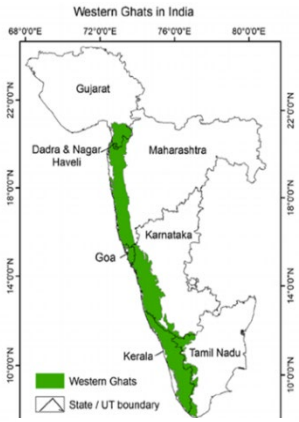
“Rooted in Vetiver Safety: Unleashing Ramacham’s Protective Power Against Landslides in Kerala.

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In the picturesque state of Kerala, known for its lush greenery and heavy monsoon rains, landslides are a recurring threat each year during the rainy season. These natural calamities strike the hilly regions of the Western Ghats, resulting in loss of life, destruction of crops, and widespread devastation. Despite its rich history in India for its aromatic oils and medicinal properties, Vetiver grass, locally known as Ramacham, has yet to be fully embraced as a powerful tool for preventing landslides in Kerala.



Western Ghats Along Six States. Source: ISRO Remote Sensing.



Vetiver as a companion plant for US Citrus Persian lime.

Vetiver has deep roots in Indian history, with mentions tracing back to the era of Harsha Vardhana. During his time, Uttar Pradesh had a "Vetiver tax" for its valuable essential oils. In Kerala, Vetiver is commonly used in soaps, oils, and traditional Ayurvedic healing practices.

The frequency and severity of landslides in Kerala have been rising, worsened by climate change, deforestation, and extreme weather patterns. In the past, limited access to timely information hindered effective responses to landslides, emphasizing the importance of raising awareness and utilizing preventive measures like Vetiver grass.

Several obstacles prevent the widespread adoption of Vetiver in landslide management in Kerala:

1. Historical Context: While landslides have been occurring for a long time, their recent surge in intensity has taken many by surprise. The lack of extensive news coverage in the past led to slower responses and limited awareness.

2. Language Diversity: India's multitude of languages challenges sharing information across states. English is a common medium but has yet to be universally understood or utilized.

3. Innovation Gap: East Asian countries have shown more significant innovation in developing practical solutions for various challenges, while Kerala has been slower in adopting similar innovative approaches.

4. Cultural Factors: People in Kerala appreciate Vetiver's aromatic and medicinal properties but have yet to explore its potential as a bioengineering tool widely. The grass' extensive root system, capable of growing several meters deep quickly, could serve as a natural barrier against soil erosion and landslides.

The efficacy of Vetiver in preventing landslides is well-documented. Its deep root system helps bind the soil, reducing erosion and providing slope stability. Vetiver has been successful in controlling erosion and stabilizing slopes in different countries, offering a cost-effective and sustainable solution that could benefit Kerala.



Vetiver on riverbanks in Vietnam. Source: Vetiver.org.

Drawing parallels with the evolution of music listenership and the transformation of how people discover talent through social media compared to traditional media like radio, we can see the potential for social platforms to spread awareness about the benefits of using Vetiver for landslide prevention in Kerala.

To safeguard Kerala from landslides, it is crucial to tap into Vetiver's untapped potential. Raising awareness about Vetiver in every household, engaging the youth in conversations about its benefits, and incorporating it into daily discussions can pave the way for widespread adoption. Influencers and innovators from various fields must join hands to promote Vetiver and its immense potential in preventing human suffering caused by monsoon-related landslides in Kerala.

It is essential to integrate Vetiver into landslide management strategies to protect lives, farmlands, and the environment of the Western Ghats. Initiating pilot projects in vulnerable regions like Wayanad could set a precedent for other areas facing similar challenges. The time is ripe to harness the latent strength of Vetiver and convert it into a sustainable defense mechanism against landslides in Kerala.



HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand. Source: Government of Thailand

Inspiration can also be drawn from **Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn** of Thailand, who is known for raising awareness about the benefits of Vetiver grass in Thailand and beyond. Her advocacy is a testament to the global significance and impact of utilizing Vetiver for environmental protection. Kerala has the opportunity to follow in her footsteps and harness the potential of Vetiver for sustainable development and disaster mitigation.

Let us unite to champion the use of Vetiver grass as a crucial element in protecting Kerala's landscapes and communities from the devastating impact of landslides. Together, we can create a safer and more resilient future for Kerala through the power of Vetiver.

I invite all influential figures in science, technology, business, religion, arts, the youth, mothers, organizations, the CM's and the PM's office to let Vetiver plant help India to avoid landslides, starting with Wayanad.

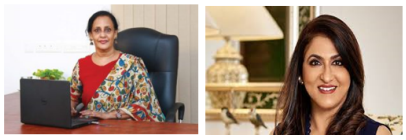
Plea to the Prime Minister, Chief Minister, and Other Influential Figures Presidents of FOKANA, FOMAA, and WMC



Prime Minister of India



Chief Minister Of Kerala



Representing the Talented Women Influencers in Kerala, to Name a Few and You Bring Others. Sheila Chittilapally, Beena Kannan, Harsha Thachery, Poornima Sreelal and Sally Varma.



Male and Female Artists of Kerala



Yusuff Ali



Kris Gopalakrishnan



Ravi Pillai



S.D. Shibulal



Sunny Varkey



T.S. Klayana Raman



Babu Stephen



The Youth & Service Wings



The George MJT Moothut Brothers



Religious leaders in Kerala



Powerful Ladies of Kerala

The Bureaucrats in the Kerala Government, all elected officials from the Panchayats, MLAs and MPS, District Administrators, and citizens.

About the Author





Left: Young grapefruit plant protection: from wind, heat and weeds. The plants were not watered for months in Texas, 2024. Right. Persian lime plants of Us Citrus with it founder in insert. Photo, US

The author, Mani Skaria, shares his journey of discovering the value of Vetiver through collaboration with scientists and a passion for organic farming. His collaboration with scientists involved in field experiments and data analysis, which provided scientific evidence of Vetiver's effectiveness in preventing landslides. The devastation faced by his citrus orchards due to natural disasters inspired him to explore the potential of Vetiver in ecological conservation. The recent landslides in Wayanad fueled his determination to protect Kerala from such tragedies. Please join him in this critical environmental initiative to make Kerala a safer and resilient place for all. Thank you.

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