

“Soil, Soul and Society”

The Future of Food : Eat like it Matters

Transcript of public talk by Dr Satish Kumar on 9th November, 2011

(Edited by KFBG)

Opening Remarks by Prof. Peter Hills

Prof. Peter Hills : Welcome everyone, my name’s Peter Hills; I am the Director of the Kadoorie Institute at Hong Kong University, here. It’s good to see many of you have come back for the second of these talks, and there are also some new participants as well. I’d just like to say a few words of welcome on behalf of the University and the Institute. This, as you know, is the second in the short series on the theme of “Soil, Soul and Society.” So for those of you that were here last night, welcome back, and of course welcome again to our speaker, Dr Satish Kumar, [of Schumacher College, UK].

These talks are being organised by the Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, together with ourselves, the Kadoorie Institute, and Schumacher College in the UK. Just very briefly, because many of you will have heard these comments last night, I’d just like to say a few words about the Institute. We share the famous Kadoorie name with our friends and colleagues at the Farm, but we are actually part of the University and we’re quite a separate organisation. We were established in 2008 to help to develop the University’s teaching and research in the fields of sustainability and the environment. The Institute was created through a merger of two existing units, one of which was the Kadoorie Agricultural Research Centre which is at Shek Kong, and it’s right next door to the Farm and Botanic Garden. This often, as I pointed out last night, leads to a little bit of confusion because people are not quite sure which one is which and who runs which one. We’re quite separate organisations but we have increasing levels of collaboration and cooperation.

Like any university department we do research, we do teaching, and we do what now is broadly termed knowledge exchange. Much of our work is very practical and involves engaging with different groups, stakeholders, who are affected by particular policies or projects, and most of that work takes place in Hong Kong. We’re also very

much involved in educational initiatives. We've been managing the Lung Fu Shan Educational Centre on behalf of EPD and the University for the last few years, and our other major venture at the moment is the Global Forestry Observatory Project which is based at Shek Kong. And we're working very closely with the Farm on that project.

We're very pleased to be associated with these public talks and to be a co-organiser. Thank you for showing your support by coming along this evening and last evening. We have a webcast this evening as well, I believe. It's good to see there's such an excellent turnout. Last night's talk was very insightful and stimulating and I'm sure the talk tonight will be the same. So thank you once again for coming along.

Opening Remarks by Andrew McAulay

Andrew McAulay: Thank you Peter. Good evening everyone, welcome to all of you, welcome back to those of you who were here last night, and also a very special welcome to all of those who are joining us by webcast. This is our, or at least the Kadoorie Farm's, first experiment with webcasting, and we have 85 different groups, of up to 50 people, joining us. They are from Beijing, Guangzhou, Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, the USA, Taiwan, France, Colombia, somewhere in Africa [laughter] – I won't say "Africa," it's huge – the UK and Australia, and also, from Hong Kong. So to give you some examples, there's a group of teachers on the Chinese University's Spiritual Education programme, a group from the Philippines Native Plants Conservation Society, Middlebury College in the USA, the sculptor Larry Holofcenor and his wife Julia – welcome to you – and many overseas Chinese groups as well. So welcome to all of you here and on the World Wide Web.

Now we were to have had two speakers tonight – very sadly Dr Vandana Shiva has not been well and is unable to join us. She very much wanted to be here and that's why it was left to the last minute to decide whether or not she could make it. So we do wish her a speedy recovery and hope that she will be able to visit Hong Kong at a later stage. Still, we're extremely fortunate to be able to welcome Dr Satish Kumar again this evening. For those of you who were here last night, you'll know what a delight it is to listen to him. Last night's topic was holistic education, and this evening's talk is titled *The Future of Food*.

I want to let you know that this evening's talk is being filmed, as was last night's talk, and they'll both be edited and made available on the Internet – I would check in with Kadoorie Farm's website www.kfbg.org if you want to watch again. I believe that transcripts are also being made and will be made available to you as well. I encourage you during the talk to prepare questions – we hope to have a very lively question-and-answer session, so do have a think about that.

I would like to share with you a little biographical information which I also shared last night. Satish was born in India, and raised as a Jain monk from the age of nine. When he was 18, he became interested in Gandhi's philosophy and vision, and became a campaigner for land reform. Later, he undertook an 8000-mile peace pilgrimage, walking all the way from India to America with no money, and this was to deliver messages of peace to the leaders of the four nuclear powers at the time. Now he's written about this journey, along with other adventures, in his autobiography called *No Destination*. He's written a number of other books as well, and some of these are available for purchase after the programme. I think *No Destination* has already been sold out, but no doubt you can get a copy through the Internet. Satish also teaches and leads various workshops and courses that combine ecology, sustainability and spirituality, and the principal vehicle for his teaching has been the Schumacher College which is an international education centre in Devon, England, as you may know. Satish co-founded this in 1991. Satish has been living in England since 1973, and he's also long been the editor of *Resurgence* magazine – I have a copy here [holds it up]. I believe after the programme there will be a chance to sign up to *Resurgence* if you visit the desk where Satish will be signing books. This magazine was described by *The Guardian* as "the spiritual and artistic flagship of the green movement."

So that's just a quick snapshot of Satish's life. Kadoorie Farm had the honour of hosting Satish's visit to Hong Kong and Beijing last year, so this visit is part of an ongoing collaboration between Kadoorie Farm and Schumacher College that I hope will result in the visit of many more interesting teachers in the years to come. You can stay abreast of these developments by visiting the Kadoorie Farm website and you can also find out there how to get onto our Facebook page and sign up to our newsletter, *Connections*.

So, without any further ado, please help me welcome Satish.

“Future of Food: Eat Like it Matters”

Public Talk by Dr Satish Kumar

Satish Kumar: Thank you for your kind introduction. And welcome to this University of Hong Kong and Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden [event]. It is a great pleasure for me to come again to Hong Kong and be guest of Kadoorie Farm and Botanic Garden, which is a wonderful place – if you have not visited it, I can recommend you [to]. And particularly I recommend you to because it’s a farm, and also a garden, where [they] grow food. When people in England, or many people who are watching this talk on a webcast, think of Hong Kong, they think of this island, with high-rise buildings, and a very, sort of, industrial city. But finding a place like Tai Po, a traditional town, and nearby, this great botanical garden, but also a farm, is a wonderful discovery. Hong Kong is not just industrial buildings, and banks, but also farms. It’s a wonderful thing, because, in my view, no city should be without surrounding land producing food for itself.

