

Press Contact: Carrie Kabat, 617-239-7446, ckabat@meridameridian.com

Sales Contact: Paul Rizzo, 617-239-7444, prizzo@meridameridian.com

MERIDA MERIDIAN UNVEILS NEW NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC HOME COLLECTION RUGS

BOSTON (April 25, 2009) –Merida Meridian, a leading designer of sustainable natural fiber floor coverings, will launch the first vegetable fiber rugs and bindings developed specially for the National Geographic Home Collection. The Merida rugs and bindings will be on display with the National Geographic Home Collection at the High Point International Home Furnishings Market, IHFC C800, from April 25-30.

This first-time licensing partnership for Merida pairs the company's 31-year history of sustainably sourced and innovatively designed natural floor coverings with National Geographic's mission to inspire people to care about the planet.

"I am thrilled and honored for Merida to be a selected partner with a world renown organization that shares our values of cultural reflection and sustainability," said Merida CEO Catherine Connolly. "Increasing the accessibility of meaningful and stylish products through the National Geographic Home Collection allows consumers to create beautiful interiors that they can be proud to have in their homes."

The Tanzania Collection, the latest line of furniture and home accessories from the National Geographic Home Collection, is inspired by National Geographic's 18th- and early 19th-century exploration across the vibrant East African landscape. Merida's floor coverings in the collection evoke the romance and wonder of Tanzania with natural fibers, earthy tones, and culturally relevant patterns to create beautiful art for the floor. Fibers in the collection include sisal, jute, and abaca with new leather and fabric bindings that were selected for their unique look and cultural relevance. The items are divided into five categories representing different aspects of Tanzanian culture: Safari, Tribal, Animal, Landscape, and Heritage.

Some of the sisal rugs in the collection are produced in partnership with a cooperative sisal farming community in Brazil. In addition to reversing the trend of falling sisal production in the region and helping to increase the market value of sisal, the co-op also provides economic, social, and educational opportunities for residents of the community. To help tell this story at retail, merchandising and display materials for Merida's product will contain icons noting the handcrafted nature of certain products and the benefits to local economies and the environment.

All of National Geographic's net proceeds from the Home Collection go to the Society's World Cultures Fund to support the study and conservation of world cultures. It aids the work of archaeologists, cultural anthropologists, artists, and other professionals working throughout the planet where looting, over development, and other threats have become agents of cultural extinction.

About Merida Meridian

Merida Meridian is a design-driven company, passionate about creating innovative and fashionable floor coverings that help solve interior design challenges. Inspired by the textures and aesthetics of natural fibers, Merida uniquely customizes its products through sizing, colors and patterns and a selection of over 300 different edge finishes. Merida rugs can be created in sizes and shapes to fit most room décors. We are committed to a tradition of integrating the finest quality natural fibers with innovative textile design and floor covering style. Merida is headquartered in Boston, Mass., maintains a manufacturing facility in Fall River, Mass. and partners with leading manufacturers and suppliers around the world. For more information, please visit www.meridameridian.com.

About National Geographic Society

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. It reaches more than 325 million people worldwide each month through its official journal, National Geographic, and other magazines; National Geographic Channel; television documentaries; music; radio; films; books; DVDs; maps; exhibitions; school publishing programs; interactive media; and merchandise. National Geographic has funded more than 9,000 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program combating geographic illiteracy. For more information, visit nationalgeographic.com.