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Tanzania's minister of natural resources and tourism announces 2010 tourism honorees

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the 2010 Tourist Board's (TTB) annual awards were Mwangunga, MP, Tanzania's minister for r out-going president of the Africa Travel As: place at the Gala Tanzania Tourism Dinne The Tanzania award dinner has become a highlights of the annual ATA Congress.



By Millicent Njeri / Press Release

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, the 2010 honorees of the prestigious Tanzania Tourist Board's (TTB) annual awards were announced by the Hon. Shamsa S. Mwangunga, MP, Tanzania's minister for natural resources and tourism, and out-going president of the Africa Travel Association (ATA). The announcement took place at the

Gala Tanzania Tourism Dinner on May 17 at the Sheraton Gambia Hotel. The Tanzania award dinner has become a celebrated tradition and one of the highlights of the annual ATA Congress.

Notable among the honorees was MTV News and Docs, named winner of the Tanzania Tourism Media Broadcast Award, in recognition of its one-and-half hour documentary on the "Summit on the Summit" Kilimanjaro Celebrity Climb aired nationwide on March 14, 2010.

Other honorees included: Dar Guide, Media Print Award; Zara Tours, Tour Operator Humanitarian Award; Africa Adventure Consultants, Tour Operator Southern/Western Tourism Circuit; Immersion Journeys, Tour Operator New Product Development Award; and Asilia Africa's Sayari Camp, Sustainable Tourism /Camps Award.

This year, there were also three Special Recognitions for outstanding contribution to the development of Tourism. Jane Goodall was honored for her world-renowned research with chimpanzees on Gombe Island National Park and her worldwide efforts to educate children around the world about conservation. The late Drs. Louis and Mary Leakey, archaeologists and anthropologists, were also recognized for their work on bone and fossil analysis in Oldupai Gorge in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area (now a UNESCO Heritage Site) fifty years ago. Here, they discovered a skull that would change all prior scientific hypothesis. Their exciting discovery was a humanoid skull with huge teeth that they named *Zinjanthropus* or "Zinj." The excellent condition of the skull allowed scientists to date the beginnings of mankind to about two million years ago and to verify that human evolution began not in Asia, as previously thought, but in Africa. In keeping with the significance of this information, Oldupai Gorge is now known as "The Cradle of Mankind." The third honoree was retired General Mirisho Sarakikya, who has climbed Kilimanjaro forty-six times, the most among Tanzanians, for his outstanding contribution, passion, and efforts he has shown in promoting and sensitizing various categories of climbers including diplomats, students, and several dignitaries to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Present at the Tanzania dinner for the announcement of the 2010 honorees and

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special recognitions were the Hon. Fatou Mass Jobe Njie, minister of tourism and culture, the Gambia; Eddie Bergman, ATA executive director; and the ministers of tourism and heads of delegations from more than 10 African countries, the ATA international board of directors, and ATA Chapter representatives, as well as more than 300 ATA delegates, including US-based travel professionals. In addition to the Hon. Mwangunga, the Tanzania delegation included Dr. Aloyce Nzuki, newly-appointed managing director of the Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB); representatives of the Tanzania ministry for natural resources&tourism; the Tanzania Tourist Board; Tanzania National Parks; Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority; Tanzania Wildlife Department; the National Museum of Tanzania; and the Department of Antiquities.

“The American market continues to grow, and for the third consecutive year, remains the number one source of visitors to Tanzania worldwide,” said Hon. Shamsa S. Mwangunga, MP. “We attribute this growth to the many aspects of our marketing plan, not least of which is the strong support of our travel industry partners we are honoring here tonight. We are also seeing the great impact of a two-year, CNN-US TV ad campaign and 'Ultimate Safari' sweepstakes, as well as our Travel Agent University Tanzania Specialist Program, with 1,500 graduates. This coming year we hope to bolster the numbers even further with the appointment last month by HE president Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of Doug Pitt as Tanzania’s goodwill ambassador in the US. We are confident that Mr. Pitt, a photo journalist who is involved in many humanitarian projects in Tanzania, will generate much interest in Tanzania through his multiple business and social networks.”

Dr. Aloyce Nzuki, TTB managing director noted that: “As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Tanzania Tourism Awards program, we can be proud of that fact that we achieved two major objectives - increasing the number of tourists from the North American market and increasing the number of tour operators who offer stand-alone safari programs to the southern and western circuits. These successes are due in large part to the strong private sector support from Tanzania itself, as well as our partners globally. However, we want to emphasize that as we work hard to continue to grow our tourism arrivals, TTB will remain vigilant about conservation, encouraging low-impact, high-quality tourism.”

This year, Tanzania also took full advantage of the unique opportunity to use the World Cup in South Africa to reach out to the thousands of football fans coming to Africa from around the globe. According to Amant Macha, TTB marketing director: “With a less than four-hour flight from Johannesburg to Dar es Salaam on South African Airways, a Tanzanian safari is an ideal extension to a visit to South Africa. By hosting more than 25 South African-based tour operators, we were able to assist them in creating some excellent tour packages.”



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