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Global Award Recognizes the Importance of Securing Community Land Rights in Tanzania

ARUSHA – A member of the Ujamaa Community Resource Team (UCRT) has been awarded with the 2016 Goldman Environmental Prize for Africa, the world's largest award honoring grassroots environmental activists.

Today, Edward Loure, of UCRT accepted the prize at a ceremony in San Francisco, California. The prize recognizes Loure's leadership and UCRT's work, which has resulted in pastoralist and hunter-gatherer communities in northern Tanzania securing rights to communal land, ensuring environmental stewardship and economic development for future generations.

"Land is life for pastoralists and hunter-gatherers, thus we must ensure that they own, manage, and benefit from it," said Loure during his acceptance speech. "When people are better off, so are the places and wildlife where they live."

UCRT is a grassroots civil society organization made up of pastoralists and hunter-gatherers, who are passionate and committed to bringing about positive change in their communities. For almost two decades, they have worked across northern Tanzania, helping more than 75 communities secure more than half a million hectares of land.

"This award helps bring attention to the rights of marginalized *Pastoralists and hunters communities* who are at risk of losing their communal land to outside interests," explains Makko Sinandei, Executive Director of UCRT. "We are excited for our teammate, Loure, and for UCRT as an organization to receive such a prestigious recognition."

Over the past five years UCRT has pioneered a unique approach to help highly marginalized groups secure communal rights to land across northern Tanzania, using what is called a Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCRO). The government has been supportive of this approach and communities are already benefiting. For example, the Hadzabe hunter-gatherers, some of the world's last first people, were granted a CCRO and have since earned almost \$100,000 for conserving their land through an arrangement with a carbon offset provider.

"Today, roughly 2.5 billion people – that's a third of our global population – are at risk of losing their land to more powerful interests," Loure explained during his acceptance speech. "The same population protects more than fifty percent - half – of our land. Thus, if these communities lose out, so does our planet...We can change this," he concluded.

UCRT and Loure, along with national and international partners, are now looking to replicate the CCRO model throughout Tanzania, with communal grazing lands of more than 250,000 hectares slated for titling in the next couple of years. UCRT's goal is to scale up efforts so that community-based land titling becomes a key component of land use planning and management that balances the needs of Tanzania's people, its environment, and economy.

ATTENTION EDITORS

About UCRT: Learn more about UCRT at <http://www.ujamaa-crt.org/>

About the Goldman Environmental Prize: The Goldman Environmental Prize was established in 1989 by late San Francisco civic leaders and philanthropists Richard and Rhoda Goldman. Prize winners are selected by an international jury from confidential nominations submitted by a worldwide network of environmental organizations and individuals. For additional information about the Prize and previous winners visit www.goldmanprize.org.

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