OurNature

Photo & Video Award 2026

A global award for nature and environmental storytelling through photography and video.

Annual international competition that honors nature and documentary photographers and short video makers from around the world — regardless of experience level — whose work tells inspiring and urgent stories about the natural world, the relationship between humans and their environment, and the challenges we face in protecting our planet.

The Golden Fox Trophy is awarded to visual works that most powerfully and uniquely reflect the significance of nature, the human–nature relationship, and a sustainable future.
Winners receive cash and non-cash prizes, along with public exposure through exhibitions in Budapest and a year-round touring showcase.

About the Award

The OurNature Photo and Video Award is a global competition dedicated to visual storytelling about nature, the environment, and sustainability.

It is part of the FotoKozma Outdoor Photography Festival, and both are promoted by the Vértes Kozma Foundation, founded by photographer Milan Radisics.

The competition is hosted on the Econtest platform and sponsored by Veolia.

Terms and Conditions

1. Eligibility

1.1 The Award is global and open to photographers of all nationalities who are aged **18 or over on 3rd August 2026**.

1.2 Participants under the age of 18 (born on or after **23rd June 2008**) may enter the *Young Photographers* category **with the help of a parent or legal guardian**, who must register on their behalf.

1.3 It is the responsibility of each entrant to ensure that they have read and will abide by these rules and the Terms and Conditions. By submitting an entry, each entrant agrees to all terms.

1.4 Employees or agents of the Vértes Kozma Foundation, Econtest.hu, or anyone directly involved in organizing the competition (excluding sponsors) are not eligible to enter.

1.5 Proof of eligibility must be provided upon request. False identity or misleading information will result in disqualification.

2. Categories

Three core topics - Nine +1 categories

Our competition always builds around these three themes:

- the pure natural world,
- the relationship between humans and their environment, and
- the challenges we face in protecting our planet.

Each image must be entered into one category.

The same image cannot be submitted to multiple categories, except for entries in the Photo Story category — those images may also appear in one other category.

The jury reserves the right to reassign entries to a different category if more appropriate.

The Nature categories are divided into three themes: images made in, on, or around water; those taken on land or of the land; and those capturing the world of air, flight, and winged creatures.

PURE NATURE – *WATER*

Life below and around water — from marine giants to tiny freshwater creatures.
From underwater worlds to freshwater habitats, coastal zones, wetlands, or rivers – this category is dedicated to nature where water is the main element. Submit images of aquatic wildlife, plants, or environments where water plays a defining role. The goal is to celebrate and protect these fragile ecosystems – both above and below the surface.

PURE NATURE – *LAND*

Wildlife and textures of the land — from insects in the grass to mammals in the mountains
Landscapes, details, animals, and plants – this category embraces the richness of terrestrial life. From forests and meadows to mountains and deserts, show us mammals, amphibians, insects, or other living organisms that make land their home. We welcome both wide views and intimate encounters that reveal the diversity and vulnerability of nature on solid ground.

PURE NATURE – *AIR*

The life of the skies — birds, flying insects, weather, and movement above
Birds in flight, insects, airborne creatures, weather phenomena, and the atmosphere itself – this

category is about the natural life and processes that occupy the skies. Show us the often-overlooked wonders above, from delicate wings to sweeping cloudscapes and signals of change in the air.

OUR FOOTPRINTS

Humans and nature – what connects us, what separates us, and what leaves a mark
Human presence in nature, whether visible or symbolic. This category explores our impact: from environmental damage and transformation to moments of connection, respect, or healing. Whether documentary or conceptual, positive or critical – the goal is to provoke thought, raise awareness, and inspire action.

SOLUTIONS

In the name of sustainability and future
Capture sustainable actions, technologies, or communities – from small personal choices to large-scale innovations. Whether it's a rooftop garden, a solar farm, or new ways of farming and learning, this category celebrates visual stories of hope, resilience, and real solutions for a better future.

CARPATHIAN BASIN

Challenging local photographers – a regional perspective
A dedicated category for photographers living or working in Hungary or the Carpathian Basin. The themes of the global categories apply here as well, and images taken outside the region are also accepted. However, the jury will give preference to entries that reflect local landscapes, cultural identity, regional challenges, or community-based solutions.

YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHERS

Open to participants under the age of 18 – showing the world through young eyes
This category welcomes images from young talents under 18. Any of the main themes apply. Entry is free of charge. Show us how the next generation sees and cares about nature.

STORIES / PORTFOLIOS

Series or bodies of work in sync with the competition's themes
Submit a coherent body of work (5–15 images) that reflects one or more of the main topics. Whether it's a photojournalistic essay, a long-term documentary, or a conceptual narrative, this category gives space for deeper visual exploration and storytelling.

VIDEOS

Edited videos or raw footage exploring the competition's topics
We welcome short videos that reflect any of the competition's themes. These can be edited or unedited, from cinematic storytelling to raw visual impressions. Landscape, vertical, or square formats are all accepted. Short-form videos under 60 seconds and max 50MB are especially encouraged.

