponsor of the Awards**, stated: “From socially-inclusive employment initiatives to establishing one of the first rewilding projects in the Philippines, this year’s WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards finalists have proved to be an incredibly diverse group of changemakers from around the world. They have demonstrated that, regardless of the size or purpose of business, all members of the Travel & Tourism industry can afford to make sustainability a priority, and become part of our collective journey towards a greener future.”

For more information on the Tourism for Tomorrow Awards and all the Winners, please visit <http://wttc.org/t4tawards>

#### **Full list of Winners and Finalists:**

**Climate Action Award**, for organizations undertaking significant and measurable work to reduce the scale and impact of climate change:

- **WINNER:** Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, Aruba
- **FINALIST:** The Brando, Tetiaroa Private Island, French Polynesia
- **FINALIST:** Tourism Holdings Limited, New Zealand

**Investing in People Award**, for organizations demonstrating leadership in becoming an exciting, attractive, and equitable employer in the sector:

- **WINNER:** Lemon Tree Hotels Limited, India
- **FINALIST:** Reserva do Ibitipoca, Brazil
- **FINALIST:** Shanga by Elewana Collection, Tanzania

**Destination Stewardship Award**, for organizations helping a place to thrive and bring forward its unique identity for the benefit of its residents and tourists:

- **WINNER:** St. Kitts Sustainable Destination Council, St. Kitts and Nevis
- **FINALIST:** Grupo Rio da Prata, Jardim and Bonito, Brazil
- **FINALIST:** Masungi Georeserve, Philippines

**Social Impact Award**, for organizations working to improve the people and places where they operate:

- **WINNER:** Awamaki, Peru

- FINALIST: Intrepid Group, Australia
- FINALIST: Nikoi Island, Indonesia

**Changemakers Award**, this year focused on organizations fighting the illegal wildlife trade through sustainable tourism:

- **WINNER:** SEE Turtles, USA
- FINALIST: Kelompok Peduli Lingkungan Belitung (KPLB), Indonesia
- FINALIST: The Cardamom Tented Camp, Cambodia

## IMAGES

Dropbox: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rwcccdf1z5imf5i/AADQ5QqXvUjxR9YwOrkout6Va?dl=0>

*Captions*

**190404\_AcceptanceVideo** Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort announced as the winner of the 2019 World Travel & Tourism for Tomorrow Climate Action Award winner.

**190404\_2019WTTCWinner** Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort owner/CEO Ewald Biemans accepts the global award

### ***About the World Travel & Tourism Council***

WTTC is the body which represents the Travel & Tourism private sector globally. Members consist of CEOs of the world's Travel & Tourism companies, destinations, and industry organisations engaging with Travel & Tourism.

WTTC has a history of 25 years of research to quantify the economic impact of the sector in 185 countries. Travel & Tourism is a key driver for investment and economic growth globally. The sector contributes US\$8.8 trillion or 10.4% of global GDP, and accounts for 319 million jobs or one in ten of all jobs on the planet.

For over 25 years, WTTC has been the voice of this industry globally. Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading, private sector Travel & Tourism businesses, who bring specialist knowledge to guide government policy and decision-making and raise awareness of the importance of the sector.

### ***About Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort***

Declared the first CarbonNeutral<sup>®</sup>/net zero hotel in the Caribbean in August 2018, Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort is one of the Top 10 Hotels for Romance in the World, No. 1 Hotel in the Caribbean, No. 1 Hotel for Romance in the Caribbean (fourth straight year) and No. 1 Hotel for Service in the Caribbean. Aruba's premier adults-only boutique resort is led by celebrated hotelier and environmentalist, Ewald Biemans, named by Caribbean Journal as the 2017 Caribbean Hotelier of the Year. The resort is nestled on the powdery white sands of Eagle Beach, home to protected sea turtles and named one of the "Dream Beaches of the World."

Bucuti offers 104 well-appointed guestrooms, suites and penthouses; sunbeds and shade for every guest; fresh water infinity pool; spa; WiFi; and complimentary iPad with Skype for use during stay. Award-winning healthy dining is enjoyed at oceanfront Elements, Tara Lounge and private beach dining. Reserved exclusively for guests and their friends, the open-air SandBar on the beach offers top-shelf cocktails and live music daily along with the Caribbean's first Healthy Hour. The resort is TAG Approved<sup>®</sup> as a LGBTQ-friendly hotel. Bucuti, a worldwide sustainable tourism leader, holds eco-certifications of LEED Silver, Green Globe Platinum, ISO 14001 and Travelife Gold and was named the World's Most Sustainable Hotel/Resort in 2016 by Green Globe.

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