



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MONTEREY COUNTY TOURISM MAKES SIGNIFICANT STRIDES  
TOWARDS DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY**

*Addressing plastics and measuring sustainability progress are critical steps in the path*

**Monterey County, Calif., December 18, 2018** – The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) has joined two initiatives that will further its goal of ensuring Monterey County is one of the world’s leading sustainable destinations by both setting ambitious goals and measuring long term impacts.

The first is with Positive Impact, a global not for profit which exists to provide education and collaboration opportunities to create a sustainable event industry – and a vision to address the role of plastics in this industry. MCCVB is the exclusive destination partner for Positive Impact on this project which has already included collaboration with a number of United Nations bodies and in Spring 2019 will see the launch of materials to help the global industry measure and understand the role of plastics.

“MCCVB is already resetting boundaries for responsible tourism and by partnering with our organization they are taking a leadership position for the entire meetings industry,” said Fiona Pelham, CEO for Positive Impacts. She added, “Certainly understanding the role of plastics which will lead to its elimination from the future meetings and conference landscape is a considerable goal, but it is critically important and partnerships such as this with Monterey County are the building blocks of collaboration necessary to achieve it.”

Meetings and events are big business in Monterey County, which is a destination known for inspiration and innovation. “This partnership is completely in line with that legacy,” says Tammy Blount-Canavan, President and CEO of MCCVB. “Our tourism economy owes everything to our ecosystem, and so taking this bold step ensures further protection of our environment and further demonstrates the innovation of our region.”

Measuring success is also critical to MCCVB’s mission. The organization joined the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS-Index) initiative, an alliance focused on helping destinations, convention bureaus, and businesses promote sustainable practices. The GDS-Index does this by measuring and comparing sustainability strategies, policies and performance of participating destinations and by sharing best practices from around the world.

GDS-Index recently released its yearly survey of global destinations at the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) annual meeting in Dubai in November. Monterey County scored 52% on the sustainability index just behind Geneva and ahead of U.S. cities like Washington, D.C. and Houston. The scoring allows MCCVB to set a benchmark and improve in the coming years.

“Ultimately, protecting our destination is every bit as important as promoting it,” said Rob O’Keefe, Chief Marketing Officer for MCCVB. “These initiatives contribute to our long term viability as a top tourism destination plus they are essential to the balance we seek to foster between visiting travelers and the residents who call our beautiful region home.”

These latest partnerships align with the MCCVB’s Sustainable Moments Collective. The purpose of the collective is to share best practices from concurrent sustainability initiatives and use the group’s collective influence to reach visitors and residents alike. More information on MCCVB’s Sustainable Moments initiative and collective can be found at [SeeMonterey.com/Sustainable](https://www.seemonterey.com/sustainable). For more information on Positive Impact, go to [PositiveImpactEvents.com](https://www.positiveimpactevents.com). For more on the GDS-Index, go to [GDS-Index.com](https://www.gds-index.com).

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#### **ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is a 501c6 organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was \$2.85 billion in 2017, representing a 3.5 percent increase from 2016. This \$2.85 billion in visitor spending supported 24,990 jobs, contributed \$255 million in total taxes and generated \$127 million local tax dollars that directly benefited the community.