

Global Coral Reef Alliance™

Dedicated to the Growth and Management of Coral Reefs Around the World

A non-profit organization for protection and sustainable management of coral reefs

Global Coral Reef Alliance

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February 28 2006

Re: Sarah Matthews' environmental films

As President of the Global Coral Reef Alliance I travel all around the Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Pacific, and Southeast Asia trying to get people to save and restore their coral reefs and hillside vegetation. Nothing reaches the fishermen, farmers, and schoolchildren who we must communicate with, better than a thoughtful mind-opening film that shows them how they can improve their lot through their own efforts. Sarah Matthews short films on restoration of degraded lands and on restoration of degraded coral reefs and fisheries do this more brilliantly than any I know.

Their effectiveness is not just their beautiful simplicity and ingenious use of animation to reiterate important concepts, but in that they take us straight to the simple steps that people have taken to improve their own lives and show the benefits they have gained. I have shown her films in several islands of Indonesia, and plan to show them in many more countries because they are pure thought-provoking content. They are so effective because they lack any of the superfluous junk that clutters most environmental films: the self-promotional glittery PR hype about the organizations sponsoring the projects rather than focusing on the way that ordinary people get results.

In many places I go to people have limited knowledge of other parts of the world, and are not really interested in hearing about it at length, they want to know what they can personally do to make a difference in the only place they know. Sarah Matthew's movies move people to say "we could do that too, why aren't we?". They are deceptively simple, but packed with content, and simply the most effective environmental films I have ever seen. She deserves the fullest support to continue her work in so many other places and on so many other issues.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas J. Goreau, PhD
President, Global Coral Reef Alliance

29th March 2006

Dear Sarah

VETIVER TRAINING VIDEO

Thank you so much for the fantastic educational video you prepared for us entitled “**Vetiver Training Video**” after your great work in only 2 days filming in one of the most isolated and impoverished mountain regions of Indonesia, comprising 19 scattered and almost inaccessible hamlets of almost 15,000 people, in June 2004. Thanks to you, we now have an exciting vetiver information and training CD, in English and Indonesian. It has already become a great tool for awareness, information and training on the many properties of vetiver for those who have never heard of it and do not believe that “just a grass” can have so many powerful benefits for mankind.

The 3-minute animation on your video probably gives the most powerful message – needing no language translation! As you know, most of the people in our region are illiterate, especially the farmers, who are responsible for providing for their families, and on steep and sandy volcanic hillside farms. Prior to us introducing vetiver for erosion control and soil/water conservation, they could grow nothing more than cassava and corn. This of course is the situation prevailing in most of the poverty stricken developing countries where illiterate rural dry-land farmers have no knowledge of better land and water management techniques that also benefit their environment.

This great video has been praised by the world vetiver experts as well as being introduced in the regional Vietnam Vetiver Conference held in January 2006, where my paper entitled “**Vetiver Improving Lives of Impoverished Indonesian Subsistence Farming Mountain Communities, led by Children**” was very well received internationally. My section on the Vetiver Training Video is reproduced below:

Vetiver Training Video

Sensitively designed awareness, education and training programmes piloted initially with children in EBPP’s five schools, have been the cornerstone of success in all of our sustainable development programmes, with vetiver systems forming one of the main foundations for future sustainability. We continuously strive to make more information available, especially to share with other disadvantaged regions, prioritizing schoolchildren and farming communities.

We are very proud that we now have an easy to understand Vetiver Training Video, presently in both English and Indonesian, to complement our field training, internet information, Newsletters and local media releases. With a running time of over 30 minutes, the video gives many examples of EBPP vetiver programmes in the village, in the vegetable gardens and a very clear explanation by Ardika Adinata, EBPP’s senior Vetiver coordinator and trainer, of preparation and planting techniques. There is also a clear explanation by the Desa Ban village Head, Mr Ketut Karta, of the benefits vetiver has brought to his village (see below).

Filmed and produced by UK-based Sarah Matthews and The Brock Initiative, Sarah is trying to get funding to produce the training video in different languages so that it can benefit a much more international audience, especially in the lesser developed southern hemisphere.

Our children are presently working on a Vetiver song and short play to complement the video, based on your suggestion, which will be ready soon and give the video much more impact.

Sarah, many thanks once again for this great production, illustrating to the most needy how a simple “grass” called vetiver (*Vetiveria zizanioides*) can sustainably improve lives through far better nutritional food farming and also save homes and regions from devastating land slides.

I close by wishing you good luck and success with getting more support to develop this great video into more languages, with background children’s songs and to help provide a simple and sustainable solution to the most impoverished rural regions of the world.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Booth'.

David J Booth MBE

Founder and Chairman of Ekoturin Foundation & East Bali Poverty Project



for a living planet

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15 October 2007

Sarah Matthews' environmental films

Nature conservation everywhere in the world can only succeed through the change of attitude of men. In the southwest of Gabon in the Gamba Complex of Protected Areas this also is the case. In an area of 12,000 km² where 9000 people live together with at least the same number of elephants, living side by side is not always easy. It is therefore important to show the people, especially young people, the beauty of nature, its benefits and how to protect it. WWF works with a local NGO called *Ibonga* who have become professionals in awareness raising and environmental education in the region.

It is therefore that we invited Sarah Matthews to Gabon to make educational films together with and for the local population in the Gamba Complex. The way Sarah worked together with the children and the local community resulted in 3 remarkable short films which moved the whole community in Gamba and surrounding towns and villages in Gabon.

A flashy music video combines the traditional music with modern rap and is so much appreciated, that it was accepted by and shown on national television and that we still have school teachers and children asking us frequently when we are going to record a second one.

Sarah implicated the children directly in the second film, by filming their own environment using a small camera nicely mixed with her own professional images. This way the schoolchildren are educating their own friends, probably the most effective awareness raising possible.

In the three months in Gabon she even managed to make a third documentary where a girl is discovering one of the most attractive National Parks of Gabon and the people living next to it, in which the most beautiful wildlife shots are mixed with shots of the reality of people living around the park.

Sarah's outstanding work has been the basis of the creation of *Ibonga's* Conservation Roadshow, which goes around all the small villages in the Gamba Complex with a portable generator and a beamer to show the local population the beauty of nature conservation. Combined with national broadcast Sarah Matthews not only made sure to bring the message across but moreover got into the local culture to find the best way to educate this specific population. Her dedication and inspiration will definitely take her far.

Sincerely,
Bas Verhage
Conservation Advisor, WWF Gamba

President: He Chief Emeka Anyaoku

Director General: Dr Claude Martin

President Emeritus:

HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

Founder President:

HRH Prince Bernhard of The

Netherlands

Registered as:

WWF-World Wide Fund For Nature

WWF-Fondo Mondiale per la Natura

WWF-Fondo Mundial para la Naturaleza

WWF-Fonds Mondial pour la Nature

WWF-Welt Natur Fonds

Also known as World Wildlife Fund