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UN celebrates world's best big cats films for World Wildlife Day

*Winners of International Big Cats Film Festival
announced at UN Headquarters*

Geneva/New York, 2 March 2018 – The CITES Secretariat and Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival announced today winners of the International Big Cats Film Festival. Winning stories about jaguars, leopards, lions, pumas, tigers and more will now hit the big screen and your mobile devices as the world celebrates World Wildlife Day 2018 under the theme “Big cats: predators under threat”.

“These films connect us in a very personal way to wildlife. They inspire us all to make sure these most magnificent creatures survive in the wild. Congratulations to all of the finalists and category winners, and thank you for making this such a memorable World Wildlife Day. 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”, said John E. Scanlon, CITES Secretary General.

“We’re eager to partner with organizations around the world to raise local awareness and engagement through free public screenings and events,” said Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival’s Executive Director, Lisa Samford. These amazing films speak eloquently to the importance of saving big cats while we are still able to do so.”

The co-organizers are particularly grateful to the following [final judges](#) for their commitment of time (in alphabetical order of family name):

- Inger Anderson, Director General of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- Bradnee Chambers, Executive Secretary, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)
- Andrea Heydlauff, Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, African Parks Foundation
- John E. Scanlon, Secretary-General, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

- Cécile Tang, Co-Director, Youth for Wildlife Conservation

Winners of the International Big Cats Film Festival in the 6 categories are:

Issues and Solutions

Broken Tail by Crossing the Line Productions Ltd.

Science & Behavior

Vanishing Kings – Lions of the Namib by Into Nature Films, Interspot Film, BoksDocs, ORF, Smithsonian Channel, Arte

Micro Movie

Pavel by WWF-UK

Local Voices

Gyamo, Queen of the Mountains by Riverbank Studios

Conservation

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

People & Cats

Livestock Insurance Program by Fidget Films, LLC, Pontecorvo Productions, Snow Leopard Trust

Over 200 entries were submitted for the international competition, and they were reviewed by 60 preliminary judges over seven weeks after which they determined the 16 finalists. The short list then was passed on to the final judging panel, which selected the winners from among the 16 finalists.

Big cats are among the most widely recognized and admired animals across the globe. However, the world has been losing these most majestic animals at an alarming rate. 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.

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.

These stories went beyond simply being visually mesmerizing and engaging. They show the challenges facing these iconic species, and they feature the front-line heroes and the solutions that are necessary if we are going to be able to save populations of big cats around the world.

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.

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.

About Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival

Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival's (JHWFF's) 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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