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## JOINT PRESS RELEASE



### Finalists Announced for International Big Cats Film Festival

**Winning stories about jaguars, leopards, lions, pumas, tigers and more will hit the big screen and your mobile devices when the world celebrates World Wildlife Day 2018**

**Geneva/Jackson Hole, WY, U.S., 9 February 2018** – Over the past century, the world has been losing the planet’s majestic big cats at an alarming rate. These iconic predators, the challenges they face, and how these challenges can be met, will be in the spotlight through the 16 films chosen as finalists in the International Big Cats Film Festival.

The Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival have announced the International Big Cats Film Festival finalists based on the preliminary judging in the film festival, which is being organized as part of the global celebration of World Wildlife Day 2018 under the theme “Big cats: predators under threat.”

The judges – professional filmmakers, big cat biologists and stakeholders from around the world – chose the finalists from more than 200 entries in six categories: Issues and Solutions, Conservation Heroes, People and Big Cats, Science and Behavior, Micro-Movie, and Local Voices.

The full list of finalists is below. Winners will be announced at U.N. Headquarters in New York at a high-level event on 2 March. Both winners and finalist films will be subsequently showcased extensively to raise global awareness of the critical challenges facing big cat species at community screening events presented by partners throughout the world.

John E. Scanlon, Secretary-General of CITES, said: “A crisis can still be averted if we take action now and we are most grateful to all the filmmakers for submitting their wonderful works. By using the power of media, we can catalyze a groundswell of support for big cats to help make sure they survive in the wild. On 3rd March 2018, World Wildlife Day, let’s make sure that all of us – no matter who we are or where we are – give big cats the special attention and the big support they deserve!”

“We send our congratulations and praise to not only the finalists, but to all of the filmmakers who entered the International Big Cats Film Festival,” said Lisa Samford, executive director of the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival. “These stories went beyond simply being visually mesmerizing and engaging. The stories show the challenges facing these iconic species, and they feature the heroes and solutions necessary if we are going to be able to save populations of big cats around the world.”

Big cats are among the most widely recognized and admired animals across the globe. However, today these charismatic predators are facing many and varied threats, which are mostly caused by human activities. Over the past century, we have been losing big cats at an alarming rate due to loss of habitat and prey, conflicts with people, poaching and illegal trade. For example, tiger populations plummeted by 95 percent over the past 100 years and African lion populations dropped by 40 percent in just 20 years. A range of measures are underway to arrest this decline, but more needs to be done.

In an effort to reach as wide an audience as possible, the expanded definition of big cats is used for World Wildlife Day 2018 and the film festival, which includes not only lions, tigers, leopards and jaguars – the four largest wild cats that can roar – but also cheetahs, snow leopards, pumas, and clouded leopards. Big cat species are found in Africa, Asia, and North, Central and South America, representing a virtually global distribution.

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.

**International Big Cat Film Festival finalists are:**

**Issues and Solutions:**

“To Skin A Cat” produced by Scholars & Gentlemen, Panthera, Earth Touch, and Beyond, Durban Film Office, National Film & Video Foundation, Peace Parks Foundation

“Tribe versus Pride” produced by Terra Mater Factual Studios, Wildlife Films and Nat Geo Wild

“Looking for Sultan” produced by Riverbank Studios

“Broken Tail” produced by Crossing the Line Productions, Ltd.

**Conservation:**

“Big Cats - Episode 3” - a BBC Natural History Unit Production for BBC and PBS with THIRTEEN Productions LLC, co-produced by France Télévisions

“Jaguars - Brazil's Super Cats” produced by BBC Studios Natural History Unit, Nat Geo Wild

“Broken Tail” produced by Crossing the Line Productions, Ltd.

**People and Big Cats:**

“Big Cats - Episode 3” - a BBC Natural History Unit Production for BBC and PBS with THIRTEEN Productions LLC, co-produced by France Télévisions

“Livestock Insurance Program” produced by Figet Films LLC, Pontecorvo Productions

“Tribe versus Pride” produced by Terra Mater Factual Studios, Wildlife Films and Nat Geo Wild

“Broken Tail” produced by Crossing the Line Productions

#### **Science and Behavior:**

“Big Cats - Episode 3” - a BBC Natural History Unit Production for BBC and PBS with THIRTEEN Productions LLC, co-produced by France Télévisions

“Africa's Hunters: The Misfit” produced by Plimsoll Productions, Blue Ant Media, Smithsonian Networks

“Vanishing Kings – Lions of the Namib” A co-production by ORF, Interspot Film, ARTE, Smithsonian Networks, Into Nature Productions and Boksdocs

#### **Micro Movie (under 5 minutes):**

“Harimau Selamanya (Tigers Forever)” produced by Nuvista Media and Rimba

“Nat Geo Inspires: Collecting Data to Save Gorongosa's Lions” produced by National Geographic

“Pavel” produced by World Wildlife Fund-UK

“Singye” produced by World Wildlife Fund-UK

#### **Local Voices:**

“Ranger and Leopard” produced by Wildlife Pictures Institute for Jam-e Jam TV Network

“The Tiger Who Crossed the Line” produced by Earthcare Productions

“Gyamo - Queen of the Mountains” produced by Riverbank Studios

#### **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, 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 and the global environment. 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 Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival**

Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival (JHWFF) programs promote public awareness and stewardship of wildlife and wildlife habitat through the innovative use of media. Since 1991, its annual conferences draw together international leaders in science, conservation, broadcasting and media. For three days in 2017, committed wild cats advocates convened for the Jackson Hole Conservation Summit (24-26 September), to share resources and strategies, address critical challenges and brainstorm innovative approaches for collaboration. They joined 650+ of the world's most influential filmmakers and commissioners at the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival to celebrate the world's finest nature programming and explore innovative ways to integrate media centrally into the battle against global wildlife crime.

#### **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.

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