



# WELCOME TO CREE

***Objective: To enable larger organizations to leverage a grassroots impact in countries and communities they work in through our community expertise, local networks, and on-the-ground project execution capabilities.***

## CAPABILITIES AND VALUE OFFERED

***Ensuring environmental protection benefits those most in need :*** CREE is unique because of its focus on poverty, making it a leader in the environmental field in addressing problems traditionally tackled only by humanitarian organizations.

***Creative Livelihoods Enhancement Programs:*** from eco-entrepreneurship to eco-tourism, CREE utilizes locally conceived ideas and creativity to leverage maximum impact in communities with minimal resources. The results are dualistic: local pride in their craft and the environment, and ecosystemic conservation.

***Rigorous biological science:*** At CREE, projects which focus on sustainable human interactions with natural resources are always based upon sound biology to determine the limits of any natural system. CREE staff have strong backgrounds in both the natural and social sciences, giving them broad and culturally appropriate perspectives.

***A truly unique institutional structure:*** All CREE projects are 100% locally developed and executed. Project managers assume the primary position of leadership and are all born and raised in the countries and/or communities they work in.

***A voice of inspiration:*** from a local villager's perspective, seeing innovative projects coming from local leaders they know and can identify with is not to be under-estimated. CREE staff have a real power and ability to motivate the next generation of community leaders to adopt an environmentally conscious approach to resolving livelihood problems.

***Compromise from conflict:*** CREE is bold and visionary in its human-wildlife conflict minimization programs. From our predator program in Tanzania to our sea turtle work in Guyana, we never shy away from working in some of the most politically contentious environments throughout the world. Turtle poachers and those engaged in retaliatory killings of lions can and do become partners in conservation.

## A LEGACY OF LASTING IMPACT

Since beginning work in 2007, CREE has established itself as a leader in the field through its work at the poverty-environment nexus. Some notable achievements include:

## Center for Rural Empowerment and the Environment: *People-Centered Conservation*

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CREE staff are world class experts in on-the-ground implementation and consulting on issues related to environmental conservation and sustainable development. We bring the human face to the forefront of the environmental movement by making conservation accountable to local people and the many poverty constraints they face on the ground. As such, we are a green solution to poverty.

## Board of Directors

**Mike Skuja**, Executive Director & Founder of CREE

**James Fountain**

**Kristian Teleki**

**Shveta Kulkarni**

**Louis Crisostomo**

**Robert Lindsley**

**Charlotte Hodde**

## Scientific Advisory Board

**Dr. Tom Lovejoy**, Biodiversity Chair, *The Heinz Center*; former Chief Biodiversity Advisor, *World Bank*; former Senior Advisor to the President, *United Nations Foundation*

**Dr. Dan Brockington**, Senior Lecturer, University of Manchester Institute for Development Policy and Management

**Kristian Teleki**, Vice President of Science Initiatives, *SeaWeb*

- **Bringing the benefits of science to the village:** CREE conducted a ground breaking biological survey of humpback whales in the northern Philippines, the only ongoing study of the cetaceans in this part of the world. CREE published internationally recognized guidelines on human-whale interactions and is now working with communities on developing a locally led model to bring the benefits of the right kind of tourism to the families themselves.
- **Fostering new community skill sets:** In Kenya, CREE staff have trained local scientists and villagers in the use of geo-spatial technology to map out cultural and biological resources near Lake Victoria, Kenya. This will structure sound harvesting of papyrus for eco-enterprise activities and related tourism of the wetlands near the lake. It is a model we see as replicable and relevant to community needs.
- **Predator-proof fencing:** CREE staff have worked to help end historically violent and contentious relations within Maasai communities over lion and hyena predation on their cattle. We have done this through newly structured chain link fences that prevent predator attacks. Zero attacks have resulted in all sites constructed to date, and Maasai are now growing increasingly receptive to this methodology, approaching CREE with the requisite 50% cost-share to have these fences implemented in their homesteads.
- **Humanitarian aid in disaster stricken communities:** CREE was one of the first to arrive in schools and homes after a typhoon struck communities we work with in the Philippines. CREE sees low cost, high impact humanitarian work as a long-term investment in community relations for the future of our cetacean biological studies and community tourism work. We are a permanent fixture in a community's development model irrespective of donor funding cycles.
- **Promoting sustainably harvested wildlife to build capacity in animal husbandry:** with the creation of Mount Cameroon National Park in Cameroon, local people have limited access to forests within the park and its snails to enrich their diet. CREE is working to prevent bushmeat harvesting in the park through sustainably harvested snails grown within villages adjacent to the park. This has the dual effect of decreasing the time spent by women and children harvesting snails in the forests at night and less pressure on the park's wildlife.
- **Placing women in a position of leadership:** CREE seeks to engage women whenever possible in both project leadership and execution. The majority of our projects are led by women, and they have a goal of fostering creative entrepreneurship from the women we work with in local communities. Examples are found in Guyana, Cameroon and Kenya.

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