

THE TRUE STORY OF BREMLEY W. B. LYGDOH, Ph.D.

The Bridge Builder Who Would Not Break

A Life of Resilience, Betrayal, and Global Impact



“The chain of impact, once started, does not break. It may get tangled. It may cause pain. But if you hold on, it will lead you home.”

PROLOGUE

A Boy Leaves the Hills

He was seventeen when he walked away from Shillong, and he carried almost nothing of value — except a conviction so fierce it would shape the next three decades of his life: that sustainable development was not a luxury, but a matter of survival. The red soil of the Khasi hills was still under his fingernails. The memory of forests vanishing while the world looked the other way was lodged somewhere behind his ribs, and it would not let him rest.

Bremley Wanbantei Blah Lyngdoh had come into the world in Shillong on 3 December 1974 — “*the Scotland of the East*,” set high in the hills of Meghalaya, **the abode of the clouds**. He was the son of Eric Bremley Lyngdoh and Dr. Iadamon Blah and, in the matrilineal Khasi tradition, the bearer of his mother’s clan name. The seed of his life’s work was planted early: as a schoolboy at St. Edmund’s School he was cast in the *Peace Child* musical, and he would later return to Peace Child International in England to help shape *Stand Up for Your Rights*, a human-rights book made for the young and by the young, launched by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 1997 on the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He was certain, even then, of a truth most people spend a lifetime doubting — that a single committed young person can move the world.

Before any of that, there had been the sky. As a flying cadet in the Air Wing of India’s National Cadet Corps — Delhi’s No. 1 Air Squadron, from 1993 to 1996 — he trained on light aircraft under a Wing Commander of the Indian Air Force and was named **Best Air Cadet at the 1996 Republic Day Camp**. He would call them the best days of his military life. The boy who learned to read the wind from a cockpit would spend the rest of his life trying to keep the air, the soil and the water fit to live in.

That conviction carried him, in 1995, into the great hall of the United Nations’ 50th Anniversary Assembly in New York. There, among the delegations of the world, the boy from Meghalaya found himself face to face with **Atal Bihari Vajpayee** — then Leader of the Opposition and head of the Indian delegation to the General Assembly. The meeting settled something in him. Lifting people out of poverty by healing the land beneath their feet was not going to be a career. It was a calling.

He went home and got to work. As Youth Programme Director of the **Consortium of Indian Scientists for Sustainable Development**, he carried the Consortium’s “People-led Model” for fighting desertification — forged on the parched Pushkar drylands — to communities across India, and in 1995 presented its eco-regeneration work at the UNEP Global Youth Forum at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1997, Switzerland came calling with the **WWF Prince Bernhard Scholarship for Environmental Leadership**, one of the most coveted honours in the field. The boy from the hills was now on the world’s radar — and he had only just begun.

What followed was a wandering apprenticeship in service that spanned continents. He planted trees and restored wetlands with a conservation corps outside Seattle; he taught English and mathematics to homeless men on the skid row of Los Angeles; he sat with Aboriginal elders in Australia for a National Sorry Day and rebuilt houses with Habitat for Humanity in Melbourne. And in the summer of 1998 he climbed onto a bicycle and rode **3,700 miles from San Francisco to Washington, D.C.** — nine weeks, thirty-five riders, half a million dollars raised for grassroots projects in fifty-three countries, and a hearing before U.S. Senators at the Capitol. He called that ragged, joyful convoy **Community on Wheels** — a name he would resurrect, two decades later, in the hills of his homeland.

He fed that ambition with relentless learning, gathering postgraduate degrees the way other men gather frequent-flyer miles — **environmental policy at Columbia University, development studies at the London School of Economics, environmental diplomacy at the University of Geneva, and international development at the Intercultural Open University** — crowned by a dual doctorate in Sustainable Development from the Universidad Azteca in Mexico and the Universidad Central de Nicaragua. He would earn the miles, too: an Impact Explorer who has since carried his work to ninety countries.

