

# VETIVERIM

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## Editorial

### From Vietnam With Love

The Editor, in his capacity of the Chairman of the Continuing Committee of the Sixth International Conference on Vetiver (CC/ICV-6), has been invited by Mr. Tran Tan Man, Coordinator, Vietnam Vetiver Network, and member of the CC/ICV-6 from Region 3 – Southeast Asia to visit Danang in Central Vietnam, the proposed venue for ICV-6 to evaluate the potential of Vietnam to host ICV-6 in 2015 as nominated during ICV-5 in Lucknow, India.

From the minute he landed in the beautiful city of Danang with so many attractive places and friendly people, all the way to the last minute he left Danang, the Editor has received a red-carpet welcome from the Mr. Tran Van Man, who met him at Danang International Airport, taking him around the city, looking at the places where vetiver was planted on the slope of a newly built coastal road as well as the conference venue (Furama Resort), and a thrilling ride on the cable car up to the peak of Mount Bana, the site set aside for the Welcome Dinner. However, the most successful event was to participate in the workshop held at the Danang City Hall attended by Vietnamese officials interested in hosting ICV-6 in Danang, including the executives of the People's Committee of Danang City, travel agent executives, vetiver researchers, etc. It has been a pleasure for the Editor to give a talk about "The International Conferences on Vetiver - ICVs", in which its origin was addressed, followed by the objectives and activities of each of the past five ICVs. He also witnessed the presentation of a number of Vietnamese vetiver experts who presented their ideas concerning the hosting of ICV-6 in Danang.

Details of his visit are separately presented in the Report of the Visit to Vietnam by the Chairman of CC/ICV in this issue of Vetiverim. A photo-essay of his visit is also presented. Needless to say, the Editor is so proud of having a chance to visit Danang to pave the way towards ICV-6. There is no doubt in his mind that, with the efficient National Organizing Committee nominated to run another important conference on vetiver, ICV-6, would be as successful as, if not better than, the previous five ICVs.

Please be prepared to participate in ICV-6 in the beautiful city of Danang in Central Vietnam in April 2015.

## Report of the Visit to Vietnam by the Chairman of CC/ICV-6

### Background

At the Business Meeting of ICV-5 held in Lucknow, India on 28 October 2011, Vietnam was nominated as the host of ICV-6. As the Chairman of the Continuing Committee for ICV-6 (CC/ICV-6), I was invited by Mr. Tran Van Man, Coordinator of the Vietnam Vetiver Network (VNVN), to visit Danang, Vietnam during 28-31 August 2012, to evaluate the potential of Vietnam in hosting ICV-6 in order for the members of the CC/ICV-6 to approve the proposal of Vietnam.

### The Visit

**Attending the Workshop:** Upon my arrival in Danang City on the morning of 29 August 2012, I participated in a Workshop held at the Conference Room of the Office of the People's Committee of Danang City. The Workshop was organized to brief the participants who will be key persons in the organization of ICV-6. I presented a paper describing the objectives of the International Conference on Vetiver and the activities of the past five ICVs. At the conclusion of the Workshop, I signed the Memorandum of Understanding among the parties organizing ICV-6 in Danang, Vietnam.

**Field Visit:** During the period of my stay in Danang, various activities were observed, namely:

**1. Vetiver Planting of the Slopes of a Newly-Built Road:** The site is the road work on Son Tra Peninsula, 5 km to the east of the city of Danang. Planting material consists of rooted slips planted for 45 days in plastic bags (polybags). They were planted three months ago and had started to establish roots into the soil.

**2. Vetiver Propagation:** The vetiver propagation site is at Dong Nghe, Hoa Vang, Danang, 20 km south of the city of Danang. VNVN established this place to propagate vetiver grass to supply material for construction activities and handicraft making in the near future.

**3. Conference Facilities at Furama Resort:** Conveniently located in the center of Danang City, Furama Resort, the proposed venue for ICV-6 as well as the accommodation for the participants attending ICV-6. It is one of the best 5-star resorts in Vietnam with 200 rooms overlooking the ocean on one side and a freshwater swimming lagoon on the other. It has many modern facilities such as western and Asian restaurants, one big auditorium, called Convention Palace, with 2,500 sq.m. of space, the largest conference hall in Central Vietnam that can accommodate up to 700 people and is equipped with the most up-to-date communication technologies for international conferences such as high-speed internet access, audio-visual system, a modern translation facility; and five other small meeting rooms. Plenty of space is available for exhibition and poster displays. On the ocean-facing side at the back of the resort, facility there is ample room to hold a big Farewell Party on the last night of the conference prior to the participants' departure.

**4. Bana Hill Resort:** A high-altitude resort at 1,800 m above sea level, Bana Hill resort is planned to be the site for the Welcome Party on the first day of the Conference. It is reached by 2 stages of the cable car, a really exciting trip as it is quite steep a ride above the valley floor with a beautiful view of Danang City and the ocean. Danang beach is renowned to be the sixth most beautiful beach in the world.

