



## The European Citizens' Award

### Voting Rules

**The following terms govern the public vote in the European Citizens' Award of the Natura 2000 Award, organised by the European Commission and the Natura 2000 Award Secretariat.**

**Further information on the Award, how to participate in it and its previous editions can be found on the following website:**

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/index_en.htm)

#### 1 Purpose

The purpose of these voting rules is to protect the impartiality and objectivity of the vote as well as to ensure transparency by informing voters and participants about the relevant processes.

#### 2 Selection of finalist applications

In order to ensure the quality of the applications included in the public vote, all eligible applications are assessed by independent experts against five criteria: effectiveness, originality, durability, costs and benefits and replicability.

The result of this process is a short list of finalists, all of which are put forward to the public vote.

Further information can be found on the following website:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/the-award/selection-and-evaluation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/the-award/selection-and-evaluation/index_en.htm)

#### 3 Procedure for submitting a vote

Votes for the European Citizens' Award can be cast online on the dedicated website from 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 to 23.59 hrs CET on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020. This period may be extended if necessary.

Voters will be asked to confirm that the details entered are correct by clicking a link sent by email. This is necessary to complete the process and submit a valid vote.

The European Commission and the Natura 2000 Award Secretariat cannot be held liable for any technical difficulties or outages encountered on the voting platforms. Nor can they be held liable for any damage, costs or other expenses directly or indirectly incurred in voting.



## 4 Data processing

The procedure described above requires you to submit personal data, namely your name and email address.

By submitting your name and email address you are giving consent to the processing of this information, solely for the purpose of ensuring the proper conduct of the vote. Your details will not be used for any other purpose or kept on file after the competition has ended.

A detailed privacy statement according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) can be found under the following link:

[https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/how-to-apply/faq/index\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/how-to-apply/faq/index_en.htm)

## 5 Eligibility

Each person may only cast and validate one vote. The vote must be cast and then validated by the same person.

To participate in the vote, they need to enter their first name, surname and email address in the boxes provided and consent to the terms and conditions.

The European Commission and the Natura 2000 Award Secretariat reserve the right to take all measures to protect the impartiality and objectivity of the vote and, if necessary, to change or modify the rules of the poll or to cancel it. This is without prejudice to the provisions on the processing of voter's personal data.

For the same purpose, the suspected use of bots, manipulations of the votes or the draws or any other automated process to vote may result in disqualification at the sole discretion of the European Commission and the Natura 2000 Award Secretariat.

The European Commission and the Natura 2000 Award Secretariat, in its sole discretion, further reserves the right to disqualify any business or person suspected of tampering with the voting process or otherwise attempting to undermine the legitimate operation of the poll.

## 6 Early close of voting

If for any reason, any aspect of the voting process does not run as planned or if interference with the outcome of the vote is suspected, the European Commission and the Natura 2000 Award Secretariat expressly reserve the right, at their sole discretion, to cancel, terminate, suspend, modify the contest or to close the voting earlier than planned without prior notice.

## 7 Severability

Should any of these terms and conditions be or become wholly or partially invalid, the remaining clauses will still apply. Instead of the invalid provision, a lawful one that comes closest to achieving its object and purpose will be applied. The same will apply by analogy if there is a gap in these terms and conditions.



## **8 Applicable law and competent court**

Any dispute arising from the application, the interpretation or the validity of the present rules and this campaign shall be governed by Belgian law and any dispute arising shall be exclusively submitted to the competent court of Brussels.

## **9 Contact**

For more information about the Natura 2000 Award or the European Citizens' Award please visit the website or contact the helpdesk on:

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/contact-us/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards/contact-us/index_en.htm)