

Willie Smith restores a rainforest

Adapted from http://www.ted.com/talks/willie_smits_restores_a_rainforest.html

Pre-listening

- 1. What are the areas most affected by deforestation?**
- 2. What are the causes of deforestation**
- 3. How can we prevent deforestation?**

Listen to the lecture first and decide whether the statements are true or false.

1. The orangutan baby was left alone after the market was over.
2. It is still living with Willie.
3. Willie started rescuing orangutans.
4. Biofuel for the West helps prevent deforestation.
5. Peat swamps can emit large quantities of CO₂.
6. The U.S. is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases.
7. Samboja Lestari is a place where both orangutans and people can live.
8. It is in West Borneo.
9. Originally there were no animals and plants.
10. Now there are 3,000 species.

Now listen again and try to fill in the missing words.

I was walking in the market one day with my wife, and somebody stuck a cage in my face. And in between those slits were the saddest eyes I've ever seen. There was a very sick orangutan baby, my first 1..... That evening I came back to the market in the dark and I heard "uhh, uhh," and sure enough I found a dying orangutan baby on a 2..... heap. Of course, the cage was salvaged. I took up the little baby, massaged her, forced her to drink until she finally started breathing normally.

This is Uce. She's now living in the jungle of Sungai Wain, and this is Matahari, her second son, which, by the way, is also the son of the second orangutan I rescued, Dodoy. That changed my life quite dramatically, and as of today, I have almost 1,000 babies in my two centers.

(Applause)

No. No. No. Wrong. It's horrible. It's a proof of our 3..... to save them in the wild. It's not good. This is merely proof of everyone failing to do the right thing. Having more than all the orangutans in all the zoos in the world together, just now like victims for every baby, six have disappeared from the forest.

The deforestation, especially for oil palm, to provide biofuel for Western countries is what's causing these problems. And those are the peat swamp forests on 20 meters of peat, the largest 4..... of organic material in the world. When you open this for growing oil palms you're creating CO2 5..... that are emitting so much CO2 that my country is now the third largest emitter of greenhouse gasses in the world after China and the United States, and we don't have any industry at all. Only because of this deforestation.

And these are horrible images. I'm not going to talk too long about it, but there are so many of the family of Uce which are not so 6..... to live out there in that forest that still have to go through that process and I don't know anymore where to put them. So I decided that I had to come up with a solution for her but also a solution that will benefit the people that are trying to exploit those forests, to get their hands on the last timber and that are causing, in that way, the loss of 7..... and all those victims.

So I created the place Samboja Lestari, and the idea was, if I can do this on the worst possible place that I can think of where there is really nothing left, no one will have an excuse to say, "Yeah, but ..." No. Everyone should be able to follow this.

So we're in East Borneo. This is the place where I started. As you can see there's only yellow terrain there's nothing left, just a bit of grass there. In 2002 we had about 50 percent of the people 8..... there. There was a huge amount of crime. People spent so much of their money on health issues and drinking water. There was no agricultural productivity left. This was the poorest district in the whole province and it was a total 9..... of wildlife. This was like a biological desert. When I stood there in the grass, it's hot -- not even the sound of insects -- just this waving grass.

Still, four years later we have created jobs for about 3,000 people. The climate has changed. I will show you: no more 10....., no more fires. It's no longer the poorest district, and there is a huge development of biodiversity. We've got over 1,000 species, we have 137 bird species as of today. We have 30 species of reptiles.