

Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award (IEFCA) – 2017 pilot edition

The Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award is a Flagship initiative under the Objective 3 “Planning and managing Mediterranean sustainable cities” of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development (MSSD) 2016-2025. Funded by the Government of Turkey, the Istanbul Award is managed by the MAP Coordinating Unit with the assistance of Plan Bleu Regional Activity Centre and the support of the other MAP Components.

A coastal environment friendly city is a city in which people enjoy a high quality of life and where sustainable development takes place within the carrying capacity of healthy marine and coastal ecosystems.

A sustainable coastal city is a coastal city in harmony with the sea, utilizing its resources efficiently, equitably and sustainably, reducing its impact on marine and coastal environment and climate change, and managing the environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

Background

The Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention, at their 19th Meeting held in Athens, Greece, in 2016, decided to establish the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award, to be conferred to Mediterranean coastal cities according to defined process and criteria.

Local authorities were encouraged to support and participate in the award process and to the promotion of sustainable urban development in the Mediterranean region.

Objectives



The Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award aims to provide recognition to the efforts of local authorities to improve the environment and the quality of life and promote sustainable development in Mediterranean coastal towns and cities.

It also aims to encourage Mediterranean coastal towns and cities to move towards a more environment-friendly future and to enable them to serve as model-cities and inspire sustainable urban development in the region.

The Award is also an opportunity to promote public awareness of the importance of coastal cities and communities and encourage efforts in addressing the pressures to the marine and coastal environment associated with urban development.

Application

Small towns and metropolitan cities were invited to submit their applications to the IEFCA in partnership with NGOs, the scientific community, the private sector or other stakeholders. The call for applications was open from 15 May to 30 June 2017 and was promoted through a specific communication campaign.

The Secretariat received 17 applications which were submitted by local authorities of coastal towns or cities from the Mediterranean region.

Evaluation

The evaluation of applicant cities was undertaken applying various criteria classified under four main categories: Nature and Biodiversity Protection; Built Environment; Social, Economic and Cultural Sustainability; and Governance.

The historical perspective of each candidate city was also considered given the importance of improvement towards sustainability, the progress achieved, as well as the city's efforts and perspectives for further improvement in the future.

Selection

The selection of the winner of the Istanbul Environment Friendly City Award was carried out through a rigorous, inclusive and transparent process in three phases:

1. **Initial screening** by the Secretariat of the MAP-Barcelona Convention to ensure that the candidate cities fulfilled the eligibility criteria and that the submission forms were correctly filled. Seven applicant cities were preselected in this phase: Two large metropolitan areas (Izmir, Turkey and Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel) with a well-defined vision on future development; and five "seaside resorts" (Bodrum, Turkey; Chios, Greece; Crikvenica, Croatia; El Haouaria and Nabeul, Tunisia), with environmental sustainability projects focusing especially on sustainable tourism development.
2. **Short-listing** of three candidate cities for the Award by the Technical Committee comprised by one representative of each MAP Component supported by three qualified independent experts. The committee prepared an evaluation report, which was submitted and approved by the Bureau of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention.
3. **Selection of the winning city including through a public voting process** which was open for a period of three weeks to derive a ranking between the three short-listed cities. Based on this ranking, the Jury (Bureau Members and President of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development) unanimously selected the winning city.

Awarding

The Award was conferred to the winning city, the Metropolitan Municipality of Izmir, during the Ministerial session of the 20th Ordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention (COP20) held in Tirana, Albania, on 19 December 2017.

The Mayor of Izmir, Mr. Aziz Kocaoğlu received the award from H.E. Ms. Ornela Çuçi, Deputy Minister of Tourism and Environment of Albania, who congratulated the municipality on its exemplary implementation of the sustainable urban political agenda in the region. In his acceptance speech, Mr. Kocaoğlu described Izmir as a vibrant, multicultural city, steeped in history, where living in a clean and healthy environment was viewed as a fundamental right.



Challenges and the way forward

Based on the lessons learned through the successful 2017-pilot edition of the IEFCA, the initiative will be sustained, focusing on improving the process.

Communication and outreach efforts should be increased, with the support of the MCSD Members, MAP Partners, and other stakeholders. The role of the awarded city is also important to support visibility and inspire a peer learning approach.

Guidelines for applicants should be provided with an improved application form in order to facilitate homogeneous applications. Submissions should present a systematic quantitative analysis based on existing indicators (SDG 11, MSSD, SCP Action Plan, etc.). In addition, the method of evaluation should be revised and a relevant assessment grid developed.

Finally, the possibility of granting separate awards for large and small cities should also be considered.

Resources

IEFCA 2016-2017: <https://tinyurl.com/ycg3bwpw>

IEFCA: Izmir Metropolitan Municipality is the Winner: <https://tinyurl.com/ya3jncbl>

An Award only for Mediterranean Environment Friendly Cities: <https://tinyurl.com/y7bto8z2>

Decision IG.22/19 - IEFCA: <https://tinyurl.com/yanp5uy5>



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