

MAGAZINE

280

PEOPLE,
FIRST



SKÅL

INTERNATIONAL
Connecting Tourism Globally

Picture: Nepal Tourism Board

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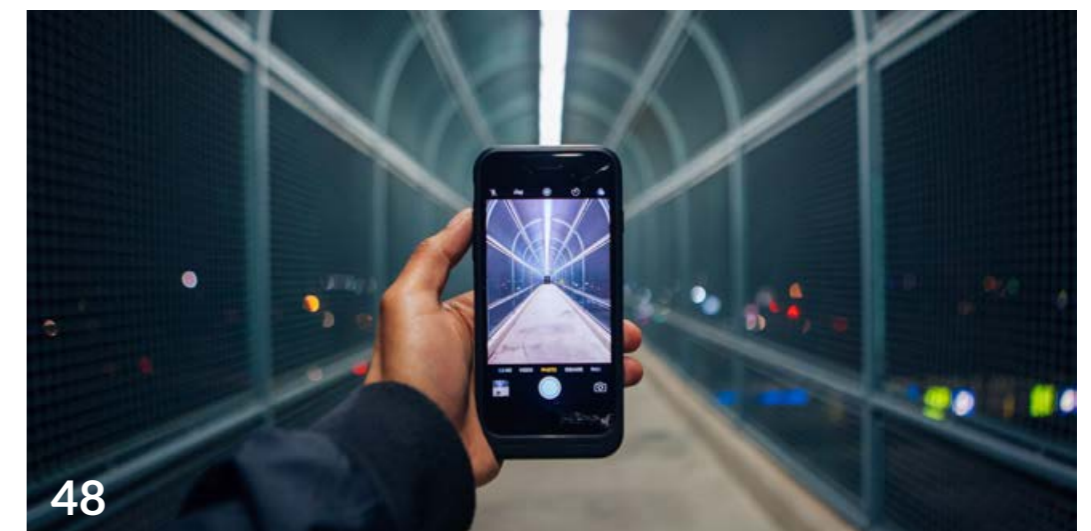
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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

“ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS IS YOU...”

My last message as your President...



Peter Morrison
President

The poet Mary Oliver said, “Keep some room in your heart for the unimaginable”. That seems very right for this last message and with Christmas nearly upon us.

I wish you a very happy Christmas and holiday season. I certainly know that this past year has been very difficult for us all, and I pray that the coming year brings more certain times for you, your family and all Skålleagues. I send all my 'bestest' thoughts, love and good wishes for better days ahead.

In general, I like to keep things light-hearted at Christmas time, but I certainly can't ignore that many of us have had a difficult year with illness, loss, uncertain employment, and isolation due to COVID-19.

In his Christmas message, World Council of Churches interim General Secretary Rev Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca has invited Christians and all people on earth to look

up in hope. Even if “there are many reasons to be afraid and to live in despair” today; reminding us that “in the most difficult days of history” Christians have, time and time again, found consolation “in the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ that begins with the birth of the Saviour in Bethlehem”.

I do feel like it is odd to be 'celebrating' this Christmas Season after possibly the toughest years for our world, but mentally and emotionally, myself and I am sure all of you are ready for the joy that Christmas and holidays normally bring; family, friends, traditions and new memories.

I have looked up some famous Christmas quotes... I hope you enjoy and can relate to them!!

"My idea of Christmas, whether old-fashioned or modern, is very simple: loving others. Come to think of it, why do we have to wait for Christmas to do that?"

Bob Hope

"I will honour Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."

Charles Dickens
from 'A Christmas Carol'

"Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone."

Charles M. Schulz

"Peace on earth will come to stay, when we live Christmas every day."

Helen Steiner Rice

"Christmas is a time when everybody wants his past forgotten and his present remembered."

Phyllis Diller

"I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked for my autograph."

Shirley Temple

"Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas."

Calvin Coolidge

"I don't think Christmas is necessarily about things. It's about being good to one another."

Carrie Fisher

"Christmas is a day of meaning and traditions, a special day spent in the warm circle of family and friends."

Margaret Thatcher

"I wish we could put up some of the Christmas spirit in jars and open a jar of it every month."

Harlan Miller

"Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of hospitality."

Washington Irving

"The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear."

Will Ferrell, 'Elf'

"Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand."

Dr. Suess

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future."

Agnes M. Pahro

"Christmas is a tonic for our souls. It moves us to think of others rather than of ourselves. It directs our thoughts to giving."

B.C. Forbes

"That's what Christmas memories are made from, they're not planned, they're not scheduled, nobody puts them in their blackberry, they just happen."

Deck the Halls (2006)

"A good conscience is a continual Christmas."

Benjamin Franklin

"Mankind is a great, an immense family... This is proved by what we feel in our hearts at Christmas."

Pope John XXIII

"Christmas is a season not only of rejoicing but of reflection."

Winston Churchill

"Christmas is like candy; it slowly melts in your mouth sweetening every taste bud, making you wish it could last forever."

Richelle E. Goodrich

"Christmas is forever, not for just one day. For loving, sharing, giving, are not to put away."

Norman Wesley Brooks

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love."

Hamilton Wright Mabie

THANKS

I also take this last opportunity to **thank all Skålleagues who have given me their ongoing support in 2020**. In particular, my Executive Board of Bill, Fiona, Burcin and Marja. Also Teresa and Vijay who both resigned during the year. They all worked so hard to keep the Skål International thesis alive.

Daniela Otero and all the team in our Headquarters have also worked tirelessly and I deeply appreciate all they have done this year.

BEST WISHES

I wish President Elect Bill Rheaume all the very best for 2021. He has an excellent Executive Board to help him: consisting of Burcin Turkkan, Fiona Nicholl, Juan I. Steta, Marja Eela-Kaskinen, Denise Scrafton and Daniela Otero. They will be amazing!

Remember: Skål International is here for you all through these trying times. For many of you this Christmas will not be all merry and bright. So instead of wishing you happy holidays, I wish you restful sleep (at least sometimes). I wish you skilled and friendly doctors and nurses. I wish you wisdom to know what to do. Skål International will be right here to help as best as we can.

I wish you endurance (Long Life), strength (Good Health), my everlasting Friendship and as much Happiness as these times can allow!

TO FINISH

Wishing you a safe and sanitized Christmas and holidays, from my bubble to yours in this very essential Christmas and unprecedented year:

Merry Christmask

Hand Santa-tiser

Home for the Holidays.

From my porch to yours

And

All I want for Christmas is a VACCINE!

Peter C Morrison MNZM
Skål International
President 2020

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ELECT

THE YOU IN
SKÅL
INTERNATIONAL!



There has been so much discussion on Membership in the last few months. Concern over renewals, ability to attract new members during the pandemic as well as what is Skål International doing for me...

In the midst of so much change within our industry, it is necessary for members to take ownership of their respective needs and future. Members must be self-directed in order to achieve their goals and successes as entrepreneurs and businesses must do.

Ask yourselves:

- What is your value to Skål International?
- Why did you join in the first place?
- What can you do to renew that enthusiasm?

Former President Lavonne Wittmann recently hosted a webinar on **'Changing the Dialogue on Membership'** with a focus on selling Skål International to prospective members, in which she stated that 80% of what we present is mindset – emotional and personal, while 20% deals with strategy – how would a prospect benefit from membership in Skål International.

Retaining members should be easier as they have already experienced what membership can offer and how engaged their club is.

Skål International provides the base benefits for all members, some of which are:

- The member data base.
- Critical need funding assistance through the Florimond Volckaert Fund.
- Opportunities to connect – Congresses, Trade Shows and Events.
- Accommodation discounts.
- Educational webinars.
- Representation on other International Tourism Organizations.

Clubs must meet the need of each individual to establish the value of membership. Price of membership becomes relatively unimportant as long as there is value, a responsibility the clubs must also accept in delivering relevant content and an engaged monthly program.

These challenging times also provide an opportunity to demonstrate the value of membership in Skål International, offering physical and emotional support to members who may be suffering loss of income or worse, the death of a loved one.

Skål International may not be for everyone and in the end, **we want to ensure we have engaged and positive members who want to be members.**

Bill Rheume
Skål International
President Elect 2021

NOTE FROM THE CEO



A 2020 WORKING TOGETHER

Many people are waiting for the end of this year... in fact, most already consider 2020 as one of the most difficult periods in recent times.

It has not been easy and we have not yet overcome it, but at least we are seeing the beginning of the end of this pandemic.

The latest World Tourism Organization report on travel restrictions, which tracks the actions being taken by destinations around the world, indicates that during November a total of 152 destinations have reduced restrictions on international tourism - and this is very good news!

Travelling will be back in 2021 because people want to travel again and as soon as they can, they will. But we must be aware of the necessary learning that has been left to us by the passing of these last months... the necessary adaptation to uncertainty.

