

Barcelona wins a new distinction for tourism sustainable city

- **The Catalan capital prevails at the Biosphere Awards for Sustainable Tourism at the Destinations category**
- **The prize-giving puts a stress on the task performed by the Barcelona City Council and *Turisme de Barcelona* and will be held in Madrid on 23 January**

Barcelona. 22 January 2014 – Thanks to the firm investment in the model of sustainable city management the Catalan capital has gone for and to becoming a great example as a promoter of responsible tourism, Barcelona will be awarded on Thursday 23 January 2014 the Biosphere Award for Responsible Tourism, overseen by the Institute of Responsible Tourism (ITR). This non-profit organization, member of the Sustainable Tourism Stewardship Council of the United Nations, has unanimously decided to present the award to Barcelona in the Destinations category.

The honour was awarded in Santa Cruz de Tenerife on 10 December 2013, and the prize-giving act will be held in Madrid on 23 January at 13.30 inside pavilion 10 at the International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR 2014). The exact venue will be the FiturKnow-how&Export at the Trade Fair Institution of Madrid (IFEMA). This new certification acknowledges tourist *industry*, which has turned responsible management of tourism into the backbone of its activity, thus becoming an international example of sustainability in its sector.

Barcelona, European city leader in sustainable tourism

As a result of a former compromise devised by the Barcelona City Council and *Turisme de Barcelona*, the Catalan first city has become a European and world capital of sustainable tourism. Adhesion to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), the

only institution for accreditation of sustainable tourism certifications worldwide, and to Barcelona's 21 Agenda, which aims to conduct govern management and policies towards sustainable development, were the base of urban sustainable tourism as a new mainstay. However, the real turning point came in 2011 with the Biosphere World Class Destination certification. The Catalan capital became the first city in the world to hold this tourist certification, awarded by the Institute of Responsible Tourism and acknowledging Barcelona as a sustainable destination that manages tourism responsibly and meets sustainable, environmental, cultural and socioeconomic managing criteria.

Barcelona Sustainable Tourism, the last programme of *Turisme de Barcelona*

After gaining top international recognition and seeking to encourage these corporate and institutional lines in social responsibility, *Turisme de Barcelona* created the programme Barcelona Sustainable Tourism willing to promote the city as a sustainable and responsible destination. Born in 2012, it is open to participation of sector-related enterprises that work for environmental, cultural, social and economic sustainability. More than 20 companies, what with establishments and services, are part of this new programme whose initial membership has already doubled during its first year.

With Barcelona Sustainable Tourism as a setting and regarding the internal management of the consortium, *Turisme de Barcelona* has implemented a number of measures and analytic tools. One of these initiatives has positioned the Barcelonan consortium among the first European organizations for tourist promotion to calculate the carbon footprint, an environmental indicator that measures its emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs).

In addition, since its creation the city of Barcelona has hosted a yearly congress about different topics in the field of responsible tourism.

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