

PRESS RELEASE

DATE: 28th November 2013

EMBARGO: Immediate Release

International judging panel arrives in China for LivCom Awards 2013

An international panel of judges has arrived in China to review the work of finalists at the UN-backed International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom) Xiamen, China (28th November- 2nd December 2013).

Kaarin Taipale (Finland) an architect and sustainable development and urban studies expert and **Torgeir Esig Sorensen** (Norway) an urban planning specialist and former chairman of IFPRA World, join the distinguished panel of international judges at LivCom 2013 for the first time.

Dr Taipale, 65, is currently Senior Researcher at the Centre for Knowledge and Innovation Research of the Helsinki School of Economics (CKIR) at the Aalto University School of Economics, in Helsinki, Finland.

From 2006-2010 she was chair and coordinator of the UN-initiated Marrakech Task Force on Sustainable Buildings and Construction with Finland as lead country. She is a former chair of ICLEI, Local Governments for Sustainability.

Mr **Esig Sorensen** was chair of International Federation of Parks and Recreation (IFPRA) from 2003-2006 and has been president of the organisation since 2010. He is also a past chairman of the Norwegian Forum for Local Environmental Management (1990-95). He has a masters in Landscape Architecture and is the former Chief Environmental Officer for the City of Stavanger.

New Zealand born **Rob Small** is LivCom's head judge. Now based in Australia, he is the chief executive of Colac Otway Shire Council. He is the former President of IFPRA, is qualified in botany, horticulture and business management and has a specialist interest in open and green space planning and urban design.

Evelyn Alemanni (USA) served as mayor of Elfin Forest, California for a number of years. She is a member of the board of directors and a judge for America in Bloom. She also judges for Communities in Bloom in Canada and has judged more than 110 towns in nine countries. She is the author of Best Ideas, in which she has compiled in pictures and words more than 2000 best practices of American cities.

Christo Coetzer (RSA) is a past president of IFPRA and a president of the World Consultation of Green Development in South Africa. His area of specialism is in construction and landscaping of sports fields and has worked in this capacity for FIFA.

Gabriel De Buyssher (Belgium) has a Master's degree in Bio-Engineering. He has worked as a senior manager in public parks and recreational facilities and was Director of the Integrated Mobility Network of the Flemish Region – a large infrastructure investment programme within the European Union.

Jos De Wael (Belgium) has a Master's degree in Horticulture from the University of Ghent and is managing director of the Flemish Federation of Park Administrators. He is also editor in chief of Groencontact a professional magazine on parks and public green spaces.

Susan Flack (UK) has recently retired from a career in public administration at both central and local government level. She has a particular interest in community development and heritage management.

Samuel McCully (Slovenia) studied landscape and horticulture in Australia and was involved in commercial landscaping in Sydney before working abroad in England, Belgium, France and Italy. He is a former World Commissioner for IFPRA, a

landscape and parks holistic consultant and life member of the International Dendrology Society.

Steve Palframan (UK) is a retired local government officer and former Deputy Chief Executive of a British local authority, he has expertise across the range of functions of local government including planning, environmental health, finance, leisure and culture, parks and community services. He has been a LivCom judge for a number of years.

Prof Dirk Schnurr (Germany) has an engineering background and is a specialist in renewable energy and heat technology. His work focuses on promoting energy efficiency in local government and planning.

Yoritaka Toshiro (Japan) is an Emeritus Professor in the Department of Environmental Science and Landscape Architecture at Chiba University. He is President of the Japanese Institute of Landscape Architecture and has worked closely with Tokyo Metropolitan Parks, Japan. He has been a LivCom judge for a number of years and has visited more than 150 cities and towns.

Krista Vilta (Estonia) has a Masters degree in environmental technology from Tartu University in Estonia and is an environmental department leader in her municipality and a lecturer in local government management.

The winning communities in the global awards scheme for civic environmental achievement will be announced at a ceremony in Xiamen, China on Monday 2nd December.

Founder and chief executive Alan Smith said: “We are delighted to welcome our new judges to LivCom’s distinguished judging panel all of whom bring unrivalled experience and are respected in their sectors. The role of the judges at the finals is all-important – they have to really get under the skin of a city or project proposal and understand its true benefit and legacy.”

A total of 60 communities are represented at the finals.

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Note to editors:

The International Awards for Liveable Communities (The LivCom Awards) was launched in 1997 and is endorsed by the United Nations Environment Programme, with which it partners an MoU.

LivCom is non-political, embracing all nations and cultures, and over 50 countries are represented within the Awards. LivCom Awards are made annually in three categories covering Whole Cities, Sustainable Projects and a Bursary Award.

The LivCom Awards are the only forum in which International best practice may be observed and developed, and participation in the Awards is an investment in the future of a community. Observers are welcome to attend.

LivCom Awards 2013

Finalists

Venue: Xiamen, China, 28th November to 2nd December 2013

Category A: Population up to 20,000

Agueda, Portugal

Birdhill, Republic of Ireland

Ewang Community, Yilan County, Chinese Taipei

Fu Xing Community, Ruisui Township, Hualien County, Chinese Taipei

Guan-Fu Community, Taichung City, Chinese Taipei

Inis Oirr, Republic of Ireland

Jiantan Township, Taipei City, Chinese Taipei

Julianstown and District Community Association, Republic of Ireland

Learmont Community Development Group Ltd, Northern Ireland

Longshan Community, Tainan City, Chinese Taipei

Pinxi District, New Taipei City, Chinese Taipei

Togo Community, Houbi District, Tainan City, Chinese Taipei

Zhuzihu Community, Taipei City, Chinese Taipei

Category B: Population 20,001 to 75,000

City of Coral Gables, USA

City of Grande-Synthe, France

Community of Szentes Town, Hungary

Cyberjaya, Malaysia

Dashu District, Kaohsiung City, Chinese Taipei

Goseong-gun, South Korea

Jiaoxi Township, Yilan County, Chinese Taipei

Jihlava, Czech Republic

Marathon Municipality, Greece

Municipality of Kaposvar, Hungary

