

SYNOPSIS

HOW TO SAVE THE EARTH

How to Save the Earth is a series of six television programmes that go beyond the usual 'doom and gloom' about the state of the Earth today. By concentrating on the life and work of twelve 'green warriors', each programme demonstrates that answers exist to the problems we now face.

Programme One: **Taking the Waters**

The world's great rivers and wetland systems are coming under remorseless pressure - from farmers, industrialists and population growth. Pollution and water shortages increase in severity year by year, but existing protection measures (national and international) remain inadequate. Klara Benkoviesova is a volunteer organiser for Eurochain, a network set up in 1990 to protest against the construction of the giant Gabeikovo Dam in Czechoslovakia. Hammadi Baraket is Chief Conservation Officer for the Ichkeul National Park - Tunisia's, and one of the world's most important wetlands.

Programme Two: **The Monk, the Trees and the Concrete Jungle**

The tropical forests form the Earth's richest environment, home to around 70 per cent of the millions of species with which we share this planet. In just a few decades, over half the world's tropical forests have been destroyed. If nothing is done, most of the rest will vanish within our lifetimes. Phra Ajaan Pongsak is a Buddhist monk who has devoted his life to restoring the watershed forests of the Mac Soi Valley in northern Thailand. Joichi Kuroda runs the Japanese Tropical Forest Action Network, one of the most effective and outspoken environmental organisations in Japan.

Programme Three: **Smogbusters**

Most of today's air pollution problems arise from the burning of fossil fuels (oil, coal and gas) in factories, power stations and cars. We are all victims of air pollution, particularly in industrial centres and large cities, where vehicle exhausts insidiously contaminate our lives. Nei Serra is Mayor of Cubatao, which used to be one of the most heavily polluted cities in Brazil. As Director of the Labor/Community Strategy Center, Eric Mann has become involved in many different environmental campaigns, particularly to improve air quality in Los Angeles.

Programme Four: Handle with Care

Our post-War obsession with economic growth at all costs has generated many benefits for a small proportion of humankind. But the costs are escalating all the time: to our communities, to the Earth's life-support systems, and to the human spirit. Directly challenging the 'growthist' consensus is an essential responsibility of the modern Environment Movement. Jorunn Eikjok is a researcher at the Nordic Sami Institute in Norway. Since the early 1980's, she has taken an active part in the Sami political and cultural movement. The world first became aware of Lois Gibbs when she spearheaded a campaign in the late 1970's to save her neighbourhood from a leaking chemical dump at Love Canal near Niagara Falls.

Programme Five: Loaves and Fishes

Since the late 1980's, food production in many parts of the world has failed to match population growth. Every year, there are 90 million additional people to feed. But every year, about 20 billion tonnes of topsoil are lost. More than a billion people are permanently under-nourished. Jens Ole-Hojmann was once a fisherman on a Danish North Sea trawler, he is now the Fisheries Campaigner for Greenpeace in Denmark. Dr. Melaku Worede is Director of the Plant Genetic Resources Centre in Ethiopia. He has devoted his life to protecting Ethiopia's genetic diversity, building up "strategic seed reserves" of traditional varieties, and working with local farmers.

Programme Six: How Much is Enough

The fate of the Earth depends on a simple equation: the number of people multiplied by average per capita consumption. Whilst population soars in the South, consumption increases exponentially in the North. Limits have to be found to both these destructive processes so that people both North and South are reconciled to the natural carrying capacity of Planet Earth. Vicki Robin is President of the New Road Map Foundation in the USA, an educational, non-profit corporation that helps to fund initiatives enabling people 'to live more simply, that others may simply live'. Carmen Leyte is one of Mexfam's Family Planning Advisors who works with the young in some of the poorest 'barrios' in Mexico City.