

# *RACING* EXTINCTION



Impact Report 2017

**VULCAN**  
PRODUCTIONS

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Photo: Shawn Heinrichs

## Introduction

Vulcan Productions broke new ground with its Racing Extinction campaign. From the international broadcast of the film on Discovery in late 2015 — which reached 35 million viewers around the globe — to events, educational outreach and online mobilizations, our campaign had wide impact, from the statehouse to the dinner table. We began in the fall of 2014, and more than three years later, our community of more than **500,000 people** — the largest at Vulcan — remains engaged and poised for action.

With Racing Extinction, our ultimate goal was to educate and activate the public on the threats facing endangered species, and to advance policies to protect those species and their habitats. To achieve that goal, we organized our campaign around two main areas: education and advocacy. With education, we built awareness and moved students and the general public to action around the connection between climate change and species loss

through (a) educational events and viewing parties, (b) in-school curriculum and virtual field trips, and (c) partnerships and online engagement. When it came to advocacy, we put audiences to work at the local, state and federal levels, supporting and amplifying legislation to reduce illegal wildlife trade and supply through (a) petitions, (b) joint campaigns with strategic partners, and (c) direct support of specific legislation.

**OUR ULTIMATE GOAL WAS TO EDUCATE AND ACTIVATE THE PUBLIC ON THE THREATS FACING ENDANGERED SPECIES, AND TO ADVANCE POLICIES TO PROTECT THOSE SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS**



AFTER THREE YEARS OF WORK,  
WE LOOK BACK AT A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN.  
TOGETHER WITH OUR PARTNERS, WE:

1

Leveraged more than **500,000 citizen actions** to drive policy change at the state, federal and international levels, including five new state laws

2

Built an engaged community of more than **500,000 people**, which we continue to activate today with ongoing Racing Extinction content and numerous other Vulcan projects and priorities

3

Furthered the education of more than **2.5 million students** with Vulcan-funded educational curriculum and events

This report details Vulcan Productions' work on Racing Extinction, the success we achieved while pursuing our objectives and the lessons we learned along the way



Photo: Shawn Heinrichs

## Policy Change

Changes in personal behavior are of course important, but changes in policy are critical to solving the world's biggest environmental problems.

We empowered our audiences to become advocates, reaching out to elected officials at the local, state and federal levels and arguing for legislation and improved regulation to protect our natural world. The Racing Extinction campaign contributed to the passage of five changes in state policy in the United States. Our community took more than 500,000 online actions, including petitions, letters and individual pledges, and more than 10,000

people attended screening events at rallies and fundraisers in support of these policy initiatives.

Audience actions also drove changes in institutional behavior. Our joint campaign with Rainforest Action Network sparked more than 250,000 signatures to put pressure on PepsiCo to change how it sources palm oil in Indonesia — a supply chain that threatens vulnerable species, including very endangered orangutans.

**WE EMPOWERED  
OUR AUDIENCES  
TO BECOME  
ADVOCATES**





Photo: Shawn Heinrichs

### Worldwide Policy Impact

Through screening events, fundraisers, and audience engagement, the Racing Extinction campaign contributed to the passage of two shark fin bans (in Texas and Rhode Island) and made great progress in New Jersey and Vermont, where bills are still pending. Separately, the team actively participated in efforts to pass broader wildlife trafficking bans in Washington, Oregon and Hawaii.

