

ONE EARTH. ONE SUN. ONE HUMANITY.



THE RAINFOREST

BECKONS

One. A Call To Love,

SIGAR HIGHLANDS
for a natural, kind & beautiful world.

by

Peng-Ean Khoo

This book is made
possible because of
Kwek Pei Xuan.

a TEUWB series

THE RAINFOREST BECKONS

One. A Call To Love.
SIGAR HIGHLANDS.
for a natural, kind and beautiful world

by Peng-Ean Khoo
a BB ROSEHut Peacemaker's walk with
Kwek Pei Xuan



a *Bilberries Blue* publication
Singapore

a TEUWB series

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A GIFT FOR ALL.

An ebook (pdf) publication.
Published on January 16, 2025.

for my beautiful
friends who have
walked alongside me;
you are my heroes.
I am deeply indebted.

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All errors are my own.

for my beautiful family.
without you, I would
be empty. with you,
I can be, truly-me.

for all - together
we are a wild garden
of life's Grand Roses.

ONE.

A Call To Love.

SIGAR HIGHLANDS

for a natural, kind and beautiful world

ONE.

A Call To Love.

SIGAR HIGHLANDS

for a natural, kind and beautiful world
since 2005

When I first stepped foot on what eventually was placemade as Sigar Highlands, it was with my dad and with my daughter. I was carrying my daughter in my arms; she was 9 months old. I remember a similar photo of my dad carrying me in his arms and I was similarly a toddler at that time. That was in the 1970s. For as long as I can remember, my dad has always brought me to work. Site visits, land development site surveys, business meetings. In a family business environment, business and family are intertwined.

My daughter is now 21 years old. The journey of Sigar Highlands is now 20 years, in the walking. It was a family decision, and still remains our joint commitment. When the land came to our stewardship, it was a secondary twice-logged forest. People used to call it a jungle, and now, sometimes, people still refer to it as a plantation. To us, it's our dearest darling rainforest. It holds a reverence for us that we can't explain to another. It's like one of our family members, and strangely, though we are a family business, we have felt it more like a calling, like our duty to Mother Earth. To serve this land, and our humanity.

So, each of us brought our all. So many people have jumped in and joined us. All brought our hearts, minds, expertise, care, encouragement, love, conviction, kindness. Though it has been challenging - we are either too small for carbon credits, or too big for a rural development, or too bold for anywhere, or anyone. We have become unfathomable, even to ourselves. Some have even called us fools. But we are no fools. We are visionaries. We can see what the world needs, what humanity needs. And we WANT to deliver on this.

This is why we have stuck with it. It is not possible to give up. It is not even an option. The site that we have stewarded now has so much naturally grown biodiversity that it feels like the rainforest is rejoicing and returning to us all our good faith in nature:

the rainforest beckons.

Adjacent to Sigar Highlands, there is the most rarest of rafflesia blooms that you can't get anywhere on earth.

This biome is also the most fertile for temperate crops production. However, the lack of knowledge and respect for our natural biodiversity, have resulted in severe deforestation in the region, and sadly, they are for chemical agriculture and timber (forest plantation). This is a double, triple, quadruple whammy, as the negative

impact is also on water, soil, resulting in irrecoverable biodiversity loss.

We stuck it out, because we have found the nature-based solutions. Our integrated pest management that is also based on nutrition farming, together with rainforest refugia, hosting multitudes of pollinators - butterflies, bees, forest insects, birds, primates - is WORKING. We are succeeding, not failing. That's our good news. We are not bringing poorly news today. We are bringing GRAND news. We have walked the distance of hope because we are living the reality of what is doable that is good. We grow pesticide-free vegetables from roots to the stems to the leaves to the flowers to the fruits and to the seeds. We started with an aspiration, an idea of freedom from pesticides, and we have achieved bringing our idea now to reality, to supermarkets in both Malaysia and Singapore.

We had been inspired by permaculture and had kept iterating innovations for different crops, different types of seed varieties, different types of agriculture and agroforestry technology, and using mechanical energy as much as possible, and fresh rain and spring water as our irrigation source. We understood that we need to have this diversity of abilities so that we don't need to fear that we don't have food. That's the real freedom. But every biome is different, and every landscape, once manoeuvred, is also different. So it takes time to adapt into a stable rainforest refugia pesticide-free farm.

