

## Friends of the Earth

F: So, Jonathan Scott, you're the director of "Friends of the Earth", is that right?

M: That's right. Have been for three years.

F: And what exactly is "Friends of the Earth"?

M: It's a campaigning pressure group, dealing with a whole series of environmental issues. Some of those are international issues, such as the protection of the rain forests or acid rain, Some are to do with national concerns, such as planning policy or protection of the countryside, a lot of the things that we're involved in are to do with people's ordinary backyard environment, as it were, small-scale things like what the individual can do on recycling, or just improving the quality of their own environment. So it covers a wide range of different issues, all the way down from — all the way up, if you like, from the very small personal concerns right through to the biggest international issues.

F: About big international issues, what do you see as the most important environmental issues of the moment?

M: It's quite difficult to make a kind of hierarchy of worry here, because so many issues are there, and so they're all very, very important. But I think it has to be said that as far as we're concerned, as a campaigning organization, it really is the rain forest that we are concentrating on most. If we don't take action on that issue within the next five years, then environmental pressure groups won't have anything to do in ten years' time, because there won't be any rain forests for them to campaign about. So this is a critical period for the rain forests, the next five years, and there is enough flexibility in the system to allow us to hope that we're going to be able to make some changes during that time. So that's why we've made it our priority.

F: What's so important about the rain forests, then? What's the difference between having them or not having them? Isn't it just, you know, basically either there is a lot of trees there or there aren't a lot of trees there?

M: Well that's what some people would like to think. I think President Reagan was famous for saying, "Seen one tree, seen them all", and basically this is not the attitude that we have. The rain forests are important in many different ways, important firstly for the countries themselves, in terms of the fact that millions of people depend on the rain forests for their livelihood, and for the quality of their environment, through the protection of watersheds, and so on. Secondly, they're important because of the biological richness of the rain forests. Um, a genetic treasure chest is how they have been described. Um, more than 60% of the world's species are to be found in the rain forests. Write that off, and you write off the genetic storehouse. Lastly, they're important at an international level because of the impact on climatic patterns that one would find if the rain forests were destroyed. So, whether you're looking closely at the tribal people who

depend on them, the countries which depend on them, the international community which depends on them, indeed, you know, the creatures themselves, it's actually the most critical issue that we face. And our prime job is of course to try and get people to understand how it is, even in countries where there are no rain forests, that they still have a connection with the rain forests.

**Questions:**

1. For how many years has Mr. Scott been the director of "Friends of the Earth"?
2. "Friends of the Earth" deals with a whole series of environmental issues, both national and international. Which of the following is NOT one of these issues mentioned in the interview?
3. Which of the following environmental issues they are concentrating on most at the present moment, according to the man being interviewed?
4. Why did they make it their priority to take action on the issue of the rain forests within the next five years?
5. According to the interview, the rain forests are important in many different ways. Which of the following is NOT one of these ways?
6. Which of the following statements is NOT true with the rain forests?

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