### Facilities In and Near Danang

Danang is a modern city conveniently reached by plane, rail and road. Danang Airport is a newly established international airport, and easily connected to two other international airports of Vietnam - Ho Chi Minh in the south and Hanoi in the north. Roads to neighboring countries such as China, Cambodia, Laos PDR, and Thailand are accessible throughout the year. Hundreds of resorts are located along the long beach of the city, as well as dozens of other budget-cost hotels in town near Furama Resort.

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\* By Narong Chomchalow, Chairman, Continuing Committee for the Sixth International Conference on Vetiver, <narongchc@au.edu>.

## UNESCO's World's Heritage City of Hoi An

Only 30 km south of Danang is the ancient city of Hoi An, one of the most popular tourist attractions of Vietnam.. There are many unique things in this city, such as the only restaurant in the world, named “Vetiver”, whose foods are as unique as the city itself, romantic walking streets decorated with millions of lights at night (but turned off during the full moon) and several other attractions within the city which are worth visiting during one of the nights of the conference.

### Approval

Members of the Continuing Committee of ICV, together with members of the TVNI and other key persons of the vetiver network are requested to cast their votes for Vietnam to host ICV-6 at the end of April 2015, which is the time when the weather in Central Vietnam is at its best. It is requested that each member send the author his or her vote and/or comments at their earliest convenience, hopefully within one week, in order for the host to prepare the first announcement of ICV-6 as soon as possible.

### Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express his sincere thanks to the officials of the People's Committee of the City of Danang, professors of Danang University, and Deputy Manager of Vietravel, for the most fruitful discussion during the Workshop on the hosting of ICV-6 in Danang. He also wishes to extend his utmost gratitude to Mr. Tran Van Man, Coordinator of the Vietnam Vetiver Network, for his warm hospitality throughout his stay in Danang and for being a wonderful host, taking good care of the author, from the first minute he landed at Danang Airport, all the time he stayed in Danang, to the last minute when he left Danang, without whose help, the author would not be able to accomplish his task successfully.

Narong Chomchalow

Chairman, Continuing Committee for the Sixth International Conference on Vetiver  
Bangkok, Thailand, 28 September 2012

### Suggested Themes for ICV-6

*Soon after the Report on the Visit to Vietnam by the Chairman of Continuing Committee of the Sixth International Conference on Vetiver has been sent to the members of such Committee and other key persons in vetiver circle, the Chairman received positive response from everyone. All their ballots support Vietnam to be the host of ICV-6 in Danang in the latter part of April 2015. In addition, many have suggested the theme of ICV-6. The following scripts were circulated through the Vetiver Web Board, and are shown in chronological order. The summary of the candidates is presented at the end.*

**From Alberto Rodriguez <Alberto Rodriguez> 8 Oct.**

*Vetiver for A Cleaner Shade of Green*

Supporting document: I suspect that water and soil phytoremediation projects will offer a major opportunity for vetiver to enter the bioengineering realm. We have seen a lot of interest in using it in landfills and we know of various research projects going on for absorption of lead, TNT, and others. I see it having a much broader appeal than energy - not to mention more demonstrable results.

**From Karuna Soeknandan <karauna.soeknandan@gmail.com> 8 Oct.**

*Vetiver & Bioenergy and Vetiver & Medicines*

**From Narong Chomchalow <narongchc@au.edu> 8 Oct.**

*Vetiver for Disaster Mitigation Ecologically and Economically*

Supporting document: The problem of land and mud slides due to heavy rain and flash floods is increasing. Hill side, seashore, river banks, lake and reservoir banks, highway slopes, etc. are seriously eroded or even collapsed. A lot of research work has indicated that the vetiver system could reduce the magnitude of such disasters, if not completely eliminate them.

**From Jason Fox <bigislandsoil@gmail.com> 8 Oct.**

- I think Alberto's suggestions are perfect. Some ideas for side presentations;
- *Getting through red tape with government agency, etc.*
  - *Methods of dissemination / marketing.*
  - *The next 20 years of vetiver.*

**From Alberto Rodriguez <agriflora312@gmail.com> 8 Oct.**

I suspect that water and soil phytoremediation projects will offer a major opportunity for vetiver to enter the bioengineering realm. We have seen a lot of interest in using it in landfills and we know of various research projects going on for absorption of lead, TNT, and others. I see it having a much broader appeal than energy - not to mention more demonstrable results. My suggestion: *Vetiver for a cleaner shade of green.*

**From Narong Chomchalow <narongchc@au.edu> 8 Oct.**

I agree with you (Alberto) and I like your proposed theme. It is short and meaningful. In Thailand, we have a lot of problems with water contamination from heavy metals, e.g. lead in Thong Pha Phum Kanchanaburi Province, cadmium in Mae Sot, Tak Province, selenium in Tha Sala, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, etc. Lately we have a big problem of dumping highly toxic wastewater from the factory's decontamination plant at one of the Industrial Estates near Bangkok. Many of our canals in Bangkok are polluted with eutrophicated waters from domestic, agricultural and industrial sources.