ACT ONE

The Rise

1999 – 2007

The United Nations and World Bank Years

In 1999 he joined the **United Nations Development Programme** in New Delhi, helping protect the fragile coral reefs of the Gulf of Mannar off Tamil Nadu. Within a year the work pulled him back to New York, to the Secretariat of the **UN Commission on Sustainable Development**, where — under Secretary-General Kofi Annan — he worked alongside the nine Major Groups charged with turning the lofty promises of Agenda 21 into action on the ground.

His own government took notice. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee appointed him the **first Indian Youth Representative** to the United Nations, and at the 2000 Millennium Assembly he rose to address the assembled leaders of the world on “*Creating Sustainable Livelihoods for Youth*” — speaking, a young man from the Khasi hills, on behalf of the **350 million young people of India**. As an advisor to India’s Permanent Mission, he would later sit in the chamber as President Nelson Mandela briefed the UN Security Council on peacekeeping in Burundi, and he once carried a youth declaration, sealed in a black box, straight into the hands of Kofi Annan.

There were degrees and offices in between — a master’s from the School of International and Public Affairs at **Columbia University**, then the Environment Department of the **World Bank** in Washington, D.C., where under President James Wolfensohn he worked on the knot at the centre of his life: how to cut poverty and protect the environment at once, in concert with UNDP, the European Commission and the British Government. For nearly a quarter of a century he would also co-chair the UN Commission on Sustainable Development’s **Education Caucus**, and serve two decades on the board of the Worldview International Foundation — the Colombo-based organisation of a Norwegian named Arne Fjørtoft, whose path he had first crossed in 1999, and who would one day call him to Myanmar.

Recognition came early. On 12 August 2000 — the first-ever International Youth Day — the United Nations honoured him at its New York headquarters with the **World Youth Award for Notable Achievement**, for advancing the UN World Programme of Action for Youth across India. He was, by then, not yet twenty-six.

A Movement of Five Million

All the while, he was quietly building something of his own. With Benjamin Quinto he co-founded the **Global Youth Action Network (GYAN)**, planting its office just two blocks from the United Nations. Its flagship, **Global Youth Service Day**, launched every April from 2000 to 2004. Under his hand it grew from a scattering of local projects into a planetary phenomenon — mobilising **five million young people across 175 countries**, and binding their energy to the Millennium Development Goals.

The Summit of 500 Million Livelihoods

In September 2002 he took on the role that would define this chapter of his life: International Coordinator of the **Youth Employment Summit (YES) Campaign**. It opened on 11 September 2002 inside the reborn Library of Alexandria in Egypt — co-chaired by Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, First Lady of Egypt, and former U.S. President Bill Clinton — before 1,600 delegates from 120 countries.

The ambition was staggering: **500 million sustainable livelihoods for young people by 2012**, above all in the developing world. He architected the framework and built the **YES Global Fund**, a financing engine for youth entrepreneurship reaching more than 80 countries across renewable energy, ICT and rural development. Working with Inger Mette, he forged the **YES Country Networks** across Africa — youth-led coalitions that trained a generation, piloted projects sector by sector, and pulled in backers as large as the European Union.

In September 2006, Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki opened the Third Global Youth Employment Summit in Nairobi and received the Summit Torch — a flame of hope that had travelled from Alexandria to Mexico, and from Mexico to Kenya. The same day, Kibaki launched a new Ministry of Youth Affairs. The campaign's fingerprints were soon visible in national policy from water security in Swaziland to renewable energy in Zambia to HIV/AIDS prevention across the continent.

Boston, and the Seeds of Worldview

In 2003 he moved to Boston and joined the **Education Development Center**, carrying the decade-long YES Campaign into 83 partner countries. In 2004 he planted the YES Country Network in India alongside Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu in Hyderabad. The African partners he had mentored for years would carry the model further still: when he later founded **Worldview Impact** in the United Kingdom, they raised their own Worldview ventures in Kenya, Uganda and Zambia — and from there pushed on into Togo, Zimbabwe and The Gambia.

London, the LSE, and the Birth of Worldview Impact

In October 2004, still tethered to the YES Campaign, he enrolled at the **London School of Economics** and went home to Meghalaya to research his MPhil/PhD thesis, *Governance of forest resources and sustainable livelihoods: analysing the implications of the logging ban on rural household strategies in Meghalaya, India*.