Nature and culture should always remain partners. When nature and culture are divorced, both suffer. At this moment, many of our cities are focusing on industry, and maybe some arts, galleries, theatres, concert-halls... but no land, no ponds, no animals. No place to grow some vegetables, or fruit. No fruit trees. And then when you go in the countryside, [the] people [there] think “Oh, we are backward, we are not quite advanced, we don’t have the facilities of the cities,” and so many rural people, including in China, but also in India, in Africa, in Europe, they feel deprived of culture. And therefore they want to go to the cities, and find jobs there. And so both are losing. The cities are losing the rural, pastoral, food, fruit, trees, wonderful Nature. And the rural areas, the villages, are also suffering, deprived of this culture. So what I would like to see is some kind of partnership between city and rural areas. Nature and culture in partnership; and then growing of food is not something for those who are uneducated, peasants [for very low pay], don’t know anything else [like] how to operate computers, how to operate high technology [it would be for city people also].

If you are working in a city, in a bank, or in other big offices, you might be paid a hundred pounds an hour, or a thousand pounds an hour. So there's this great disparity between rural and urban, and we have somehow come to believe and think that farming, gardening, growing food, is somehow low-level work, and getting your hands dirty... I say to my city friends, "Dirt is not dirty." If there was no dirt, you'd have no food on your table. Even though now the food you are opening, from supermarkets, is packaged three times in plastic... inside that very neat, clean-looking plastic, is food coming out of dirt, the soil. Therefore dirt is not dirty – we are made of the soil. We are made of the earth. So we need to bring back that dignity of labour, dignity of working on the soil. Why does a farmer having, maybe, a thousand acres – some of my references may be more British than Hong Kong or Chinese, but in England it's true, a farmer might have one thousand acres of land – and cannot make a living? Why? Why should our food production be so put so low that they have to be subsidised?

And we all want cheap food. We don't want to give any dignity, any respect, any honour to our food growers, but we want them to produce very cheap food. We are not prepared to pay. We are prepared to pay big money for computers, or mobile phones, or other great inventions of technology, but when it comes to food, it must be cheap.

So we have to change our mind, change our thinking. We can live without technology, we can live without many other things that we value, but we cannot live without food.

So simple! So elementary! But we have forgotten that simple elementary reality.

So I would like to say that every new city, or urban planners, should think about it, that we should have 50, 60 miles' radius around a big city, like Hong Kong, or Beijing, or Shanghai, where food is grown locally. At this moment, because cities have money, people are wealthy, rich, they can import food from anywhere. Now something like 50 percent of fossil fuel used, or global warming created, comes from agriculture. First of all, we are putting huge machinery on the land. Big combine-harvesters and tractors and machinery. So farmers are no longer farmers. Agriculture is no longer agriculture. It has become agribusiness. Now there's a great deal of difference

between agriculture and agribusiness. When food becomes business, it becomes a commodity, and the idea of food as a sacred source of nourishment, as a sacred source of social and family relationships, and also a source of spiritual wellbeing – so ecological, spiritual and social, these three dimensions – get lost when food is only a commodity. Like when you put fuel in your car, you put food in your body as a commodity, and you don't think about it. I think we need to pay greater attention to the quality of food, the sacred quality of food: where it is coming from, how it is packaged, how it is distributed, how it is grown. Non-violently. Agriculture turning into agroindustry, or industrial agriculture, or agribusiness, becomes violent. If you take factory farms, where animals are kept in confinement – chickens, and pigs, and cows, and all the other animals that we consume – they are kept in cruel conditions. And when you are eating the food produced without compassion, and meat coming from unhappy animals, what is going to be the result? Do you think if you are eating meat of unhappy animals you will be happy? If you are eating the animals which are the source of your nourishment, source of your wellbeing; if they are not in wellbeing themselves, are they going to bring wellbeing to you? These are fundamental questions that we have to ask – How [do] we treat the soil? Even how [do] we treat the earthworms? How [do] we treat our cows? And how [do] we treat our seeds? And how [do] we treat our pigs. And how [do] we treat our trees. And how [do] we treat our bushes? Every living creature upon this earth is our relation. And we have forgotten that. We think this is only a source of making money. So food production is no longer, truly speaking, to nourish society, no longer to feed the people. Feeding the people is only a by-product of agribusiness and industrial agriculture. The main purpose of modern industrial agribusiness is to make profit. To make money. And the prices are fixed somewhere, in Chicago, or some big central systems. And that creates problems for farmers, and particularly Third-World farmers. They cannot compete with American industrial agriculture, because they are more efficient in terms of machinery use, in terms of fossil fuel use, chemicals, fertilisers – so they cannot compete. So they are always losing out. So the whole industrial food system and agricultural system has become such a big problem now [and] we need to address it quite seriously.

The first step in order to address this issue is to go local. Now it's a very big challenge, because at the moment, food is all global. Globalisation has been the trend, and you can import food from anywhere.

Once my friend and mentor, E.F. Schumacher, was standing outside London, and he noticed a lorry full of biscuits produced in Edinburgh, coming to London. And he looked at it: “Why are biscuits coming all the way from Edinburgh to London?” And as he was wondering, he saw another lorry, going from London, full of biscuits, to Edinburgh. Now Schumacher was an economist, Oxford graduate. And as an economist he started to calculate, “What is the economic factor in this system? That a lorry full of biscuits coming from Edinburgh to London, and London to Edinburgh – everyday drivers driving, lorries driving, driving, drivers bored, driving... roads are built, the fossil fuels are imported from Saudi Arabia, from Iraq, from everywhere... to do what? To take biscuits from Edinburgh to London and from London to Edinburgh.” He was puzzled. Then he said, “Oh well, I’m merely an economist. I’m not a nutritionist. Perhaps when you transport biscuits from Edinburgh to London and London to Edinburgh the nutritional value of the biscuits will go up?”

Now this is not merely a light-hearted joke. It is a very serious matter. And not only from-Edinburgh-to-London biscuits. I have seen myself – I was once in France and I went to a shop, and I saw Scottish water, bottled in a plastic bottle. All the way from Scotland – Highland water – because in Scotland we have very pure clean water from the Highlands, and this is why Scottish whisky is very famous, because of the purity of the water. So I saw this Scottish water being sold in France. And then I was with a friend, and he said “But you know Satish, Perrier water from France is sold in Scotland.” Now Scottish Highland beautiful clean crystal-clear water is not good enough for the Scottish. And French water is not good enough for the French. So they are exporting French water to Scotland and Scottish water to France. I can understand if they want to trade between Scottish whisky and French wine. That’s a fair trade. I’m not against trade. But I’m against this mad, unwise, without-any-proper-logic-or-reason, this mad transportation, just going. And we need fossil fuel for it. And we go to war to protect our resources of fossil fuel. And how do we use that fossil fuel? If it were used wisely, for real need of people, one can understand, but it’s a complete waste. Globalisation of food not only causes global poverty but also causes global warming and global climate change. And so we need to address this issue of the future of food from the point of view that we have to move away from this global market to more locally produced food.

