



Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) Newsletter August - October 2020 | Volume 7, Issue 3

From the Executive Director

At CREST we are working on several fronts to promote and advance a responsible recovery to COVID-19, while maintaining our focus on Tourism in a Climate Crisis. The climate crisis is fundamentally a human crisis, testing our ability for collective response, to be responsible citizens, and to develop strategies that are evidence-based, just, and effective. People are looking for ways to reduce their footprint and to work with better, more responsible travel companies, sustainable destinations, and resilient communities.

Post COVID, I believe we will see consumer interest demand a more sustainable tourism marketplace. In fact, I anticipate that there will be a profound shift in the competitive landscape in the travel and tourism sector, with preparation and effective risk management, adaptation, resilience, and decarbonization being fundamental to future competitiveness and relevance.

With the compounding threats of climate change and COVID-19, we need actionable knowledge and case studies that provide genuine lessons learned. As we look to the future of tourism, the same rigor and dedication that is needed to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic must also be applied long-term to neutralize the threat of climate change.

So where do we look to find such important and inspiring examples of tourism leadership in a climate crisis? On October 27, The UN Global Climate Action Awards were [announced](#). The 13 award-winning projects fall within three focus areas: 1) Climate Neutral Now; 2) Financing for Climate Friendly Investment; and 3) Women for Results. At CREST, we are proud to recognize that 2 of the 13 recipients are CREST partners, Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba and Global Himalayan Expedition in India. The projects are recognized as innovative solutions that not only address climate change, but also help drive forward progress on many other sustainable development goals, for example, innovation, gender equality and economic opportunity. Both awardees “lead by example” and offer cutting edge best practices and lessons learned for us all to apply locally and globally. Take a look and join me in congratulating Ewald Biemans at Bucuti and Paras Loomba at GHE and their teams for showing us how tourism can be science-based, profitable, and a sustainable strategy to address the climate crisis. Learn more here:

- [Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort](#) | Aruba: The Caribbean's first – and only – hotel to achieve carbon neutral certification, and now working to go carbon negative.
- [Global Himalayan Expedition \(GHE\)](#) | India: One of the world's first organizations using the force of tourism coupled with technology to bring solar energy to remote communities.





Gregory Miller, Ph.D.
Executive Director

The Case for Responsible Travel: Trends and Statistics 2020
Released



In September, CREST released our much anticipated annual meta-analysis, [The Case for Responsible Travel: Trends & Statistics 2020](#). This year's report has a special focus on the two major crises facing our world today: climate change and COVID-19. Sharing cutting-edge research and examples, the report describes how travelers, tourism businesses, and destinations are implementing workable, sustainable solutions to support our planet and its people. The report also provides an overview of what consumers, businesses, and destinations are experiencing during COVID-19 and offers sustainable solutions that can help the tourism industry find the path to a responsible recovery.

"Crisis often breeds innovation, and destination communities and businesses must now take the time to reconsider the path forward," said Gregory Miller, Executive Director of CREST. "As we look to the future of tourism, the same rigor and dedication that is needed to adapt to the pandemic must also be applied to neutralize the threat of climate change."

Trends & Statistics 2020 builds on CREST's annual industry studies, beginning in 2013. This year's report was prepared in collaboration with more than 30 leading organizations, researchers, and institutions, including the United Nations Environmental Programme, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, and the World Wildlife Fund.

World Tourism Day Webinar Offers Insights

The Case for Responsible Travel:
LESSONS FROM COVID-19 FOR
TOURISM IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Erin Francis-Cummings
President and
CEO, Destination Analysts

Moderator: Denaye Hinds
Owner and Managing
Director, JustaTAAD, LLC

Dr. Gregory Miller
Executive Director,
CREST

Ewald Biemans
Owner and CEO, Bucuti
& Tara Beach Resort,
Aruba

Dr. Daniel Scott
Executive Director, Interdisciplinary
Centre on Climate Change
(IC3), University of Waterloo

