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PRESS RELEASE

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The First Coastal Tourism Innovators Symposium Receives High Praise from Participants

The first-ever Symposium for Innovators in Coastal Tourism Development, held January 20-22 at Stanford University, exceeded expectations of both participants and organizers. The Symposium, organized by the Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) and cosponsored by the Center for Global Business and the Economy (CGBE) of the Stanford Business School, was attended by 85 innovators from the private and public sectors who are incorporating social and environmental best practices into coastal resort and vacation home developments. The full proceedings of this noteworthy event are available online at www.responsibletravel.org.

"We successfully met our goal of bringing together leading pioneers in coastal tourism who are creating sustainable alternative models to the gated, all-inclusive beach resorts that today dot coastlines throughout the Americas and the Caribbean," says Dr. William H. Durham who is CREST Co-Director and Bing Professor of Human Biology in the Anthropology Department at Stanford.

Keynote speaker Chris Blackwell, owner of Island Outpost Resorts, founder of Island Records, and member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame praised the event, saying, "The CREST conference redefines what is truly meaningful in responsible tourism today." Deborah Szekely, founder and owner of Rancho La Puerto in Mexico proclaimed "it was a positively wonderful program," while Mary-Elizabeth Gifford, Board Member for the Demeter Association, declared that the Symposium "sets the standard by which all other summits will now be judged... Davos, without the snow."

The Symposium got off to a spirited start with a panel discussion following the premier showing of "Cracking the Golden Egg: Tourism on Costa Rica's Pacific Coast," a new CREST documentary film about the impacts of large resort tourism along Costa Rica's Pacific coast.

Symposium topics also included public and private sector finance for sustainable tourism, green design and architecture, community engagement, and the impacts of both the economic recession and climate change on coastal tourism. Many participants praised the high quality of the speakers: Dr. Patrick Tierney, Professor of Tourism, San Francisco State University said, "The content was cutting edge and relevant to the current and future situation. I liked the future orientation of the speakers." Mark Spalding, President Ocean Foundation added that keynote speakers "were spectacular." They included renowned oceanographer/explorer and former chief scientist at the U.S. National Oceanic

and Atmospheric Administration, Dr. Sylvia Earle; Dr. David Orr, the Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies and Politics, Oberlin College; and Dr. William Barnett, Director, Center for Global Business and the Economy, and the Thomas Siebel Professor of Business Leadership, Strategy, and Organizations in the Stanford Graduate School of Business.

The participants included developers and experts from the Caribbean, North America, Costa Rica, El Salvador, and a strong contingent from Mexico. By the end of the meeting, momentum had gathered for hosting the next Innovator's Symposium in Mexico, at a date and place still to be determined.

To view presentations, photos and video clips from the Symposium or order copies of the documentary, visit the CREST website, www.responsibletravel.org.

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