- Supported getting shark fin trade ban bills on the ballot in Texas, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Vermont
- Shark fin ban passed in Texas, May 2015
- Shark fin ban passed in Rhode Island, June 2016
- Bill 1401 passed in Washington in November 2015 : A public referendum in the state of Washington prohibiting the sale or trade of elephant ivory, shark fins and other animal parts derived from certain exotic, endangered creatures
- Bill 2647 passed in Hawaii in May 2016: Statewide Legislation in Hawaii that prohibits the sale, offer to sell, purchase, trade, possession with intent to sell, or barter of any part or product from various endangered or protected animals and marine species

- Measure 100 passed in Oregon in November 2016: Statewide measure prohibiting the sale of products and parts of 12 types of animals in Oregon: rhino, cheetah, tiger, sea turtle, lion, elephant, whale, shark, pangolin, jaguar, ray, and leopard
- Manta hunting banned in Indonesian community of Lamakera

### Citizen actions included:

- **133,000 SIGNATURES** on petitions demanding action from world leaders at 2015 Paris Climate Conference
- Over **50,000 SIGNATURES** to have President Obama ban ivory trade
- Over **27,000 SIGNATURES** to demand carbon polluters curb their emissions
- Over **25,000 SIGNATURES** to protect wildlife
- Over **7,700 SHARK FIN PLEDGES** signed

Today, more than 400,000 people follow the Racing story on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and we communicate with 185,000+ newsletter subscribers.



**7,700+**  
SHARK FIN BAN  
PLEDGES SIGNED

## RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK PARTNERSHIP (FALL 2016)

The Leuser ecosystem in Indonesia is the last place on Earth where Sumatran orangutans, elephants, tigers, rhinos and sun bears still roam the same habitat. Due to its complex biodiversity it is one of the most important areas of intact rainforest in Southeast Asia. Unfortunately it is in grave danger due to industrial extraction of palm oil and other resources. PepsiCo is one of the largest companies contributing to the destruction of this cherished environment by extracting conflict palm oil — a common ingredient in numerous food products.

To help preserve this sacred area, we partnered with the Rainforest Action Network (RAN), Wildlife Asia and SumOfUs to pressure PepsiCo to cut this conflict palm oil from the PepsiCo supply chain. We produced three short videos, using content from the film and new footage captured by partners on the ground in Indonesia, and released them online on our social media channels.



### The partnership resulted in:

- **250K SIGNATURES** delivered to Pepsi HQ
- **DIRECT ENGAGEMENT WITH PEPSI OFFICIALS** and promises for attention to issue
- **SYNDICATED RELEASE OF “CHOCOLATE”** orangutan video story across multiple social platforms with press exclusive featured on HuffPost

More than 250,000 people took action against conflict palm oil.



Leuser Ecosystem



Sumatran Tiger



Sumatran Elephants





Photo: Shawn Heinrichs

# Online Engagement

This level of citizen engagement was made possible by our successful development of an engaged and constantly-growing online community.

While Racing Extinction’s worldwide broadcast event on Discovery set viewership records in December 2015, our successes reaching and activating audiences via online channels were equally significant. The Racing team’s digital efforts combined short form video content, online events, social media engagement and strategic partnerships to build a dynamic community which continues to grow today, almost two years after the film’s broadcast premiere.

These efforts drove audiences to the broadcast, extended education beyond traditional environmental audiences and activated supporters who advocated for

policy change and the local, state and federal and international levels, and changed their own behavior.

## Overall Outcome

The Racing Extinction online community is the largest and most active platform in Vulcan’s environmental portfolio. Overall, our digital efforts reached more than 50 million people across the globe through the website, social media and broadcast. Our activity led to more than **50,000 POLICY ACTIONS** (e.g. petitions, letters and calls), and an additional **28,500** individuals changed their own behaviors with the Racing Extinction Challenge.

### ENGAGEMENT RESULTED IN:

- **18 MILLION+** online video views
- **2 BILLION** media impressions
- **1.3 MILLION** unique visitors to the Racing Extinction website
- **28,500 PARTICIPANTS** in the “Racing Extinction Challenge”
- **500,000+** advocacy actions
- **315 MILLION TOTAL IMPRESSIONS** across Facebook and Twitter
- **4.6 MILLION TOTAL** Facebook and Twitter engagements

## TOP 10 VIDEOS

Our videos generated 24,000,000 views across all Vulcan and partner platforms.