**From Alberto Rodriguez <agriflora312@gmail.com> 9 Oct.**

I think that Vietnam is a very pertinent location for this meeting, but I do not feel too excited about an energy focus. This would seem premature and may disappoint attendees.

**From David Booth <info@eastbalipovertyproject.org> 9 Oct.**

I totally agree with Shantanoo's suggestion which is very similar to my own. I believe that ICV-6 MUST focus on the basics of life and that is communities and the goals my own programs have of sustainable social and economic development. But of course there are many aspects indeed to this and apart from encouraging all the big mining companies that we have persuaded to introduce VS for erosion control and mine tailing pollution prevention, we have also convinced 2 major mining companies to provide vetiver to start vetiver nurseries for the local communities that they will then buy back at top price - thus encouraging many aspects of land preservation and social economic development. The theme for ICV-6 must be more global and look at the original goal of the World Bank when they sent Dick Grimshaw and John Greenfield to find a solution - which was vetiver!

Energy as a topic with vetiver is not practical because this would be very narrow indeed seeking out the fortunate massive vetiver nurseries that can create the bio fuel, pellets etc. Not much of the impoverished developing world really has access to that luxury of large nurseries and the chippers, etc.

**From M. Golabi <mgolabi@uguam.uog.edu> 9 Oct.**

I think that *Vetiver and Energy* is appropriate theme as demand for energy is constantly increasing and vetiver being a good biomass producer, it should be considered at least for research and evaluation. It might be appropriate to consider the *Vetiver and Energy* as one of the alternatives or sub-theme if that would work.

**From John Greenfield <27@xtra.co.nz> 10 Oct.**

I agree with Shantanoo and David, and have stated for a long time that we mustn't lose sight of the importance of vetiver hedges conserving moisture and the essential nutrients while preventing erosion throughout the rain-fed areas of the tropics. Without the Vetiver System rain-fed farmers in Ethiopia and throughout Africa have no hope of, and no other way of, surviving the future ravages of climate change for their very subsistence. I am talking of millions of people here!

This point has been lost on our colleagues from the UN and its alphabet agencies, it is up to us to get the message out globally. In rain-fed areas it is essential to control runoff. David's work with

the young people of his villages is an outstanding example of how to get the vetiver technology established throughout the tropics.

On that basis, I ask our colleagues to come up with a simple but apposite name for ICV-6.

**From Don Miller <donmillernz@gmail.com> 11 Oct.**

I agree with the comments expressed by many others above. I suspect that by 2015 the price of food around the world will be rising again and the reality of sustainable food supplies for a world affected increasingly by climate change will take the headlines. *Sustainable Development* has been considered a contradiction in terms by many, but having vetiver incorporated into that development can, in my opinion, allow development to be sustainable. Can I also suggest that the issue of non-maintenance of established vetiver plantings and the reasons for the decline in its use where great success had previously been achieved be discussed at this conference. It is difficult promoting vetiver where examples of its abandonment after earlier use are all about. I am thinking of Fiji here but it is also a problem in Thailand I understand.

**From Don Miller <donmillernz@gmail.com> 11 Oct.**

Further to my earlier email, this item appeared in the press this morning. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/graphic/2012/oct/10/food-security-risk-index-map>>. Then this: <<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-10-10/drought-cuts-u-dot-s-dot-crops-below-demand-first-time-in-38-years>>. I believe the issue will be even more urgent by 2015.

**From M.P. Singh <mpsingh@earthizenz.org> 11 Oct.**

The buzz of the world is SD, i.e. *Sustainable Development*. The definition of *Sustainable Development* adopted by the world is: "Development that meets the needs of the present generation, without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs" Brundtland Report, 1987. This is only possible in an Environmentally, Socially and Economically healthy world. These are the three pillars on which mankind's future lies. There can be no real economic development without environmental well being. Social development is automatic. Vetiver has proven to support all three aspects independantly and collectively. So, I fully endorse what Shantanoo and David Booth have to say. It should be something like *Vetiver for Sustainable Development*. All three pillars of SD covered, viz. environmental, social and economical.

**From Shantonoo 11 Oct.**

The primary use of Vetiver is for erosion control. It is unique. No plant has the qualities Vetiver has to fight against erosion. Other uses are generally a by-product. So whatever theme, it dominated by issues related to erosion control, I think the theme should be a broad one. Let the researchers present papers on every conceivable topic. If the topic is not yet fixed, I suggest something like *Vetiver for A Sustainable World*.

**From Mark Dafforn <VetiverNet@aol.com> 11 Oct.**

Speaking metaphorically, vetiver can provide the "energy" for many things, including fire of course, but it is also a "fuel source" and catalyst for all else we do as well. Maintaining and sustaining that *Vetiver Energy* has become an emerging area of importance. So, whether one is talking about installation or maintenance or social change or biomass or whatever, while many of the basics have been demonstrated, the key thing is always making it happen, that is to say, energizing it. So, maybe something like *Energizing Vetiver*? It's catchy and nicely ambiguous (at least in English), sorta "wedding" the various suggestions, with a core emphasis on putting vetiver to good use with a special focus on energy uses? Maybe the committee could play around with some generalized rubric like that or its many permutations? Just trying to provide a spark here, to see if it catch a fire.