Now when we are producing food, gardening is very important for me. Farming on a small scale. In England – again I give you an example of England but it can be an illustration for many countries. A tremendous number of people from rural areas of China are moving toward the cities. I was talking with Professor Wei who was here last night and we were having lunch together today and he was saying the rural areas are now becoming empty, and a lot of land people are just leaving in search of jobs in cities. Why? Because as I said at the beginning, the dignity of farming labour is very very low. And we have thought that if you are no good to do anything better, then you do farming. So young people who are educated don't want to have such an inferior position, so they are leaving the land. So we need to reverse that culture, and this is our challenge, we, the people sitting in this room, and people listening from many parts of the world, on the webcast, it is our challenge because we have lost connection with the soil, and we are part of that problem, that the dignity of working with the land, and producing food, is undervalued, undermined, and not considered very high. So we have to change our minds, and we have to start thinking of the importance and dignity of the gardener and the farm. So we all need to spend some time touching the soil, touching the earth, and planting the seeds. Even if you live in Hong Kong you can perhaps have a window box in your balcony, or you can perhaps take some time off and go to Kadoorie Farm and see how they are producing food and maybe find out if there are possibilities of some volunteering. Every one of us – Mahatma Gandhi said this – needs to respect manual labour, the dignity of working with your hands and producing food – “bread labour,” Mahatma Gandhi called, it – Leo Tolstoy called it – “bread labour.” If we have not put a few hours a week into something related to our bread, our food, then all our great intellectual achievements – making films, or writing books, or giving lectures in this Hong Kong University like I'm doing now – it's all no use. This is why I live in rural Devon in England and as I said yesterday I have 15 apple trees, I have two acres of land, and I would say something like 75 to 80% of my vegetables and fruit, I grow myself. And what a joy it is. My writing, my editing of *Resurgence* magazine, my teaching of philosophy at Schumacher College – they are all fine, I would consider them as icing on the cake. But when I am working on the garden, that is my spiritual practice. It is a mindful gardening. When I'm touching the soil I am nourished not only in my body but also in my psyche. It's a healing process, a therapeutic process.

If you have mental problems, if you have any kind of physical illness, I advise you to

start working in the garden. Don't go first to a pharmacist or a doctor to get some tablets; they will only suppress your illness. If you really want to heal your psyche and heal your body and heal your spirit and soul, touch the soil, plant a seed. See the seeds grow and harvest the fruit and the vegetables and you will see a new life emerging out of your life. I experienced that – it's a healing process for me psychologically and spiritually.

Mahatma Gandhi, whom I follow very much, said spirituality is not in the books, in the bible or the Koran or the Bhagavadgita or any other great holy books. Spirituality's not in a mosque or a temple or a church. Spirituality is in everyday life. How to live every day. Your food has to be spiritual, your cleaning the toilet has to be spiritual. Mahatma Gandhi used to clean toilets. He said "If you want to remove Untouchability from India it's no good hoping some technological solution will come, I have to clean my toilet." That was his manual labour, dignity of labour. He was not shy of working with his hands.

And so if we can transform our consciousness... and it's not some big philosophy that I want to speak to you, it's not some kind of theory I want to speak to you. I want to speak to you from my heart to say what are we doing to our Mother Earth? How are we using it? In industrial farming, and agribusiness we are destroying the very branch upon which we are sitting. We are cutting the branch upon which we are sitting. We are going to fall down. And it seems as if humanity is at war against nature – the way we are treating the soil with chemicals and fertilisers and pesticides and herbicides and huge combined harvesters and ruining the soil. And [we have an] increasing number of population – now we have reached seven billion people. This is not the sane, intelligent way of treating nature and the soil and the earth.

So we need to go back to small-scale farming, farming with tools and simple machinery. Intermediate technology, as E.F. Schumacher wrote about. Intermediate technology. Schumacher, Mahatma Gandhi, Leo Tolstoy, myself... we are not against technology. Technology is good as long as it aids human hands. But when it replaces human hands, and makes people redundant, so that technology can do your work – then it becomes oppressive. So we need to use technology in a wise way, in a sane way, so that we are using it for easing work. Schumacher invented a little wheelbarrow, with a little motor in it, so that he could push his wheelbarrow full of

compost, and that way he was a compost-maker and a grower. So you can see many many great human beings, who are great intellectuals and who are great thinkers, and philosophers, and economists like E.F. Schumacher... He was chairman of the Soil Association. And he knew where his wheat was coming from to make his bread. Every month he got a big bag of organically-grown wheat. And he had his own mill to grind the flour. And he would grind the flour in the morning, once a week, with his hands, like this. He also had a little intermediate-technology machine, sometimes he'd put wheat in a little machine, which would grind – stoneground, again – and it would bake the bread, for the family, for the week. Schumacher believed, and many Germans believe, that it's better to eat bread not too fresh – maybe the second day, third day, the bread gets better. That's a kind of Austrian/German idea, so Schumacher followed that.

So there is a great source of joy, and a pleasure, and a nourishment, when you are growing the food, baking the bread, grinding the flour, cooking the food, sharing with your family, and when you invite the guests, “come and have dinner” – what is the good of dinner when you have bought your food from a supermarket package, and you have opened it and served to your guests? That's not good food. For real hospitality you need to know how to cook the food. When you are baking bread, and you are waiting for it to rise, and waiting for it to emerge out of the oven, that's a meditation. That's a mindfulness. You are present there. There's no hurry, there's no rush, you are not rushing for anything, you are slowing down to go further. The greatest challenge of this century in our time is to slow down. We are forced to go faster and faster and faster. And this is why we are ruining our environment. We are ruining our land. We are mistreating our animals.

And so it is a very basic principle that food must be treated as sacred, and we must all participate. You don't have to be full-time farmers, everybody. Maybe only ten, twenty, thirty percent of people can be full-time farmers. But everybody can be a small gardener, a little bit of participation, so you know what is involved in producing food. We don't know, many people in big cities don't know, what is involved in producing food. So local food, organic food, food produced with love and care and compassion, and without chemicals – organic means without chemicals.