That time we took was 15 years.

I don't think one can miss the treasury of nature-based food productive ability that we have iterated and grown. You need both. You need technological engineering and you need edible botany. And the third is you need a heart. You need to love. Love the plants, they are nature's providence to us. Love people, love the agronomists, composters, seed cultivators, composters, growers, packers, transporters, distributors, retailers, marketers, educators. Do you know how we know? We have had to build it all.

Without love, it is not possible to walk this journey.

That's why this beckoning of the rainforest has such a beautiful untold secret. You can't experience this profound courage and conviction, which in the end, I have found out, is that you become more and more like the rainforest. You forgive all the hurtful words and acts of cruelty of those who don't yet understand.

You can bear the purpose, like a rainforest.

We have become unfathomably formidable, like a rainforest.

The rainforest isn't just the tree. It's everything. The entire ecosystem. The geology, the water, the 7 layers of the rainforest, and interestingly, I think, the rainforest beckons the people whom it knows are rainforest folks. We recognise each other immediately.

We are the ones who grin when walking in a rainforest shower. We start talking to trees, to bees, to butterflies, to flowers, to wild mushrooms. We notice everything. We see the yellow spiders, we hear the calls of the gibbons, the songs of sunbirds. We whistle to it. I learnt to whistle when I was 6 years old, I keep learning to whistle the call of the wild because I feel the joy of my childhood, and this deep exhilaration, every time I work on this work.

This work has now become my life. My work and life are intertwined. It is even more radical than my family and my business being intertwined! I love this beckoning because it has grown me. It has grown me beyond anything that I could be, because you can only grasp nature to this depth, after you have served it, loved it, belonged in it, been fighting for it, daily, 24/7, 365 days a year, for 2 decades. That's been the last 20 years, truly. I can't actually imagine doing anything else, really.

There is another word for this. ARRIVAL.

My dad told me that we have to keep the diversity, in case we have pests and diseases outbreak that wipe out a single species of crop. Every time my dad shares his vision, I put it in my vision pocket. Because you can't not have a vision pocket. That's the real heirloom. It isn't just the technology or the know-how. It is the core principles. The core guiding decision-making of non-compromisable wisdom.

Wisdom from being hungry as a post -WWII war child.
Wisdom from economic development of land to kickstart economies in the 1970s. Wisdom from seeing all kinds of geopolitics and all kinds of changes in climate.

And all kinds of capital, business, social failures. We spent Christmas this year reflecting upon the 80 years since 1944. That's the year my dad was born - 1944. He is 80 years old this year - 2025, and it'd been 80 years since the end of WWII.

What's happened to us?

What's happened to our world, and our humanity, and our earth?

All I can say to myself, is that we have done this to ourselves - the Anthropocene.

Our goal now is to hold the Holocene conditions through our own decisive action and commitments, now.

My dad bought us ice-cream, chocolates, books when we were children. As soon as he had money. He provided for us - love, joy and dreams.

I read *The Good Earth* by Pearl S. Buck when I was 9 years old. And Gandhi's autobiography when I was 12 years old. I have always understood the what we each must hold on to, in order to hold up ourselves, our families, our societies, our continuities.

Our dignity as a human civilisation.

Culture has actually been consistent. In fact, we all have a work ethic that does want to improve, do better. I think there are so many myths in broad strokes narratives.

They are profiling untruths. Most of us want to be good, make a good hardworking living serving purpose. Where we can't seem to engage is perhaps where many offerings have become misaligned from basic human dignity and the beauty of our world and life.

My mom, she wipes fungi off leaves. She plants roses at work sites. She clears the drainage of Moonriver Lodge and the farm team's accommodations, with a broom, and spring water. Whenever there is decay, you can see her there. She knows how to mend, how to heal, how to regenerate. She tells me something simple. Everything and everyone are like little children, you need to care for them like children. They are as precious and as fragile as children.