**From Elise Pinners <elise.pinnars@gmail.com> 11 Oct**

Just adding: if energizing is one side of the theme, we can also look at the reverse: dissipating or leveling out (destructive) energy of floods;

*VS adoption - energizing people for many uses that can easily be adopted large scale*  
*VS renewable energy by-product*

*VS green infrastructure - mitigating or leveling destructive storm & flood energy.*

**From Maria Calderon <imariacalderon@googlemail.com> 11 Oct**

I was thinking, perhaps to go along with Mark's idea, here are some suggestions:

*Vetiver - energizing sustainable development*

*Vetiver system - (n) years of sustainable development*

*Vetiver Grass - green infrastructure and sustainable energy in a developing world.*

**From Jim Smyle <jsmyle@earthlink.net> 11 Oct.**

I fully support the Vietnamese' proposal for hosting ICV-6. In terms of themes, I agree with all prior comments regarding the importance of not losing sight of the importance of the Vetiver System for erosion control, communities and livelihoods and overall sustainability. But I think it is also important to recognize what, in practice, have been the values-added by the ICVs. There are two in particular I would mention: (i) to push the envelope and explore and bring attention to new and emerging applications and (ii) to deepen and broaden our knowledge and understanding of the more developed applications and experiences in how they are implemented in different social/cultural, climatic, technical and economic contexts. If the hosts have a clear vision and proposal about how to develop the *Vetiver and Energy* theme, then I think we should support it as the "potential, groundbreaking use". At the same time, inevitably the bulk of the presentations will be in the realm of other applications and experiences and that should not be lost, either.

So, my recommendation to the Continuing Committee would be to find a way to wed *Vetiver & Energy* with Shantanoo's broader *Vetiver for A Sustainable World* and come up with a title that respects the host's ideas without giving a false impression that the conference is narrowly focused on a theme around which there is as yet little experience or knowledge.

**From John Greenfield <27@xtra.co.nz> 11 Oct.**

Well here I go again – When I developed the Vetiver System back in the 50s in Fiji, it was to prevent erosion while expanding the sugarcane areas in to the hill country. It did a fantastic job. Since then, vetiver has gone "Global" and so has the concern for world 'Poverty'. You hear nothing else these days, even the humble Town dweller now knows what a problem world poverty is, but worries that there is no answer for it. I like Maria's *Vetiver - energizing sustainable development..* Forget all its new-fangled uses they are vitally important too, but do not strike a note with the uninitiated who only understand poverty and really worry about it. They hear it all the time on their radios, TVs and it is the basis of street demonstrations. May be *Vetiver: The Answer to Poverty Alleviation* would get more attention from the masses. .Don't confuse the Conference with all the other attributes of the plant, people will think we are selling 'Snake Oil' here.

**From M.P. Singh <mpsingh@earthizen.org> 12 Oct.**

Yes, *Vetiver: Energizing Sustainable Development* seems to be a step further. As Elise has mentioned the flip side of energy production, it would be wise to delve a little more in to how we view the main pillar of sustainable development, i.e. Environment. All Development consumes energy. Energy can be natural, renewable or fossil based. Which brings us to carbon. Today, to my mind, the whole thing revolves around the maintenance of the level of Carbon Stocks. An activity in a project area needs to be carbon neutral. With Vetiver intervention, we may in some cases achieve carbon positivity. In most of its applications it conserves the below ground carbon stocks and also, in some cases, increases it. Added to this is the avoidance of loss of carbon, if the intervention had not been made. When vetiver is used as an initiator of forests in degraded lands, the effect is colossal. The Carbon Stocks multiply naturally, with minimal or no human intervention after a certain time. Carbon. If the carbon Stocks are maintained in a development, the environment is taken care of and the development becomes sustainable. how much actual energy vetiver can produce or conserve becomes a much smaller achievement when we bring things down to the Common Denominator viz. CARBON.

**From David Booth <info@eastbalipovertyproject.org> 12 Oct.**

The carbon factor is very interesting indeed, but I sigh because the world as we know it now does not yet recognize the carbon sequestration and other benefits of the most important "grasses of

## The Third Series of Vetiver Handicraft Awards Released in Dafan



Photo 1 Farmers are sending products for awarding



Photo 4 Counting of voting paper



Photo 2 Meeting for awarding



Photo 5 The 1<sup>st</sup> award receiver



Photo 3 Evaluation and selection



Photo 6 The 2<sup>nd</sup> award receivers



Photo 7 The 3<sup>rd</sup> award receivers



Photo 8 Discussion on future development



The 1st award receiver from TVNI, Mr. Ye Naiquan



The 3rd award receiver from TVNI, Mr Zheng Dafang



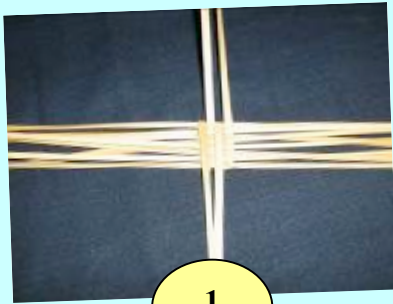
The 2nd award receiver from TVNI, Ms Xu Lixia



