

Critical Kingdoms: Stories Of Hope

3 x 60'

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. Australia

Australia - the driest continent on earth, but still with an incredibly varied scenery, its landscapes provide the natural habitat to a unique biodiversity. But in the last 2 centuries, its resources and wildlife have been exploited and threatened. With some of the highest deforestation and mammal disappearance rates in the world, along with receding reef systems, Australia's environment is in dire need of a rescue. In this episode, we examine some of these threats and follow the stories of those who are committed to not only combatting but also reversing their effects and bringing hope to the Critical Kingdoms of Australia.

2. Indonesia

Indonesia is composed of a unique archipelago of thousands of islands, stretching for 5000 kilometres along the equator between Asia and Australia. Historically, the islands have long been a vital source to the spice trade and today, Indonesia is the largest economy in South East Asia. However, it is also unparalleled in the richness of its biodiversity, especially its jungles. This has proved to be a double-edged sword. Indonesia's jungles, in particular those of the island of Borneo are under extreme threat from deforestation for farming, most notoriously for the palm oil industry. This substance was once seen as a green alternative to the traditional use of animal trans-fats in foods. However, it has become a dagger in the heart of ecology. Famously, palm oil farming has impacted upon the habitats of several animals such as the gibbon. The Indonesian island of Sulawesi is home to another endangered species, this time the Black Crested Macaque, who after surviving massive deforestation that occurred in the island for centuries, its last few thousands who live in the protected area of Tangkoko national park are still being hunted down for their own meat. Also under the sea, Manta Rays were over hunted for their gills to supply a black market in China and Dolphins have been captured for the sheer entertainment of people. Our journey to these unique islands will unveil three equally unique stories of hope.

3. Africa

Earth's last great wilderness is under threat like never before. From illegal mining and logging causing desertification, a rampant trade in animal parts and the incursion of human settlements into the wild, Africa stands on the brink of an ecological catastrophe. However unbelievable efforts are underway to reverse our human impact. We will begin our journey by looking at the growing illegal wildlife market and the modern technologies that are being used to tackle poachers in Kenya, where also local tribes are reversing centuries old traditions to preserve the Lions. Follows the dramatic sprint of the Cheetah against its own extinction in Namibia and the rescue of the illegally traded cubs in the Horn of Africa. Finally, we venture into the heart of Africa where efforts

are being made to save the vast populations of wildlife and show the successful growth of the Mountain Gorilla population.