The idea itself reached back further. In 1999, at a UN ESCAP conference in Bangkok, he had met **Dr. Arne Fjørtoft**, Secretary-General of the Worldview International Foundation — a mentor whose vision would shadow the rest of his life. Over years of conversation the two refined a concept; it was incubated at the LSE; and in April 2007, in the Norwegian Parliament, Bremley stood among the guests celebrating Arne's seventieth birthday. The bond struck in Bangkok would, fifteen years on, draw him to the mangrove flats of Myanmar.

The LSE turned passion into strategy. He learned why so many development projects collapse — because they ignore the hard limits of the natural world — and the lesson reoriented him toward regenerative finance: projects that restore nature and generate returns at the same time. He stopped thinking of his work as charity and started building models that could attract real investment. In August 2007, in partnership with the LSE Student Union Entrepreneurs, he launched Worldview Impact as a social enterprise, built directly on the applied research he had carried out in his homeland.

ACT TWO

The First Betrayal

2009 – 2014

The Columbia Network and the Ponzi Scheme

The network he had nurtured at Columbia would both lift him and very nearly destroy him. In October 2009, in London, he reconnected with a fellow graduate, Gideon Hoffman, who spoke of a man named Mathew Ames and his venture, Forestry for Life. Two months later, amid the noise and hope of COP15 in Copenhagen, Gideon made the introduction.

He joined Forestry for Life in January 2010. In February he met Joanne White, another idealist, and together they began dreaming of a working model for tropical reforestation. But the cracks came fast. Expenses ballooned. He found himself crisscrossing the globe, pouring his own thin savings into flights and hotel rooms that were never reimbursed.

In February 2011, Forestry for Life filed for bankruptcy, leaving him **£50,000 in personal debt** — unpaid wages and travel he would never see again. Only later did the truth surface: Mathew Ames had been running a **£1.6 million Ponzi scheme**, peddling bogus carbon credits and phantom teak-tree investments. In March 2014, Ames was sentenced to three years and four months in prison; Bremley was called to give evidence against him in court.

Even in that darkness, he refused to break.

Global Plantations and the Gibraltar Connection

That very same month — February 2011 — Bremley and Joanne White founded Global Plantations, determined to do it the honest way: transparent books, real trees, real benefits for real communities. In May, he was introduced to Toby Gibson, Managing Director of the Medori Group in Gibraltar, who dangled access to capital. The deal never quite ripened, but it planted a seed; over the next decade, Toby would resurface at the strangest and most decisive moments.

Global Plantations struggled. Without large institutional backing, they could plant only a fraction of what they had imagined — keeping the lights on with small grants and personal sacrifice. It was a lean, frustrating apprenticeship. It was also where he learned, in his bones, how the money really moved.

ACT THREE

The Mangrove Years

2014 – 2023

Myanmar: One Hundred Million Trees in the Delta

In October 2014 came the call that changed everything. His old mentor from Bangkok, Arne Fjørtoft, was launching a vast mangrove restoration in the Irrawaddy Delta of Myanmar — the **Thor Heyerdahl Climate Park**, named for the great Norwegian explorer, rising on a coastline gutted in 2008 by Cyclone Nargis, which had killed more than **138,000 people**. Bremley moved there, and stayed for six years in one of the most climate-vulnerable places on Earth.

He waded the tidal flats. He sat with village elders. He trained nursery workers from scratch. And he helped design the country's first Verra-registered blue carbon project — **Project #2088**, developed in 2015 and issuing its first credits in 2018. That single project became the template for six more. Together they have planted **over 100 million mangrove trees** across the Irrawaddy Delta, Tanintharyi, Rakhine and beyond — work that created thousands of jobs for seed collectors, nursery hands, planters and guards, and a steady current of high-integrity carbon credits that now fund schools, clinics and community development.