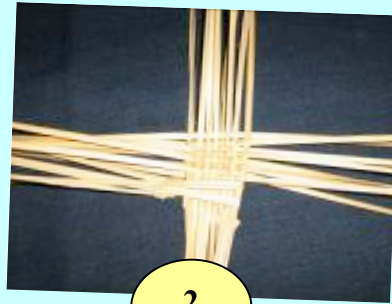
The 3rd award receiver from TVNI, Ms Zhu



**How to weave a hat by the late Petai  
of the Department of Industrial Promotion, Thailand**



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



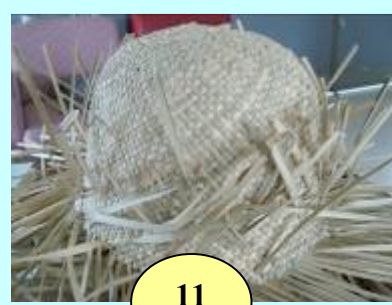
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vetiver and bamboo". As much as I applaud and fully understand your great document here, I do not think that many of the organizations like mine here in Bali, whose clients and target audience are predominantly illiterate populations, will have much understanding or enthusiasm for the carbon aspect - and as such I personally do not think it should be a major aspect of ICV-6. BUT should surely come in as a supplementary long term beneficiary aspect to help our very fragile planet.

**From M.P. Singh <mpsingh@earthizen.org> 13 Oct.**

I think I have not succeeded in explaining my point. I brought in the Carbon angle only as a linkup to energy; as different from direct source of energy by way of briquets or by burning the leaves, I also brought it in to explain Elise Pinner's comment "we can also look at the reverse: dissipating or leveling out (destructive) energy of floods" and to that most energy, fossil based or renewable comes from carbon. It is for us, the people who are promoting this to understand this. The poor people who take this up as a sole source of survival need not understand this. We must understand that we are, via vetiver, giving them a development that is sustainable. That they can pluck fruits from the tree and leave enough for their coming generations.

I visited Bali last year. The poor people are much more disciplined in their attitude towards environment, (thanks to an organization like yours) than in my own country, where humans defecate on the roadside or the railroad side. The horse driven carriages on Gili islands, with bags hanging under their tails, to accommodate their excreta, speaks volumes about their civic responsibility. So, in my own humble way, I second *Vetiver: Energizing Sustainable Development*.

**From Rafael Luque M. <rafaelluque@gmail.com> 13 Oct.**

If we analyze the meaning of the term "energy" from the holistic point of view, we'll find that this is as wide as could be the use of vetiver. So we should not only look at it from the conversion of vetiver in thermal energy point of view.

Seen from this perspective, the possibilities of vetiver for energy transformation or energy control through its use are very large, see: Thermal Energy: Feasibility biofuels transform biomass (solid or liquid). Hydropower: Flood control and soil movement by using barriers. Wind Energy: Control of desertification. Life energy: Increased food production. Medicinal plant resources. Then consider that the name *Vetiver and Energy*, proposed by the Vietnamese is appropriate for the ICV-6.

**From John Greenfield <27@xtra.co.nz> 13 Oct.**

David is absolutely right, we must be more realistic, being bombarded in the Press everyday with Poverty in the 3<sup>rd</sup> world and seemingly nobody doing anything constructive about it. The Vetiver System has proven to be almost miraculous with its many and varied and in some cases outstanding uses. But I consider its most important contribution is preventing poverty at virtually no cost, by sustaining crop production. Therefore the Theme for ICV6 ought to be spelt out loud and clear: *Vetiver Stabilizes Access to Farm Markets*.

Every track from the farmer's field to the village road should be stabilised with vetiver hedges; the village roads to the main town should be stabilised with vetiver hedges. Along the way the culverts/bridge abutments should be protected with vetiver hedges preventing these essential structures from being left, after a flood, standing in the middle of the stream and useless. Look at the importance of vetiver's success with the Madagascar Railway line, which was to be abandoned until vetiver hedges saved it.

Jeffrey Sachs recommends the use of Cell phones for farmers to contact the markets, but these are useless too if the farmer can't get his produce to the market, or essential services can't reach the farmer or his village. Strategically placed vetiver hedges can prevent mud-slides from wiping out whole villages. We must get the message across how vitally important it is to control runoff in all cases.

A "flier" (pamphlet) should be printed and posted out internationally advertising ICV-6 and inviting University Faculty, and Aid Agencies to attend. If they don't attend, at least it makes them aware that there is a technology they should look at. Papers on all the other esoteric uses of vetiver could be included in the Conference with special sessions for those interested.

**From Don Miller <donmillernz@gmail.com> 13 Oct.**

I particularly endorse John's comments regarding access, and the role of vetiver in maintaining rural roads. This can be of great significance to women as they will be the ones that have to carry the produce on their backs if the men can't drive their trucks on the road.... It is this aspect that has neighbouring villages in Vanuatu wanting to be included in the current Vetiver scheme, while their Public Works Dept has been asked to stay away.