What we are doing – it's very simple things I am talking to you [about], very

elementary – in cities, we buy food. Say, fruit: bananas, or oranges. We take banana peel, or orange peel – what do we do with it? In a big city, we don't know what to do with it. So we put it in a plastic bag. And then that plastic bag is put in another bin. And once a week maybe, a lorry will come and take that away. And where will it take it away to? Some landfill. This is in most cities – now some cities are changing, and they are trying to make compost, but still very little. Mostly, big cities are putting their food waste onto the landfill. And what does that do? That causes greenhouse gases. Causes global warming. And we can say we are educated, intelligent, PhD doctorate, MA, MSc, big big degrees, we have written papers for scientific journals – but what we do with our vegetable peel, we don't know. So ignorant. Whereas that banana peel, that orange peel, is nourishment for the soil. The soil is waiting for it to be returned back. The soil says to you, "I am producing cauliflower; food for you. I'm nicely presenting it to you as a present;" but when you give a present you pack it nicely, with a nice cover on it. So nature is saying to you "look, I'm producing this cauliflower with lovely green leaves around it, so the cauliflower, the white, clean pristine flower, doesn't get damaged. So you get this present beautifully. But I am giving you this cover, these green leaves outside, to protect your food, and give you a nicely presented present, but please remember: that leaf I want back. I want it back. Because that is my nourishment." The soil needs those leaves back. So compost making was very important for E.F. Schumacher, in whose name we started our college. And so those leaves should be returned to the compost. And compost is called 'green gold'. Green gold. It's so valuable, but we don't understand it, we just throw it away, and buy it back, as chemical fertilizers, coming from Saudi Arabia, [made of] oil, made of fossil fuel. And that's poisonous for the land. Worms die, and therefore soil eventually becomes a desert.

We need to go from ABC – first principles – of food. I would like to see Hong Kong University leading the way, or Hong Kong corporations leading the way: no food waste should go on the landfills. And every bit of food, after we have thrown food away from restaurants, or food left over in the homes, or food left over in your supermarket – all that food, if it is not edible, then it should go back into the compost. In nature there is no waste. But we humans, we think we are so clever, so advanced, so progressive, we have so much science, so much technology, therefore waste is our result. We are waste makers. But "waste not, want not." That's an old Chinese saying, I am told: waste not, want not. And the greatest curse of our modern civilisation,

modern agriculture, is waste. In Britain, forty percent of food is wasted. Isn't it a crime, when millions of people in Africa, even in England itself, are hungry, without food? And we are wasting forty percent of food, in transporting, in storage, in sell-by date gone, or restaurant food, you name it – the amount of food wasted is colossal.

So these are, friends, very simple matters, elementary matters. I should not be required to say these things to this learned audience here. But unfortunately, we have lost our connection with fundamentals. And our head is so high in great ideas and theories and science and technology and philosophy, anthropology and what not – so many subjects we learn in our universities – but we don't learn how to plant a seed in the soil and how to see it grow and how to take care of it and how to make compost and how to harvest it and how to preserve it. These are the basic things. You can have ten PhDs, but if you don't know how to grow, and how to cook – and when you have no money – and now the world is somehow running out of money, because bankers have forgotten how to count money. So America, England... China is better off for the moment, Hong Kong is better off at the moment, but problems are coming close to you, so be aware. So we need to rise to the challenge, and bring food to our local area. Hong Kong is an island, but you are connected to the mainland, and now your transportation and opening is there, so I hope that more of your food is coming from within a fifty, sixty-mile radius and you are not dependent on importing food from too far away.

So local food, organic food, and there are many many wonderful ideas, of natural farming, and permaculture, and many many other ideas have been developed by wonderful agronomists of our time, like Masanobu Fukuoka of Japan, and Bill Mollison of Australia, and Lady Eve Balfour of England, who wrote the book called *The Living Soil*. She was a founder of the Soil Association. So these [are] great teachers we have, and we must read them, and find out how we can come back to the basics, to our roots. Let your head be in space, in the sky, and [let] universal values, and universal culture be in your consciousness. But let your feet be on the ground, and you know your soil, you know your earth, you know where your food is coming from. If that is sorted out, everything else will be sorted. If food is not sorted rightly, and we get into crisis, and we depend on [bringing] Edinburgh biscuits to London and London biscuits in Edinburgh, we are in peril. Thank you very much.

Andrew McAulay: Thank you Satish for bringing us down to earth with so much passion and eloquence and simplicity. Thank you very much. We'll have a question-and-answer session.

Question and Answer Session

Question 1: Recently I saw a documentary on farmers in India who committed suicide because they could not have enough money to buy fertilisers. This is a huge problem. We are fighting the agribusiness. We are very small in this whole scheme of things which is all about money. What suggestions do you have for us, the people who are here tonight who are actually conscious and aware and want to do something, and make a difference, to create this awareness? How do we move the power of these very strong, big, Monsanto and so forth?

Satish Kumar: Yes, the farmers getting in debt in India is a very big problem. My friend Vandana Shiva who works in India with the farmers, knows about this much better than I do, but I also know, that something like 150,000 in the last ten to fifteen years have committed suicide because of the debt that they cannot pay back.

This debt culture has to be questioned. Why should farmers be persuaded to take loans? Farmers don't need any loans. Farmers have land, they have skills, they have hands, they can sow the seeds, they don't need Monsanto's genetically engineered seeds. And also, when you have GM seeds, farmers become more or less captives, or more-or-less enslaved, by the big multinational five or six corporations. And once you start taking those seeds, you cannot save those seeds. With normal seeds you have a crop, you harvest your crop and save ten percent of the crop, you save for next year. You are not dependent on any big companies to supply seed for you – you don't need any money; you sell your crop to give you money but you don't need to buy anything like seeds from any corporation. But when you are buying genetically engineered seeds that cannot be reused [the plants produce sterile seeds] – this is a big problem of those GM seeds – you become in the hands of those big corporations. And so Vandana Shiva has been campaigning against Monsanto and all the other multinational corporations who are controlling seeds. Saving seeds should be the primary responsibility of every farmer and every grower. So you grow your harvest, you take your harvest and save your wheat or rice or potatoes or peas

or beans or whatever you are growing, save your own seeds and do not become dependent. Particularly if you are a farmer, and you need a lot of seeds; you are not a small gardener and you have other income and gardening is only a little icing on the cake for you and you have plenty of income and you can buy seeds. For a farmer whose main income is the crop and he or she becomes dependent on bought seeds, that is a very negative approach. So saving your seeds and not promoting multinational corporations, particularly those who produce GM seeds, and not becoming slaves in their hands – that’s a challenge.