CREST
Centre on Responsible Tourism

In recognition of World Tourism Day, CREST offered the webinar "*The Case for Responsible Travel: Lessons from COVID-19 for Tourism in a Changing Climate*." The webinar revealed the report's findings and brought together experts to discuss consumer, business, and destination trends in the context of recovery. Distinguished speakers explored the unprecedented opportunity to mitigate two existential threats, climate change and COVID-19, with one coordinated approach, truly making the

world a safer, more equitable, and more resilient place for all. The webinar was opened by Dr. Gregory Miller, CREST Executive Director and ably moderated by Denaye Hinds, CREST Board Member and Owner and Manager of [JustaTAAD, LLC](#). Panelists included:

- Dr. Daniel Scott, Executive Director, Interdisciplinary Centre on Climate Change (IC3), [University of Waterloo](#)
- Erin Francis-Cummings, President and CEO, [Destination Analysts](#)
- Ewald Biemans, Owner and Manager, [Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort](#), Aruba

View the [recording of the webinar](#) and the insightful chat text here, which was attended live by more than 265 participants from across the globe, including 17 journalists (*New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Conde Naste Traveler*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *National Geographic*). CREST is now partnering with our Academic Affiliate, Dr. Christine Vogt, Director of the Center for Sustainable Tourism at Arizona State University, to create a resource guide following the webinar. We look forward to sharing it soon to further assist destinations and businesses on their road to recovery. Stay tuned!

Future of Tourism Coalition Supports Recovery & Beyond



As we announced this summer, CREST has joined forces with the Destination Stewardship Center, Green Destinations, Sustainable Travel International, The Travel Foundation, and Tourism Cares to form the Future of Tourism Coalition (FoTC), with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council as a formal advisor. Together we advocate for a new model of tourism that: puts destinations and communities at the heart of decision-making, development, and planning; enables well-managed growth and flourishing communities; prioritizes the needs of residents, ensuring opportunities for

local people; and protects the environment, biodiversity, and cultural resources that communities depend upon.

Recognizing the power of our unified NGO voices and the considerable knowledge and tools we have together, we first developed a set of [13 Guiding Principles](#) for a new future for tourism, our attempt to establish an inspiring public framework for tourism's recovery and beyond. Each month, we highlight additional details about a Guiding Principle. Since our launch, more than 300 signatories have joined our movement. Through engaging with signatories, we then entered a listening and reflection phase, including conducting global focus groups. Although we're already thrilled to have a louder voice, we are also mobilizing for action and determining how we can best work with our signatories and other collaborators to foster a genuine movement for change at a time tourism needs it most. Options considered include a knowledge network around key impact themes, providing practical tools, and streamlining measures that matter.

Most recently, the FoTC formalized its governance, as follows:

- Jeremy Sampson, The Travel Foundation, Chair
- Samantha Bray, CREST, Vice Chair
- Albert Salman, Green Destinations & Greg Takehara, Tourism Cares, Partnerships Co-Chairs
- Gregory Miller, CREST & Graeme Jackson, The Travel Foundation, Fundraising Co-Chairs
- Paloma Zapata, Sustainable Travel International & Paula Vlamings, Tourism Cares, Impact Co-Chairs
- Ben Lynam, The Travel Foundation & Jonathan Tourtellot, Destination Stewardship Center, Communications Co-Chairs

Sign up for Coalition email updates on our [homepage](#), [join us as a signatory](#), and reach out to us at any time at coalition@futureoftourism.org.

Electric Road Trip Launches National Tour



South Shore Productions, in partnership with CREST and the National Wildlife Refuge Association will be launching an online video series this fall entitled “What Fuels You: An Electric Road Trip.” Erika Gilsdorf, the producer and owner of South Shore Productions, will be traveling around America for one year in a Mitsubishi Outlander plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV), with her tiny house and two cats in tow. Along the way, Erika will be visiting wildlife refuges and gateway communities to share stories of inspiring people tackling the climate crisis and working to protect our natural places for wildlife, human health, and local economic viability through tourism. Stay connected with CREST on social media for more updates of Erika’s journey!