The Green Heritage of Budapest's 2nd District

We invite photographs that explore the relationship between nature and the urban environment in Budapest's 2nd District. This category aims to highlight the district's natural treasures, protected areas, unique biodiversity, and the green heritage that shapes its character and identity.

Submissions may showcase the beauty, vulnerability, and transformation of nature, the impacts of climate change, and the many ways people and the environment coexist. We welcome documentary, nature, urban, and creative photographic approaches that use visual storytelling to reflect the district's green values, its past, present, and future.

All photographs must be taken within Budapest's 2nd District.

3. Submission Rules

3.1 All entries must be submitted **via the Econtest platform** before **11:59 (CET (Budapest time)) on 3th August 2026**. Late entries will not be considered.

3.2 Entrants may submit:
– **Up to 30 single images** distributed freely across the five main categories (*Nature – Water, Land, Air; Our Footprints; Solutions*) and the *Carpathian Basin* category (if eligible).
– **Up to 10 single images** in the *Young Photographers* category.
– **Up to 2 photo stories/coherent portfolios**, each consisting of **5 to 15 images**, in the *Stories / Portfolios* category.
– **Up to 2 videos** (max **60 seconds** each) in the *Videos* category. Videos must be in **.mp4 format**, in any aspect ratio (landscape, square, vertical). Preferred size 1080 px, and each submitted video must not exceed **50 MB** in file size.

3.3 All photography genres are accepted — including **nature photography, documentary, conceptual, portrait, abstract, macro, microscopic**, and more — as long as the work fits within the thematic categories.

3.4 Images must have been taken within the past **5 years**, no earlier than **June 2021**.

3.5 The same image cannot be submitted to multiple categories.

3.6 Submitted images must **not contain watermarks, frames, signatures, logos**, or any identifying marks. Violations will result in disqualification.

3.7 Each submission must include a **title** and **description**. Image descriptions should include location, subject, and context, especially if manipulation or staging is involved.

IMPORTANT! To ensure consistency across all submissions, the caption must include the location where the image was taken, the name of the subject, species, or topic depicted, and a description of what is happening in the image. Additional background information or context may also be provided where relevant. If the image has been staged, altered, modified, or manipulated in any way, this must be clearly disclosed in the description.

3.8 Images must retain **original metadata** (EXIF), including camera and lens information and shooting settings.

3.9 Minimum image size is **4000 pixels** on the longest side. Files must be in **JPEG format**, 300 dpi, sRGB color profile preferred.

3.10 **AI-generated content is strictly prohibited**. Any image found to be created or augmented using AI tools (including generative fill or added elements) will be disqualified. Offenders may be banned from future editions.

3.11 The well-being of people, animals, and habitats depicted in submitted images is a core value of the competition. All entrants must confirm that their work was created with full respect for all subjects and the environment, without causing harm, stress, or disturbance.

3.12 **Live baiting is strictly prohibited.**
Images of **captive animals are not allowed** in the *Nature* categories, unless clearly documented as part of the story and explained in the caption.

3.13 For *nature and documentary* photos, **manipulation is not allowed**.
No addition or removal of elements (e.g. animals, plants, people, objects) is permitted. Cloning, composite blending, or staged behavior invalidates the entry in these genres.

3.14 In *conceptual, artistic, or other open genres*, digital editing and manipulation are accepted — but must be **clearly described** in the image description. The original work must always originate from a photograph (digital or analog).

3.15 Acceptable minor adjustments (across all genres):
– Color and exposure correction
– Cropping (if compositionally justified and not misleading)
– Dust or blemish removal
– Dodging and burning, moderate retouching
Note: Cropped images must still meet minimum resolution requirements.

3.16 Over-manipulated images may be rejected at the jury's discretion, if they compromise the integrity of the photographic medium.

3.17 The organizers reserve the right to request **original camera files** or **high-resolution versions** of any submission during the jurying process.

3.18 The use of **AI detection tools** is part of the submission evaluation process. Suspected violations will be reviewed with the support of the Econtest platform.

3.19 The organizers reserve the right to disqualify any work that does not comply with the rules or the spirit of the competition.

4. Judging Process

4.1 Submissions will go through a **multi-round selection process**. The jury is composed of the **competition organizers** and their **invited panel of internationally recognized photographers, editors, curators, and experts**. The full list of jury members will be announced later.

4.2 The jury will evaluate submissions **anonymously**, based on artistic quality, technical execution, and storytelling relevance to the category themes.

4.3 The selection includes:
– **10 finalists per category**
– **Category winners, runner-ups**
– **OurNature – Image of the Year**
– **OurNature – Story of the Year** (chosen from the top 5–7 photo stories)
– **OurNature – Video of the Year,** chosen from among the 10 finalists.

4.4 The **official finalists** will be announced in early **September 2026**.
The **winners** will be revealed live during the **Awards Ceremony in October 2026**, and featured in an outdoor exhibition in Budapest's most frequented Széna Square, and online publication.