**From Richard Grimshaw <r.grimshaw@comcast.net> 13 Oct.**

I have read many of the comments. Clearly respondents all have individual priorities and interest. It seems to me that we need to bring together the many very successful applications of vetiver to provide a conference scenario that demonstrates the powerful potential of VS for sustaining the welfare of our planet. I have to agree with John Greenfield that we must bring some focus back to the use of vetiver in the agriculture sector, and its impact and potential for the poorer societies in the tropics. I am not talking just about erosion control, but also the whole gambit that includes infrastructure, water and energy, all of great importance to the rural people.

ICV-6 venue in Vietnam will assure the proper focus and good field demonstration for participants. To make this conference successful, and I mean success, not just sharing information between those like us who know and delight in the technology, but by having a major and serious impact in the world at large, post conference, a number of things must be done in the planning and execution of the conference, including:

1. Very careful conference structuring
2. Involvement of speakers (more than just key note speakers) who can demonstrate sustained success in the application of the technology. These speakers not only have to demonstrate what they have achieved, but also must be able to showcase the policy implications and the potential impact of the application when scaled up to large scale. Examples include Ethiopian soil conservation; disaster mitigation in Vietnam - highways and levees); South American efforts to deal with devastating landslides; commercial pollution mitigation efforts in the US; Australia and Mexico; dealing with poverty in Madagascar, Haiti, Indonesia; energy for the rural poor, and large scale commercial possibilities for the future. Speakers from all over the world must be carefully selected to deal with these topics.

3. We have to find a way to make ICV6 so attractive that representatives from key development institutions from around the world will want to attend. I have in mind not only the development banks and aid agencies, but also the likes of the Clinton Foundation, Gates Foundation, Aga Khan Foundation and others like them. This conference must be marketed widely. Perhaps we should see if someone like Clinton or Gates would be willing to make the opening address. A special invitation from our Patron might help in this respect.

I guess what I am trying to say is that we have a very strong case, based on 30 years of experience, that this unique plant has a major role to play in sustaining the planet and its inhabitants in the coming decades and its time that we should use our Vetiver Conference as a springboard to achieving this objective. As for a name for the conference, you and others can make that decision

**From Doug Richardson <dgrichardson@mac.com> 13 Oct.**

Thanks to everyone for their contributions. A possible conference title: *Mitigating Human and Environmental Impoverishment with Vetiver - the Miracle Grass.*

**From Elise Pinnars <elise.pinnars@gmail.com> 13 Oct.**

Please allow me another suggestion for ICV-6 Theme: *Energizing Vetiver: on farms, along roads, to markets.* Subtitle: *Vetiver System and Shared Value* (will explain Shared Value (SV) below, for those who can bear reading it... it carries me away; I attach a Harvard article that shouldn't be shared too widely as it is paid for - as TVNI I don't quite understand but anyway - it inspired below ideas). This energizing refers to:

1. On-farm energy: (a) carbon fixation (b) bio-fuel (c) farmers' energy to adopt and upscale this - because its short- and long-term benefits.
2. Energy along roads/infrastructure: (a) dealing with flood damage (negative energy resulting from Climate Change - CC) (b) the importance especially for farm-to-market roads.

3. Appealing to many markets: for farmers, and new markets, where SV (not profit per se) is the guiding principle. CC defines markets and we can connect companies' success with CC adaptation and mitigation, making Vetiver System (VS) a core business, expanding the benefits to many more.

Shared Value (SV) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is out, SV is in. We have appealed to CSR and done some with the sponsors we got - to a limited extent. But CSR programs - a reaction to external pressure - emerged largely to improve firms' reputations and are treated as a necessary expense. Anything more is seen by many as an irresponsible use of shareholders' money. In practice, CSR projects are often poorly done, and hardly give credit to a companies' excellence in its core business. TVNI appealed to CSR and we got some sponsors, to a limited extent. 'Shared Value' is a concept that brings society issues to the core of business itself. Read society issues as: socio/environmental issues: relevant for promotion of VS, SV is not social responsibility, philanthropy, or even sustainability, but a new way to achieve economic success. It is about creating economic value in a way that also creates value for society; reconnecting company success with socio/environmental progress. It is not on the margin of what companies do but at the center: a major transformation of business thinking. The purpose of the corporation must be redefined as creating shared value, not just profit per se. Business acting as businesses (not as charitable donors) will need new skills and knowledge - in TVNI we can appeal to that and share some good practices, putting VS at the core of business. We appeal to business that are ready to develop a far deeper appreciation of societal needs, a greater under-standing of the true bases of company productivity, and the ability to collaborate across profit / nonprofit boundaries. In TVNI terms this is a far deeper appreciation of issues of water infiltration on-farm and how this affects the entire agricultural sector, flood damage and the kind of innovations (VS) that can address this, water quality (and VS), etc.

Initial investment and time may be required to implement new procurement practices and develop the supporting cluster, but the return will be greater economic value and broader strategic benefits for all participants. It is about expanding the total pool of economic and socio/environmental value. Think of infrastructure and related labor markets: contractors option for VS creates more employment: greater SV.