We have learned that there will not always be experiences that can be taken as a reference for new scenarios or situations. For this reason, we must develop a greater individual capacity for resilience and flexibility and surely we will all have to make an effort to work on this.

As we approach the Christmas holidays, we already visualize ourselves spending time with family and friends. We already know that the current reality will not allow us to do so... and we will also have to adapt to it.

As I have said on other occasions, these are the times when more than ever, we need to work together... each of us contributes to others. So together we will all achieve important goals.

I would personally like to acknowledge the team of the General Secretariat and Communication, who have worked both from home and from the office, dedicating more hours and days to attend to all the needs that have arisen... and always with an incredible willingness.

My thanks also go to all the members of the Executive Board, as they have been to more video conferences and committees meetings than seemed possible, and have helped the entire General Secretariat team, being a real support to all of us.

Also to our members, who have made courageous efforts to endure 2020! I applaud and appreciate all their hard work and sacrifice... and I thank them for their loyalty to continue to belong to our great Skål International family!

I am sure that better times will come soon, our industry will continue. There is no doubt about that.

Thank you for all your hard work, dedication and effort to move forward.

Happy Holidays to all of you and your families!

Daniela Otero
CEO

SEASON'S GREETINGS FROM YOUR SKÅL INTERNATIONAL 2020 EXECUTIVE BOARD



Peter Morrison MNZM
President

Remember: Skål International is here for you all through these trying times. For many of you this Christmas will not be all merry and bright. So instead of wishing you happy holidays, I wish you restful sleep (at least sometimes). I wish you skilled and friendly doctors and nurses. I wish you wisdom to know what to do. Skål International will be right here to help as best as we can.

I wish you endurance (long life), strength (good health), my everlasting friendship and as much happiness as these times can allow!

Bill Rheame
Vice President

Christmas is a time for reflection...

On the memories of joys past, special traditions, and wonderful experiences.

It's a time to honor the passion for things we hold dear in our lives.

And it's also a time to be thankful for the professionalism and dedication of all Skålleagues during these challenging times.

However you choose to celebrate this festive season, I wish you joy and happiness.



Fiona Nicholl
Director

Wishing all Skålleagues and friends a very safe and happy festive season! Sadly, we cannot all be with our loved ones this year but when the times comes, hold them a little tighter and a little longer. There is no greater gift than family and friends.

Let's say goodbye 2020 and Hello 2021!
I hope to meet you all soon!

Wishing you happiness, good health, friendship and long life! From my family to yours... Skål!



Burcin Turkkkan
Director

As we are getting ready to say goodbye to 2020 I cannot tell you how excited I am to welcome 2021 in just few days! 2020 has been a challenging year for everyone.

During these extremely difficult times we all have discovered something new about ourselves, learned not to take things for granted but most importantly we learned to appreciate and to be grateful what we have in our lives. I have high hopes from year 2021; I want the new year to bring lots of love, happiness, good health, peace and good luck to us all; individually and collectively. I hope 2021 will be the year where everyone's dreams will come true!

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a very Happy New Year! Always in friendship and Skål!



Marja Eela-Kaskinen
President, International Skål Council

I want to wish all of you a peaceful Holiday Season with your loved ones and let's hope we can all meet in Quebec next year!

Happiness, Good Health, Friendship, Long Life, Skål!



A challenging year, in which we have discovered the value of simplicity, comes to an end.

Let's stay with those small but important gestures that can generate great results...

Our best wishes for 2021.

Daniela Otero,
CEO of Skål International,
and the Team of General Secretariat

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year
from the whole team!



COUNCILLOR'S CORNER

Jean-François Côté
Councillor,
Skål International Canada



Hello fellow Skållegues,

As 2020 is nearing the end, let us summarise this abnormal year....
Wait no, that has been done over and over, so bye-bye 2020 and may
you be forgotten fast!!!

Let us focus on the task of making 2021 amazing!

It is my great privilege to have been elected to the International Skål
Council Board for 2021. Congratulations to Denise Scrafton, Julie
Dabaly-Scott and Bimbo Durosinmi-Etti who will join me in this great
adventure! A special thanks to President of Council Marja Eela-Kaskinen
for her tireless work at the council and for her two-year presidency. Hat
tip to Neil Els for his continuous work on providing debate and generating
ideas!

President of the Council, Denise Scrafton, assigned each of us a list of
responsibility. **I have been assigned membership engagement for the
Americas and have been paired with Vice-President Fiona for her**

Innovation, Technology, Digital/Online Platforms portfolio.

This is where we need to look to make 2021 a game changing
year. We need to use the tools we have developed since 2018, to
communicate and leap Skål International forward. Use this new
tech to make sure we increase Skål International's visibility to its
members, communicate with them, make them fully aware of the
value proposition of this great organisation.

By doing this, we will automatically increase Skål International's
overall visibility in the tourism industry. It will create appeal and
draw that new generation of professionals for whom technology
is a way of life.

So yes, a big job for 2021! With President Bill Rheume and the
new Skål International Executive Board, I am certain we will have
fun doing it!

A special thank-you to President Peter Morrison for his leadership in this unreal year!

Safe festivities and a stellar beginning of 2021!

SKÅL!

EXEMPLARY SKÅLLEAGUE OF THE YEAR 2020

Antonio García del Valle

Honorary President of Skål International



In each edition of the Skål International quarterly magazine, we are honoured to feature an exemplary Skålleague that has gone above and beyond for our organisation. **Antonio Garcia del Valle** is not only an Honorary President of Skål International, he is also our **Exemplary Skålleague for 2020**.

Antonio dedicates hours and hours of his time each week to updating our new ['Skål International History' Facebook page](#). Our very own Skål Historian. We are extremely lucky to have access to Antonio's private Skål International history memorabilia of which he shares daily via Facebook.

Congratulations Antonio!

Born in Madrid on 04 March 1935. Bachelor Studies, Law and Fine Arts. I arrived in Malaga in 1960: Hotel Los Álamos 1960/64, Hoteles del Sol (Las Mercedes and Delfín) 1964/67, Autos Niza 1967/1974, Viajes Málaga 1974/78, Viajes Savitur 1978/2020.

I learned about the existence of Skål International when I arrived in Málaga. Skål International Málaga, founded in 1958, brought together all the important tourism entrepreneurs and I immediately became interested in being a member. I achieved this in 1961, so **I have been at Skål International for 59 years**.

During these years, I was President of Skål International Málaga-Costa del

Sol, Honorary President of Skål International Málaga-Costa del Sol, President of the Spanish National Skål International Committee, Honorary Member of Skål International Spain, Honorary President of Skål International Spain, Skål International Spain Gold Medal Winner, International Advisor for Skål International Spain, International Auditor, President of the International Skål Council, International President 1985/86, Honorary Member and Honorary President of Skål International since 2003. Treasurer of the Organising Committee for the 1968 Skål International Congress, responsible for the transfer of the General Secretariat from Brussels to Málaga in 1984, Coordinator of the Organising Committee for the 1975 International Congress, President of the Organising Committee of the 1992 Latin American Congress, 1994 Barcelona 'International Tourism Day' Town Crier, Author of 'Historia del Skål', ('History of Skål'), Paris 2009, 'Skål Merit Diploma' 2012. Honorary Member and Honorary President of some clubs, especially in Latin America.



The awards that a professional receives are always a new incentive to continue working towards what is their life's work. There are many received both inside and outside our borders and all of them are welcome.

In Tourism, Hotels, Rent a Car Companies, Travel Agencies. No. 1 Málaga Tourist Board Member, President of the Airport Commission, Chamber of Commerce 1998/2002, President of the Tourism Commission, Chamber of Commerce 2002/10, President of the Málaga Gourmet Academy 2006/10.

After attending so many international, regional and national congresses, after having participated in the organisation of some international and Latin American congresses in Málaga, it was at the end of the latter when I thought about the idea of gathering data and photos and writing the 'History of Skål'. **Over these 28 years, I have been able to accumulate**

about 45,000 photos and documents. I have not received many contributions from the clubs, of their founding documents and photos or memories of their early days. I keep waiting for them.

This past year I was commissioned by the International Executive Committee to manage the ['Skål International History' Facebook page](#). On it, I remember the birthdays of the clubs, active or suspended, trying to recover them, and for now and until 1999, remembering anniversaries with photos and documents.

SKÅLLEAGUE

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL GOA

CLUB OF THE YEAR

2019/2020

In this issue, Skål International Magazine has asked the winner of the Skål Club of the Year 2019/2020 Award, Skål International Goa, to share some of their thoughts and ideas on the success of the club and insight into winning the coveted award:

The Skål International Goa Executive Committee had made a resolution that they would be working towards the Skål Club of the Year Award from Skål International for 2019/2020.

In this process we took our members into confidence and requested them for their wholehearted participation in all the programs that would be held through the year, be it networking, charity, conservation of nature, doing away with plastic, formation of Young Skål, etc.



