



## Adventure Tourism Offers Hope for Fragile Ecosystems and Globalizing Cultures

March 21, 2008

*Kochi, Kerala* – In a landmark gathering of sustainable tourism professionals and academics at the Responsible Tourism Conference in Kerala, India, March 21-24, Xola Consulting, Inc. will reveal a new standard for the development of sustainable adventure tourism, the *Adventure Tourism Development Index*.

At the Kerala meeting sustainable tourism leaders will gather together to share success stories and challenges to sustainable tourism around the world. On March 21<sup>st</sup>, adventure tourism development specialist Christina Heyniger of Xola Consulting, Inc. will introduce the new adventure tourism development standard pioneered by the Adventure Travel Trade Association, The George Washington University, and Xola Consulting, Inc.

Specifically designed to encourage and shape tourism development policies for the benefit of local people and the environment, the ATDI provides a structured method readily applied in emerging markets.

Xola President, Christina Heyniger said, “The ATDI represents a great opportunity for sustainable tourism developers as it links the private sector, academics and consultants with a methodology specifically designed to encourage environmental and cultural preservation through the application of sustainable tourism policies and programs.”

If in the past people may have viewed adventure tourism as the bastion of hard core extreme sports enthusiasts, the adventure tourism industry is now seeing itself broadened as a result of market forces — consumers see adventure in a broad context, and the industry is responding by providing sustainable tourism products to meet changing expectations.

For more information on the Kerala Responsible Tourism Conference visit:

[www.responsibletravel2008.org](http://www.responsibletravel2008.org)

For more information on the ATDI visit [www.xolaconsulting.com/atdi.php](http://www.xolaconsulting.com/atdi.php) or The George Washington University website: [www.gwu.edu/iits](http://www.gwu.edu/iits)

*Xola Consulting, Inc. (www.xolaconsulting.com) provides consulting services to individual adventure tour company operators and tourism boards interested in adventure tourism development for the benefit of rural communities and the environment. Xola also specializes in supporting organizations seeking to blend adventure tourism and volunteer service. Xola consultants have in-depth experience in emerging markets around the world including Central and South America, North Africa and Southeast Asia, including Cambodia, Myanmar (Burma), India and Nepal.*