

On 28 February 2018, Ciné-ONU screened ‘ [The Last Animals](#) ’ to mark [World Wildlife Day](#) on the 3 March. ‘The Last Animals’ is a story about an extraordinary group of people who go to incredible lengths to save the planet’s remaining rhinos and elephants. The film was shown in partnership with [UN Environment](#) and [UNODC](#) at [Cinéma Galeries](#) in Brussels.



The screening was preceded by a Facebook Live event with the director, Kate Brooks. Visit our [Ciné-ONU Facebook page](#) to watch Ms. Brooks discuss how conservationists, scientists and activists are battling poachers and transnational trafficking syndicates to protect elephants and rhinos from extinction.

The screening was followed by a conversation on the issues highlighted in the documentary. The guest speakers included: [Kate Brooks](#) (Director); Chantal Marijnissen (EU DG DEVCO); Thierry Lucas (UN Environment); and moderated by Caroline Petit (UNRIC).



The discussion initially focused on how Ms. Brooks became interested in this project. She revealed: 'My background is as a war photographer, but after witnessing a herd of elephants in Kenya, it reminded me that amongst all the human destruction I had witnessed, there was still some sort of natural order, thanks to these majestic creatures'. From this experience, Ms. Brooks shared how she: 'became passionate about wildlife protection – using the medium of film-making to tell the stories of the rangers and members of the military – who risk their lives to protect endangered species'.

On the issue of how to tackle environmental crime, Ms. Marijnissen stated: 'there is a clear link between wildlife trafficking, international crime and terrorism'; emphasizing the aim of the EU to 'look at parks as areas where we can create peaceful zones; because by protecting areas, we protect the people'. Mr Lucas reiterated this, saying that: 'four environmental defenders are killed per day. We need more documentaries like ['The Last Animals'] to raise awareness and get more people involved and speaking out'. Despite this, Ms. Brooks stressed that: 'there is no single solution: teaching and advocacy are hugely important, but laws and law enforcement are essential'; adding that: 'We need laws that clearly recognize environmental crime as serious crime'.



In response to this, Mr. Lucas stated that: 'whilst we do not have an international court to prosecute environmental crimes yet, we are keeping this at the top of the agenda on the national level; what we try to do in the UN is to work with young people, to train the next generation;' with Ms. Marijnissen adding: 'we need a multi-pronged approach: with Interpol, with the consumer countries – such as China and India.'

Finally Mr. Lucas closed the discussion by reminding the audience about World Wildlife Day on 3 March; urging the audience to 'use this as an opportunity to increase visibility about the importance of biodiversity, today more than ever', because: 'When a species is extinct, it's forever'.

- Check out our photos in our [Flickr Album](#)

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