The membership also went out of their way to support the Executive Committee in every endeavour that was planned and executed through this period. We started off with development of Young Skål and organised a steady stream of activities. Director Young Skål Cral Costa played a stellar role in taking off and guiding the Young Skål activity for Skål International Goa club. Motivation and team building, prevention of sexual harassment of women at the workplace, safe food for good health, blood donation camp, entrepreneurship, Christmas celebration with differently abled children, etc. were some of the activities that were conducted for and participated in by our Young Skål members.

Our Active Members acted as mentors to the Young Skålleagues by guiding and motivating them through this period. Due to COVID-19 however we were forced to curtail on our further planned activities for the Young Skålleagues. However, through the COVID-19 period we conducted some Zoom Meetings, offered them information on Food & Beverage recipes, shared books that would be of interest in their educational and professional pursuit as well. Even in this

pandemic period wherein the Young Skålleagues are having a difficult time with job opportunities, our members have come forward to ensure that they are absorbed in their ventures. The internship requirements in the various departments in the Hospitality sector are also being taken care off by our membership. The first-year students have been updated by the second- and third-year members as to what events they have participated in and how they have benefited from the same. There is a great interest being shown by the First Year Students in becoming Young Skål Club members with Skål International Goa.

The mentorship aspect also assists the Young Skålleagues in developing contacts with senior members when seeking employment on course completion or so also when they have to seek an internship slot as required by course curriculum.

We do have our monthly GBM's and our members and their Families attend the same in good numbers. It gives good scope for networking amongst ourselves and sharing information that would help others in the Hospitality & Tourism sectors. We have a number of guest speakers connected with different government authorities

participating in our GBM 's and this gives the members an opportunity to interact with them on a one-on-one basis and can then meet up with them for assistance as and when required.

We invite prospective members to our GBM's and also request our members to recommend quality prospective member applications for membership with our Club. Our strength is in the Executive Committee being able to reach out to each and every individual on a personal basis for resolving any issues that they may be experiencing as related to businesses that they are involved in.

For the earlier part there were a number of events that were held by our Executive Committee Team for the members – the Skål International Christmas get together in December is the talk of the town and members and their guests do look forward to attending the same. The members participated in events along with the Tourism Department – namely Vibrant Goa wherein we had agents from across India and the world attending the three days event connected with development of businesses including Tourism & Hospitality sector. The members also participated in a Techfest wherein they were made aware of different innovations across industries including the Hospitality sector which is a major contributor to Goa's Economy. Ways and means wherein the members

could connect with industries that could offer solutions resulting in major savings in their respective operating plans were rolled out and have benefited the members to a great extent.

The COVID-19 period was an eye opener for all and the Executive Committee were able to bring about a coordinated effort on the part of Skål International Goa to work towards channelizing all efforts so as to reach out to maximum numbers of – Front line COVID-19 Warriors – in the form of personal protection gear, face shields, soaps, sanitizers, food packets through months since the inception of lock down and the beginning of the fight against COVID-19. Providing the police force with umbrellas and tents so as to give them some comfort during their long work hours on the field. Providing the police force, the doctors and nurses with accommodation so that their comfort was taken care of and they were able to offer entire concentration on the job.

The under privileged and the needy – offering rations for the families, food packets on daily basis, running large canteens round the clock so that nobody would have to face hunger. Offering comfort as possible in the form of mattresses, linen, bath linen, soaps, shaving kits, soaps, sanitizers, etc. in temporary camps that were set up by Government authorities.

The elderly and the sick – ensuring that necessary support was made available to such individuals who were not in a position to organise provisions, medicines, sanitizers and other necessities for themselves.

The Executive Committee members are in touch with members across the country and the world and network for and on behalf of their members for any business prospects that may be possible to be achieved. The networking possibilities have grown tremendously because of the trust factor of working with a Skålleague who would go out of his / her way to ensure that the business request is connected with the right partners as per client requirements be it for individual travellers or for MICE or Leisure Group movement.

Member benefits are also offered to Skålleagues within and across Clubs as required. Participating in Skål activities at the national and Asia level by our Club members has also proved to be a benefit in our success in achieving the Skål Club of the Year Award for Skål Goa. The members at both the national and Asia level were able to reach out to Club Officials across India, Asia and the World in a systematic and persistent manner to highlight the Club activities and achievements through this period.

We at Skål International Goa are indeed to be proud recipients of a number of Awards in this year,

starting with the Skål International Asia Club of the Year, Young Skål Club of the Year (in combination with Skål Singapore) and following it up with the Skål International Club of the Year, the Membership Development Gold Award recipient and one of our senior members also received the Skål International President's special recognition award.

President Ernest Dias was able to lead from the front and motivate the entire Executive Committee team and membership to do their very best in our walk through this period leading to success for the Club. International Skål Councillor for India Mario Sequeira was also able to obtain support from across the world for this endeavour. Shekhar Divadkar – Secretary Goa, India and Asia – also networked with Club Officials in India, Asia and across the world. Other Executive Committee members also offered their support in connecting with Skålleague associates as were known to them for supporting the cause of Skål International Goa.

We are indeed grateful to Skålleagues across the world for supporting Skål International Goa in our quest for the Award and we in turn do commit our very best to the Skål Movement across the World.

Viva Skål!!!



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

AUSTRALIA BUSH FIRE

APPEAL UPDATE

Ho Ho Ho to all you fellow Skålleagues around the world!

You will remember back in January 2020 we had the devastating bush fires around Australia. There were several generous donations made by clubs and members around the world and we thank each and every one of you.

Skål International Australia received over \$20,000 in donations and these funds were donated to 4 different State Organisations to assist with their recovery.

Skål International Melbourne chose Swifts Creek Fire Brigade as a very worthwhile recipient of the \$5,000 donation from the Skål International Australia Bushfire Appeal.

Swifts Creek is a small community in the Victorian High Country, approximately 400km east of Melbourne. With a population of about 200 people, it services local beef and sheep farming families. In addition to farming, its other major industry relates to its natural environment and location. It provides a regional base for the State government Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) who manage the large areas of State Forest surrounding the district, and it supports a local timber mill.

Located in the Victorian High Country with the Alpine National Park, Dinner Plain and Mt Hotham ski fields close by. The tourist road, "The Great Alpine Road" is an iconic road trip for motor bikes because of the amount of bends. Omeo (20km up the road) is being developed as a Mountain bike mecca. The pump track opens at end of the month and later this month.



An ultra-light tanker vehicle ready for a fast response

The Omeo Cattlemen 100 MTB is a regional cycling event spanning across Omeo, Omeo Valley and Benambra, highlighting the High Country's breathtaking landscape acting as a 'teaser' for the forthcoming mountain bike trail network. The Omeo Cattlemen 100 MTB is actually 105 miles, or 175km. It covers just under 3,700m of climbing and the route takes on mostly gravel roads and other back roads only known to locals.

Kaye Richards with PNG soldiers who came and worked with ADF from Townsville based in Swifts Creek Omeo area.



USA firefighters were based at Swifts Creek, on the local football oval, a base camp of tents for those in the area doing firefighting and later recovery, tree clearing, fence repairs.

Swifts Creek brigade (Kaye Richards) organised a local wombat rescue shelter to attend the camp in the evening to show and talk to international firefighters from the USA and PNG, ADF and other firefighters with wombat babies up close.

OUR OTHER WORTHWHILE RECIPIENTS FOR YOUR DONATIONS.

- **Skål International Adelaide** presented the Kangaroo Island Mayoral Relief and Recovery Bushfire Fund a cheque for \$5,000.00 to assist in the rebuilding of Kangaroo Island which is a massive draw card for tourism within South Australia.
- **Skål International Gold Coast** donated the funds to Mudgeeraba Rural Fire Brigade, one of the oldest on the Gold Coast with 57 volunteer members. The funds will go towards new hoses, many of which were damaged in the fires, and improved communications equipment.
- **Skål International Sydney South** funds will be donated to Exeter RFS, one of 20 RFS Stations in the Wingecarribee Shire which covers the region from south of Camden right through the Southern Highlands. Exeter was a staging point for the bushfires in the Southern region and at one stage had 80 appliances and crews working out of their Station.
- **Skål International Australia** chose [Blazeaid](#) a volunteer-based organisation that works with families and individuals in rural Australia after natural disasters such as fires. Working alongside the rural families, our volunteers help to rebuild fences and other structures that have been damaged or destroyed.

A sincere thank you to all Skålleagues who donated to assist our Australian communities and wildlife recovery from these disastrous fires. Thank you also to the Club Presidents for organising the distribution of funds. Skål International has made a significant contribution and provided invaluable assistance thanks to the compassion and generosity of our Skål International members world-wide.