How we do it is a big question. We have to raise awareness, we have to communicate, we have to campaign. Vandana Shiva and many other organisations like the Soil Association in England, and many organisations in Japan and Australia, and I’m sure you have some here as well – Kadoorie Farm, you can find out more from there... you have to raise awareness, and when large numbers of people become aware that this is a big problem for farmers, and that they’ve become indebted... And the idea of getting in debt... America is in debt, England in debt, Greece in debt, every country becoming in debt, farmers in debt, business people in debt... this debt culture only benefits the banks who take a lot of interest from you. And so minimising your debt and maximising your self-reliance, for your food especially... With agriculture I would also say that we need some crafts or arts or other sources of income for the farmers so that they have a little bit of cash income as well, side by side, so they’re not completely dependent on growing food, out of season when the harvest is done and you have time. My mother used to be a farmer; she had five acres of land. When the harvesting was done and we had all the food in the house she had time, and she would do some embroidery, and also my father did some other business as well. So adding something else with your growing food will bring some income and so that farmers don’t get into debt, and be forced to commit suicide. So that is another aspect for the farmers.

But raising awareness is our challenge and we must all spare some time to work in this field.

Andrew MuAulay (Question 2): Thank you. Now we have a question from Ling in France, and the question is: “Arne Naess, the founder of Deep Ecology, said in his eighties: all my life I have believed that logic, rigour, argument is important. But now I realise that emotion is what really matters. What do you think of this comment? How do you think feelings and emotions can help in conservation. And, quoting Vandana

Shiva, how can we make people feel the pain of violence against nature and the joy that comes with healing it?

Satish Kumar: Some of you who may not have heard of Arne Naess, I think he is someone worth looking into and pursuing and finding out [about]. He was the founder of the Deep Ecology movement. He was a professor of philosophy in the University of Oslo in Norway and he was a teacher at Schumacher College so I knew him very well. I totally agree with Arne Naess, and Vandana Shiva, that our relationship with the natural world is not only a rational and empirical, intellectual, scientific relationship. It is rational, empirical, scientific, but also it is emotional. Unless we develop our emotional intelligence and we have some kind of eco-intelligence... The eco-intelligence and emotional intelligence come from the heart, and I talked about it yesterday, that we have to develop our 'heart' qualities. So you need, with deep intellectual commitment, you need deep experience. Deep ecology is pursued and followed and developed by deep experience. Now how do you get deep experience? You get deep experience by being in Nature, and knowing Nature. Being in a relationship with Nature. It cannot come only by reading books, or only by watching Nature on a television screen, even if it's a wonderful film made by somebody like David Attenborough. That is second-hand knowledge. First-hand knowledge and experience of Nature can be had only when you are in Nature. So, deep experience. And out of deep experience comes deep commitment. That what you are experiencing – your relationship with Nature – that must not be destroyed for some commercial or human vested interest. They should be there for its own intrinsic value. The value of earth, and trees, and plants, and animals, are not only in terms of their usefulness to humans. Nature has intrinsic value. That is a fundamental and first principle of Deep Ecology. So if we recognise the intrinsic value of nature and have deep experience and a deep commitment to maintain the integrity of nature then I think we can develop heartfelt relationship, more emotional intelligence, and more eco-intelligence, and so that is the way: deep experience.

Question 3: You talked about farmers' dignity. I think there's an interesting situation that we observe. When we see people working in a city or living in a city, when they go back to become a farmer – like university professors – when they retire they go back to become a farmer, they're actually looking for their personal dignity. But following what you just mentioned, following your logic, to work with soil is actually

like a spiritual meditation. When we work with farmers in rural areas every day they work with dirt, every day they work with soil, but what you just mentioned is they actually lost their dignity at the same time. I just wonder why such a situation is happening?

Satish Kumar: It is true that dignity comes from within – your own self dignity. But we are not isolated selves. We are not disconnected selves. We are connected with our culture, with our society, with our environment. We are influenced. We have impact of social conditions and we are conditioned, by social conditioning. If our culture lifts the industrial production at a higher level, and scientific progress and technological progress at a higher level, and farming, gardening, or tribal, indigenous ways of living at a lower level, then over a long period of time, conditioning of the mind will develop in such a way that people will start to think that living in high-rise buildings is more advanced, more progressive than being a tribal person, an aboriginal person, in an aboriginal culture in Australia or in China, or native Indians in South America – that’s [regarded by others as] “backward”. In the same way farmers are [regarded as] “backward”, they are “uneducated”. So social conditioning impacts our self-respect. So although I agree with you that dignity comes from within, it’s not disconnected from our social and cultural conditioning. And at this moment, social and cultural conditioning is such that we think that doing anything with your hands is somehow not so dignified. Either it should be done by machine, or by some cheap labourer. What is happening in Europe now: all the jobs are being outsourced to China, or to Vietnam, or to Korea, because we think that the most cheap labour in China should produce all our goods like shoes, or computers, or clothes, or whatever. Everything should be produced by cheap labour – they can be paid something small and we can get cheap goods. They have lost that dignity of labour in themselves, and that has to be changed. So we need to bring back in our culture, and decondition our social, cultural conditioning against growing food or producing material goods, like shoes, or radio, or computers. If we use it we should make it. Why should we buy from some cheap market in China or Korea or India? Why not Germany or England or America? So outsourcing of jobs is the same problem.

So dignity comes from within, I agree, but it is also connected with the social and cultural conditions.

Andrew McAulay (Question 4): Thank you. So now we have a question from Spencer

in Hong Kong [through the internet]. “Honestly speaking, I cannot see that people these days will wake up easily to the values of soil, and human development and society. Are you optimistic that all of us will be able to treasure the dignity of soil? Do you think people will need a big lesson in the form of a disaster or war or something that will upset all human beings?”