The Vatican and the Seed Missiles

In 2017 he heard of the **Bridge Builder Challenge**, run by the GHR Foundation and inspired by Pope Francis' call to bend innovation toward the common good. His proposal was audacious: send the tree-planting drones of BioCarbon Engineering, out of Oxford, skimming over the delta to fire biodegradable "*seed missiles*" — planting millions of mangrove pods from the air. Worldview Impact Foundation was awarded **\$250,000**. Shortly afterward, he was summoned to the Vatican to meet Pope Francis himself, patron of the challenge. Standing before the Pontiff, the man who had been bankrupted and betrayed felt, at last, a profound sense of validation.

Coming Home: The \$60 Million Meghalaya Project

He never stopped giving back to his own hills. Between 2014 and 2015 he sat on the original drafting team — with experts from the Meghalaya Institute of Natural Resources and the Forests and Environment Department — designing a new model of forest management that would let tribal communities reforest bare hillsides, revive dying springs, and build nature-based livelihoods. The **World Bank** approved it for five years (2018–2023). The **Meghalaya Community-Led Landscapes Management Project** wove traditional

knowledge together with science and empowered **400 village communities** to heal their land, water and forests — financed by a \$48 million World Bank loan and \$12 million from the Government of Meghalaya, a **\$60 million** undertaking in all.

In the same years he worked with the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority to prepare the state's case for UNESCO World Heritage recognition. Today the Khasi hills hold one cultural site on the World Heritage Tentative List — the extraordinary **Living Root Bridges (Jingkieng Jri)** — with India's formal nomination dossier, "*Jingkieng Jri / Lyu Chrai Cultural Landscape*," submitted for the 2026–27 evaluation cycle.

Ride East

On 15 October 2019 — in partnership with **Terra Hale**, the London eco-fitness studios where he served as Director of Sustainability — he opened a tree-planting ceremony at the Eric Bremley Lyngdoh Agroforestry Project in Raid Sakra, Ri Bhoi District. Ten socially conscious bikers, mounted on Royal Enfield Himalayans and Bullets, planted ten teak trees, then thundered off on a **1,000-mile ride** from Shillong to the Lake of No Return on the India–Myanmar border, tracing the route of the WWII dispatch riders through the borderlands of China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh. They rolled back into Shillong on 24 October, in time for United Nations Day. He gave the convoy the old name from his San Francisco-to-Washington ride of 1998 — **Community on Wheels** — a brotherhood of riders, now bridging the city to the smallholder organic farmers of the Northeast. The boy who had pedalled across America for the planet was, twenty-one years on, riding home for it.

The Hill Farmers' Union: From 50,000 to 250,000

In August 2020, as India emerged from lockdown, he was invited to become Senior Advisor to the **Hill Farmers' Union**; after returning from Myanmar in 2021, he threw himself into it full time. The Union then counted around 50,000 members. Bremley saw a bridge waiting to be built — between distant carbon markets and farmers fighting to stay on their land. He went village to village, sitting with women's self-help groups, youth clubs and traditional *durbar* councils, explaining how regenerative agriculture could rebuild soil, lift yields and earn carbon credits all at once. Within five years, membership had swelled **five-fold, to 250,000** — a force powerful enough to negotiate with the state, court international partners, and lay the foundations of the Regeneration Meghalaya project. The Union — born in 1992 in the wake of the Rio Earth Summit — now reaches across all eleven districts of Meghalaya and into Assam and Nagaland besides.

The Sundarbans and the Earth Tiger

On 8 June 2021 — UN World Oceans Day — he joined **EcoFriend World** — the social enterprise he had founded in 2016 with one audacious mission, **a billion trees by 2030**

— and the Worldview Impact Foundation to launch the **Eric Bremley Lyngdoh Earth Tiger Climate Park** in the Sundarbans of West Bengal, beneath the year's theme, "*Ocean: Life and Livelihoods*." The park honours his late father, Eric Bremley Lyngdoh of Meghalaya — born in the year of the Earth Tiger, the man whose dream had inspired every restoration Bremley ever built. In 2012 that dream had taken root as **Spring Valley Farm**, a sanctuary for new thinking set in a hill-ringed valley around a spring that never runs dry — a living lesson that water is the life that sustains all things.