She has another secret. She says that the rainforest is always listening in. And we mustn't speak ill of it, and of anything disrespectful about earth and life. She also always cautions us against being prideful. Don't be too proud, she would always remind us when we go off tangent away from basic simplicities. I think she understands service more than anyone of us in the family. She understands it as love. Love in action, to be specific. So it is even beyond philosophical musings of service and theological expositions of spirituality.

I think we have stuck it out so far because we have kept it real. I am glad the rainforest has kept it all real for us. We are glad that our children have been able to witness our journey with our parents. That's really the most precious gift in terms of being a human person serving this rainforest highlands.

There is a great yet quiet satisfaction that comes with knowing, that we are giving our all, living this walk that is as mysterious and as tough as the rainforest. We, in the end, realise that the rainforest has been growing us. The last 20 years. I don't think anyone can be more thankful and grateful for such a beckoning, as our family, and all our friends and stakeholders who have contributed financially, and all the experts who have believed in us and gave their all together with us, all the teams and business partners who have stuck it through with us too, and our customers who support us with so much kindness and encouragement. We are so excited to be able to grow this ecosystem of like-minded good folks, and action concrete good solutions together.

To lead our walk together.

I think there is this incredible beauty that is indescribable. It's like a warm glow inside our hearts. It makes us human.

Isn't it interesting how it is nature who makes us human?

When we know one rainforest, we know every rainforest.

And when we know every rainforest, we basically forgive the trespasses of humans, and are able to find inside ourselves a new expansive ability to embrace our whole earth, and our entirety of human historicities, and become very determined to always do better. Because we have all come so far, we can't let the baton drop. We simply can't let the fire of continuity be put out, just because we choke, duh-miss our watch.

We cannot miss this watch.

We don't miss the goodness. We don't miss out on this sweet beckoning.

We hope that you will join us to build a sustainable development township. We are very excited to work our heartfelt brilliances together. Imagine one such amazing beacon of 1000 acres of - I Believe - shining from the mountains of Upper Titiwangsa, pivoting the regeneration of the Central Forest Spine of Peninsular Malaysia. We must hold up our moral courage for our children's children, for our Earth's children, for the continuity and regenerativity of our human continuity. We must not lose the Central Forest Spine - it provides 80% of the water to Malaysia and Singapore.

Without integration, the silos of the past can't emerge new solutions. That is why our small site developments are meant to facilitate this integration in a methodical manner, in ecosystem archetypal holons. Pattern languages.

Our vision is to find nature-based solutions, habitats, that are nimble, that have both site-specific specificities regarding biodiversity, renewable energy, pesticide-free food, full inclusion care, culture of school of life, and governance - stewardship of dignity.

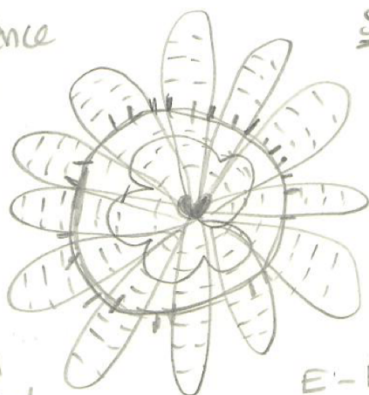
If we build it methodically, and with adaptability to different biomes, it means that whatever we build, will also, logically and naturally, be scalable.

**So, after 20 years, we arrive HOME.
And the rafflesias cup our feet.**

With much love
Peng-Ean Khoo
January 16, 2025

THE STEWARDSHIP OF GLOBAL COMMONS

B - Resilience
TEUWB



S - Safe &
Secure
Birth to
Lifelong
Care

O - Open
Pedagogical
Documentation

E - Ecology
Circular

Let the Beauty
of what
You Love
be what
You Do.

- Rumi

“The root of the disconnect in the Anthropocene is [human estrangement](#) (ref Small is Beautiful-EF Schumacher), from within ourselves, each other and with nature. So our focus, critical response and determination is to restore this, so that we dare to love again.”
– Peng-Ean Khoo

Ms Peng-Ean Khoo read Economics at Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge, UK, and is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales since 1997. She trained in London with Price Waterhouse in the Products Group, and subsequently, in the Technology Group, Boston of PricewaterhouseCoopers. Her experience included UK statutory accounts audits, UK plc annual report, British Railways Board Privatisation, US SEC filing, US technology start-ups audits, NASDAQ pre-IPO Preparation, and Transaction Support for mergers & acquisitions.