Satish Kumar: I hope we can wake up before a big disaster hits us [laughter]. I am an optimist because I have a great belief in humanity. I think we are a little bit brainwashed in our culture at this moment and we are conditioned to think “Someone will produce food for us and someone, somewhere will produce all the other things that we need, and I don’t need to do anything.” This kind of conditioning – either a machine will make it or some cheap labourer will produce it – this kind of thinking is prevalent. But this is not going to be here forever. Human consciousness and human awareness can be aroused. So I work in hope and with optimism because pessimism is disempowering. If you are a pessimist you feel powerless. “Nothing can be done – either some disaster will come and will wake us up or nothing can be done.” That’s very pessimistic, and disempowering. If that’s enough then we do nothing – you don’t need to come to this meeting, I don’t need to speak, I don’t need to write, I don’t need to do gardening, I don’t need to do anything. Someone, God, will save us. That’s the kind of hopelessness that I don’t like. I’m an optimist, and this is why I’m trying to speak to you and I hope you share some of these ideas. If you do, you will speak to ten other people... If two hundred people here go out, and speak to ten other people, there’ll be two thousand. And if two thousand people speak to ten other people, there’ll be twenty thousand. And ten thousand people speak to ten other people, there’ll be two hundred thousand. So we can build a movement, big movement, in the same way as the movement for civil rights movement, Martin Luther King, was built in the United States, and Nelson Mandela and his organisation built, in South Africa and around the world, to bring an end to apartheid, and the Berlin Wall came down, and that consciousness was changed. Many, many big changes have taken place in the past, and that gives me optimism that if apartheid can come to an end, the Berlin Wall can come down, the British Empire can come down... Hong Kong was a British colony, and Britain was so powerful – where is that British power now? India was a British colony, but now India is free. So all those things happened in the past – that history, those examples – give me optimism and hope. Therefore let’s work together and bring back our connection

with Nature, with soil, with food, and have a joyful, wonderful life, of dignity.

[Applause.]

Question 5: Thank you again Satish for your time. My question's going to be about choices of food that you make. Like when we have the discussion around things like vegan, vegetarian or eating meat, and when you start asking questions about whichever choice you've made there, and starting to realise the craziness of our food transport system, with organic vegetables maybe coming from New Zealand; sustainable fish from the US, frozen. And what got me was that when the air traffic was closed down in Europe, our local shop couldn't get organic sausages because they were airfreighted from Europe. When you're traveling and away from home how do you make some choices around the food you eat, which is kind of the choice that I might be making each day at work, how do you choose what you enrich your body with?

Satish Kumar: When I'm travelling it is not easy. One choice I have made, whether I'm traveling or staying at home, is eating only vegetarian food. That limits a number of problems already, because if it's vegetarian you are not participating in the factory farms of animals, and cruelty to animals, and slaughtering in cruel conditions – all that. And when you are vegetarian, also this problem at this moment – big problem I think, particularly in China and Hong Kong as well maybe – the overconsumption of wild animal food. I'm told that wild food is very fashionable in China. Therefore people are going into the wild and collecting that food, even snakes and all kinds of wild animals. If you become vegetarian that will reduce that. I do not say that everybody will become vegetarian. But then the second choice will be reduce your meat consumption. This idea that we need so much meat is, to a large extent, propaganda by the food industry: that we need so much protein. I was in a primary school in Dartington, [Devon, UK] when I was organising the Tagore Festival, I wanted the school to participate in it so I went to speak to them about Tagore. And once of the children asked me a question – only a seven, eight-year old child: "What is your favourite animal?" I said, "Elephant." "Why?" I said "Elephant is vegetarian and yet it becomes so big." The idea that only meat can give you enough energy and you don't get enough energy from vegetarian food is a complete myth. My family has been vegetarian for something like 1500 years [laughter] – [I am from] a Jain family, the Jains don't eat meat. And I am – can you guess how old I am? I am 75 years young.

[Laughter.] And I have never, never, never tasted meat or fish in my life. Do I lack energy? [Laughter.] Horses are vegetarian – do they lack energy? So I would say the first choice we need to make is to reduce our meat consumption.

The second choice I make when I am at home in England: I never, never shop in a supermarket. I always go to a farmers' market or a small supplier of organic food. Most of our vegetables and fruit I grow myself so I don't need to buy, but for other things like flour, or lentils, or honey, or oil, other ingredients I need, I shop for in a small shop. A small shop, a boutique shop, is a much more joyful and pleasant place to shop than a supermarket where you are nobody. When you go in a small shop you talk to the shopkeeper, you are friendly; they want you to buy something from them, you want to please them. There's a kind of relationship. And I talked a lot about relationships last night. So shopping becomes a pleasant experience rather than take this, take this, full trolley, take home, half of it is wasted. Half of it is packaging. So the second choice I make, for myself, is never to shop in supermarkets.

And the third choice I make is, as much as possible – and it's not 100%, let's not think we can create 100% utopian ideal, we must always make our journey towards a more decentralised, more local system – I try to buy organic, and I try to buy, as much as possible, local.

So these are the choices I make, but everybody needs to make their own choices. There's no one blueprint for everybody. As long as you are aware, mindful, thinking about your food and where it is coming from, how it is packaged and transported, how it is managed and grown, all these questions are in the back of your mind... I'm sure every one of you is intelligent and wise and with your own wisdom you will make a right choice. There is no blueprint. Thank you.

Andrew McAulay (Question 6): Next question from Mainland China, from 'Tree hugger' [laughter]. There are treehuggers in Mainland China. "I have a question about the Chipko Movement. The local women played a more pivotal role than men in the Chipko Movement. What do you think is the reason for this difference between the genders, besides the fact that deforestation affects the livelihood of women more directly?"

Satish Kumar: Yes, yes. Now many of you may not have heard of this Chipko Movement, and again my friend Vandana Shiva was very much part of that movement. It happened because a big company got a license from the Government

to go and cut down a huge area of forest in the Himalayas, just north of Dehra Dun in the Himalayas, on the way to a very holy place of pilgrimage where the Ganges originates – the source of the Ganges. [There] was a forest, a teak forest, and they wanted to make cricket bats or something like that [out of it]. So, when the women heard about it they said “The forest is our livelihood. We cannot allow this big company to come, all these big tractors and so on. What should we do?” They hadn’t organised anything, they did not know what to do. So a simple thing, they decided. Somehow it came out of a kind of inspired moment – somebody suggested “We are going to go and hug the trees and say to these chainsaw tree cutters, ‘before you cut down the tree you have to cut our bodies.’” And everybody thought “what a brilliant idea”. So the women said, “Men can’t go – they will only push you away and do this or that – but they won’t touch women.” Because in Indian culture you don’t touch a woman unless you know the woman – your mother, your wife, your sister. You don’t touch a woman you don’t know. “So you stay at home, menfolks, and look after the children [laughter], for a change, and we will go, the women, and hug the trees. Because we cannot allow this big company to cut down our forest. Big forest, and teak wood – a very valuable, beautiful wood, and a source of livelihood for the forest people. And so that was the reason: the chainsaw people would not touch women. It became a very important point to inspire women to lead the movement. And these people came, and the women said “Before you cut the tree you have to cut us.” And tree after tree after tree... the moment any tree was empty, and somebody went with a chainsaw, the women would rush to it and hug the tree. And so for a whole week these people who came with the chainsaws could not cut a single tree. And the news spread. And Vandana Shiva was there – she’s very good at publicity and contacting the press and so on. She spread the word: Lucknow, New Delhi, Calcutta; radio, television. Chipko was in every newspaper and every radio station, so suddenly it was a big movement, and a delegation of men went to the local government, and the central government. In the end that order – the license given to this company – was withdrawn and the women had the victory of saving the forest. So that was the story.

