

James J. Tarrant



James J. Tarrant, whose interest from an early age in the global ecology movement led him to become a leading expert on environmental policy in Indonesia and elsewhere in the developing world, died on January 30, 2023, after a long illness. He was 72. Growing up in Pittsburgh, Jim received a gift of a spinning globe, which fascinated him. Inspired by President John F. Kennedy's appeal to idealistic youth, Jim decided he would join the Peace Corps, which he did in 1972 after

graduating from Allegheny College. He was sent to Ethiopia, where he taught English in a mountainous village school and helped set up water infrastructure. This began a lifetime practice of long, vivid letters and humorous drawings.

Jim received a Masters from Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a Ph.D. from the University of Sussex Institute of Development Studies. In his first overseas posting in the early 1980s, Jim set up environmental education centers at Indonesian universities, under the mentorship of Indonesia's pioneering environment minister, Dr. Emil Salim. Indonesia is well renowned as one of the most significant places on Earth for a diversity of unique species in its magnificent rainforests and coral reefs. He then did extensive field studies on the traditional methods West Java farmers used to manage upland watersheds which became the basis of his Ph.D. In Indonesia he met his future wife, Cynthia Mackie, who also worked on nature conservation.

Jim subsequently embarked on a series of assignments for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other donors on environmental and energy projects in Egypt, Cypress, Eastern Europe, Rwanda, Russia and Southeast Asia. The family returned to Indonesia in 1997

during a tumultuous period when the strongman ruler Suharto was toppled from power. Jim managed a major USAID project to improve Indonesia's rainforest and coral reef management. This was a foundational initiative that built a robust cadre of Indonesian experts and model field programs that continue to inspire efforts to this day.

Jim is survived by his widow Cynthia Mackie; their two children Kevin and Melati Tarrant; his mother, Kathleen Tarrant; two brothers, Bill and David; two sisters, Peggie, Mary Sue; nine nieces and nephews: Tavleen and Jasleen Tarrant; Narkeez and James Carlton, Natalie and Jackson Tarrant, Meredith Bendl and Steven DeGrace, and James Joseph O'Leary.

A Celebration of Life will be held in April by invitation only. Condolences and memories can be shared at:

<https://www.mykeeper.com/profile/JamesTarrant/>. Donations in his memory can be made to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (<https://pancan.org>) or to support the pancreatic cancer research of Dr. Lei Zheng at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center (online: <https://secure.jhu.edu/form/kimmel>).

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