4.5 The jury's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into regarding results.

5. Prizing

5.1 A total of **10 finalists per category** will be selected.

5.2 The following awards will be presented:

- **€300 artistic fee** for each category winner
- **FlexShooter ballhead** for the overall winner (*OurNature – Image of the Year*)
- **Product prizes** from competition sponsors for other category winners
- **Certificates** for highly commended finalists
- **Free accommodation** during the opening weekend of the festival for all winners
- Travel **reimbursement** for award recipients.

5.3 Additional **special prizes** may be offered by competition partners and sponsors. These will be awarded to selected finalists at the discretion of the organizers.

5.4 All awarded and selected works will become part of the **OurNature 2026 Photo Awards Collection**, which will be exhibited in **Hungary** and presented in **multiple locations** throughout the following year.

5.5 Winning and finalist entries will also receive **broad media coverage** and international visibility through the festival's platforms and press partners.

6. Entry fee

Entry fee is 30 Euro for

– Up to 30 single image submissions in any category,
– Up to 10 in young category,
– Up to 2 photo stories/coherent portfolios, each consisting of 5 to 15 images
– Up to 2 videos, max 50 MB in file size

To participants under the age of 18 entry is free of charge – with the help of a parent or legal guardian, who must register on their behalf.

Payment is made securely via major credit card on Revolut. Entry fees support the Vértes Kozma Foundation in organizing the competition, providing the prizes, promoting nature and environmental photography, and producing the international touring exhibitions. Please note that all fees are non-refundable.

7. Timeline

Submission Deadline
11:59 (CET), 3 August 2026
All entries must be submitted before the official deadline to be eligible for review and judging.

Judging Period
7 September 2026
All eligible submissions will be evaluated by a professional jury based on artistic quality, technical execution, and storytelling.

Official Nominees Announcement
14 September 2026
Finalists will be officially announced and featured as the OurNature 2026 Finalists.

Awards Ceremony
Between October 8-16th 2026 – Budapest.
The exact date and venue will be confirmed later.
The OurNature Awards will be presented live on stage, celebrating the year's most outstanding nature and environmental photographs.
Award winners will be revealed during the ceremony, and their work will be featured in an outdoor exhibition and published online.

8. Copyright and Usage Rights

8.1 All submitted images must be the **original work of the photographer**, and must not infringe upon any third-party copyright or contain copyrighted elements.

8.2 Entrants retain **full copyright** of their submitted images.

8.3 By entering the competition, photographers grant the **Vértes Kozma Foundation**, **Econtest**, and **competition partners** a **non-exclusive, royalty-free license** to use the submitted images strictly for:

- Promotion of the OurNature Award and its exhibitions
- Inclusion in printed or digital Award catalogues or books
- Use in press, PR materials, and social media related to the competition and the FotoKozma Festival
- All usages will be accompanied by proper credit.

8.4 No submitted images will be sold or used for commercial purposes **without prior written permission** from the photographer.

8.5 A **bilingual hardcover Awards Book** (Hungarian/English) is planned, featuring winning and selected works. Photographers whose images are included will receive **2 free copies**. The book may also be distributed through publishing partners, with no royalties paid, as the project is non-profit and intended for visibility and outreach. (Only option)

8.6 If submitted images feature recognizable individuals, the photographer must have obtained **written consent**. For minors, consent from a **legal guardian** is required.

9. Liabilities

9.1 The Vértes Kozma Foundation and Econtest.hu are not liable for any loss, damage, or injury incurred by entrants during their participation in the competition or related events.

9.2 Entrants agree to indemnify the organizers against any claims arising from third parties related to the submitted photographs, including legal expenses.

10. General Conditions

10.1 The Vértes Kozma Foundation and Econtest.hu reserve the right to cancel or modify the competition at any time without prior notice.

10.2 Participation in the competition implies full and unconditional acceptance of these Terms and Conditions.

10.3 Any breach of these Terms may result in the **exclusion of the photographer and disqualification of submitted works**, without further obligation from the organizers.

10.4 Once submitted and after the entry deadline, **entries cannot be changed or withdrawn**.

10.5 In case of dispute, the parties agree to attempt an **amicable resolution**. If unsuccessful, the dispute shall be settled through **final and binding arbitration** in accordance with applicable international arbitration rules.

10.6 These Terms and Conditions are governed by **Hungarian law**.

10.7 Entrants have the right to access, modify, or delete their personal data by contacting the organizer.

11. Organizer Contact

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About the Award

The **OurNature Photo and Video Award** is an international competition celebrating powerful visual storytelling about **nature, the environment, and sustainability**.
It invites photographers and filmmakers of all levels to share their unique perspective on the beauty and challenges of our natural world.

The award originated from the FotoKozma Outdoor Photography Festival, and both are promoted by the Vértes Kozma Foundation, founded by photographer Milan Radisics.
The competition is hosted on the Econtest platform and proudly sponsored by Veolia.

Winners are awarded the prestigious Golden Fox Trophy, along with artistic fees, product prizes, and international exposure.
Finalist works are showcased in the OurNature Photo Awards Exhibition, which opens in Hungary and travels to multiple venues throughout the year.

Hungary, June 2026.