

WINNERS OF THE 2025 INTERNATIONAL PHOTO COMPETITION ORGANIZED BY INBAR

March 2026

[INBAR has announced the winners of the 2025 International Bamboo and Rattan Photo Competition](#) held under the theme *Celebrating the Global Presence of Bamboo and Rattan*.

This year's competition invited photographers from around the world to capture how these remarkable materials support sustainable livelihoods, protect ecosystems and inspire innovation across Africa, Asia, Europe and North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean. A panel of professional photographers and INBAR experts reviewed submissions from around the world to select the Best Photo Awards. New for 2025, the competition also introduced a People's Choice Award, allowing the public to vote for their favorite panel-selected images through social media.



[Winners of the 2025 Photo Competition for the different geographic areas:](#)

AFRICA

Best Photo: “Bamboo eco-environment study” by Stephen Barasa from Kenya

This photo was taken inside a bamboo plantation while observing how bamboo supports healthy ecosystems. Bamboo absorbs large amounts of carbon, releases more oxygen than many trees, protects soil and water, and provides habitat for wildlife. Strong yet flexible, it is a climate-resilient plant that supports both nature and people, offering sustainable alternatives to timber and plastics while creating green livelihoods for communities.



People's Choice: “The love for bamboo” by Fitsum Abera from Ethiopia

The photographer has known Zerihun since 2013, and over the years their friendship has grown into a shared journey shaped by their belief in bamboo. This photo was taken at an artisan market, where the energy of the space reflects the life and care behind our work. What you see is not just a product on display, but years of collaboration, trust, and learning. For them, bamboo is more than a livelihood; it is their heritage, their passion, and a promise of a sustainable future. Through bamboo, they support their community and protect our planet. Every created piece tells a story of friendship, resilience and hope.



ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Best Photo: “Keepers of the bamboo tradition” by Reu Dawner Flores from the Philippines

Under the soft glow of a single lantern, fishermen move quietly through the water, guiding large conical traps hand-woven from bamboo. The scene captures a living tradition passed down through generations, where skill and patience meet nature's rhythms. Long before plastic nets, bamboo served as a biodegradable, renewable tool — supporting sustainable fishing, local economies and livelihoods in harmony with the surrounding environment.



People's Choice: "Bamboo bridge" by Nay Myo Hlaing from Myanmar

In this photograph, novice monks carefully cross a narrow bridge made entirely of bamboo. Each step reflects balance and quiet focus, as the simple yet resilient structure connects daily life with nature. Built from locally sourced bamboo, the bridge embodies tradition, resourcefulness and sustainability, showing how this natural material continues to support communities in harmony with the environment.



EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

Best Photo: "Europe's First Bamboo-Timber Composite Gridshell at Edinburgh Napier University" by Professor Hexin (Johnson) Zhang from China

This photograph shows Europe's first bamboo-timber composite gridshell, built at Edinburgh Napier University in just four days through collaboration between students and educators from different parts of the world. Woven from bamboo and European softwood, the structure draws its strength from both natural materials and thoughtful design, blending traditional craftsmanship with modern digital tools. Reflected into a heart shape, the image becomes a symbol of innovation rooted in care for the planet, showing how renewable materials, shared knowledge, and creative thinking can shape a more sustainable future.



LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Best Photo: "Dance in the bamboo forest" by Juan Salazar from Ecuador

This photograph captures a dance inspired by a song dedicated to *Guadua angustifolia*, the bamboo species most vital to producers in Ecuador. Moving within the bamboo forest, the dancer becomes part of the landscape, expressing respect, gratitude and cultural connection to a plant that sustains livelihoods and traditions. The image reflects how bamboo is not only an economic resource, but also a source of identity, creativity, and harmony between people and nature.



People's Choice: "Conexión" by Antonio Flores Calvario from Mexico

This photograph captures an intimate, grounded connection between people and bamboo. Bare feet rest on a bamboo floor, revealing how deeply this natural material is woven into everyday life. The image speaks of connection, where human and bamboo come together through tradition and sustainability.



The INBAR website underlines that "These winning photographs tell a powerful global story, one that moves from forests and rivers to classrooms, bridges, markets and homes. Across regions, they reveal how bamboo and rattan support ecosystems, livelihoods, culture, education and innovation, while shaping everyday life in sustainable ways. INBAR warmly thanks all photographers who took part in the 2025 competition for sharing their perspectives and helping bring these stories to light. Through their lenses, bamboo and rattan are shown not only as

materials, but as living connections between people and nature. Selected works will be featured and credited across INBAR's platforms, where we will continue to share the stories behind the images."

For further inspiration connect with INBAR on social media ([Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)), and explore winning entries from previous competitions [2020](#), [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#), and [2024](#).

To know more

[News in INBAR website announcing the winners of the 2025 Photo Competition](#)

[INBAR website](#)