Double Your Impact for CARE for the Cape & Islands



CARE for the Cape & Islands, a fiscally-sponsored program of CREST, is seeking support for their Campaign Challenge 2020! By donating to CARE today, you will be doubling your impact for the future of the Cape Cod region. Thanks to a generous donor, all gifts up to \$25,000 will be matched. CARE works to encourage, support, and create opportunities for visitors and residents to donate their “time, talent, and treasure” to help preserve and protect the Cape Cod region’s exquisite natural beauty, plant and wildlife habitats, and culture and history. They have awarded more than \$65,000 to fund 50+ projects, activated 3,000+ volunteers in the community, and spearheaded the Stewardship Collaborative of 70 public and private organizations. The Challenge Campaign will provide much needed resources for CARE to build capacity to further their mission. [Click here](#) to learn more about CARE and to make your donation!

Destination Stewardship Center Offers Practical Guidance

The Destination Stewardship Center (DSC), a fiscally sponsored program of CREST, recently released the [Autumn edition](#) of the *Destination Stewardship Report*, which offers examples and practical guidance on how tourism destinations can better plan for post-COVID-19 recovery. The latest edition features “Doing It Better” highlights of the Columbia Gorge destination stewardship council, as well as a feature by CREST’s very own intern Daza Garcia on how Mallorca is planning for overtourism. Jonathan Tourtellot, CEO of the Destination Stewardship Center, keynoted the Eurocat Forum Turistic conference about technology’s role in post-recovery destination planning and has been featured in media articles for London’s Financial Times and India’s The Dope. Global Shakers recently named Tourtellot among its 40 "[Global Shakers in Sustainable Tourism](#)."

Torres del Paine Legacy Fund Joins CREST



CREST is pleased to announce its official fiscal sponsorship of the [Torres del Paine Legacy Fund](#), a nonprofit program in Puerto Natales, Chile, that works to create a sustainable future for the iconic Torres del Paine National Park and its surrounding communities. The Legacy Fund promotes a destination stewardship model that brings together public and private stakeholders to collectively implement and finance sustainability action projects. Since 2018, the Legacy Fund has worked with 159 volunteers and 44 local and international business partners on various protected area infrastructure and conservation initiatives in Torres del Paine. Their impact since 2018 includes:

- The construction of more than 10 kilometers of new and restored hiking trails.
- Two 170 meter boardwalks built over wetland areas to protect and restore their ecological functions.
- Data collection and monitoring of more than 45,600 reforested native trees.

The Legacy Fund and CREST look forward to working hand-in-hand with local communities in southern Patagonia for years to come.

Judy Kepher-Gona Recipient of Prestigious CREST Award



CREST's Board of Directors and staff are honored to announce the second annual recipient of the Martha Honey Legacy in Responsible Travel Award: **Judy Kepher-Gona**, Founder and Principal Consultant at [Sustainable Travel and Tourism Agenda](#), in Kenya, Africa.

The inaugural Legacy in Responsible Travel Award was made last year to Dr. Martha Honey on the occasion of her retirement to honor her incredible leadership and accomplishments in responsible travel. At that time, the CREST Board of Directors decided to make this an annual award to someone in the global tourism industry making a significant difference in pushing the envelope in responsible travel.

This year's award winner, Judy Kepher-Gona, is a thought leader in sustainable tourism with over 20 years of experience as a champion for responsible tourism in Africa and beyond. From setting up Africa's first ecotourism society to working with countless communities in tourism and conservation, Judy's contribution to sustainable tourism transcends continents. She has dedicated her career to a pioneering model of ecotourism worldwide.

"This recognition is a much-needed boost to my commitment to stand up for responsible travel. A renewal," Kepher-Gona relays. "Until the last tourism company responds. Until the last traveler responds. Until the last DMO & DMC responds. Until global tourism organizations respond. Until tourism media responds. Until policy makers and investors respond to the call for responsible travel; I have my work cut out." The 2020 Legacy Award was presented in September to Judy in Nairobi by CREST Board member Melissa Biggs Bradley. [Click here](#) to view a short video in her honor.

