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## “Kiss the Ground” – film review

The documentary “Kiss the Ground” directed by Joshua Tickell and Rebecca Harrell Tickell illustrates the many significant solutions we can make every day to reverse global warming, heal the Earth and ultimately restore its full glory. This can be accomplished with the most significant solution being right beneath our feet - soil.

With an enormous amount of conveniently presented fact-based information, graphs and statistics, I think thanks to this film, the importance of soil has grown now more than ever. Carbon was never the problem; soil has the ability to capture it from the atmosphere where it belongs, and then turn it into humus. The film is greatly informative and would serve well as a source in educating all audiences. Portrayed in the film, is a continuous cycle in the reciprocation between quality food and quality health. I think it is astonishing how in the monocultured country that the United States is, there is 5% of farms managing soil health that stand together and spread their rationale. They just don't give up. The film introduced Soil Health Pioneers - Ray Archuleta and Gabe Brown who travelled across the U.S with their determined, pro-ecology attitude, teaching farmers about regenerative agriculture, that in the end contributes to biodiversity. I'm sure that the constant spread of awareness lead by their will power and persistence, will positively and highly impact the future of our planet.

Celebrity activists such as Jason Mraz, Gisele Bundchen or Patricia Arquette also explained the rationale along with their own experiences. Some parts of the movie might have been hard to take seriously, maybe because a few lectures about agriculture were given by the ‘Vampire Dairies’ star – Ian Somerhalder, and I'm not sure how people feel about that...

There were of course many science specialists sharing their observations, background research and thoughts as well. The film presented science that in essence was ecology based, which was then efficiently transformed into solutions we all can make every day to help change the climate. A big advantage to the film was surely the structure of portraying information between: research – solution.

The film illustrated history research coming from World War II up to now. For example, chemicals such as the nitrogen fertiliser or glyphosate, were used during the Holocaust and are now being used to spray on crops. If we consume these kinds of foods, they affect our bodies, causing cancer, as well as various kidney and liver complications. Facts like an average American eating 3 pounds of chemicals each year, might be shocking, but unfortunately true. The documentary informs us to be careful when choosing what food to buy, which consequently comes with which farms we are supporting.

The filmmaking techniques, capturing the many areas all around the world, in which our encouragement is mostly needed, help us understand the importance of taking action. Damaging soil is the biggest reason to global warming and the movie accurately presents the process of desertification and how soil turns into dust. Around 2/3 of the world are currently desertifying, pushing around 40 million people off their land each year. As a result, it is said that by 2050 around 1 billion people will have to migrate because of desertification. “Kiss the Ground” presents information conveniently enough to help everyone generate conclusions. Although some can be easier said than done, the many solutions presented here can be implemented by people ranging from small children to farmers, who grow crops on an everyday basis.

Actions that build the audience’s encouragement like the United Nations COP21 conference in Paris in 2015 were mentioned. This is where the idea of storing carbon in soil was presented by INRA (an institution in France which has been studying soil for over 100 years). It was then signed by 30 countries which led to huge changes in agriculture. However, the three biggest CO<sub>2</sub> emitters: India, the United States and China have not signed the coalition. Reducing emissions isn’t enough, for the 1000 gigatons of carbon that have already been released into the atmosphere.

The film enormously highlights the ultimate solution in rebuilding what we have already destroyed. It is the process of regeneration. This includes tree and crop diversification. It is said that 1% of organic matter can capture 2 and a half tons of carbon... It is the only way to reverse desertification. An example of regenerative agriculture is collecting food scraps. The Tickells illustrate the city of San Francisco as an ultimate goal in creating compost. People get fined if they do not contribute to green bins and pay more if they have waste in black bins. We must bring back the biodiversity and feed the soil, consequently leading to the rebirth of microbes. Recycling is a community solution and an act of unity to rebuild the world.

The film also informatively portrays solutions to help the situation of our planet that is happening in Third World countries. Building sanitation, educating and most importantly spreading awareness in Haiti and countries of Africa, makes the people crawl out of poverty, because they become to know how to efficiently grow crops. They are taught to help save the world as well as themselves.

Although I wasn't keen on the typical 'Hollywood ending', presenting the positive sentiments with a very average soundtrack playing in the background, I still feel the film was well-done and valuable in information. Portraying the fact that there is hope in healing and bringing back the balance to the Earth has been successfully accomplished. "Kiss the Ground" certainly attempts in making these issues feel personal enough, to make people actually care. By bringing back biodiversity to nature in general, we can create an abundant world for many generations to come. There is no greater satisfaction one can have from contributing to what is actually important in life. We must harness the regenerative Power of Earth and so, I recommend watching how you too, can 'kiss the ground'.