



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SIGNS ON AS SPONSOR OF 9TH WORLD WILDERNESS CONGRESS AND WILD SPEAK**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Nov. 5, 2009)—National Geographic announced today its sponsorship of WILD9, the 9th World Wilderness Congress, and the accompanying four-day conservation communications symposium, WILD SPEAK. WILD SPEAK, organized by the International League of Conservation Photographers (iLCP), provides a forum for media professionals to discuss environmental issues and themes, share strategies and technologies, and explore how their work can raise awareness and realize conservation objectives. WILD SPEAK will take place Nov. 9-12, 2009, during WILD9, which will run from Nov. 6-13 in Mérida, Mexico.

Throughout its 121-year history, National Geographic has encouraged conservation of natural resources and raised public awareness of the importance of natural places, the plants and wildlife that inhabit them and the environmental problems that threaten them. In the past four years, 54 articles in National Geographic magazine have been photographed by iLCP members. Photographers whose work has appeared in the magazine and who are scheduled to present at WILD SPEAK include Michael Nichols, Brian Skerry, Paul Nicklen, Steve Winters, Tim Laman, Christian Ziegler, Frans Lanting, Jack Dykinga, Tom Peschak, Klaus Nigge and James Balog.

Tim Kelly, president of National Geographic Global Media and president/CEO of National Geographic Ventures, and Frank Biasi, director, conservation and special projects, National Geographic Maps, will speak at WILD9.

“We are excited to be part of WILD9 — a vital forum that is closely aligned to our own mission to inspire people to care about the planet,” said Kelly. “It speaks to our ongoing commitment to environmental storytelling across all of our media platforms. We constantly challenge ourselves to take these kinds of stories and find fresh ways to share them with our many audiences. It’s an honor to have supported some of the conservation photography showcased at WILD9 and WILD SPEAK, and we look forward to future collaborations with iLCP.”

“This year’s congress greatly expands our focus on the visual and written media professions as catalysts and influencers to raise awareness of environmental issues and on their role in achieving conservation outcomes,” said WILD Foundation President Vance Martin. “National Geographic is an ideal sponsor of WILD9 by virtue of its commitment to conserving nature and traditional communities, and success in bringing issues, emotion and information to audiences regarding the beauty and fragility of our planet.”

WILD9’s principal theme is the key role that wilderness conservation plays in mitigating climate change and conserving biodiversity and other ecosystem services critical to human well-being.

[Register Here for WILD SPEAK and WILD9.](#)

Please send requests for **images** to media contacts below.

WILD9 is a partnership between The WILD Foundation and Unidos para la Conservación and relies on the support and participation of many partner organizations.

**The National Geographic Society** ([www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)) The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Founded in 1888 to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge," the Society works to inspire people to care about the planet. National Geographic reflects the world through its magazines, television programs, films, music and radio, books, DVDs, maps, exhibitions, live events, school publishing programs, interactive media and merchandise. National Geographic magazine, the Society's official journal, published in English and 32 local-language editions, is read by more than 35 million people each month. The National Geographic Channel reaches 310 million households in 34 languages in 165 countries. National Geographic Digital Media receives more than 12 million visitors a month. National Geographic has funded more than 9,200 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geography literacy.

**iLCP** ([www.ilcp.com](http://www.ilcp.com)) Its mission is to further environmental and cultural conservation through ethical photography. iLCP is a project-driven organization, with a vision to translate conservation science into compelling visual messages targeted to specific audiences. iLCP works with leading scientists, policy makers, government leaders and conservation groups to produce the highest-quality documentary images of both the beauty and wonder of the natural world and the challenges facing it. From poaching to global warming, from habitat loss to cultural erosion, from sustainability to biological corridors, the work of conservation photographers covers the range of threats to biodiversity and is a critical component in the conservation toolbox.

**The WILD Foundation** ([www.wild.org](http://www.wild.org)) Founded in 1974, WILD is the only international organization dedicated entirely and explicitly to wilderness protection around the world. WILD works to protect the planet's last wild places and the wildlife and people who depend upon them, because wilderness areas provide essential social, spiritual, biological and economic benefits. We believe that intact wilderness areas are an essential core element of a healthy modern society.

**Unidos para la Conservación** ([www.undiosparalaconservacion.org](http://www.undiosparalaconservacion.org)) Founded in 1992, Unidos is a nonprofit Mexican conservation organization that has actively promoted the concept of wilderness conservation in Mexico. Its working strategy combines the establishment of alliances with government, nonprofit and corporate partners with the promotion of a conservation culture through publications and films in a search of conservation solutions through specific action.

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