



**Center for Responsible Travel**  
Washington, DC and Stanford University  
*Transforming the Way the World Travels*

## **Foreword to the Documentary** **“Cracking the Golden Egg: Tourism on Costa Rica’s Pacific Coast”**

The video documentary is designed to highlight a selection of problems and conflicts caused by the rapid rise of all-inclusive resort and vacation home developments along Costa Rica’s Pacific Coast. It is a supplementary document to The Center for Responsible Travel’s two-year research project, “Impact of Tourism Related Development along the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica” (see [www.responsibletravel.org](http://www.responsibletravel.org)). We solicited this video for three main purposes:

- (1) To show some of the more serious issues raised by recent resort and vacation home development along the Pacific coast of the country;
- (2) To give voice to some of the rural peoples and communities affected by these developments, including people who are often not heard in public discussion;
- (3) To show that, in contrast, there is a model of coastal tourism development in Costa Rica that already works quite well for both conservation and development objectives: i.e., nature-based tourism, or ecotourism.

The video is *not*, and was never intended to be, a synthetic, comprehensive, or panoramic overview of the state of tourism in Costa Rica as a whole, and we hope no one will try to use it in that way. As goes without saying, it is not a documentary of the energetic, sometimes heroic efforts of other individuals, organizations, and agencies to push toward genuinely sustainable forms of tourism in Costa Rica. Although not originally intended to show the responsiveness of Costa Rican agencies to internal problems, the video does also serve that purpose. One of the serious issues portrayed in the video when it was filmed in December 2009—the contaminated creek at the entrance to Manuel Antonio National Park—was already ameliorated by agency action when the film was first produced (March 2010). We hope that other problems and conflicts depicted in the video will also be speedily resolved.