VS and its relevance to CC is excellent for appealing to companies that embrace SV principles. We can help these companies find ways to drive innovation to address CC and productivity at the same time. Consider that CC is not an 'externality' that has to be forced on business by government regulation, and addressing CC is not a government responsibility but can be in the core of business without tempering economic success: it defines markets and we can connect companies' success with CC adaptation and mitigation, and expand markets, open up more ways to serve new needs, cut costs, gain efficiency.

The principle of SV creation cuts across the traditional divide between the responsibilities of business and those of government or civil society. SV creates new demands on what a government can do to enable private sector to play its role regarding CC. TVNI can appeal to existing policies on CC and point out where current practices prohibit the private sector from playing its part. The example of the roads sector is one, in Kenya it remains 'locked' but in Vietnam and many other countries we can find good government practice allowing adoption of VS for infrastructure (roads, railways). We can put this in a larger context of SV and energize businesses to push forward these arguments to influence policies, to call for green procurement.

In TVNI we know a number of companies (smaller and some larger ones) that can share their expertise on how they created SV, making VS part of their core business. The Madagascar Railway project (have they invented 'Shared Value'?), many small on-farm nurseries across the world, business like Bemasoandro, Hydromulch, Deflor, the polluted-city-waste recycling company in Vietnam, small companies like Green-Water Solutions, etc. My list is definitely incomplete and we need to explore further to see in how far such business follows the SV principles - successes and failures to learn from. In ICV-6 this can be shared, to energize other companies, as well as governments: we can pull out some policy issues for advocacy.

**From Richard Grimshaw <r.grimshaw@comcast.net> 14 Oct.**

I wonder if we are getting carried away by this energy focus. The point is that vetiver has a very high biomass per ha potential. We need to make those who are developing alternative energy concepts and energy production systems that involve biomass as feedstock, at what ever scale, to be aware of vetiver's biomass. We are not in the business of developing high tech biomass boilers, gasification systems, etc. leave this to others. So if we have a conference that focuses on vetiver and energy, we only need one paper that describes the BTU of vetiver, and vetiver biomass production as a bio product of vetiver applications under management conditions. Period!

**From Oscar Rodríguez <osrp1958@gmail.com> 16 Oct.**

It is interesting to know how much interest has raised the Vietnam vetiver congress slogan. As one idea following the interests of everybody, how do you like *Vetiver System: Empowering Sustainable Development*. It is similar to energizing but perhaps more comprehensive of all vetiver applications.

**From M.P. Singh <mpsingh@earthizen.org> 17 Oct.**

I feel all people who matter in decision making in various countries, would like to be seen as supporting SD, i.e. *Sustainable Development*. By Definition it covers *Environmental, Social and Economic* well being. The Environment component covers energy (in terms of prevention of negative energy in disasters, in terms of losing carbon stock in floods, in terms of forestation that is caused only due to vetiver intervention, and countless other ways). Carbon saving/addition covers climate change. Soil conservation, prevention of erosion, water conservation, wastewater treatment all cover CC; aside from the contribution to social well being of communities, not only due to the vetiver plant itself, but also the gains it brings due to prevention of various tragedies.

The contribution in economic well being is not restricted to the earning from vetiver but most of the gain is resultant to prevention of loss. Therefore, in my opinion *Vetiver for Sustainable Development* seems to be an all engulfing theme. We were bringing in the words 'energizing' or 'empowering' to, somehow, highlight the energy factor. But the energy factor is predominantly built in the SD.

I would suggest a step further. As we all know, the world is passing through the *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* (ending year 2014). Countries all over the world have done something or the other towards this. The Centers of Excellence, should include Vetiver in their programs of ESD. Well, this is a thought. This should get the governments to participate more actively.

A word on what Elise suggested Vetiver System in a Sharing Value Programme. "*VS in SV*". My friend - Ashwin Aiyer, an ardent organic farming activist and an ardent supporter of vetiver, reports that a farmer in Tamilnadu put vetiver bunds in his small field and his output of rice has doubled. If food chain companies (like Walmart) are encouraged to use vetiver via their farmers, this system can be applied. A broad model can be evolved. There can be value addition all round.

Shantanoo is doing some trials for a corporate house in a minefield. Currently, the company must be doing it under CSR but a SV model would be more sustainable. I am very poor with money matters and hence, cannot give an expert view. But *prime facie*, this can be a good catalyst. Even the ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) mentioned above can be a SV program.

**From David Booth <info@eastbalipovertyproject.org> 17 Oct.**

I've just read the early part of M.P. Singh's email and I would like to add just one word! *Vetiver for Sustainable Community Development*. That's my contribution for today. Many thanks and really interesting dialogue that has developed over the last week or so.

**From M.P. Singh <mpsingh@earthizen.org> 17 Oct.**

I agree with David Booth that the word '*Community*' should come in. But to make the phrase catchy to 'officialdom', the words '*Sustainable*' and '*Development*' must be together. The initials SD are well known. How about *Vetiver for Sustainable Development of Communities*?

