

Friday 16th September

A Mongolian Couch

(12 min)

Directors: Eva Arnold and George Clipp

In a city of tower blocks and tents comes a unique story of energy and enterprise; Begzsuren lives with his wife and four children in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and possesses an inspiring passion to improve both his family's and his community's lot. Installing a rain water shower, changing his family's diet, planting trees, Thai Chi- Begzsuren is a busy, dedicated and extremely forward-thinking Mongolian. Begzsuren welcomes guests into his home from all over the world, offering these visitors aspects of traditional Mongolian culture and in exchange his guests offer insight into how they live and work back home. Everyday Begzsuren is on an adventure and a mission, by exploring and inviting the world into his home, he is slowly but surely improving his own world.

Tide of Change (12 min)

BEST ULTRA SHORT AWARD

Director: Amie Batalibasi

Filmmaker Amie Batalibasi went back to visit family in the seaside village of Llisiana, Solomon Islands, at a time when the village was affected by the extreme high tides due to climate change. Tide of Change documents the stories of the people, interwoven with the events surrounding the loss of a loved one, as the sea rises around a community on the brink of inevitable change.



Friday 16th September

Landscapes at the World's Ends (30 min)

BEST NEW ZEALAND CINEMATOGRAPHY AWARD

Director: Richard Sidey

A non-verbal visual journey to the polar regions of our planet portrayed through a triptych montage of photography and video.

Landscapes at the World's Ends is a multi-dimensional canvas of imagery recorded above the Arctic Circle and below the Antarctic Convergence, viewed through the lens of whom is realistically an alien in this environment, the polar tourist. Filmed during several artist residencies on-board three expedition vessels, New Zealand nature photographer and filmmaker Richard Sidey documents light and time in an effort to share his experiences and the beauty that exists over the frozen seas.

Set to an ambient score by Norwegian Arctic based musician, Boreal Taiga, this experimental documentary transports us to the islands of South Georgia, the Antarctic Peninsula, Greenland and Svalbard.

Marion Stoddart: The Work of 1000 (30 min)

BEST SHORT FILM AWARD

Director: Dorie Clark

An unlikely activist, Marion Stoddart lived next to one of America's most polluted rivers and unexpectedly transformed herself from a housewife and mother to an environmental leader and citizen hero honored by the United Nations.

The Work of 1000 is the documentary film chronicling her life, achievements, setbacks, and unwavering belief that one person can make a difference in the world.



REEL
EARTH

12 - 16th
September

2011
7

7.30pm

\$10

Waikato Environment
Centre

25 Ward St, 1st Floor

ENVIRONMENTAL
FILM FESTIVAL

Monday 12th September

River Dog (30 min)

BEST NEW ZEALAND FILM AWARD
BEST EMERGING TALENT AWARD

Director: James Muir, Oscar Hunter

In a remote part of New Zealand, farmers have a law unto their own. They pollute and destroy the rivers and streams unchecked. Only one man is brave enough to stand up for the river he lives by. Together with his team of working dogs Grant Muir risks his livelihood to stop the pollution and make a change for good in this isolated rural land.

SoLa: Louisiana Water Stories (60 min)

Director: Jon Bowermaster

Water's everywhere in Southern Louisiana ("SoLa"): rivers, bayous, swamps, the Mississippi River, the Gulf of Mexico. Everyone has a water story. Water permeates every aspect of life, yet the quality of that water and the lives that depend on it have been severely compromised — sometimes, it seems, irretrievably. When the locals call a 100-mile stretch of the Mississippi "Cancer alley", you know you have a problem. Could it be the 200-plus petrochemical plants lining the banks? In July 2008 a shipping accident spilled over a million litres of oil into the Mississippi in the centre of New Orleans. Guess where New Orleans gets its drinking water? Then there's Hurricane Katrina, and just last year the appalling Deepwater Horizon incident. SoLa: Louisiana Water Stories listens to the stories of the people who live here, who work here, who fight to look after it, who dance and sing and take pride in what they do ("I don't make ammunition to kill people. I just make food to feed 'em"). With an oil and gas industry worth USD 63 billion annually, Louisiana should be one of the richest US States; instead, it's one of the poorest. Beautifully filmed, SoLa offers a warmly human and honest account of the impacts of big industry on a region remarkable for the character of its natural environment and its inhabitants.

Tuesday 13th September

Streams (4 min)

Director: Wayne Johnson

Every little drain, creek, or stream has a source, be it bush clad mountains or hills, rural or suburban at its point of origin. Those water ways and the life within and around them is as only as healthy as what happens to them on their journey from their source as they travel on to our oceans. In recent decades we have abused some so badly, they have died due to total willful neglect by us. But there is hope and a change in the air, as some people have woken up to the importance of these vital water ways in their home and work environments. Streams is about those who care and who wish to restore these water ways to their former well being with community based restoration projects taking the charge to help bring them back to permanent recovery, health and life.

Cowboys in India (80 mins)

BEST FEATURE FILM AWARD

Director: Simon Chambers

Investigative film-making can be hard at the best of times, but when you're assisted by people who'll say apparently anything to keep you happy — or nothing when they think it'll make you unhappy — and when people you interview say exactly the opposite a short time later, how can you make a credible film? Remarkably, director Simon Chambers achieves the seemingly impossible by telling the story of his attempts to investigate a London-based corporation's mining of tribal lands in a remote part of India. By turning the lens on his own investigation and its frustrations, he shows not just the deliberate obfuscations (and sometimes threats) of those he tries to investigate but also the problems of determining what's reliable information even when he gets apparently straight answers. In doing so, he leaves one wondering to what extent similar weaknesses characterise all documentaries, suggesting this is a film not just about a particular controversy, but about documentary film-making. But it's the manner of telling that lifts Cowboys in India far above the ordinary. At times hilarious, sometimes tragic and often self-deprecating, it engages the viewer's empathy, first with Chambers and his tribulations, then, subtly and eventually powerfully, with his Indian companions. Entertaining, deeply affecting and thoughtful, Cowboys in India is one of this year's stand-out films.

Wednesday 14th September

Grow Your Awareness (5 min)

Director: Ralph Lengler

Most of us associate electricity with being a clean energy source. We also know that our electricity has to come from 'somewhere'. This viral animation wants to make us aware that this 'somewhere' means in most cases 'coal', which in carbon emissions is the dirtiest of all fossil fuels. On the example of the soon to be introduced electric car 'MINI E', this animation shows the carbon footprint of electricity for different Australian cities. Those carbon footprints are then compared to a range of petrol cars. If you live in Melbourne (Australia) for example, driving a MINI E has the same carbon footprint as a Porsche.

Deep Green (101 min)

BEST SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AWARD

Director: Matt Briggs

Too many documentaries about climate change leave the viewer feeling discouraged, even hopeless. Deep Green does the opposite. Film maker Matthew Briggs focuses on solutions, on options available either now or in the immediate future.

Starting with an analysis of energy efficiency, he points out how in the last 30 years California's energy efficiency programs have kept per capita energy consumption stable while on average the rest of the US has risen by 50%. Accompanied by an international team of National Geographic, CNN and BBC cinematographers, Briggs enlists commentaries by some of the world's most articulate and thoughtful leaders —Amory Lovins, Lester Brown and David Suzuki, for example — and assesses a wide range of options from clear winners like "mining for efficiency" through electric transport, solar power and more, to clear losers like "clean coal".

Well filmed and edited and with appealing touches of humour, Deep Green shows how feelings of hopelessness and helplessness are misplaced. Solutions are abundant, even if not all prove workable: what we need is the leadership and political will to implement them.