



SEED Initiative

Supporting Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development

Making sustainable development happen: SEED announces its 2008 Award Winners

IUCN Headquarters, Gland, 21 August 2008.

Five highly resourceful and innovative local entrepreneurial partnerships which can contribute to the Millennium Development Goals were today celebrated as the SEED Initiative announced its 2008 *SEED Awards for Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development*.

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN's Director General said: "These SEED Award Winners have real talent and are among those who can lead the way in showing how it is possible to take action to solve some of the major problems facing the world today and at the same time to act responsibly."

Achim Steiner, UNEP's Executive Director said: "The SEED Awards again underline that creative and entrepreneurial solutions to many of the pressing challenges facing the world are being found. It is now vital that these shining examples are federated and mainstreamed across communities and countries to maximize their undoubted and potentially significant impact."

Kemal Dervis, UNDP's Administrator said: "By rewarding and supporting grassroots entrepreneurial partnerships committed to contributing to their community and the environment, the SEED Awards are playing an important role in helping to bring about positive change. The winners identified show all of us how, working together, we can make real progress towards meeting our development goals."

The 5 winning partnerships, each of which will receive from SEED a package worth \$25,000 of tailor-made support services, international exposure, and networking activities to assist its development from a project idea to a sustainable enterprise and to create real impact, are:

- In Brazil, partners in *Pintadas Solar* are triggering community approaches in the semi-arid Northwest to water-efficient crop irrigation and biofuel production to address climate change adaptation and mitigation, and food security and poverty.
- In Cameroon, *Guiding Hope* partners plan to expand their production of organic, fair-trade honey from the remote Adamoua savannah to reach international markets

and to become Cameroon's largest exporter of high quality beeswax, as well as building an international market chain for the community-owned soap- and candle-making businesses.

●● In India, local businesses and an NGO have teamed up with a UK university and identified an essential oil from high altitude Himalayan oregano as an antimicrobial agent that could be used in handsoaps and surface disinfectants in hospitals as a preventative against the bacterium Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).

●● In Nicaragua, a university research centre, a women's cooperative, an NGO and experts on solar technology will launch a cooperative business that will produce and market solar products made from recycled solar cells and solar cookers adapted for local needs.

●● In Thailand, tsunami-affected communities on the Andaman coast plan to expand employment opportunities through community-based tourism while the proceeds will support local projects such as handicraft marketing, a community centre, recycling, and youth-led conservation programmes.

An International Jury, composed of global experts across a range of sectors, advised the SEED Initiative on the selection. Jury members were deeply impressed by the promise of these projects, each of which is likely to be able to scale up its activities considerably; some might be replicated elsewhere.

This third round of International Awards represents a significant scaling up of SEED's efforts: formerly a biennial competition, the SEED Awards are now given annually. The 2008 call for proposals was met by an overwhelming response: close to 400 applications from over 100 countries worldwide, representing the collaborative efforts of some 1629 organizations from the private and public sector, including non-governmental organizations, women's groups, labour organizations, public authorities, international agencies and academia.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About the SEED Initiative

“Supporting Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development” – **the SEED Initiative** – is a global network for action on sustainable development partnerships, founded by **IUCN, UNDP and UNEP**, to deliver concrete progress towards the internationally-agreed, aspirational goals in the UN’s Millennium Declaration and the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002.

SEED focuses on **locally-driven, entrepreneurial partnerships** in developing countries. Its goal is to **inspire, promote and build capacity** to support the many innovative ways in which diverse groups are working together to improve incomes and strengthen livelihoods; tackle poverty and marginalisation; and manage and conserve natural resources and ecosystems.

Through an annual, global awards scheme SEED **reveals a wealth of novel ways of doing business** through partnerships and provides international recognition to the most promising enterprises.

SEED Award Winners then receive a tailored package of support services to help them to **become established and to increase their impact**. This includes access to relevant expertise and technical assistance, meeting new partners and building networks, developing business plans and identifying sources of finance.

By tracking their progress as they grow, SEED also seeks to **increase technical knowledge and understanding** of these small-scale, locally-led activities. It studies what partnerships like these need to succeed and grow and how successful ideas can be replicated elsewhere.

SEED then uses its **extensive network, publications and events** to promote these innovative approaches, to disseminate its findings to partnerships practitioners and policy and decision-makers and to provide a platform for shared learning and collaboration.

SEED Partners

Partners in the SEED Initiative are IUCN (the World Conservation Union); the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); and the governments of Germany, the Netherlands, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. SEED also works closely with GlobalGiving and the UN’s Global Compact.

SEED International Jury

The SEED Initiative is extremely grateful to the 2008 International Jury – a panel of experts in various fields of sustainable development - who have kindly given their time to help to identify the most promising partnerships from the nearly 400 applications received this year. Jury members were Eugenio da Motta Singer, founder of the Instituto PHAROS and President of EZ CARBON SOLUTIONS in Brazil; Kofi Nketsia-Tabiri, Regional Manager of E+Co Africa; Yves Renard, co-founder of the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute and independent expert; Jennifer Seif, Executive Director of Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa; Hanumappa Sudarshan, founder of VGKK and Karuna Trust in India; Nino Tevzadze, Regional Coordinator for the Caucasus Environmental NGO Network; Sarah Timpson, Senior Adviser to UNDP on Community-based Initiatives; George Varughese, President of the Development Alternatives Group in India.