



**CTO's Successful Implementation of the European Program  
"European Destinations of Excellence - EDEN " and  
the Award to Troodos as "Best Emerging Rural Destination - Cyprus"**

The Cyprus Tourism Organisation has successfully implemented the European Program **European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN)**, and has awarded Troodos as **"Best Emerging Rural Destination - Cyprus"**.

The EDEN program, which is co-financed by the Tourism Unit of the European Commission, had 10 European nations as participants and each one has selected its own national winning destination [Pielachtal-Austria, Durbuy-Belgium, Sveti Martin na Muri-Croatia, Troodos-Cyprus, Florina-Greece, Specchia-Italy, Clonakity-Ireland, Kuldiga-Letonia, Nadur-Malta and Orseg-Hungary].

In order to select the **Best Emerging Rural Destination** in Cyprus, CTO launched in March 2007 a National Competition. Candidacies were submitted by 3 regional bodies: Troodos Regional Tourism Body, Larnaca Development Company and the Pafos Tourism Committee (Chamber of Commerce, Pafos).

Accepting an invitation by the European Commission, CTO presented the Cyprus EDEN project to the EU Tourism Advisory Committee in Brussels, on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007. The project served as a "best practice case" for the encouragement of more European countries to participate in the new EU's Call for Proposals for the EDEN 2007 program.

Troodos is included in the select group of the 10 European "Best Emerging Rural Destinations" promoted in a pan European campaign by the European Commission and CTO. The various means of promotion include a 20-page colour brochure, 2 DVDs [3 and 12 minutes] as well as the Cyprus EDEN website - [www.rural-cyprus.com](http://www.rural-cyprus.com), and the EU website.

The European Commission has decided to promote and award the 10 European EDEN projects and winning destinations, during the European Tourism Forum which took place in Portugal 25-26 October 2007, and has invited 2 representatives from each participating country to attend the EDEN Awards Ceremony and EDEN Exhibition. The Cyprus invitees were Ms. Maro Kazepi - Cyprus EDEN Manager and Mr. Panagiotis Papadopoulos, representative of the Troodos Regional Tourism Body.

During the EDEN Awards Ceremony, honored by Mr. Gunter Verheugen - V.P. of the European Commission, a promotional film for Troodos was presented, followed by a speech by Ms. Maro Kazepi, Tourist Officer CTO - Cyprus EDEN Coordinator, in the presence of Mr. Andreas Panagides, Vice Chairman of CTO and Mr. Panagiotis Papadopoulos, representative of the Troodos Regional Tourism Body. The EDEN Award Ceremony was broadcasted live through the European Commissions website.

The 10 winning «Best Emerging Rural Destinations” were promoted during a special EDEN Exhibition where each country had its own exhibition stand. The EDEN Exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Pedro Ortun, European Commission’s Official, and Mr. Bernardo Trindade of the Ministry of Tourism of Portugal, before the official opening of the European Tourism Forum. At the Cyprus exhibition stand, special promotional materials on the Cyprus EDEN project and Troodos were available and traditional local products were offered to the visitors.

This prestigious Award is of high importance for Cyprus and in line with the objectives of the Strategic Tourism Plan of the island which emphasise sustainable tourism development and the promotion of special interest tourism including the revitalisation and promotion of Rural Cyprus.

The pan-european calibre of the EDEN Award is expected to provide winning destinations with a credible, universally acknowledged Award which will facilitate their marketing, promotion and general visibility on the world’s tourist map.

It is a great honour for Cyprus and Troodos to be part of the select group of the 10 “Best Emerging Rural Destinations” which opens a new window of opportunity to develop future “Networks of Excellence” and “Networks of the Winning Destinations” for the further development of cooperation programs, exchange of best practice experiences, as well as joint promotional activities at the European level.

Such profile achievements in european programs are a great honor for CTO and will be exploited effectively for the promotion of Troodos, the “Best Emerging Rural Destination-Cyprus”, and the networking with other European rural destinations for the exchange of experiences as well as for further cooperation.

For further information on the Cyprus EDEN please contact:

Ms. Maro Kazepi  
Cyprus EDEN Coordinator  
Cyprus Tourism Organisation

email: [Maro.Kazepi@visitcyprus.com](mailto:Maro.Kazepi@visitcyprus.com)

web: [www.rural-cyprus.com](http://www.rural-cyprus.com) [www.visitcyprus.biz](http://www.visitcyprus.biz)



With the EDEN Award [from left – right], Mr. Andreas Panagides – Vice Chairman CTO, Mr. Gunter Verheugen – Vice President & Commissioner EU, Ms. Maro Kazepi - EDEN Project Manager CTO and Mr. Panagiotis Papadopoulos - Troodos



At the Cyprus EDEN Exhibition Stand, Mr. Francesco Ianniello –Tourism Unit EU, Ms. Maro Kazepi-EDEN Project Manager CTO, Mr. Panagiotis Papadopoulos –Troodos and Ms. Girma Anuskeviciutea –Tourism Unit EU