Question 7: Hi Dr Kumar. Hong Kong is one of the worst offenders when it comes to consuming locally grown produce. Something like 90% of the food in Hong Kong is imported across all categories: meat, dairy, fruit, vegetables. Hong Kong ranked ninth in the world’s food vulnerability index last year. So I’m wondering, given that Hong

Kong has very limited land, what are some practical ways that we can achieve a better balance? Obviously it's not realistic to expect 100% local consumption, but what are some practical ways that we can improve this balance – is the best solution simply sourcing more from southern China? There are so many food safety issues in China that there are problems there as well. So I'm wondering what suggestions you might have within Hong Kong's borders.

Satish Kumar: Yes, it is a very real question, and difficult to think immediately how Hong Kong can begin to be more self-reliant: locally-grown food. But if your consciousness is there and you begin to think, you will find that any areas now empty of buildings can be protected for growing food. The growth of buildings has been nonstop, more or less, for a long time. I think now Hong Kong and the surrounding area, including the New Territories, have perhaps enough buildings. Unless they are really essential, I think we should try to do the amount of buildings we have today: enough; not build more new buildings and more new infrastructure. So see how much land you can reclaim within your city and within your various islands. So that will be one step – a small step, nevertheless at least your consciousness is that way. I don't know what the food issues and [food] safety issues are in southern China but I would like to find a way so that transportation of miles and the distance of miles is reduced. If you have food miles which are ten thousand miles or five thousand miles or two thousand miles and you can reduce them to two hundred miles or a hundred miles or fifty miles, that from the point of view of the environment is better. I would like to say that if your waste is reduced, your consumption will be reduced. At the moment we are importing a lot of food from far away and we are not even using it. A lot of food is being wasted, even in Hong Kong. So reduce your waste. And as I said, Kadoorie Farm, and various other farms, which are already there: talk to them and see how we can participate, a little bit, in a voluntary basis. If people go and touch the earth, touch the soil, know about the seeds, the seasons, all that – that knowledge itself will connect you with the natural world. So without hoping that you can become 100% self-reliant in food, such an ideal, say "step by step." The Great Wall of China was not built in one day. Step by step, brick by brick, stone by stone, day after day: after a long period the Great Wall was built. So if you want a transformation and change from 60, 80% of food imported from New Zealand or Europe or America or something, far away... if you want to reduce that and focus on reducing your food miles and making it as local as possible – where there's a will

there is a way. You will find some ways. Make a step in the right direction. There's no destination. There is no final goal. They are always unfolding, new ideas are always emerging; new ways of growing food are emerging. Even rooftops can be gardens. In Kadoorie Farm, if you go and see – I even saw one of your trucks had a roof with some greenery on it [laughter], some strawberries growing on the roof of the truck. Can you believe it? So you need imagination. So you see why I say “Where there is a will there is a way.” Where there is imagination and you make a step in the right direction, you will discover many, many good ways of producing food – on your roof gardens, or any empty spaces available, or local farms where you can go and participate and grow some food.

Andrew McAulay (Question 8): Thank you. I will add that we do run courses at The Farm to help you learn to grow vegetables on your balconies, on your window boxes, and you can sign up to those courses on the website. [Laughter at the unaccustomed advertising.]

Now, we have a question from Dong Yiu in Botswana, and I hope that I'm getting this question right. “I'm always thinking about how I can protect our home. If we want to stop destroying the earth we need to stop using all this science and technology and change our human civilisation. Dr Kumar, if we do that, then thousands of years of the work of our ancestors will be in vain. Do you think that's too big a price to pay?”

Satish Kumar: Good question. What I'm saying does not involve undoing of all the progress in science and technology we have made. We don't need to undo all that. What we need to know is to use our wisdom – and wisdom is in short supply today. So we need to develop some wisdom. Say: “What is the right kind of technology, what is the right kind of progress, which is not damaging the earth, and not replacing human dignity?” That's all we need to be discerning. Now I would like to say that the agriculture technology, agribusiness, agri-industry – that has gone in the wrong direction. And what we have achieved is no great achievement. We have destroyed our family farms, we have destroyed our skills, we have destroyed our poetry, we have destroyed our celebrations, we have destroyed our festivals... We have destroyed thousands of years of culture, and gone in to this very narrow agribusiness, industrial agriculture. Whereas traditional farming, of thousands of years, of ancestral development we had inherited, was full of festivals, and joy, and

preservation, and..., and skills, and tools. So this technology has undone thousands of years of achievement. So we need to think what are the technologies which are good? Any technology which aids human hands, as I've said, is a good technology. It makes work easier. And if it is based on natural resources... the sun – there's enough energy coming from the sun – the wind, the rain, our muscle power – a great source of energy; seven billion people have 14 billion hands. So much energy in our body, but we are not using it. We are all depending on oil – Saudi Arabian oil – or coal – deep mining. So we need to think with wisdom – what are the technologies which serve human need without destroying our environment, our ecology. If we can use that wisdom then science is welcome. Technologies are welcome. Mahatma Gandhi, E.F. Schumacher – they were not against technology. But this mad pursuit of technology to make bigger and bigger profits, minimise human input and maximise technological input...

