PRESS RELEASE

**Ljubljana - European Green Capital 2016 - is preparing for a prestigious global event for sustainable tourism**

**World celebrates green tourism in Slovenia: Global Green Destinations Day**

**On World Tourism Day, 27th September, a two-day conference, Global Green Destinations Day (27-28.9.2016) is taking place in Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia. The flagship green destinations event is planned on a global scale and will bring together leading experts in sustainable development and green tourism, opinion leaders, representatives of destinations, associations, hoteliers and tourist operators who strive for sustainable development in tourism. The main partner and co-organiser of the event is Ljubljana Tourism, in cooperation with the Slovenian Tourist Board. The capital of Slovenia has won the candidacy for the green conference because of its prestigious title of European Green Capital 2016. The Global Green Destinations Day programme also presents the exclusive awards ceremony for the Top 100 Sustainable Destinations 2016, featuring the most successful sustainable tourism destinations of the world, as well as the best providers of green solutions in the tourism sector, who will receive awards for their responsible environmental and social performance.**

**The European Green Capital 2016 and one of the 5 greenest countries on the planet are hosting the best-rated Green Destinations Worldwide**

The 2-day international event, supported by the *Global Sustainable Tourism Council* and organised by the international organisation Green Destinations and the Institute of Sustainable Tourism GoodPlace, represents a living laboratory of green solutions in tourism and examples of good (green) practice. The main topics of the event will be debated at special discussion and study panels, which will address the key aspects of sustainable development in tourism, the development of smart cities and local communities, green transport for today and tomorrow, social change, sustainable management and education on green tourism.

**The opportunity of the year for connecting and networking in the field of sustainable tourism**

Global Green Destinations Day will bring together leading sustainability-oriented destinations from around the world, tourism operators, hoteliers, representatives of companies that offer practical green solutions in tourism, and representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions active in the field of planning sustainable policies. In addition to the nomination of the 100 greenest destinations, the key mission of the event is to allow participants to make new connections and access strategic partnerships and international networks. The organisers and partners aim is in fact to promote a brighter, more connected and sustainable future in tourism.

**Presenting the Top 100 Green destinations of the world**

**Top 100 Green destinations 2016** represents a continuation of the initiative of National Geographic Traveller and each year gives recognition of excellence to destinations that have successfully introduced sustainable measures in tourism. The aim of the initiative of the international organisation Green Destinations, which is headquartered in the Netherlands, is to encourage public and private sector and civil initiatives within destinations all over the world to participate in introducing sustainable practices in tourism. Green solutions contribute to balanced development at the ecological, social and economic levels, which together constitute the three pillars of sustainability.

**Destinations for future generations and Top 10 green solutions in the tourism industry**

The theme of this year's selection is *"Destinations for Future Generations",* which serves as a platform for promoting practices which support the unique characteristics of the destinations, biodiversity, the balance between protection and accessibility of natural and cultural heritage, and the sustainable development of local communities.

The second initiative presents the **Top 10 green solutions** and rewards the most innovative visions in the field of infrastructure and technology which allow tourism providers to use green solutions in tourism.

**The awards ceremony of Quality Destinations, Quality Coast and Slovenia Green certificates**

The final selection of destinations within the category Top 100 will be the result of both the experts’ assessment and a public vote. The main ceremony, on World Tourism Day, 27th September, will reveal the best destinations in the world in terms of sustainable development. The selected destinations will receive the prestigious Quality Coast, Quality Destinations and Slovenia Green certificates. The latter is the pride of Slovenia, which is the first country in Europe that has been assessed according to international standards of sustainability. The Green Scheme of Slovenian tourism is part of the national programme and its main aim is to promote sustainable business models in tourism. It was established in 2015 by the Slovenian Tourist Board in partnership with the Institute of Sustainable Tourism GoodPlace (accredited partner Green Destinations).

**From inspirational lectures to the Ljubljana classroom - European Green Capital 2016**

The event offers a varied programme which includes round tables and workshops on sustainable forms of development of destinations, sustainable hotel management and green marketing. Among the most interesting experiences is the **Ljubljana green outdoor classroom**, which will present the cities green points and the sustainability measures which brought Ljubljana the title of **European Green Capital 2016**. Did you know that Ljubljana was the first capital of the European Union to achieve a **Zero Waste Management Strategy**, and that its town centre is fully closed to motorised traffic?

**Green-healthy-active study tours across Slovenia for a genuine experience of sustainable tourism**

The most exciting part of the programme is the study tours, which will enable participants to experience the best green experiences in Slovenia, the land between the Alps, the Mediterranean sea, the Pannonian plains and the Karst. Slovenia, one of the greenest countries in the world, impresses everyone with its incredible natural wealth of forests and healthy water. The natural drinking water, which is among the highest quality in the world, flows from every tap, and can be tasted in the middle of the city at one of the many drinking fountains. In Ljubljana alone you can find more than 30 of them. A popular feature of Slovenia is also its excellent wines and other delicacies, which often come on a plate straight from the home garden.

**Global Green Day Destinations, alongside the Bled Strategic Forum, is the central event of sustainable tourism, the Slovenian Tourist Organisation’s key development priority.**