1 Trailer: 3.2M



6 Why Sharks Matter: 972k



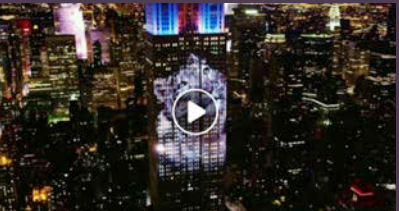
2 There are 7,000 species of amphibian. They’re all endangered: 2.8M



7 With this camera, the world can now see what scientists have been talking about for decades. 813k



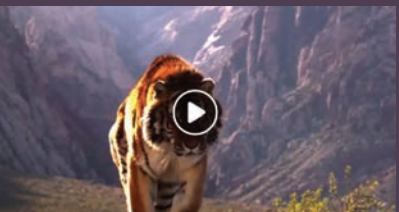
3 Empire State Event: 1.7M



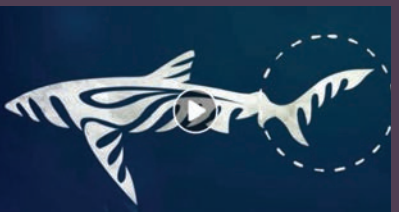
8 11,408 sharks are killed every hour: 750k



4 Imagine a world without tigers: 2M



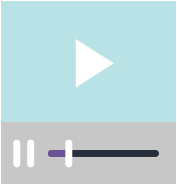
9 Where once we were many. Now we are few.: 640k



5 There’s still a lot left worth fighting for.: 1.7M

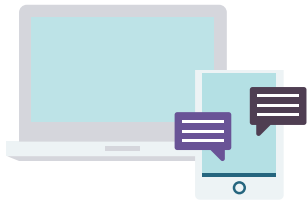


10 Take a good look: 615k



24M  
VIEWS OF  
ONLINE CONTENT





APPEARED IN

2K+

MEDIA OUTLETS



4.4 BILLION

MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

NEWS

180,000

NEWSLETTER SIGN-UPS



196

COUNTRIES

Our web, Press and social media efforts reached every nation in the world

## TOP MEDIA POSTS



10.3M FOLLOWERS



6.6M FOLLOWERS



952K FOLLOWERS

## TOP INFLUENCER POSTS



7.3M FOLLOWERS



16M FOLLOWERS



3.8M FOLLOWERS






Photo: Oceanic Preservation Society

# Breaking Through the Noise

Racing Extinction — and the campaign — came online at a time when a number of environmental films and initiatives were fighting for the spotlight.

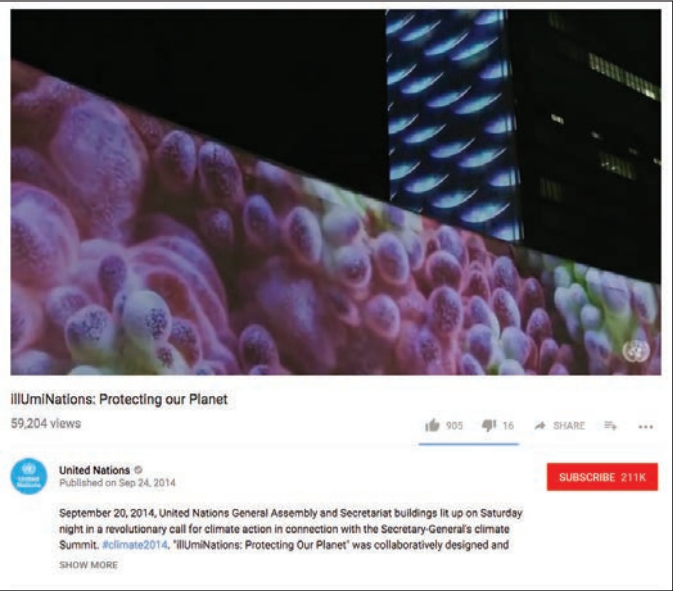
To break through this crowded environment, Racing Extinction went beyond the regular playbook and executed a series of large-scale, high-visibility projections on iconic buildings in areas with heavy foot traffic to reach high volumes of people. Each event attracted significant attention in mainstream media and on social media, setting our campaign apart from more traditional efforts.