**From David Booth <info@eastbalipovertyproject.org> 17 Oct.**

How about *Vetiver Empowering Impoverished Communities towards Sustainable Development*?

**From M.P. Singh <mpsingh@earthizen.org> 17 Oct.**

My opinion is that vetiver is not only for the impoverished. It is good for all. How about *Vetiver for Sustainable Development & Community Empowerment* or *Vetiver Empowering Communities towards Sustainable Development*?

**From David Booth <info@eastbalipovertyproject.org> 17 Oct.**

Great stuff!! Both are a good fit in my opinion. Let's see how the ICV-6 Committee move on this. The final choice is theirs.

### The Third Series of Vetiver Handicraft Awards Released in Dafan Village\*

The evaluation, selection and awarding of prizes for vetiver handicraft products, was organized in Dafan Village of Jinzhai County, Anhui Province, China on 26 September 2012. This was the third time awards were made in this village. Altogether, 22 women attended the ceremony. It was requested that each farmer who participated in the activity should bring 20 cucurbit handicrafts made from vetiver grass for evaluation and selection.

Through evaluation it was found that the quality of most vetiver handicraft products has improved. However, they differed in quality and design. The system of evaluation, selection and awarding, promote the improvement of the products and encourage farmers to be more involved in product quality so that the products can attract more customers in the market. In addition, some farmers designed new products that may have market potential. Finally, a total of eight women were selected to receive the awards (Table 1).

**Table 1. The third vetiver handicraft awarding in Dafan Village.**

Level	Name	Votes
1 <sup>st</sup>	Shen Laixiy	15
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Zhu Yingxiu	13
	Chen Tangmei	11
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Xia Zhiquan	10
	Cai Xainxia	9
	Zhang Jiaqin	9
	Zheng Dafang	8
	Cai Shoumin	8

The cucurbits from each woman were collected by the Vetiver Cooperative for sale. At the same time, some women sold their own products in the market at higher price. We encouraged them to do their best to sell their products through their own efforts order to get higher profit. The person who did an excellent job market development will be highly appreciated and will get special premium. Meanwhile, they were asked to plant more vetiver grass and to treat and store dry leaves which are prerequisite for further production.

To seek more markets, the Village Committee organized some product exhibition at the canton. In addition, some products were sent to Shanghai Agricultural Products Fair and Anhui Agricultural Fair in 2012.

In addition to vetiver handicraft making, leaders of the China Vetiver Network and local government investigated the cultivation of tea oil tree (*Camellia oleifera*) with vetiver planting. Generally speaking, 95% of the tea oil trees have survived and started to grow. They are much better than those planted in nearby villages outside the project site. However, due to extreme drought during the planting season, vetiver did not grow well. Later in July 2012 more vetiver slips were transported from Hubei Province. They all survived and started to grow. However, since they were planted later it might be difficult for them to form hedges in 2012. During our latest investigation we found that the two ponds constructed during our project period played a great role in rice production. Farmers were very happy to harvest their rice crop from their own fields. Furthermore, they all realized that the irrigation facilities will certainly a prerequisite for a good harvest in the coming decades. In addition, we investigated the old (beverage) tea garden which was established in the 1970's. Since the farmers have been lacking funds, they almost lost their production. As tea production forms one of the most important sources of income, the degraded tea garden will surely impact farmers' life. It is expected to include this matter in our next new project. (See photographs in the central pages)

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\* By Liyu Xu, Coordinator, Chinese Vetiver Network, Nan Ching, China

## **HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Opens the “Miracle Vetiver” Exhibition**

On Monday, 10 September 2012, at 15.00 hrs., Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn went to the Lifestyle Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Siam Paragon Department Store in Bangkok, Thailand to open the Exhibition entitled, “Miracle Vetiver” where she was welcomed by the executives of the Chaipattana Foundation, the Office of the Royal Development Projects Board, the Land Development Department and PTT Public Company Limited.

The “Miracle Vetiver” Exhibition was organized through the cooperation among the four agencies mentioned above with an aim to publicize the importance and benefits of the vetiver which His Majesty the King of Thailand had ignited the idea and gave initiatives for the dissemination of its uses among the Thai people. In particular, the Thai farmers have adopted the vetiver technology for soil and water conservation as well as for improving their farmlands to the extent that has considerably increased the production. Apart from the use for soil and water conservation, the vetiver leaves can be creatively made into various handicrafts which include those featuring the local knowledge, e.g. baskets, bags, souvenirs etc. Some products such as furniture, accessories and clothes even won the first prizes from the contests on the design from vetiver.

The “Miracle Vetiver” Exhibition was held from 10 to 15 September 2012 at the Lifestyle Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of Siam Paragon. The exhibition showcases the interactive booths, animations reflecting the ingenuity of His Majesty the King in the use of vetiver for soil and water conservation, vetiver works that won prizes from the contests on the design from vetiver as well as products under the brand “Pat Pat,” meaning outcome of development, which emerged from His Majesty’s benevolence and kindness. *(See photographs in the central pages)*