

PRESS RELEASE

FROM The Cooley Peninsula Tourist Office Carlingford Co Louth

DATE 20th September 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EUROPEAN TOURISM DAY

&

4th EDEN NETWORK MEETING



28th – 27th September 2010

**The European Commission BERLAYMONT building 1st floor
Walter Hallstein room (WHALL) 200 rue de la Loi 1049
Brussels**

Carlingford & The Cooley Peninsula, winner of the 2008 European Destination of Excellence for Ireland is to represent Ireland at the European Tourism Day at the European Commission Charlemagne building in Brussels this week. The tourism events held on behalf of the European Commission Directorate-General Enterprise and Industry in Brussels on the 27 – 28 September 2010 will follow the debates of the European Tourism Unit on the European Cultural routes.

The 3 other winning Irish destinations- Clonakilty Co Cork (2007), Sheeps Head Co Cork (2009) and this years winners - Loop Head from Co Clare will also be attending the EDEN Awards Ceremony and gala dinner where the 2010 winners will be officially presented with their award and sign the Brussels Declaration. The second day of the conference will focus on the business of the entire European EDEN Network which now consists of 52 destinations from 22 countries within Europe. Frances Taylor from Carlingford & The Cooley Peninsula who is the current coordinator of Irelands national EDEN Network, will make a presentation to the European network as the newly appointed Project Leader under Funding and Organizational Issues on the Steering Committee of the European EDEN Network.

‘This appointment reflects how well Ireland is received in Brussels’ said Frances Taylor. ‘Ireland hosted the first European Destination of Excellence Network conference in Cork in 2009 and we are the first country to have initiated its own internal national EDEN network. ‘Fáilte Ireland work hard to ensure that the Irish destinations are professionally prepared and access the opportunities offered within this project’. We have benefited hugely from winning this award. One of the main aims of the competition is to disperse visitors throughout the lesser known destinations within Europe and we are definitely experiencing that in Carlingford & The Cooley Peninsula. We are recording an increase

in visitors in 2009 and in 2010 which reflects a distinct shift in our profile status and the visitors that are finding us’.

The European Destinations of Excellence Network last met in Kuomo, Finland in May this year to discuss sustainable indicators, branding and management structure of the network.

What is EDEN

EDEN is the acronym for European Destinations of Excellence, a project promoting sustainable tourism development models across the European Union. The project is based on national competitions that take place every year and result in the selection of a tourist “destination of excellence” for each participating country. Through the selection of destinations, EDEN effectively achieves the objective of drawing attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations. It enhances the visibility of emerging European destinations, creates a platform for sharing good practices across Europe and promotes networking between awarded destinations.

This European quest for excellence in tourism is developed around an annual theme, chosen by the Commission together with the relevant national tourism bodies. This theme functions as a leitmotif: so far, rural tourism, intangible heritage, protected areas and aquatic tourism have been the main EDEN themes.

The key feature of the selected destinations is their commitment to social, cultural and environmental sustainability. The recipients of the award are emerging, little known European destinations located in the 27 Member States and candidate countries. The EDEN project helps to spread the sustainable practices used in the chosen destinations across the Union and to turn these places into all-year-round venues. The process thus aims to help de-congest over-visited tourist destinations.

The development of this project is backed by the European Commission which launched the project in 2006 and still plays a crucial coordinating role. Its tasks include encouraging dialogue among stakeholders, co-financing the selection procedures, and coordinating a comprehensive communication campaign.

ENDS

PRESS ONLY

Frances Taylor

085 823 0322