We began with the United Nations Headquarters in New York in September 2014, followed by the Empire State Building in the summer of 2015 and finally St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican in December 2015, only days after the worldwide broadcast on Discovery.

  
**200 M+**  
REACHED BY  
PROJECTING CHANGE

## United Nations

On September 20th projections lit up the United Nations headquarters from 8pm to 11pm ET, the night before the People’s Climate March and leading up to the United Nations Climate Summit. Towering images of endangered animals, the state of the oceans and threatened habitats were displayed across the UN General Assembly and Secretariat buildings. Ban Ki Moon attended the event along with many others kicking off the large scale projection events.



## Empire State Building

The projections on the Empire State Building reached over 1 billion people worldwide and received over **231 MEDIA COVERAGE STORIES** including NBC, The Guardian, The New Yorker, Times Live, Weather.com and a print article in the New York Times. After the event **46K PEOPLE** signed the African Ivory Ban Petition and **181K PEOPLE** reacted socially.

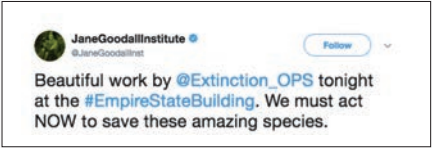






Photo: Leigh Vogel/World Bank



Photo: Joshua Brott/Obscura



Photo: David Doubilet

## Vatican

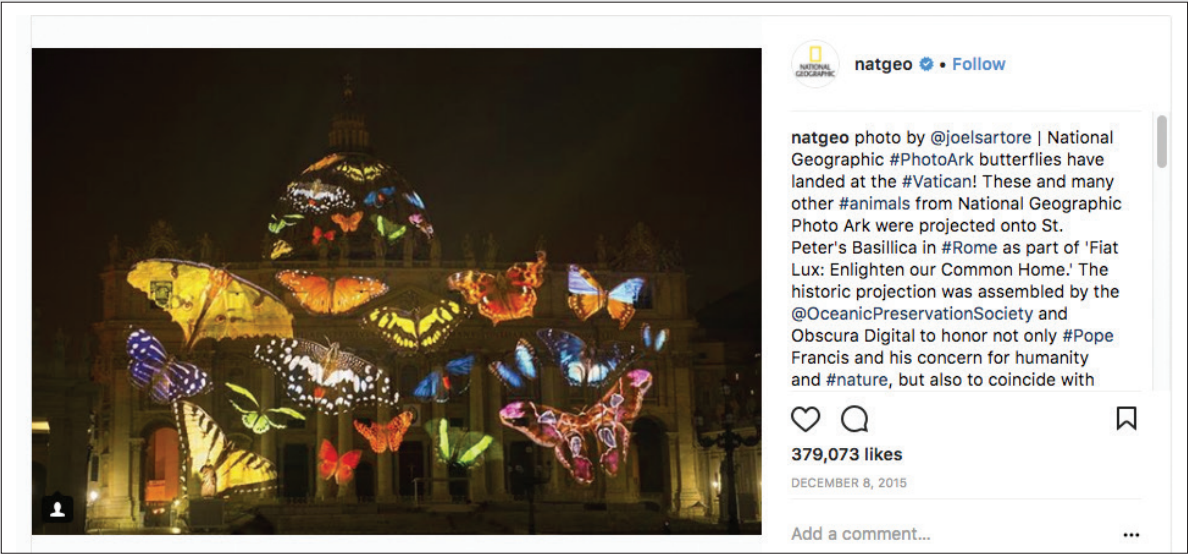
A humanitarian coalition presented a gift of contemporary public art entitled “Fiat Lux: Illuminating our Common Home” to Pope Francis on the opening day of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. This event aligned with the United Nations Climate Change Conference. After the event, we gained **26K SIGNATURES** for our climate change action petition. Also, **500+ ORIGINAL** and repost news articles covered the event in English, Italian and French reaching a potential **AUDIENCE OF 507M+**. The event and projections trended on Twitter internationally and in the US during the event.