I'll give you one example. When I go from Devon, in England, to London I arrive at Paddington Station. Now Paddington Station has a shop called WH Smith. It's a stationery, newspaper, book shop. Now I like to buy, [for] when I'm in a train, I like to buy a newspaper, to know what's going on in the world, so I go and buy a *Guardian*. I used to go there, there were three people serving the customers. Three people were getting employment there, they were getting work. Recently I went to that WH Smith shop, and there was one person, and two machines. Whatever you are buying – newspaper – there's a bar code. So you put your bar code under this machine, and the machine will tell you how much the newspaper is, and then you put your visa card, or cash, into the machine, and... so self-service. Now you can say this will be profitable for WH Smith because now WH Smith has to pay two people no salary. Now, is this a good technology? Do you want to see two people unemployed on the dole queue? Do you want to pay more taxes to the Government so that these two people can be kept on the dole? We have something like one million young people in Britain unemployed. We have in certain areas nine, ten, eleven percent of people unemployed. And these big, big corporations are going for big, big invention of machines which will replace these people. And then they say "Those people are going for riots. These people are not doing any work. Why should they depend on the state?" What are they going to do? Either their jobs have gone to China, or to Korea, or to Vietnam or Bangladesh, or their jobs have gone to the machine. What are the human beings going to do? So that kind of technology, which replaces human imagination, human creativity, human input, is not a good technology. So create

technologies... science is good, technology's good, if it aids the human creativity, the human work, and makes it more enjoyable, and more celebratory, then, it's a good technology. At the moment technology is a servant of money, of profitmaking: maximising profit, and minimising human input. That is the formula of the current capitalist system. So we need to challenge that system; this is not about science and technology, it's a pure profit motive, maximising the profit. So I think we are not undoing the achievements of our scientists and technologically-minded people; we are celebrating them. But we are not allowing science and technology to serve just the capitalist interest of the few, and not the majority of people. If we let science and technology serve everybody that's fine, that's welcome.

Question 9 : It's actually two questions. The first question is regarding the example you quoted that the Scottish people buy the bottled water from France and the French people buy bottled water from Scotland. So this situation is very much related to the brand name of the product. A lot of people have the desire for imported products which are associated with a brand name. So how do you think this kind of concept is developed, and would you have any suggestions how we can [correct] this kind of impression – this is the first question. The second question is regarding the power of advertising. Today a lot of the want is created by advertising and it's a very powerful channel. There's actually one office in Hong Kong promoting people to try to counter this kind of force by whenever, for example on the train, you saw some advertising, they just encourage people to block the brand name so that it's stopping people look at the brand. So how do you feel about this kind of action and do you have any suggestion how we can counter this kind of advertising power?

Satish Kumar : I think the first one is the question and the second one is the answer [laughter]. What attracts us to brands is advertising. Advertising is created in such a way that it creates desires. Now if you live in a Buddhist country, like China used to be [laughter], or a Taoist country, like China used to be [laughter], then minimising your desire and attachment, and maximising your wellbeing was the principle. My friend E.F. Schumacher wrote an essay called Buddhist Economics. He said "Economics without values, without moral, spiritual, ethical principles, is not economics. Economy must be balanced with values. What are the values of advertising? To maximise your desire and minimise your wellbeing. Just the opposite. So the problem of brand popularity, and people getting this desire to have something

from far away, something exotic, something new that they have not tried before... it is a desire. And I think desire is endless. Bottomless. There is no fulfilment of desire. So all spiritual traditions and all wisdom traditions from anywhere in the world, whatever you might call it, have all spoken about minimising desire and maximising your peace of mind, maximising your wellbeing. The latest edition of *Resurgence* which Andrew showed you is all about wellbeing.

Economic growth. Advertising and economic growth. Economic growth is the second problem to create these desires. Government and business, they always say that economic growth, economic growth... that is the aim of our society. China has 8% or 10% or 11% economic growth. In Britain now as economic growth is going down, they are all worried. They are saying "Go and shop. We need more consumerism." Government is promoting it. When there was 9/11, in the United States of America, in New York, what did Bush say to people? What was his advice? "Go and do shopping. And we will deal with terrorism, don't worry. Don't stop shopping." So advertising on the one hand, and the goal of increasing unlimited growth on a finite planet on the one hand. We are told by people like Bush "Shopping is your patriotic duty. [Laughter.] If you are not consuming, and not shopping, you are not a patriot; you are not helping the economy." At Christmas time, when Jesus Christ teaches live in simplicity, elegant simplicity – that's the Christian tradition, when you become a Christian you take a vow of simplicity, voluntary simplicity – at Christmas time it's the biggest time for consumerism. So I'm afraid this brand attraction is promoted on the one hand by advertising and on the other hand by our capitalist system of government and business. So these both have to realise that it's a finite planet and increasing desires... like if you have a little scratch and you scratch it, it will only hurt you more, and your skin will be exposed. So if you get a little scratch on your skin, put a little ointment, a little bandage, on it, and don't touch it any more. But desires aren't like that – the more desires you meet, the more desires you have.

So the answer to your question – both questions are related – is to pursue a more ecological, spiritual wisdom path of joy. Joy and delight and happiness are not related to consumerism. Joy and delight and happiness are part of our wonderful living – this glorious world that we have today around us. The sun is shining, the flowers are blossoming, the fruit is on the trees, and the birds are flying, and children are being born, and mothers are loving, and husbands and wives are caressing and kissing and embracing each other. That is the human life which we have, a natural,

ecological, spiritual life, that is where the joy and delight... and fulfilment. Satisfaction. It's come from that kind of life. Shopping, consuming does not bring that kind of satisfaction, does not bring fulfilment, does not bring wellbeing.

So the answer is to follow a more ecological path. Eco, not ego. We have to move from ego to eco. Only a small change you are making – from g to c. [Laughter.] And yet you make a quantum leap. So “eco” means relationship. The joy and fulfilment and delight of life is in relationship with Nature, with your human family, and with yourself, with your soul, with your spirit. That is where the fulfilment and happiness and wellbeing reside. But consumerism, materialism... more desires, more you want to have, and you bring something to your house, put it in the attic, and you never use it. We are destroying the world and we are not being fulfilled – what's the point? That's the answer.

Andrew McAulay: Thank you once again Satish, thank you for being willing to answer so many questions, with so much passion and love – it's wonderful to have you here with us. And Satish has already been asking about next year's visit, so... stay tuned. And thank you also everyone for your questions – I'm sorry that we don't have time for any more...

Satish Kumar : And can I say, that Andrew was saying last night, “You are preaching to the converted.” So, if I come next time, you have to do a job. The job is to bring some people who are not yet in this ecological mindset, or spiritual worldview. Bring people who are not familiar with these ideas. Because we want to spread the word, and share these ideas, and communicate, and have a dialogue, with all kinds of people. So if you want me to come again, bring some other people with you. [Laughter, applause.]