



Vetiver Greetings for 2014 – What happened in 2013

The worldwide Vetiver family had another good year in 2013. It was exciting to see expanding use of Vetiver System applications in most parts of the world, often from people and places that we rarely hear from,

The year's highlight was The Second International Latin American Conference on the Vetiver System that was held in October in Medellin, Colombia, and very ably organized by Daniel Londono of the Colombian Vetiver Network. There was excellent attendance and some very interesting [presentations](#) from most of the region's countries covering various applications. It was interesting to see how individuals, communities, private companies,

schools, and Universities were all making their contribution to furthering this great technology. I was personally moved by the work of Alois Kennerknecht of Lima, Peru, who, using his own money, had virtually single handed introduced VS for [beautification, soil conservation, and other purposes](#) to some very poor inner city urban communities. In Madagascar, our current "Vetiver Champion", Yoann Coppin, continues his excellent work with a number of [cross sector applications](#) that show what can be done when you put your mind to it! We thank the companies and individuals who contributed to the conference in kind and funds.

In late November we learned that Paul Truong had been shortlisted in the final 25 contenders for the St Andrew's Prize – an important UK environmental prize. His submission was based on his pioneering work on phytoremediation of wastewater and its potential for reducing diseases transmitted in dirty water. We will know whether he is a winner or not in May 2014. Water quality is an important area where VS can prove helpful. For example we recently learned that TechnoServe has a project in East Africa that addresses the coffee industry, including training over 120,000 Ethiopian coffee farmers in VS technology and using the VS application, that we are now calling, [Vetiver Phytoremediation Technology](#) (VPT), to treat wastewater from coffee pulping stations.

We would like to congratulate TVNI Director, Roley Noffke of Hydromulch, South Africa, for being elected as Vice President of the International Erosion Control Association (IECA) with global responsibilities outside of the US. Roley has been a great supporter of the Vetiver System; has helped fund a number of vetiver programs and vetiver training courses; has carried some [large mine rehabilitation and slope stabilization](#) works in Africa using VS; and has shown how poor local communities can significantly improve their incomes through inclusion in the

production and supply of large quantities of **quality** vetiver plant material. His example is laudable and should be an example to many other commercial operations that use VS.

Our website continues to be very well used. It is interesting to see the growing interest from countries such as the Philippines, Italy, Brazil, Myanmar amongst others. I have been busy updating the website (something I should have done a long time ago), and have now nearly completed an additional [Vetiver System Library](#) that is in the public domain and hopefully proves easier to find vetiver information and documents. You can still use the website search engine and the Vetiver Archives – they are all interlinked.

Sadly in the past year we have lost two of our longstanding Board members and friends. Monty Yudelman who died in January 2013 was well known in international circles, having been at one time the World Bank's Director of Agriculture and Rural Development where he oversaw a massive increase in Bank agricultural lending to impoverished farmers. Then this last November Mark Dafforn, our Secretary and Director, died suddenly at far too young an age. He will be remembered particularly for his work the National Academy of Science's 1993 study – "Vetiver Grass – A Thin Green Line Against Erosion" and his work with Robert Adams on the DNA of Vetiver, as well as for the good scientific advice that he gave us all. We are setting up two awards in their names - "The Monty Yudelman Award" and "The Mark Dafforn Award". Details will be posted shortly about the awards, but both will be open to people undertaking outstanding contributions to the Research and/or Development of the Vetiver System. The Yudelman Award already stands at \$5,000 and The Dafforn Award is at \$1000. If anyone would like to contribute you can do so either via our "Donate" button on our website or by mailing in a check or money order.

The Vetiver System continues to attract a good deal of attention, and is particularly important for addressing Climate Change and Food Security issues. I firmly believe that VS is one of the most important tools for mitigating and preventing many of the land and water related environmental activities that are needed if this planet is to be a better place. We have a long way to go, and a lot of hard work remains particularly in information transfer and application. The three major legs of the Vetiver System: infrastructural slope stabilization, on farm soil and water conservation (erosion control), and treatment of contaminated land and water (phytoremediation) remain the keystones of the technology; together they address the critical areas mentioned above.

For those of you who may share this letter with your friends and interested clients you might care to read up on the history and achievements of TVNI and the Vetiver System in [this document](#) that I recently prepared.

The next big vetiver event will be the [6th International Conference on Vetiver](#) (ICV6) to be held in Da Nang, Vietnam in May 2015. Its theme will be "Vetiver System: Empowering Sustainable Development". It should be a very good and informative

gathering, and is being ably organized by [Man Tran](#), Vietnam Vetiver Coordinator. Mark up your diaries and join us in Da Nang.

Finally at this season of “Giving”, I would like to tell you that in the past few days we have had some generous responses to our request for funds to support the ongoing work of the Vetiver Network. Thus far we have collected nearly \$4,000. **We need more**, and I would ask those of you who have not yet made a contribution and who care about our planet, the solutions and opportunities that VS can provide, and the personal/business benefits that many of you have derived through the Vetiver Network to consider a tax deductible donation – easy to make via the secure “Donate” button on our website.

Thank you all for a good year, and Greetings!

Dick Grimshaw