So again, thank you and may your Christmas be full of 'Happiness, Good Health, Friendship and Long Life' enjoy your time with family and friends over this holiday season.

Until next year stay safe, stay well, and stay connected.

Yours in Skål,

Ivana Patalano
VP Membership
Skål International Australia

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE ABOUT SWIFTS CREEK CFA BRIGADE



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CANADIAN ROCKIES

Christmas in the Canadian Rockies is a magical time of year and for Skål leagues, the President's Christmas Gala is a highlight of the season.



Skål International members, partners, and guests from the region (spanning five communities and over 15,000 sq. kms) have gathered for 36 years to enjoy a formal, multi-course dinner.

Enter 2020... COVID numbers in the region had remained relatively low over the summer and into the Fall but as mid-November approached, restrictions on the size of gatherings started to amp up. Our traditional Gala needed some out of the box thinking or it would need to cancel altogether. A Zoom call with the Executive ensued and consensus was, "If we can't bring everyone together for Christmas, we need to bring Christmas dinner to everyone".

The invitations were sent out and a resounding 124 members and partners replied that they were 'in' (more than any other Christmas Gala, ever!).

The Malcolm Hotel in Canmore, and Fiddle River Restaurant in Jasper, synchronized a five-course prepared 'Sous Vide' dinner, with the Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel supplying the dessert.

Delivery or pick-up (even one by horseback in the Malcolm lobby) and 'tips' were suggested with proceeds going to the local food banks. Nearly \$2,000 was raised!

The 'meeting' commenced via Zoom with a virtual reception, instruction on preparing mulled wine by two top bartenders broadcasting from the Malcolm Hotel while we enjoyed the provided charcuterie. Skål toast followed with supplied mini Aquavit (Skål International logoed) bottles, with greetings from our very own International President Elect, Bill Rheume... then onto the next courses...

Sous vide is a cooking method that simmers vacuumed packed ingredients for maximum flavour and texture, so the items only needed to be re-heated in simmering water in the sealed bags. Executive Chef from the Malcolm broadcast over Zoom the exact timing for the full preparation. As the courses were consumed, a world-renowned harpist entertained everyone with Christmas favorites from her private recording studio.

In all, 62 packaged dinners for two were delivered throughout the region, and accolades flowed. Delivery was by Skålleague volunteers, as was assembly. Assembly included over 20 items per logoed cooler, with a hand-addressed Christmas Card, dinner preparation instructions and recognition of the key volunteers.

The mission to provide a bright light of hope in a year of global darkness was felt to have been accomplished by the Club. Please view our website, LinkedIn and Facebook pages, for pictures of this and other events.

Wishing Everyone the Very Best of the Season - Skål!

Andrew Shepherd

President 2020

Skål International Canadian Rockies



SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

EDMONTON PIVOTS

DURING GLOBAL

PANDEMIC

Skål International Edmonton, – not unlike any other club – is known for its love of fine food and wine, and likes to celebrate and connect with its members.

When the World Health Organization (WHO) announced Covid-19 as a global pandemic in March, the Executive Committee rose to the challenge of deciding how to continue the club's monthly meetings and continue membership engagement.

Cancelling their April meeting to protect both their members and to follow the new restrictions outlined by local government, the Edmonton Club Executive started to engage their members online with weekly updates of their favorite local Edmonton shops; restaurants for take-out and Covid-19 safe activities, encouraging members to support local hospitality and tourism businesses during these challenging times. They also created 'Skålographies', which were interviews of Skål members, letting them know each other better, even when further away.

With lockdowns and restrictions still in place for Edmonton, the Executive Committee decided to jump online to further connect with its members. For May's meeting, Skål International Edmonton focused on the theme 'connecting' through a virtual 'cocktail hour', with a special delivery of a bottle of red and white wine to ensure all members were ready for the Skål toast. The guest 'toast master' was Jean Pelletier, Skål International Canada President. In typical Skål International Edmonton fashion, the club wrapped up the meeting with an online trivia game to test members' Skål International knowledge.

With the success of their first online meeting, Skål International Edmonton hosted their June meeting online, with a Meet 'n Dine. Providing all members with a credit to local grocery retailer, Italian Centre Shop, to allow members

to create their own charcuterie masterpieces, while supporting a local business. The Club also welcomed Skål International USA President, Dave Ryan to present the signature Skål toast, and as our guest speaker welcomed Maggie Davison, Interim CEO of the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation (EEDC), for an update on Edmonton's hospitality and tourism industry.

Taking the summer months off, Skål International Edmonton continued to engage members via their social media channels, Facebook and Instagram. Posting safe, local summer activities that continued to support the hospitality and tourism industry.

A welcome start to the fall, Skål International Edmonton was able to host its first in-person meeting since March. Hosting a social distanced, face masked event at member hotel, the Matrix beginning with a social distanced cocktail reception followed by their own private table for dinner. This theme continued for their October meeting, allowing members to connect – lederhosen optional - for an Oktoberfest dinner at the Radisson Hotel Edmonton South. Prost!

As the winter months began, there was a dramatic spike in cases in Edmonton and through the province of Alberta. The Executive Committee made the difficult decision to return to online meetings to ensure the safety of their members. Skål International Edmonton hosted their November

meeting online with custom, build-your-own charcuterie board and a bottle of wine from local Skål International member restaurant, Ampersand 27. Members enjoyed highlights from Tim Shipton, Senior Vice President of Communications and Government Relations with Oilers Entertainment Group highlighting the trials and tribulations of hosting the Stanley Cup play-offs in a 'bubble' during a pandemic.

Skål International Edmonton will wrap up 2020 with their favorite meeting of the year in December. An extravagant, spousal event, this year will end with members connecting online over a 'to go' festive dinner provided by the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. Continuing to enable members to once again safely connect virtually, raising a glass, and telling stories of their favorite holiday cocktails, ugly Christmas sweaters and traditions that make this holiday bright, even during the darkest times. Although not meeting in person, members are encouraged to wear their festive finery. At least from the waist up...

With some creative thinking and planning – and amical in their hearts – the Executive Committee of Skål International Edmonton has been able to bring comradery through Covid-19 restrictions. Connecting and engaging with its members at a time when that means more than anything, and holding true to their Club's love of sharing good times, whether in person or over a screen, and celebrating with great food and fine wine!

WELCOME!!

As CEO of Skål International, I am very happy to welcome all the members who have chosen to join the world's largest association of Travel and Tourism professionals.

This is without doubt the best time to have a network of contacts at a global level, to benefit from the advantages that membership offers, and to do business among friends.

You can contact new members through the Skål International web platform and give them a warm welcome!

Log in with your username and password to the 'Members' section and connect with members from all over the world! If you have any questions regarding access to the platform, please [contact the support team](#).

Daniela Otero
CEO

NEW MEMBERS OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL

COUNTRIES	SECTORS
Albania	Airline Restaurant
Australia	Attraction Suppliers to
Austria	TourismTour
Canada	Car Hire Operators
France	Consultancies Tour Operator
India	Hotel Tourist
Indonesia	Hotel Chains Apartments
Italy	Inbound Tour Tourist
Mexico	Operator Authority
Netherlands	Medical Tourist
New Zealand	(Wellness Organisation
Romania	Tourism) Travel &
South Africa	Motel Tourism
Spain	Education
Sri Lanka	Outbound Travel Agents
Switzerland	Tour Operator
Thailand	Prof. Congress Travel Media
United Arab Emirates	/ Events Sports Tourism
United states of America	Organisers



The winners of the **Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards 2020** were announced during the virtual Annual General Assembly of Skål International held on 17 October 2020. Congratulations to the winners and thank you for your passion, contribution and dedication to our industry!

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS

THE UN INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER (ITC)

Myanmar | Category: Community and Government Projects

WHAT IS THE PROJECT'S MISSION TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

The International Trade Centre is the only international agency fully dedicated to the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. Working with partners to strengthen the competitiveness of exporters, we help to build vibrant, sustainable export sectors that provide entrepreneurial opportunities, particularly for women, young people and poor communities.

ITC's Inclusive Tourism in Myanmar project, supported by the Netherlands Trust Fund Phase IV, focuses on fostering economic opportunities through the development of sustainable tourism products in Myanmar – consolidating previous project results in Kayah State and extending activities to Tanintharyi Region.

WHICH SDGS DOES YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY MAINLY IMPACT?

NTF IV Myanmar project:

- GOAL 1: No poverty - TARGET 1.2: Reduce proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty.
- GOAL 5: Gender equality - TARGET 5.5: Ensure women's full and effective participation in business and trade and equal opportunities.
- GOAL 8: Decent work and economic growth - TARGET 8.9: Implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products; TARGET 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.
- GOAL 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development - TARGET 17.11: Support significantly increased exports of developing countries, doubling the LDCs' share of global exports by 2020.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

The data utilized for the award application were gathered as part of the NTF IV M&E framework. The M&E framework is at the basis for continuous improvement given that it is not only limited to reporting, but as well it aims at performance improvement.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework under NTF IV was defined during the programme design phase. Monitoring is undertaken by the NTF IV staff both in the field and at headquarters. A Quality Assurance Adviser (QAA) ensures alignment between team practices and the framework. The QAA also trains staff on a yearly basis either in a face-to-face set-up or through skype calls.