The partners pledged to restore 300,000 mangroves while protecting the endangered **Royal Bengal Tiger** and the marginal farmers living around the swamps. With Avatars For a Cause, EcoFriend World scaled the dream to three million trees; today the ambition stands at **2,000 hectares and five million mangroves** across the Sundarbans.

Terraformation

In September 2021 he partnered with the U.S. restoration company Terraformation to expand the agroforestry project in Meghalaya toward 200 acres of native forest. The first phase put **20,000 trees** in the ground and reintroduced up to sixteen native species — among them *Castanopsis indica* (Indian chestnut), *Areca catechu* (betel nut), *Mangifera* (mango) and *Artocarpus heterophyllus* (jackfruit) — proof that he could now pull international capital toward regenerative agriculture in his home state.

The Gambia and Benin: West Africa Answers

On World Mangrove Day, 26 July 2022, he launched a restoration project in The Gambia with Worldview The Gambia, which since 2015 had already planted 10,000 mangroves along the Banjul coast and watched the wildlife return. Now they aimed higher: mangrove incubators raising four to five seed crops a year, and **25 million seedlings** along the West African coast within a decade.

In Benin, MAIS ECO — with MAIS Trading and EcoFriend World — had been winning the trust of chiefs and customary landowners since 2022. In Togbin Adouko, a fishing village near the port of Cotonou, residents who once cut the mangroves freely came to understand what they had been losing: nurseries for young fish, a shield against malaria and disease, the very ground beneath their livelihoods. The partnership offered a balanced path — and MAIS ECO has now signed agreements with three communities across roughly **2,750 hectares**, a commitment of some **7 million mangrove trees** and an estimated **3.5 million tonnes of CO₂** locked away over the project's 30-year life.

ACT FOUR

The Second Betrayal

2023 – 2025

Earthbanc: Ambition, Then Exploitation

In January 2023 a Swedish company called Earthbanc came knocking. Its founders, Tom Duncan and Rishabh Khanna, knew his work in Myanmar and Meghalaya, and they arrived with a dazzling pitch: blockchain and carbon markets, fused to fund reforestation at scale — and a relationship with **AstraZeneca** to prove it. Bremley agreed to lead the project of his lifetime: **Regeneration Meghalaya** — 22,670 hectares of degraded land, 64 million trees, and a \$71 million commitment from AstraZeneca.

He gave it everything. Months in the hills with village councils and the Hill Farmers' Union; a benefit-sharing model that routed **half of all carbon revenue** straight to local communities. He opened his contacts book and introduced Tom and Rishabh to the Chief Minister of Meghalaya, the British High Commissioner, the Swedish Ambassador. He built the bridge, beam by beam.

The high point came on his own birthday. On **3 December 2023**, before the British and Swedish Ambassadors to India, Bremley stood with his colleagues from Worldview Impact and the Hill Farmers' Union and launched the Regeneration Meghalaya Project — a public pledge of 64 million native trees to bring the cloud forests back to the highlands of his home. It was the proudest day of the whole endeavour. It was also, though he did not yet know it, the beginning of the end.

Then, six months in, the payments simply stopped. His invoices from January to June 2024 went unpaid. When he confronted the founders, they grew evasive. Word reached him from Kenya that Earthbanc was **double-invoicing** — billing the parent company twice for the same trainers and pocketing the difference. In June 2024 he resigned, walking away from nearly **£30,000** he was owed. Far worse, the Kenyan farmers he had personally vouched for were being cheated of carbon payments that never came. A Kenyan High Court later froze a **KSh 20 billion** donor fund and named Rishabh Khanna a defendant; an independent Swedish investigation called the Kenya dispute “just the tip of the iceberg.”

He had brought these men into the lives of vulnerable people. Now those people were suffering. The weight of it would nearly kill him.

The Ruptured Appendix and the War Zone

The Earthbanc collapse, stacked atop years of accumulated trauma, broke his body. His London landlord evicted him; for weeks he slept on a friend's gym floor. Then his appendix ruptured — the doctors traced it to prolonged, extreme stress — and he was rushed into emergency surgery.

When he woke from the operation, he felt he had been given a second chance — so he gave it away.

He left everything behind and went to volunteer in the war zones of Ukraine. For months he rebuilt schools flattened by Russian missiles and raised animal shelters for cats and dogs that had lost their owners, working shoulder to shoulder with young volunteers from **56 countries** — many of whom never went home. Amid the shelling and the dying, he found something he had lost: a kind of peace, and a renewed sense of why he was alive. But he never forgot the communities waiting for him in Meghalaya, the Sundarbans, The Gambia, Benin and a stretch of West African coastline called the Keta Lagoon.

ACT FIVE

The Bridge Rebuilt

2023 – 2026

Ghana: The Keta Lagoon

In July 2023, over coffee in a small café in Beckenham, he met Neil Danby of MAIS Trading — unassuming, sharp, a trader who understood both money and integrity. They kept in touch. In April 2024, as he was extracting himself from Earthbanc, Toby Gibson resurfaced once more, now Chief Operating Officer of Port Elysium, with news that a friend named Julian Drake of Greenfield Capital was hunting for high-integrity blue carbon projects.

That August, at a meeting Toby arranged in London, Bremley introduced Julian Drake to Neil Danby and Bernard Hicks of MAISECO. For hours they talked about the Keta Lagoon in Ghana — a degraded, eroding coastline where mangroves had once thrived. Bremley had walked it decades earlier as a young UN worker. He knew its poverty, its collapsing fisheries, its disappearing shore.

If we can restore those mangroves, we can protect the villages, revive the fish stocks, and generate carbon credits that actually help the people who live there.

— Bremley Lyngdoh, to Julian Drake

Julian was intrigued. In December 2025 he brought in Simon Grenfell of Greenfield Capital, who committed **\$350,000** to kickstart the work. By January 2026, Bremley was back on the ground in the Volta Region, walking the muddy flats of the Keta Lagoon with Neil and Bernard — collecting soil samples, sitting with chiefs, and drafting the Project Design Document for a 2,000-hectare Verra-standard restoration they named **MAISECO**. For the first time in years, he was building, not cleaning up someone else's wreckage.

The President's Special Initiative

The pilot in Ketu South drew attention from the very top. Bremley opened talks with the **President's Special Initiative of Ghana** and the Forestry Commission to scale the work into something extraordinary: **10,000 hectares restored and 25 million mangrove trees planted** across the Keta Lagoon and Ketu South — one of the largest blue carbon initiatives in West Africa, shielding coastal communities from erosion, reviving fisheries, and channelling the majority of revenue to the customary landowners themselves. Three decades of work in Myanmar, the Sundarbans, The Gambia, Benin and Meghalaya had prepared him for exactly this moment.

Wildlife Works and the Garo Hills

He never lost sight of home. At the UN's Rio+20 conference in 2012 he had met Rachel O'Reilly of Wildlife Works, a global leader in community-based REDD+; in August 2014 he brought her to Shillong to present the model to the Chief Secretary of Meghalaya. On 22 April 2026, after years apart, he reunited by phone with the Wildlife Works team in Shillong and reconnected with the company's founder, Mike Korchinsky.

Wildlife Works was developing a vast REDD+ project in the Garo Hills — **150,000 hectares** of biodiverse forest, home to elephants, hoolock gibbons, and the matrilineal Garo people. Bremley offered everything he had: knowledge of the terrain, the trust of the communities, the ear of the government — the bridge between international carbon finance and what actually happens on the ground.

Measuring Appetite

And he was thinking bigger still. With Julian Drake of Greenfield Capital, he was exploring **\$15–20 million in debt financing at 4–7% interest** for a whole portfolio of REDD+ projects — Temb  and Tenharim in Brazil, the Garo Hills in India, West Lunga in Zambia, and the Solomon Islands. “Measuring appetite,” he called these conversations: testing the waters with investors who had learned to trust his judgment. If it landed, it would let Wildlife Works and its partners shield **millions of hectares** of tropical forest — carbon locked away, biodiversity defended, indigenous livelihoods secured.

