



Travelers' Philanthropy Conference

Making Travelers Philanthropy Work for Development, Business and Conservation
Arusha, Tanzania, December 3-5, 2008



For Immediate Release

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Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai to Give Keynote Address at 2008 Travelers' Philanthropy Conference

Washington , DC – June 6, 2008: Dr. Wangari Maathai, the Nobel Peace Prize winner and the founder of Kenya's Green Belt Movement, has graciously agreed to give the keynote address at the 2008 Travelers' Philanthropy Conference to be held in Arusha, Tanzania, December 3-5, 2008. The conference, organized by the Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development (CESD), will focus on the growing global movement spearheaded by responsible tourism businesses to provide financial and other types of support to local community and conservation projects.

"This is the first conference focused on travelers' philanthropy ever held in Africa," says CESD Co-Director, Dr. Martha Honey. "And we are honored that it will be keynoted by Dr. Maathai, the continent's most eminent civic leader in the struggle for democracy, human rights, women's empowerment, and environmental conservation." Since 1977, Dr. Maathai has been organizing rural Kenyan women to plant trees in an effort to help combat deforestation, soil erosion, and water shortages. The Green Belt Movement has planted over 40 million trees and become a leading force in Kenya's pro-democracy struggles as well as a model for similar initiatives in other developing countries. In 2004, when Dr. Maathai was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts, she became the first environmentalist and only African woman to receive this prestigious award.

"I have always believed in the huge potential of travelers' philanthropy," says Dr. Maathai. "The Green Belt Movement has been sharing its work with friends and supporters through our Green Belt Safaris which combines visits to our tree planting projects with game viewing safaris. I know that this conference will enrich our experience and deepen our understanding of this very important concept."

The 3-day conference is entitled "Making Travelers' Philanthropy Work for Development, Business, and Conservation." It will bring together several hundred participants from Africa, as well as international representatives of leading tourism businesses, conservation and development NGOs, UN agencies, and other aid organizations. Plenary and workshop themes will include the role of tourism businesses in supporting HIV-AIDS education and prevention; raising funds from travelers and travel businesses for environmental initiatives and conservation of wildlife, parks and protected areas, and developing business models that incorporate Travelers' Philanthropy as a central element.

Conference details including how to register, apply to speak at the event, and apply for scholarship assistance are available on the conference website, www.travelersphilanthropyconference.org. There is also information about the eight specially designed and discounted Tanzanian wildlife viewing safaris and tourism activities with visits to community projects.

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About the 2008 Travelers' Philanthropy Conference

To be held December 3 – 5, 2008 in Arusha, Tanzania, the Travelers' Philanthropy Conference is aptly themed "Making Travelers' Philanthropy Work for Development, Business and Conservation." The international conference with a focus on Africa will concentrate on the growing trend among responsible tourism businesses to support local community and conservation projects. For the latest information about the conference, visit www.travelersphilanthropyconference.org or contact conference organizers Whitney Cooper in Washington (wcooper@ecotourismcesd.org) or Fred Nelson in Arusha (fnelson@habari.co.tz).

About the Green Belt Movement

Green Belt Movement Kenya is a non-profit grassroots non-governmental organization based in Kenya. Its vision is to create a society of people who consciously work for continued improvement of their environment and a greener, cleaner Kenya. Its mission is to mobilize community consciousness for self-determination, equity, improved livelihoods and security, and environmental conservation. It is guided by the values of volunteerism, love for environmental conservation, pro-action for self-betterment, accountability, transparency, and empowerment. For more information, visit www.greenbeltmovement.org.

About The Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development

The Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development (CESD) is a non-profit institute based in Washington, DC and at Stanford University whose mission is to design, monitor, evaluate, and improve responsible tourism practices and principles. Its policy-oriented research, field projects, and programs focus on promoting sustainable tourism as a tool for poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation. For more information on CESD, visit www.ecotourismcesd.org. For more details about CESD's ongoing Travelers' Philanthropy program, see www.travelersphilanthropy.org or contact Laura Driscoll (laura@ecotourismcesd.org).

Travelers' Philanthropy is a Project of the Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development (CESD)

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