Reporting takes place in two forms:

- Corporate Reporting on the ITC project portal: project activities are reported on a monthly basis by the national project coordinators. Reports are reviewed and uploaded by the NTF IV team at ITC on the corporate project portal. Results are reported on a quarterly basis on the same portal, both in terms of data and narratives. Data on training outputs is inserted on the event management portal, which is synchronized with the project portal. Field staff monitor results on a permanent basis through interactions with beneficiaries. At the end of the year, national project coordinators reach out to beneficiaries to report on outcome-level results as per ITC's corporate indicators.
- Reporting to stakeholders: The monthly reports are disseminated to the steering group and donor focal points. National project coordinators are then responsible for the dissemination of project-level monthly reports to their national stakeholders (in Myanmar and Senegal, the report is translated).

IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE SDG AS YOUR SIGNATURE GOAL, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

SDG 8.2 as the projects develops the tourism value chain and focuses on adding value to the tourism sector by working with companies and individual tourism service providers in two regions

WHAT IS THE GREATEST IMPACT YOUR PROJECT CREATED IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY?

In 2019, the CBT tours in Kayah State have been sold successfully by over 90 international tour operators. CBT has generated over \$USD35,000 income directly to village service providers; while catalyzing additional business for Loikaw tourism businesses estimated to be worth over USD\$650K. Between 2016 and 2019, the value of new business for Kayah SME tourism suppliers is estimated to be over USD\$1.4 million.

Crucially, CBT was not developed in isolation. To achieve success and sustainability, ITC adopted and refined a successful value chain approach. The CBT experiences were built upon rigorous community consultation, participation and capacity building; alongside full integration into the broader project context of tourism supply chain and 'whole destination' approaches. The team worked with local communities, ground handlers and tour guides, national DMC's and EU tour operators. This ensured maximum awareness, sustainability and buy-in from community members and tour operators. The project has also given new skills, voice, confidence and social capital to ethnic minority villagers, who are emerging from decades of conflict, fear and poverty.

GO TO 'THE UN INTERNATIONAL
TRADE CENTER (ITC)' WEBSITE



GRUPO ECOLÓGICO SIERRA GORDA IAP

Mexico | Category: Countryside and Biodiversity

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

GESG's mission is: To conserve natural resources and promote the sustainable development of the Sierra Gorda through citizen and institutional participation.

WHICH SDGS DOES YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY MAINLY IMPACT?

It undoubtedly has an impact on several of them. But in relation to the Skål Award our work is more related to Goal 8-Decent Work and Economic Growth, as well as 15-Life of Terrestrial Ecosystems.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

In relation to micro service companies, we have constant visits to review service standards, we have the "Sello Sabino" as a main tool, regional protocol developed by GESG as a quality tool, additional questionnaires are conducted to measure the behavior of tourism activity.

IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE SDG AS YOUR SIGNATURE GOAL, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

In relation to all the work carried out by the GESG, it would be the 13th, Climate Action, given that it is undoubtedly a reality and with more devastating effects than those of the pandemic on social welfare, the economy, the collapse of ecosystems and food production. In relation to the Skål Award, it would be Objective 8-Decent Work and Economic Growth.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST IMPACT YOUR COMPANY CREATED IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY?

Over 34 years we have developed a culture of using natural capital, basing our service offer on the conservation of the environment and integrating eco-techniques and bio-construction to minimise the impact. Currently 80% of the projects are managed by women, thus changing the social dynamics of the communities and involving in most cases a second generation of families.

GO TO 'GRUPO ECOLÓGICO SIERRA GORDA IAP' WEBSITE



WESTERN UNIVERSITY

Canada | Category: Educational programmes and Media

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

Hospitality Services at Western University is committed to working locally to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our campus community.

WHICH SDGS DOES YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY MAINLY IMPACT?

Our Hospitality Services Sustainability Actions Plan targets several of the 17 Sustainability Development Goals. We align most closely with the following SDG's:

- #2 Zero Hunger – Achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. Working to ensure access by all to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year long.
- #3 Good Health and Well-Being – Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being.
- #8 Decent Work and Economic Growth – Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- #11 Sustainable Cities and Communities – Making cities safe, inclusive, resilient and sustainable.
- #12 Responsible Consumption and Production – Using services and related products which respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources as well as emissions of waste and pollutants over the life-cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations.
- #14 Life Below Water – Conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources.
- #15 Life on Land – Protecting, restoring and promoting sustainable use of ecosystems, sustainably managing forests, desertification, and halting biodiversity loss.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

Tracking sustainability outcomes helps us establish targets for future growth and fosters the adoption of best practices. By participating in the Times Higher Education World University Ranking and the *stars* (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System), we measure our sustainability performance over time and across institutions using a common set of measurements. Measuring outcomes helps to create incentives for continual improvement toward sustainability.

IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE SDG AS YOUR SIGNATURE GOAL, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

This universal call-to-action to end poverty, protect the planet, and improve lives requires all business to apply their creativity and innovation to solve sustainable development challenges. If I were to choose one SDG as our signature goal, I would select SDG #12 – Responsible Consumption and Production; this is the area where, as a hospitality and foodservice operation, we can make the greatest environmental impact. Through our efforts in responsible sourcing, sustainable dining, waste reduction and diversion and, education, awareness and collaboration, we can make a profound contribution toward a more globally sustainable environment.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST IMPACT YOUR PROJECT CREATED IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY?

In 2019 Great Hall Catering at Western University secured the Gold Award in the Category of “Procurement Practices” in the NACUFS (National Association of College and University Foodservices) Sustainability Award for our continued commitment to raising honeybees on campus.

Sourcing ingredients produced on campus is at the forefront of the local food movement. Campus-to-kitchen food programs can not only improve procurement practices but also increase student food literacy and serve as a source of pride for food services and the university.

Currently Western is home to approximately 1 million honeybees. The honey is used by Great Hall Catering (GHC) in recipes, served with tea and coffee, and bottled for sale. Honeycombs are incorporated into the local cheese plate and beeswax is used to polish the wooden platters.

On campus honeybee hives have benefited dining operations by not only providing fresh local honey, but by initiating conversation and sparking interest and awareness of food systems and our relationship to them.

The majority of crops that we like most to eat and provide most of our nutrition (fruits, vegetables, and nuts) use animal-mediated pollination. Without pollinators, our diets would be severely limited, and it would be more difficult to acquire the variety of vitamins and minerals that we need to stay healthy. In order to maintain the diversity of our natural ecosystems, we need healthy pollinator populations to ensure that the next generation of plants will be produced.

Our on-campus honeybee program is one of our most prized sustainability initiatives at Western University.

GO TO 'WESTERN UNIVERSITY'
WEBSITE



TAMARA LEISURE EXPERIENCES

India | Category: Rural Accommodation

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

Tamara Leisure Experiences has, over the years, earned its place as a key player in the luxury hospitality space. As trendsetters in this space, we strive to push the industry towards a space that offers travellers all that they look for in a luxury experience, while staying committed to our Sustainable Development Goals. The wellbeing of the planet and its inhabitants; both present and future; is at the core of every policy at Tamara Leisure Experiences. At every property, we do this by building sustainable structures, beginning with the choice of space and the architectural designs of each property, to implementing the right technologies and innovative working practices required to operate in a sustainable and responsible way.

As an organisation, we believe in the importance of responsible tourism, respecting and supporting local culture and practices, treating all guests, employees and stakeholders with respect, and intruding on the surrounding natural environment as little as possible.

We have observed that luxury travellers are becoming more and more discerning in the way they travel. They are sensitive to environment, history, culture, and sustainability, and we at Tamara Leisure Experiences intend to do all we can to make each of our properties sustainable and sensitive; our step towards a more responsible world.

WHICH SDGS DOES YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY MAINLY IMPACT?

Corporate Sustainability is at the top of our list of SDGs. It is important to us that we operate in a manner that is responsible, sensitive, and sustainable. As a luxury brand in the hospitality sector, we begin right from the construction and establishment of our properties, their operations, waste management, policies on products and materials used within the resorts and hotels, and the manner in which guests' experiences are designed, promoted, and offered.

In addition to this, we have specific goals of '**No Poverty**' and '**Zero Hunger**' that we target with community outreach activities through the year. As an organisation, we maintain a minimum of 50% local hiring, providing employment to locals from the communities surrounding our resorts and hotels. We also make a concerted effort to support communities affected by conflict and climate-related disasters. During the floods in Kodagu, for example, we provided essentials and approved paid leave to the employees to work as volunteers in flood-affected areas. We also contributed to education expenses of children in the flood-affected areas.