EPILOGUE

The Chain That Would Not Break

Over the years he had tended his Columbia network like a garden. Gideon Hoffman still offered counsel. Joanne White became a trusted ally. Toby Gibson — for all his financier’s manner — proved a dependable conduit to capital. The chain of ventures he had set in motion, some triumphant and some catastrophic, had woven a web of relationships across continents. Every failure taught him something. Every betrayal hardened his resolve to do better.

He had remained, through all of it, a connector of people and of ideas — an Impact Explorer who has carried his eco-blueprint to ninety countries. He advised blue-chip names from the Crown Estate to Heathrow to Nike through the value-accounting firm Route2, chaired the forest working group of the Blockchain & Climate Institute, and helped steer the regenerative-finance house ReGen Future Capital. Today he advises the Resilience Frontiers of the UN climate convention and sits on the steering committee of the Caux Dialogue on Land and Security in Switzerland — where he helps others see what he has known since boyhood: that the health of the land and the security of the people are one and the same question.

Now, in the muddy water of the Keta Lagoon — with a small team of stubborn, honest people and a few hundred thousand dollars of clean money — he is finally planting trees that will outlast him. The communities cheated by Mathew Ames and by Earthbanc will never see a cent of those fraudulent carbon revenues. But they will watch the mangrove nurseries rise along the shoreline, and they will know that one man never stopped trying to make it right.

Thirty Years, By the Numbers

What does a boy who walked out of Shillong at seventeen build in three decades?

100M+	mangrove trees planted across six Verra projects in Myanmar
5M	young people mobilised in 175 countries through Global Youth Service Day
500M	sustainable youth livelihoods targeted by the YES Campaign across 120 countries
250K	Hill Farmers’ Union members — grown five-fold from 50,000
\$131M	in development finance shaped: a \$60M World Bank project and \$71M from AstraZeneca

1 Billion

trees — the EcoFriend World mission he intends to complete by 2030

The Work, Region by Region

Region	What Bremley Built
Global Youth	Co-founded the Global Youth Action Network and Global Youth Service Day (5M youth, 175 countries); led the YES Campaign across 120 countries toward 500M livelihoods.
Myanmar	100M+ mangroves across six Verra blue carbon projects; thousands of jobs; coastlines defended against cyclones.
India — Sundarbans	The Earth Tiger Climate Park: 300,000 mangroves scaling to 5M trees, protecting the Royal Bengal Tiger and marginal farmers.
India — Meghalaya	Hill Farmers' Union grown to 250,000; a \$60M World Bank project for 400 villages; \$71M secured for Regeneration Meghalaya (22,670 ha); 20,000 native trees with Terraformation; the Ride East initiative.
The Gambia	A mangrove programme targeting 25M seedlings along the Banjul coast.
Benin	Through MAIS ECO, agreements with three communities over 2,750 ha — 7M mangroves and 3.5M tonnes of CO ₂ over 30 years.
Ghana	The MAISECO blue carbon project in the Keta Lagoon, scaling toward 10,000 ha and 25M trees with the President's Special Initiative and Forestry Commission.
South America	Two years developing a 55,000-ha REDD+ project in the Gran Chaco dry forest (now active with Wildlife Works); exploring REDD+ for the Temb� and Tenharim territories in Brazil.
Global Finance	Facilitating \$15–20M in debt financing at 4–7% for a REDD+ portfolio across Brazil, India, Zambia and the Solomon Islands.



Beyond the trees and the credits, he has proven something larger. That a single person — bankrupted, betrayed, evicted, nearly killed, pushed again and again to the very edge — can still rise and keep walking. That a chain of impact, once started, does not break. It tangles. It cuts. But hold on, and it leads you home.

And so, at fifty-one — grey at the temples, calluses on his hands, fighting fit as ever — Bremley Lyngdoh keeps going. The vision he carried out of the hills at seventeen, of a world where development heals rather than harms, has become real for millions of young people and hundreds of thousands of families across three continents. And he is not finished. Not until the last of **one billion trees** is in the ground by 2030.