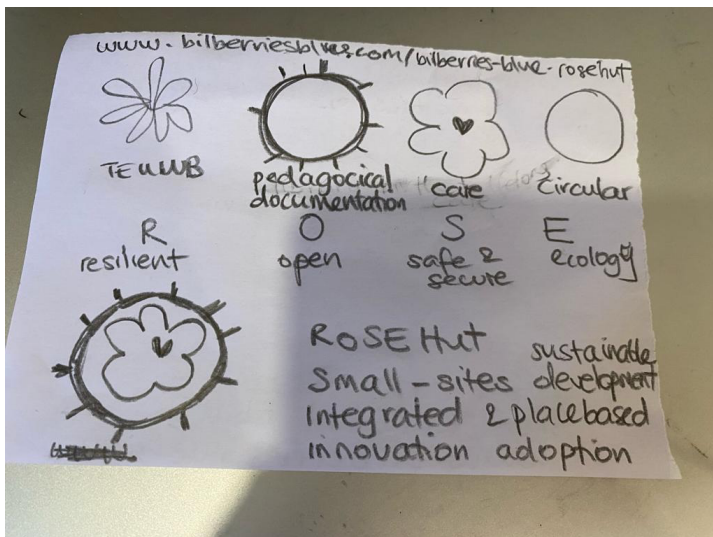
Since 2000, Peng-Ean co-founded [Bilberries Blue](#) with her brother, Khoo Peng Keat, servicing sustainable enterprises that support and enable the eco-systemic emergence of Good Work in local, regional, international economic development and in the capital marketplace. In Singapore, in the capacity as finance consultant or interim Chief Financial Officer roles, Peng-Ean’s corporate clients included serving certain entities in NTUC Social Enterprises.

She founded [One Love Ltd](#), a company limited by guarantee, in 2014, to create and sustain birth to lifelong transition and support platforms. She hopes to enable responsible access, opportunities and meaningful livelihoods as she continues to ponder Amartya Sen's statement in 'Development as Freedom' (1999): 'Development is indeed a momentous engagement with freedom's possibilities.'

From Emergent Poetry in 2000 to [charKOL](#) in 2008 to [The Happy Heart School](#) in 2012 to BB Studio in 2016, the Culture of School of Life grounded in the pedagogy of love, voice and participation, as the core of human development (of nations) from personhood in community for sustainable development. Between 2021-2023, One Love completed the fully inclusive prototyping for adolescents and young adults through [Bilberries Blue LightHouse](#). The microsystems knowledge-embodied-space typology for a fully inclusive live-play-work from cradle-to-cradle is available as a-gift-for-all from 2024, and aims to be scalability-ready in 2026.

[Bilberries Blue Blog](#) documents our pedagogical journey of possibilities between 2016-2019. TEUWB (The Economics of Universal Wellbeing) was completed in 2019. [TEUWB Book](#) and [TEUWB lecture series](#) were published as a-gift-for-all during 2020. In 2022, [The Kind Grower](#) was co-founded to pivot [Food Forest Farm](#) to a global steward of #FoodSustainabilityintheAnthropocene.

[Bilberries Blue ROSEhut](http://www.bilberriesblue.com/bilberries-blue-rosehut) paradigm emerged in 2023, to respond to state-market-community coordination gaps (inspiration, knowledge, innovation, technology, finance, skills, transition management) in innovation adoption during Transition. Taking small-sites nature-positive-net-zero developments with low capex, high density of biodiversity & nature-based technology, high innovation-income yield, high community repository with skills development access, high climate-resilient potential and underserved heritage sites, 1000 ROSEHuts +Campus Zero +Biodiversity Parks +Hospitality, kickstarts as a Sustainable Rural-Urban Development model- viable, nimble, complex adaptive, unique value creation delivering SDG2030, integrating [ACT-D](#) & [TNFD](#) governance.



a TEUWB series

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