

# Theme Resorts & Spas Wins



(L-R): Janith Iddawala, Assistant Manager - Group Business Development and Sustainability; Maxime Wickramasinghe, Director; Chandra Wickramasinghe, Chairman; and Chamin Wickramasinghe, CEO with the award.



Environment & Sustainability Society after a cleanup project.

Theme Resorts & Spas' unwavering commitment to sustainability was reaffirmed at the Asia Corporate Excellence & Sustainability Awards 2020 by winning the award of 'Sustainability Rising Star' under the sustainability category. ACES awards is organized by MORS group and is considered to be one of the most reputed accolades that recognises inspiring leaders and sustainability advocates cross-industry and across Asia. Amidst tremendous competition from across the region, the jury panel admired Theme Resort's commitment to sustainable development by actioning diverse solutions to sustainability challenges faced by the company especially during a pandemic centric time period. The award was presented to Theme Resorts & Spas in recognition of its efforts in creating new pathways and piloting change especially through grassroot sustainable initiatives.

The overarching sustainable policy of Theme Resorts & Spas is based on two

fundamental pillars: environment and social, highlighting its formal pledge to the protection, conservation and upliftment of the environmental and social bottom lines within and beyond the company whilst driving sustainable economic growth. The twin pillars of sustainability have been developed to encompass some of the key impact areas of the tourism industry; such as the environment, employees, local community, culture and heritage. Some examples of its environmental sustainability efforts include the usage of renewable energy, comprehensive waste management systems (including the company's very own paper recycling plant located at Aliya Resort & Spa) and the maintenance of in-house organic gardens that contribute to the overall fruits and vegetables requirement in most of its hotels. Given the downtime created as a result of the persisting pandemic situation, the company has ventured into new avenues such as Agro-tourism with the active participation of company staff members as well. Moreover, some initiatives undertaken for the upliftment of the local community includes generating employment through the creation of job opportunities within the hotels where it prioritizes hiring from the local community, sourcing hotel day-to-day requirements from surrounding communities to stimulate local economy and having dedicated corporate social responsibilities initiatives specifically aimed at the marginalized rural communities. They provide employees with sustainability education and training to improve their knowledge on sustainable business operations, and encourage employees to actively take part in the company's sustainability initiatives through its resort-wide environment and sustainability society.

Reconstruire et Vivre (Rebuild & Live), the long-standing CSR arm founded and run by the founders and directors of Connaissance De Ceylan and Theme Resorts & Spas is an umbrella initiative that collectively conducts as well as coordinates a number of socio-economic development projects in various parts of the country with the aim of bettering the lives of marginalized local communities. The company's latest sustainability initiative Biodiversity Educational Research Initiative (BERI) is developed to address one of the longstanding sustainability related concerns in Sri Lanka – biodiversity conservation. The main scope of BERI is to facilitate research promotion and education for local and international students, researchers as well as other interested stakeholders on Sri Lankan biodiversity.