



# Earth Pilgrim Africa

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## We Are One!

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Biospherians Sierra Silverstone, Gaie Alling and Laser Van Thillo



*'It may seem that their work is insignificant - one small boat, one small team in the middle of the ocean - but it is not. It is the most important thing anyone can do to make a difference'*

*James Cameron, filmmaker, screenwriter and deep-sea explorer*

Living for two years within a sealed ecological

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# 2332

days since  
start of pilgrimage

### Inspiration today

***"Walk gently on Mother Earth. She is the only one we have.***

***Thank you Geoff for reminding us to be reverent and caring for the environment. God go with you."***

**Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu**

system known as Biosphere 2 – which was described as one of the most exciting scientific projects since the first moon landing – changed everything about the way its human inhabitants related to the Earth as a support system for all life.

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It is now 25 years since they stepped across the threshold in Arizona and to celebrate that rite of passage and all that has unfolded since, a trio of Biospherians and their supporters have created a fascinating 44-minute film entitled *Odyssey in Two Biospheres*. It is available as a free download.

In much the same way that astronauts have looked back from outer space on our blue planet with a sense of awe and wonder at its beauty and preciousness, Biosphere 2's team of eight scientists explored and celebrated the interdependence and interconnectedness of life from the inner space of a unique glass-enclosed structure in the Arizona desert.

What their scientific minds had known and understood translated into a deeper spiritual understanding with very practical implications – what we do to our environment we do to ourselves.

"We hurt ourselves when we pollute or deplete our natural resources because we are our biosphere," Abigail Alling asserts, referring to the land, sea and atmosphere that support life on Earth. "We are part of it and we need it – it is our life support system.

The eight Biospherians back in 1991



"Without our atmosphere that separates us from the universe, a separation that allows life to thrive on our planet,

nothing would be alive. There would be no water and no air to breath. It is really that simple and is the reason why we must learn to live intelligently with our biosphere.

"All of us can make the difference and it starts with caring. I do care. I love my beautiful earth's biosphere. I enjoy being a part of it and its wellbeing. I wish to become an intelligent steward of this biosphere because a healthy biosphere means I will be well and so will those whom I love."

By definition the Earth is Biosphere 1 and the term applies to the planet's complete ecological system including all organisms and the environment in which they live.

That ambitious pioneering experiment in Arizona during the early '90s was intended to be – and became - the second fully self-sufficient biosphere after the Earth itself. And from its experiences and challenges have grown greater understandings that could help humans to develop technologies to explore the possibility of surviving in environments like the moon or Mars.

A trio of the original eight – Abigail Alling, Mark 'Laser' Van Thillo and Sally 'Sierra' Silverstone – have made it their lifelong passion and mission to share the insights of those two remarkable years – they were sealed in their world in miniature for longer than any astronaut has been in space!

Mark 'Laser' Van Thillo with Biosphere 2



Key to their ongoing work was the founding of the Biosphere Foundation and its mission to inspire intelligent stewardship of our world through sustainable community-based conservation projects, educational programmes that inspire people to get involved and make a difference, and through making valuable research data freely available. (To learn more visit [www.biospherefoundation.org](http://www.biospherefoundation.org))

Always it comes back to the need to take better care of the Earth. They insist that it can be as simple and as profound as supporting an initiative like Walking Water, which has traversed the Owens Valley that is home to the three for a few months each year in between projects that are mostly based in Indonesia, Bali, Sri Lanka and Singapore.

Their message of gratitude to the Walking Water pilgrims is: "Thank you all of you who are walking for our water in the Owens Valley.

"The most important thing we learned about working together within Biosphere 2 is that no matter our differences, we could transcend our personal and cultural habits and come together to care for our biosphere. The health and wellbeing of our biosphere was the value that brought us all together."

For the free film download click [here](#)

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