Our resorts are also very sensitive to food, it's production, and waste management. The resorts produce their own compost, donating extra amounts to farmers and plantation workers around the properties. We are vigilant about reducing wastage, and often parcel edible leftovers after big events to donate to families and communities in need.

Our goals of maintaining **Clean Water & Sanitation** are met through technology put in place to ensure efficiency of water usage. In-house rainwater harvesting and sewage treatment have been implemented, and drinking water is produced within the properties to reduce dependence on packaged drinking water and plastic bottles.

It is important to acknowledge that Sustainability is a long-term and holistic commitment; one that we as an organisation has charted out for ourselves right from inception. This includes goals of being Gender Equality, It is a journey we are on, improving one step at a time each day, doing everything we can to be an inclusive, respectful, sensitive, and responsible hospitality brand.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

Sustainability is at the core of Tamara Leisure Experiences' business model. This ensures that the company views growth and viability as a long-term process. Over the years, starting with the establishment of our first resort, the company has grown to own 2 luxury nature resorts, 1 luxury business hotel, and 2 mid-segment hotels. In addition, a new launch is in the pipeline in the space of holistic wellness in Alleppey, and other projects in Kannur, Guruvayoor and Kumbakonam. The company is constantly expanding and looking for suitable opportunities to ensure the longevity of our vision.

The world is changing every day and it is important to us that every process and procedure is regularly monitored. Assessments are done on a regular basis at every Tamara property, and we are pleased to note that energy savings, compost production, efficiency, and sustainability reports improve a little bit every time. These assessments allow us to constantly be at the top of our game and ensure that we are always doing the best we can in the sustainability space.

IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE SDG AS YOUR SIGNATURE GOAL, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Responsible Production & Consumption:

Sustainable and responsible business practices is a decision; one that we, as an organisation, took very seriously right from the start. It is possible, as we have seen over the years, to offer luxury experiences in a manner that does not negatively impact the natural environment.

This is done through careful design of policy; for example, keeping the Coorg resort unfenced, using low and warm lighting around the hills, maintaining the resort as a no-plastic zone etc. It is also achieved through the implementation of innovation and technology to constantly increase the energy and resource-efficiency of the property.

Over time, we have also found that the expectations and concerns of the luxury nature traveller is slowly changing. Travellers are becoming increasingly concerned about environmental issues, and are more and more insistent on organic, eco-friendly, sustainable, and sensitive practices. We are encouraged by this, and more convinced than ever that responsible luxury is not only possible, but necessary.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST IMPACT YOUR COMPANY CREATED IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability Initiatives at The Tamara Coorg and The Tamara Kodai:

- Rainwater harvesting.
- Within property sewage treatment with re-usage of treated water.
- Composting of all organic material and production of compost within the resorts.
- No-plastic zone.
- Organic toiletries and spa products.
- Energy-efficiency measures.
- Low lighting along pathways to reduce disruption to fauna.
- Reduction of food wastage to minimum possible.

These initiatives have allowed us to offer luxury experiences and still stay energy efficient, reduce waste more and more every year, manage our own sewage and waste disposal, and produce our own compost.

In addition, Tamara Leisure Experiences makes a concerted effort to keep the respect for local communities as an important factor in any decision that is made. First and foremost, our staff is comprised of more than 50% local individuals. We believe that this has created employment opportunities to local residents, and at the same time has provided a way for our guests to have an authentic connection to the places our resorts are established in.

Certain activities at the resort are designed to celebrate the local history, culture, and produce of the region. At The Tamara Coorg, the plantation tour and the Blossom to Brew experiences allows our guests to interact with plantation workers, and understand better the fine and intricate craft of coffee-making; right from the growing of the beans, to harvesting, drying, roasting and grinding them, to the brewing of different varieties of local coffee.

At the Tamara Kodai, heritage walks allow our guests to learn about the rich history of the region, both in terms of the establishment of Kodaikanal as a settlement in colonial times, as well as in terms of the local flora and fauna and how it has changed over time. These experiences help us to remain rooted and connected with local communities, celebrating their history as deserved.

Both resorts also have stores within the property that promote the sales of local produce. This allows the surrounding communities to sell craft products, coffee, spices, honey, and lots more. Finally, Tamara Leisure Experiences also puts a lot of effort and resources into supporting local communities in need. This is done through scholarship funds for children in need, flood relief work, distribution of food and medicine during COVID, and participation in local planting activities in the region.

GO TO 'TAMARA LEISURE EXPERIENCES' WEBSITE



GLOBAL HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION

India | Category: Tour Operators - Travel Agents & Special 'Skål-Biosphere' Award

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

While the world is achieving many milestones on the frontiers of science, technology and economic development – there are still many corners of the world where the basic necessities have not reached. Globally there are 800 million people living in darkness, using pre-industrial revolution methods for their energy needs by burning fossil fuels, which is extremely harmful to their health and local environment. While some countries are discussing about how their daily needs can be more environmental friendly and sustainable, there are many countries and regions still miles away from having infrastructure for basic necessities such as steady access to electricity.

Global Himalayan Expedition (GHE)'s mission is to reach out to the indigenous communities living in the remotest regions of the world and create a fertile ground for bringing in sustainable development through clean energy infrastructure, which will act as a catalyst for faster progression on the UN SDG Goals, leaving no one behind. We believe in bringing development to the destination, rather than the villagers travelling from the destination to urban areas in search of development and better lives. We envision a Future where the villages are powered up by Clean energy with the most efficient technology, schools that have digital classrooms to enable a student in the mountains to compete in the same exam as a student from a modern city, health care facilities closer to the village so that no has to wait for the transport to the big hospital, livelihood opportunities through tourism so that no family has to leave their village and travel to far of destinations to worry about the next meal.

WHICH SDGS DOES YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY MAINLY IMPACT?

GHE's main strategy is to provide clean energy sustainable infrastructure that empowers the communities across multiple Sustainable Development Goals. Through our impact portfolio, we are able to directly impact 7 of the UN SDG Goals.

- SDG7: Clean Energy: GHE is using an innovative solution of DC Solar Micro-Grids to transition the villagers to the Forth Industrial Revolution Technology where they are able to produce and consume their own power through Solar Energy. Till date, we have setup more than 2500 Solar Grids with a total capacity of 360kW to empower 60,000 lives in the Himalayas.
- SDG 3: Good Health: Kerosene Lamps produce a lot of toxic fumes, causing respiratory and health problems. By displacing the kerosene with Solar Energy, we are able to create a direct impact on the health of the villagers. Over the last 8 years, 12000 Litres of Kerosene usage has been eliminated by providing communities with sustainable energy sources, and a reduction of 60% in respiratory and health related problems due to burning of fossil fuels.
- SDG4: Education: GHE sets up Innovation Centres with computers which provide the students access to digital education where students can access Khan Academy, Wikipedia, TED Talks in a digital format. This is enabling 7500 students across multiple regions with access to digital education.

- SDG5: Gender Equality: GHE empowers the women by taking them as engineers and training them as homestay guides. This has created a strong narrative for Gender Equality, enabling more than 300 women to be empowered.
- SDG8: Economic Growth: GHE promotes tourism in the villages and sets up homestays which result in income generation for the communities through tourism. Till date, more than 55 solar powered homestays have been setup across multiple regions, enabling an income generation of \$135000 USD for these communities.
- SDG13: Climate Action: By enabling the communities to transition from Kerosene lamps to Solar Energy with efficient LED Lights, there has been an elimination of 35000 tons of CO2 emissions from these fragile ecosystems.
- SDG17: Partnerships: GHE is working with both, the public and private sector, by creating a unique model of multistakeholder approach towards bringing energy and development access to the mountain communities.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

Once the solar micro grids are installed in each household, GHE calculates the total capacity of the grids, mitigation of carbon emission, and increased number of working hours during evening time for the communities. This episodic engagement to electrify each household shows direct progress in the impact parameters. When the community engagement turns from episodic to relational for the economic development through tourism development, GHE keep the note of parameters such as - income generation through agriculture or any local occupation already present in the village, no. of people skilled in various vocations, involvement of women in different occupation. After setting up solar homestays and promoting local tourism offers, GHE tracks the increased footfall of tourists in the village, their expenditure, increased per capita income for the community and rise in no. of local entrepreneurs. In this kind of relational engagement with local communities, the progress of these parameters are monitored annually to see if there any further assistance GHE can provide to the holistic development of the communities. This is achieved through the following means:

1. Eco-Tourism Development:
 - Provide clean energy to the remotest villages in the Himalayas through tourist expeditions.
 - Setup an entrepreneurial ecosystem for the maintenance of the solar grids.
 - Support livelihood opportunities through tourism.
 - Bring the community together and preserve the cultural heritage of Himalayas.
 - Skill Development of the local youth as homestay owners and as guides and chefs.
 - Integrating the Guide Training program of the Government of India with the local curriculum to impart specific skills.
2. Capacity Development and Homestays:
 - Setting up Solar Powered homestays and training the local community, specially women, in running the homestays.
 - Investing in upgradation of the homestay facility in partnership with the local tourism administration and the community.
3. Destination Development:
 - Creating tourism dispersal through developing new destinations for travelers to explore.
 - Developing experiences revolving around the local community with a focus on culture, heritage and festivals.
 - Bringing the unique experiences on online platforms for travelers to discover.
 - Marketing the destinations in partnership with sustainable tourism authorities globally.

IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE SDG AS YOUR SIGNATURE GOAL, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

Considering the multiplier effect of GHE's mission of providing clean and sustainable energy to communities, it can easily be said that SDG 7 – Affordable & Clean Energy is our signature goal. Access to Energy acts as the foundation on which multiple other impact layers can be built. This is a goal where direct impact with effective and innovative solutions can be created and its results are more evident. Seeing the quick transformation in their conditions by providing solar micro grids for electricity, communities get motivated to continue using the clean energy solutions for their other needs. We have seen people switching from fossil fuel to solar water heaters after using affordable and clean energy infrastructure of the access to electricity. One action triggers the movement of using developing sustainable infrastructure in these villages. This holds the capacity of turning these energy deprived villages into sustainable communities with innovative infrastructures.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST IMPACT YOUR PROJECT CREATED IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY?

GHE's strategy of providing clean energy solutions and further tourism development of the villages has created tangible impacts on environmental, social, cultural and economical fronts. By installing 340 kW of solar power in the villages, GHE has mitigated 35000 tons of carbon, and in the process, more than 60000 people living in energy deprived regions have been positively impacted by this initiative.

To make the model truly sustainable, GHE believes in the build-and-transfer mode, where the community plays a larger role in sustaining the facilities provided to them. Communities become self-reliant and those who are assigned roles of maintenance or running their homestays self-regulate. The villagers are accountable to each other, and therefore, more likely to continue the good work through the inspiration and motivation. We believe in empowering the communities to be self-sustainable where GHE plays a role of catalyst in starting a process by providing the necessary skill and infrastructure which empowers the community to meet the basic needs and catapult towards a brighter future.

GHE's tourism development initiative Mountain Homestays has developed 55 solar homestays and through various eco-tourism offerings, has generated a total revenue of \$135000 for the communities. These newly developed tourism destinations have catered to 3000 plus travellers, empowering more than 100 women entrepreneurs to confidently host the tourists coming from different parts of the world and offer the best hospitality services to them. The ongoing economic development of the communities that is based on clean energy solutions is the greatest impact achieved by GHE.

GO TO 'GLOBAL HIMALAYAN EXPEDITION' WEBSITE



THE REES HOTEL, LUXURY APARTMENTS AND LAKESIDE RESIDENCES

New Zealand | Category: Urban Accommodation

WHAT IS YOUR MISSION TO MAKE THIS WORLD A BETTER PLACE?

The Rees Hotel Queenstown is committed to policies and practices that support the goals of environmental and social protection and sustainability. The Rees Hotel has implemented a company-wide stewardship programme to pursue and develop operational practices that minimize waste and promote positive interaction between the operations of our business and the broader community in which we live.

WHICH SDGS DOES YOUR SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY MAINLY IMPACT?

Nature Conservation & Social Sustainability.

HOW DO YOU MEASURE YOUR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS?

Annual Audit by Qualmark NZ – Tourism NZ's official mark of quality.

"Qualmark provides evidence that your business has been independently validated as a quality tourism business. It provides instant recognition for customers that your business will deliver a quality experience".

IF YOU HAD TO CHOOSE ONE SDG AS YOUR SIGNATURE GOAL, WHICH ONE WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

It is difficult to choose one as all SDG's are equally important. However, nature conservation is high on our priorities in ensuring the environment is preserved and protected for future generations and the future of the world we live in.

WHAT IS THE GREATEST IMPACT YOUR COMPANY CREATED IN RELATION TO SUSTAINABILITY?

Giving back to the community and taking small steps to make the world a better place and sustainable for the future.

One example of Social Sustainability is this story [here](#).

GO TO 'THE REES HOTEL' WEBSITE





NEPAL
SKÅL
 INTERNATIONAL
 Connecting Tourism Globally
DESTINATION OF THE YEAR

“
 SAVE
 THE
 DATES
 ”

TRADE SHOWS

ITB BERLIN NOW

9-12 MARCH'21

[WEB](#)

IMEX FRANKFURT

25-27 MAY'21

[WEB](#)

WORLD TRAVEL
 MARKET AFRICA
 (CAPE TOWN)

7-9 APRIL'21

[WEB](#)

WORLD TRAVEL
 MARKET (LONDON)

1-3 NOV'21

[WEB](#)

FITUR (MADRID)

19-23 MAY'21

[WEB](#)

IMEX AMERICA
 (LAS VEGAS)

9-11 NOV'21

[WEB](#)

MATKA NORDIC
 TRAVEL FAIR
 (HELSINKI)

21-23 MAY'21

[WEB](#)

IBTM WORLD
 (BARCELONA)

30 NOV'21 - 2 DIC'21

[WEB](#)

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL CONGRESSES 2021

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
 ASIAN AREA CONGRESS

**NEW DATES TO BE
 CONFIRMED**

Srinagar, India.

NORTH AMERICAN
 SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
 CONGRESS

CANCELLED

Orlando, U.S.A.

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL
 WORLD CONGRESS

12-17 OCT'21

Québec, Canada.

THE PEOPLE OF NEPAL

Put your hands together and say Namaste and smile as they return your gesture with genuine smiles of acceptance. 'You are welcome, you are our guests' say the friendly smiles. Nepali people are some of the friendliest people in the world which is one of the reasons visitors keep coming back.

Nepal is an incredibly diverse country and home to multiple religions, race, tribes, and cultures. The country has over 100 ethnic groups and is virtually a melting pot of many (more than 90) languages and ethnicity.



PICTURE: WELCOMENEPAL.COM

DIGITAL UPDATE

Present and Future of Skål International in a Digital Age.

No one could have predicted where 2020 would take us.

The last twelve months alone have produced more digital transformation than the last decade, with every transformation effort already underway finding itself accelerated, and at scale.

Before the beginning of 2020, Skål International was immersed in its own Digital Transformation, which has allowed us to quickly face the necessary changes during this unusual and challenging year.

The pandemic has accelerated the digitalisation process and therefore Skål International has been promoting this **new way of working** for a couple of years, allowing us to speed up the processes and provide a better service.

Crises can also generate opportunities, and this was no exception.

We quickly adapted and created the new [Skål International Resource Centre](#), a place on our website that offers a collection of resources and content to keep our members up to date with the trends in the travel industry, and also offers training tools of high professional value.

A very successful chapter this year, has been the cycle of **free webinars** with experts and relevant leaders of the tourism industry, which are being attended by thousands of members and that, due to the success and comments received, we have decided to continue from now on, as a new product.

Through the **internal platform** of the web, the **officers** (members with managerial positions such as President, Secretary, Treasurer and Web Administrator) can make the necessary arrangements to access at all times the information of their clubs and update their membership data.



Given the fact that the internal area of the platform used by officers is one of the most complex functionalities, due to the large volume of operations that clubs have to carry out daily, improvements have been made this year based on the suggestions received from our users. A Dashboard has been created from which officers can access all the necessary functionalities to carry out the different operations.

Among the improvements made, membership management operations have been optimised, including approval and transfer processes, and it has been implemented the option to export lists with all the members' data in a single click.

The accounting management has also been improved with easy access to all the economic information of the club, with the management of the invoicing optimised and simplifying the process of online payments. The officers are currently testing the platform and the feedback received has been very positive.

Another great added value this year has been the creation of **websites for Clubs, Regional and Area Committees**. A great technical effort has been made so that these **corporate websites can be available by 2021**, and although the development of the websites for Area Committee were not part of this project, we managed to include them at **no additional cost!**

As we already announced, a **virtual membership card** will be issued from 2021 onwards. The card will be issued once the club has paid the international membership fee. Since the online payment tool is already available, in the 'Members' Area' of the website, clubs will be able to mark the members for whom they wish to pay, and then the system will automatically issue the virtual cards.

Members will then receive by email the link where they can download the application to view the Skål International card.

The **virtual membership card** will allow members to share professional profiles, by reading a QR Code, through which they can exchange their professional details, a very important part of a business network such as Skål International.

Members may also download the card in PDF format, which can be printed and laminated if desired.

With this decision Skål International generates significant cost savings and it is aligned with sustainability and the technological trend.