CREST Releases 2020 Call for Academic Affiliates

Applications are now open for CREST's Academic Affiliate Program! CREST launched its Academic Affiliates program in August 2016. Since then, we have established affiliations with leading tourism professors at dozens of universities, both in the United States and around the world.

CREST is known for having strong academic ties and for placing sound science at the forefront of all tourism decision making. The Academic Affiliates program strengthens those ties without establishing a formal affiliation with any one educational institution. CREST is seeking to onboard two new Academic Affiliates, who will become recognized by an internationally renowned sustainable tourism organization and will gain access to a global network of academics from leading institutions and varied disciplines within tourism.

Prospective Academic Affiliates should submit a resume, cover letter, contact information for two references, and two examples of work to CREST Program Manager [Kelsey Frenkiel](mailto:kfrenkiel@responsibletravel.org) (kfrenkiel@responsibletravel.org) by November 6. [Click here](#) for more information on the opportunity.

Fall Travel Auction Announced



CREST's Fall Travel Auction will take place **November 10 – 24**, just in time for holiday shopping! These auctions feature donated packages from generous hotels and tour operators who support CREST's mission. So far, this year's donors include: [Alaska Wildland Adventures*](#), [Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort*](#), [Coyaba Beach Resort](#), [The H Resort Beau Vallon Beach Seychelles](#), [Hilton, Mashpi Lodge](#), [Overseas Adventure Travel](#), [Nayara Gardens](#), [Océano Patagonia](#), [Seychelles Tourism Board](#), [VBT*](#), and [Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi](#). All packages will feature COVID-19 safety protocols and will have lengthy validity dates to allow for flexible planning. Mark your calendars to

bid to support CREST! Not only will you get an incredible experience, but the proceeds from the auction will support our Responsible Recovery Fund, focused on addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on the tourism industry. Thank you to our generous donors for supporting CREST's work to transform the way the world travels!

Want to donate? Contact [Samantha Bray](#) by November 3.

* Signifies Platinum Sponsorship, which means that the donor has committed to supporting CREST auctions for a period of five years to fund responsible travel research and development.

Leading B Corp Becomes CREST Platinum Sponsor



CREST is honored to announce responsible travel leader [Legacy Vacation Resorts](#) has made a five-year commitment to supporting CREST's mission through Platinum Sponsorship. Legacy Vacation Resorts (LVR) provides vacation experiences for families and friends to create unique moments and lasting memories in a manner that respects the environment, employees, and community. Located in some of the United States' most cherished vacation destinations, LVR properties offer accommodations to fit the needs of families of all sizes. As a certified B-Corporation, the company strives to use LVR's success to inspire the travel and hospitality industry to fully embrace inclusive and regenerative practices. They use LVR's commitment to a higher social purpose to inspire growth and positive change in resort communities. Lastly, they use LVR's partnerships with local and national environmental organizations to highlight important initiatives. While using business as a force for good, LVR commits to being a collaborative steward of the hospitality industry, using compassion, interdependence, and positive impact to drive sustainable economic development.

CREST Shares Our Experience

CREST makes it a priority to exchange knowledge and advance responsible travel through external engagement. We recently shared our expertise through virtual activities hosted by organizations including the George Washington University, Organization of American States, Society of American Travel Writers, New Travel Conference, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Skål International, Travel Unity, and Johns Hopkins University. [Learn more.](#)

CREST in the News

CREST's recent media outreach has focused on ways to make tourism more sustainable. Check out [these articles](#) from the *Boston Globe*, *Reader's Digest*, the *Telegraph*, *Travel Pulse*, and more.

FOLLOW US



The Center for Responsible Travel (CREST) is a 501(c)3 non-profit research institute, based in Washington, DC. Founded in 2003, our mission is to promote responsible tourism policies and practices globally so that local communities may thrive and steward their cultural resources and biodiversity. [Support our work here.](#)

We are committed to your [privacy](#). Please let us know if you'd like to [modify your subscription](#), or unsubscribe below.

