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Wildlife films to animate the “biodiversity super year”

World Wildlife Day 2020 Film Showcase announced

Geneva/Jackson Hole/Montreal/Nairobi/New York, 26 November 2019 – The Secretariats of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Jackson Wild announced today that they are teaming up to organize an international film showcase highlighting wildlife as an important component of biological diversity and how its conservation and sustainable use will help reduce the risk of unprecedented extinctions from overexploitation.

The Film Showcase will be one of the global events that will anchor next year’s UN World Wildlife Day (3 March) celebrated under the theme *Sustaining all life on earth*. The theme encompasses all wild animal and plant species as a component of biodiversity as well as the livelihoods of people, especially those who live closest to the nature. It also underlines the importance of sustainable use of natural resources in support of the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Winners and finalist films entered into the competition will be shown throughout 2020, known as “biodiversity super year” around the world and at various major events.

CITES Secretary-General Ivonne Higuero said: “World Wildlife Day 2020 and the film showcase will embrace the ‘biodiversity super year’. This gives us a unique opportunity to celebrate wildlife as a component of biodiversity in its many beautiful and varied forms, raise awareness of the multitude of benefits of wildlife to people, the threats they are facing and the conservation success stories through motion pictures and story-telling. We urgently need to bend the curve of species and biodiversity loss before we reach the tipping points from which we may not recover, with dramatic consequences for all life on the planet.”

The CITES Secretariat is designated by the United Nations General Assembly as the global facilitator for the celebration of the World Wildlife Day each year in collaboration with organizations in the United Nations system.

As noted by Midori Paxton, Head of Biodiversity for UNDP: “Wildlife and biodiversity underpin the well-being, safety, and resilience of all societies. The World Wildlife Day 2020 film showcase will raise awareness of the importance of investing in nature in ways that help accelerate progress across the Sustainable Development Goals. The theme of World Wildlife Day is particularly timely

as the UN System, countries, and all partners are preparing for the post-2020 global Biodiversity Framework to be launched in October 2020 in Kunming, China at CBD COP15.”

“The science tells us that a million species could go extinct if we don’t change the way we live on the planet. Storytelling reconnects people and nature. We hope this event will build the groundswell of support needed to drive the transformation and courage that our leaders need to demonstrate in 2020 to secure a prosperous future for people and nature,” said Susan Gardner, Director for Ecosystems for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

“Rich biodiversity is essential to the health of our planet. The various threats facing wildlife escalate every day. As growing numbers of species edge toward extinction we must act quickly and decisively,” agreed Lisa Samford, Executive Director of Jackson Wild. “We believe in the power of story to inspire awe at the wonders of our natural world and ignite the critical changes that will be required to restore and protect it.”

“By protecting animals and plants, we protect the ecosystems that underlie our economies, our social and cultural traditions and human well-being,” said Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Officer in Charge of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). “Wildlife is instrumental to global forestry, fishery and tourism livelihoods. Biodiversity in turn keeps ecosystems functional, providing the ecosystem services that allow us to survive. The conservation and sustainable use of wildlife is therefore a critical component of sustainable development, and part of a comprehensive approach to achieving poverty eradication, food security and sustainable livelihoods.”

Timeline and planned activities

The call for entry will close on 4 January 2020 and finalists will be announced in early February 2020. Winners will be presented at a high-level event to coincide with the global celebration of UN World Wildlife Day at UN Headquarters in New York on 3 March 2020.

Winning and finalist films will be subsequently showcased extensively throughout the world.

Award categories include:

- **Science, Innovation and Exploration**
Awarded to the film that most effectively conveys the values of wildlife as a component of biodiversity, and tells stories about scientific explorations, research and the discovery of species of wild animals and plants in the various ecosystems.
- **Issues and Solutions**
Awarded to the film that most effectively explains the current threats and challenges facing wildlife, the environment, socio-economic consequences and the solutions to ensure their conservation and sustainable use.
- **People and the Wild**
Awarded to the film that best demonstrates the relationship between wildlife and people, especially those who live alongside wild animals and plants.
- **Stories of Hope**
Awarded to the film that most effectively celebrates the work of individuals or groups committed to the restoration and conservation of wildlife and their habitats.

- **Global Voices**
Awarded to a film created by people local to the area or subject of focus addressed by the film.
- **Short**
Awarded to the best film less than 15 minutes in length.
- **Micro**
Awarded to the best film less than 5 minutes in length.

Submission Guidelines

There is no entry fee for submission. Films entered must be completed since 1 January 2017. Both entries that have not yet premiered and entries that have been broadcast or presented prior to submission are welcome. Submissions in all languages are welcomed. Programs in a language other than English must be subtitled in English for presentation to the judges and for the World Wildlife Day Film Showcase: Biodiversity. Eligible entries must complete an online submission form via www.jacksonwild.org. Entries will be uploaded to a private and secure Vimeo channel for judging.

For more information and to arrange interviews, please contact:

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About CITES

With 183 Parties (182 countries + the European Union), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) remains one of the world's most powerful tools for wildlife conservation through the regulation of trade. Thousands of species are internationally traded and used by people in their daily lives for food, health care, housing, furniture, handicrafts, tourist souvenirs, cosmetics or fashion. CITES regulates international trade in over 36,000 species of plants and animals, including their products and derivatives, to ensure their survival in the wild with benefits for the livelihoods of local people, the global environment and sustainable development in general. The CITES permit system seeks to ensure that international trade in listed species is sustainable, legal and traceable. CITES was signed in Washington D.C. on 3 March 1973 and entered into force on 1 July 1975.

About CBD

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community.

About UNDP

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in nearly 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

About Jackson Wild

Jackson Wild's programs promote public awareness and stewardship of wildlife and wildlife habitat through the innovative use of media. For over 28 years, the Jackson Wild Summit has grown a reputation for hosting an extraordinary convening of scientists, conservationists, innovators and media where collaboration and innovation thrive, ideas are launched, and strategic partnerships are forged as participants work together to address critical conservation and environmental challenges facing our planet. The 2020 Jackson Wild Summit will be hosted in Austria: 28 Sept-2 Oct. in the famous Neusiedler See - Seewinkel National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

About the United Nations World Wildlife Day

On 20 December 2013, the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 3 March as World Wildlife Day to celebrate and raise awareness of the world's wild fauna and flora. The date is the day of the signature of the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora \(CITES\)](#) in 1973. World Wildlife Day has quickly become the most prominent global annual event dedicated to wildlife. It is an opportunity to celebrate the many beautiful and varied forms of wild fauna and flora and to raise awareness of the various challenges faced by these species. The day also reminds us of the urgent need to step up the fight against wildlife crime, which has wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts.