

Opening Remarks:

Welcome – karibuni – distinguished Tanzanian officials, colleagues, and friends to the 2008 Travelers' Philanthropy conference – the first ever such conference held in Africa.

At the conference, we have over 225 registered participants, from some 20 countries. They include scores of people from tourism businesses, as well as representatives from community and conservation projects, NGOS (local and international), development and aid agencies, philanthropic foundations, and academics.

Many of you have traveled far and long to get here. Many also sat through the not so short Short Course on Travelers' Philanthropy this afternoon. So I'll keep my remarks brief.

Let me just do a couple of things. First to recognize some of those who have traveled the farthest to get here – many of whom have not been in Africa before. We have participants and speakers from India, Costa Rica, the Caribbean island of Dominica, Japan, Nigeria, Canada, the US. They join our large and wonderful delegations from Eastern and Southern Africa.

The term Travelers Philanthropy is less than a decade old. It began as a true grassroots initiative by a small number of tourism operators working on all continents –

Typically these companies were working in spectacularly beautiful, culturally rich but economically poor parts of the world. In a variety of ways these companies began scattered experiments in supporting projects in their host communities.

number of the early pioneering companies are here at this conference

Today Travelers' Philanthropy is growing exponentially and becoming a global movement – with the potential to greatly increase the financial, material and expertise flowing from tourism into community and conservation projects

And Now big tourism businesses have gotten involved, gotten on board

From chain hotels to airlines to major resort groups.

They also are represented here at the conference.

I would also like to mention what we, the organizers, have in mind in terms of the goals of this conference – a few of the objectives and goals.

What are the conference goals:

- To strengthen and raise the profile of Travelers' Philanthropy as a rapidly growing global movement – as part of the core definition of responsible travel.

- To work to develop some protocols, guidelines and best practices and models for how Travelers' Philanthropy projects should be carried out. We are seeking to move beyond traditional charity models of philanthropy – giving handouts – to supporting projects that lead to real development through social empowerment, capacity building and training, equity, and entrepreneurship
- There are a couple of specific themes I want to highlight. Yesterday was World AIDS Day and our conference is specifically discussing the role and responsibilities of the tourism industry in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Frankly the tourism industry has been slow – and reluctant – to step up to the plate and respond to HIV/AIDS. In large part because many tourism businesses fear the clients - the travelers -- will be scared off if AIDS is openly discussed. At the conference are sev businesses that have developed solid programs to work with their staffs and local communities around HIV/AIDS education, prevention and treatment. We hope this conference will help to bring others in the tourism industry out of shadows and into the front lines in addressing HIV/AIDS.
- We are also, with the keynote addresses by Nobel laureate Wangari Maa thai , leader of the Green Belt Movement and Dr.David Western, former head of the Kenya Wildlife Service, looking at the role of tourism and specifically Travelers' Philanthropy in supporting social and environmental movements and in recognizing the rights of local communities to both benefit from tourism and have their rights to land, culture, and livelihoods respected by tour operators and travelers.

This Travelers' Philanthropy conference has been organized by The Center on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development (CESD), US based NGO, in partnership with – in East Africa, Honeyguide Foundation, Basecamp Foundation and Ecotourism Kenya, and in South Africa, the Africa Safari Lodge Foundation. We owe special thanks to the two main organizers – Whitney Cooper from CESD in Washington and Fred Nelson who step forward as our local organizer here in Arusha.

In addition,, we are enormously grateful to our long list of sponsors – shown here on this sign board -- who have helped to underwrite the costs of the conference and allowed us to provide some scholarship assistance to a large number of the speakers and participants from developing countries.

We have worked to make this conference as socially and environmentally responsible as possible. I want to announce that we are offsetting the carbon footprint of the conference itself through providing funds to Carbon Tanzania which is involved in tree planting and alternative energy projects. WE urge all of you to mitigate the carbon footprint of your travel here. You can do so by talking with Marc Baker from Carbon Tanzania or visiting the Travelers Philanthropy conference website – where you can calculate the cost to offset your emissions.

Finally, Since we know that many of you never heard of CESD before this conference, let me say just a word about who we are.

We are a US based NGO with offices in Washington, DC and Stanford University committed to undertaking policy oriented research and projects around critical issues within the tourism industry

Aim is to support and promote responsible tourism and to, as we say, help to *transform the way the world travels*

I am CESD's co-founder and co-director, along with Dr. William Durham from Stanford University. Bill is arriving later tonight.

Since we first created CESD in 2003, Travelers' Philanthropy has been one of our core programs. Four years ago we held our first Travelers' Philanthropy conference, at Stanford University in the US

We wanted to hold the next conference in a location where tourism is strong and where there are companies involved in various types of Travelers Philanthropy projects.

As we open this conference we need to recognize that Travelers Philanthropy is still in its infancy. We gathered here can play a role in helping to shape its development, deepen its meaning,, and expand its potentials. What we need is frank and honest discussions – not simply feel good congratulations and p.r. promotion. We need to hear from all sectors involved in and affected by tourism.

Thank you all for coming and we look forward to the discussions and interactions over the next two days.