In the future, this new system will allow us to continue developing and incorporating new features in order to create for example, a Loyalty programme for our members.

The pandemic has accelerated all the processes of digitalisation, it is estimated that the changes will be advanced by approximately 5 years. Therefore, we must prepare for this new stage, as the trend is clear and fast.

From 1 January 2021, all members will have to **log in** to the new platform and enter the private section to have access to all the information, services, database and read our newsletters and magazines. This is also a measure to **reinforce the security of your data and the Skål International platform**.

For this reason, we kindly invite all our members to **update their profile** through the **'My Account'** area of the website. This will allow you to use all the Skål International Services already at your disposal and those that we will soon develop.

If you do not remember your username and password, please contact our user [support department](#).

Finally, and the most important thing, make sure you are taking advantage of the full potential of Skål International.

In the coming months of rebuilding, the best informed professionals and the best prepared companies... will be the ones to recover.

Skal.org, is not just a corporate communication website, it is the meeting place where all Skålleagues can share contacts and create networks to boost their business more quickly.

Daniela Otero
CEO
Skål International

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL BENEFITS

We keep working to ensure that Skål International members get more global benefits for being part of the organization.

ENTER THE
BENEFITS AREA



JOB'S BANK

Join us and help disrupt the
enterprise market!

ENTER THE
JOB'S BANK



RESOURCE CENTRE

We want to bring you the latest news of the sector, valuable information to build a better future. On this occasion we would like to recommend these two readings that we consider of interest:

- 6 trends for 2021: Travel's comeback story (Amadeus).
- The journey of resilient leadership (Deloitte).

NOW AVAILABLE AND
ACCESSIBLE AT OUR
RESOURCE CENTRE



GLOBAL MICE

INDUSTRY GATHERS AT

IBTM WORLD VIRTUAL 2020

The first-ever IBTM World Virtual has closed with nearly 13,000 business meetings having taken place and almost 8,300 meetings and events professionals attending over the course of the three-day event, which this year took place fully online.

Of the Hosted Buyers that attended, 30 per cent were new to the IBTM portfolio. Over 700 exhibitors attended from all over the globe, each carrying out an average of over 19 meetings with Hosted Buyers over the course of the show.

The organisers reported an impressive **92 per cent attendance at pre-scheduled meetings**, and an average meeting quality rating from both exhibitors and Hosted Buyers of 4.6 out of 5.

Commenting on the experience at IBTM World Virtual 2020, Barbara Jamison, Tourism Sector Head, London & Partners said: *“The London Convention Bureau has been delighted to exhibit at IBTM Virtual 2020 and I must congratulate the team on their outstanding help and support. They have responded quickly and efficiently to any questions and have also provided us with a number of creative platforms to promote London to the registered buyers”.*

Barbara continues: *“The technology has been easy to use and enabled our team looking after our markets in Asia Pacific, EMEA and North and South America to engage with clients across various time zones”.*

Hosted Buyer Emmanuelle Wurffel from ETSI, said: *“IBTM World Virtual 2020 just finished! As a hosted buyer, I really enjoyed this very special IBTM on-line session. I made 38 appointments in three days with hotels, conference centres and convention bureaus. The platform offered during IBTM World Virtual was excellent: easy to use, and the idea of sending the business card was a plus. Sharing the screen to display my slides was easy and quick.”*

Emmanuelle continues: *“It was very productive since the person you were talking to was checking instantly the availability of the meeting space and guest rooms. Thank you very much for offering me the pleasure to e-travel so much during these three days”.*

IBTM World Virtual featured a packed live and on-demand content programme with 87 sessions, four keynotes and more than 95 speakers covering a variety of topics designed to help meetings professionals look towards a brighter future as our industry rebuilds and recovers post pandemic.

Over 1,400 hours of live and on-demand content was viewed over the course of the show, and content will be available to view for two weeks after the event, for those who registered to attend. In addition, this year’s event saw the introduction of IBTM TV, sponsored by MeetEngland and Monaco Convention Bureau, a live and on-demand platform which streamed content from expert speakers direct to attendees’ screens. This included a variety of panel sessions, keynotes, trend reports and awards ceremonies.

Also new for this year was a programme of bespoke content for those running experiential events in the Exceptional Experiences stream, and Hosted Buyers benefitted from dedicated content tailored specifically for them with the IBTM Inspire Masterclass stream, a separate on-demand track with sessions for associations, corporates and agencies. The association stream of the Inspire Masterclass was sponsored by Korea Tourism Organization.

The online event brought together some of the world’s largest and best-known destinations and suppliers with top calibre Hosted Buyers from some of the biggest global corporations, associations and agencies. Exhibitors included Singapore Tourism Board, Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau, Adelaide Convention Bureau, Tourism Vancouver, Destination DC, The Carlton Tower Jumeirah, Visit Portugal CVB, Rhodes Bay Hotel & Spa and Bruges Meeting & Convention Centre.

Buyers attended from across the globe, including associations such as: European Society of Urology, the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific (ADFIAP), World Confederation for Physical Therapy, The International Ecotourism Society.

Major corporations attended including IBM, Michelin, Dell, Boston Consulting Group, Real Madrid C.F., Deloitte, Cook Medical, NIKE, Leroy Merlin, BBVA France, Puma Brazil, Mundipharma International Limited, Hyundai, HORIBA Medical, and Schlumberger.

Commenting at the close of IBTM World Virtual 2020, David Thompson, Event Director, IBTM World Virtual, said: *“This year has been a huge challenge for the meetings and events industry, so it’s been fantastic to come together with IBTM World Virtual, to share our experiences of the year, our learnings, make valuable connections, hear from industry experts and of course, continue to do business. We’re delighted with the feedback from the buyers and exhibitors, especially regarding the quality of meetings and the business opportunities generated and I’m incredibly proud of the entire IBTM World Virtual team for producing what has been an outstanding event”.*

IBTM World 2021 will take place at Fira Gran Via in Barcelona from 30 November – 2 December 2021.

VISIT IBTM WEB



Green light for WTM Africa 2021 live/hybrid event in April

First-of-its-kind hybrid event set for WTM Africa from 07-09 April 2021. Plan B will be to run WTM Africa as a fully virtual event on these dates.

WTM Africa will go ahead from 07-09 April 2021 in the format of a hybrid event, delivering a significant ROI for exhibitors and providing a much-needed platform for live and virtual connection between tourism industry stakeholders engaged in bringing business to Africa.

Carol Weaving, MD Reed Exhibitions Africa, unpacked the decision taken following a robust study amongst exhibitors and buyers which indicated strong support for holding a live event in April 2021. This was followed by a virtual round table discussion with key stakeholders earlier today.

"We are delighted to be able to inform our industry partners that we will be going ahead with WTM Africa as a hybrid event, incorporating the best characteristics of a live and virtual showcase of Africa".

"Our sentiment survey revealed that 88% of buyers confirmed they wanted to attend WTM Africa in 2021 and within this, a further 96% confirmed they would travel provided the regulations allowed them to do so. I'm pleased to say our king buyers have also confirmed their attendance, so it's full steam ahead as far we are concerned," says Weaving.

During the virtual discussion, the Reed Exhibitions South Africa team provided two scenarios for WTM Africa, both relevant to a hosting date of 07-09 April 2021.



Plan A will see meetings take place over three days, face-to-face, at the Cape Town Convention Centre (CTICC), with a fourth day dedicated to virtual meetings, explains **Megan Oberholzer**, Portfolio Director – Travel Tourism & Sports for Reed Exhibitions South Africa.

"With an extra virtual event day, we will cater for any international buyers who may not be able to attend the physical element of the show. The benefit to buyers and exhibitors is a greater ROI of connecting exhibitors and additional international buyers that would not have been able to attend the live event, meaning that even more meetings will be set to take place" says Oberholzer.

In the event of a COVID resurgence, the Reed Exhibitions Africa team presented a Plan B which will see the event go fully virtual over three days on the same dates, with an adjusted offer of various tailormade event packages for exhibitors.

Thorough research and preparation has been made to ensure that the live/hybrid event adheres to all stringent safety protocols and regulations. The venue will be able to accommodate 5000 visitors per day in order to allow the necessary physical distancing.

"The live/hybrid WTM Africa be the first of its kind in Africa. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back to the show after a tough year. The time is ripe for us to make travel happen together and WTM Africa is just the platform to reignite it," Oberholzer concludes.

A full recording of the virtual discussion will be available on the [Africa Travel Week Connect website](#).





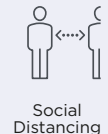
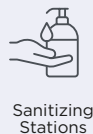
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Because we care, Best Western® Hotels & Resorts was one of the first hotel brands to implement enhance cleaning protocols with our **We Care CleanSM** program.

When you are ready to travel, we are ready to welcome you back with a full heart.



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