

September 1, 2017

Dear Members of the Hong Kong Legislative Council,

With the support of WildAid Hong Kong, I am coming to Hong Kong next week to testify at the public hearing on the proposed ivory ban. I thank you in advance for affording me the opportunity to speak.

After reading a news story about more than 80 elephants being machined gunned down on the border of Chad in 2013, I proceeded to dedicate four years of my life to the making of *The Last Animals* documentary film about the illegal wildlife trade.

*The Last Animals* is a story about an extraordinary group of people who go to all lengths to save the planet's last animals. The documentary follows the conservationists, scientists and activists battling against poachers and transnational crime syndicates to protect elephants and rhinos from extinction. From Africa's front lines to behind the scenes of Asian markets to the United States, the film takes an intense look at the global response to this slaughter and the desperate measures to genetically rescue the Northern White rhinos who are on the very edge of extinction.

The film not only endeavors to expose the horrors of this crisis, and that extinction is real, but also how this trade is linked to the darkest sides of global criminal activity. During the making of the film multiple rangers and national military were killed by poaching gangs in Garamba National Park and drug barons linked to the ivory trade were extradited to the United States for trafficking heroin and methamphetamine. The number of Northern White rhinos on the planet fell from 7 to 3, as industrial sized shipments of ivory were seized over and over going to Asia.

The illegal wildlife trade is a global problem that requires a global and united solution from consumer responsibility to government action. Hong Kong has the largest retail ivory market in the world, while continuing to be a conduit for the illegal trafficking of ivory in spite of all the law enforcement efforts. I am coming to Hong Kong to testify in support of the ban because it is imperative that the ivory market be closed for both the future of elephants and the security of African communities.

– Kate Brooks, Director of *The Last Animals*