

Category E judges: **Rob Small (NZ)**; Gabe de Buysscher (Bel); Lway Nakasha (UAE)

Their comments:

Day one

“Dealing with growth in global and local populations is in the minds of many contestants. Growth is seen often as a good thing from an economic perspective. But the paradox between economic prosperity and emerging issues such as food and water security is also become evident. In one area in Taiwan, the paradigm that is being pursued is a return to truly organic land management in a rural district adjacent to Taipei. The change in land use and the organic produce itself is in itself creating a local tourism interest.

“Community consultation is also very much in evidence with more and more community leaderships trying to tap into the people’s perceptions of the community that they want to live in.”

Day two

“The standard today was extremely high. Some communities are beginning to fully integrate low carbon economies and principles into their approaches. This is a significant paradigm shift. Things such as changing farming methods from chemicals to organic manures and low or no pesticides.

“As the globe exceeds seven billion people, by the end of October, communities are reflecting on what growth they may be able to accommodate.

“It is fair to say that most communities appear to be grossly underestimating this aspect in terms of capacity of natural resources to cope with this change. Water and food security are emerging issues.

“Bilbao City today told the amazing story of its reinvention as a world city driven by arts, culture and the “Guggenheim” effect.

“Jeju City talked about their drive for low carbon excellence and environmental excellence in an area that boasts world Natural Heritage status and welcomes over 8 million tourist visitors per year.”

Day three

“Population growth again was mentioned – some large cities like Nanjin are planning to expand from eight million to 12 million people in only 10 years.

“This will put enormous pressure on water and food security. It is also clear that pressures will grow on sustainable practices in terms of greenhouse gases.

“There are two quite different approaches being adopted. One is entirely people-focussed, while others focus on the infrastructure and economic prosperity. Today we encountered communities who blended these two concepts together.”