“‘We are grateful for the gift and hope that many people will be able to enjoy it throughout the world,’ said the archbishop, whose political council is in charge of overseeing the Jubilee. The event will be streamed online at [OurCommonHome.World](#).”

*International New York Times*

“An extraordinary illuminated projection of images of the natural world onto St. Peter’s Basilica on Tuesday evening drew thousands of awed spectators to the Vatican and delighted untold numbers more watching online and via widespread media coverage of the three-hour show.”

*The Washington Post*





# SMALLER SCALE EVENTS

As we gained attention from the public, we continued momentum with smaller-scale events, including theatrical screenings for the public, appearances at conferences and environmental gatherings and events on university campuses. These events continued to connect directly with audiences and garner media attention.

## Partnerships:

To amplify social media and online outreach, as well as our premieres and events, the Racing Extinction campaign developed key partnerships with leading advocacy organizations, universities and even government agencies. These partnerships provided valuable credibility to our efforts and added to our reach.



35M

WATCH  
DISCOVERY  
WORLDWIDE  
PREMIERE

### OUTPUTS:

- 50 ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS
- TOP COMMITTED AND INFLUENTIAL PARTNERS:



## Viewing Parties:

Before the film even premiered, Racing Extinction had already gained a large following from media coverage and organization engagement. In order to mobilize communities and galvanize collective action, the film campaign helped individuals and groups organize viewing parties. Of those who participated many went beyond only watching the film.

### OUTPUTS:

- 2,000 PARTIES organized
- 75% OF VIEWING PARTY attendees visited the website
- 1/3RD OF THE ORGANIZERS downloaded and used the viewing guide
- 71% OF VIEWERS signed a petition to prevent the trade of endangered species
- 70% OF VIEWERS pledged to cut back on eating meat and 61% of viewers pledged to reduce their individual carbon footprint — through driving less, reducing energy use etc.



Sonu Darali/Harela Society

# Education

Racing Extinction provided a great opportunity to reach and educate students around the globe.

Putting information in the hands of students creates an opportunity for them to then pass their knowledge onto families and friends also to take action. We partnered with Discovery Education to produce a curriculum based on Next Generation Science Standards for middle and high school students. Through lesson plans and teaching guides, as well as virtual field trips, the campaign educated middle school and high school students about the connection between climate change and species extinction.



ENGAGED MORE THAN

1M

STUDENTS WITH  
RACING EXTINCTION  
CURRICULUM

### OUTPUTS:

- 47,000 TEACHERS downloaded the curriculum
- 2.3 MILLION STUDENTS engaged in the classroom
- 48,000 LESSON DOWNLOADS via Discovery Education Network
- 200,000 STUDENTS participated in Virtual Field Trips



# Lessons Learned

While evidence points to a campaign that successfully reached, educated and activated millions of people around the world, the effort also revealed a number of valuable lessons that we’re already applying to future engagements.

## 1. GENERAL PUBLIC BEHAVIOR CHANGE IS DIFFICULT, COSTLY AND HARD TO MEASURE.

Through the Racing Extinction Challenge, we aimed to ignite consumer behavior change to reduce demand for illegal wildlife products and reduce carbon emissions and further amplify the outcomes of our two strategies, education and policy.

- **28,500 INDIVIDUALS PARTICIPATED** — committing to a week of personal actions
- **70% OF PARTICIPANTS** completed 3+ actions
- **11,000 DIET CHALLENGES** completed
- **7,200 OCEAN CHALLENGES** completed
- **7,000 ENERGY CHALLENGES** completed
- **2,700 TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES** completed

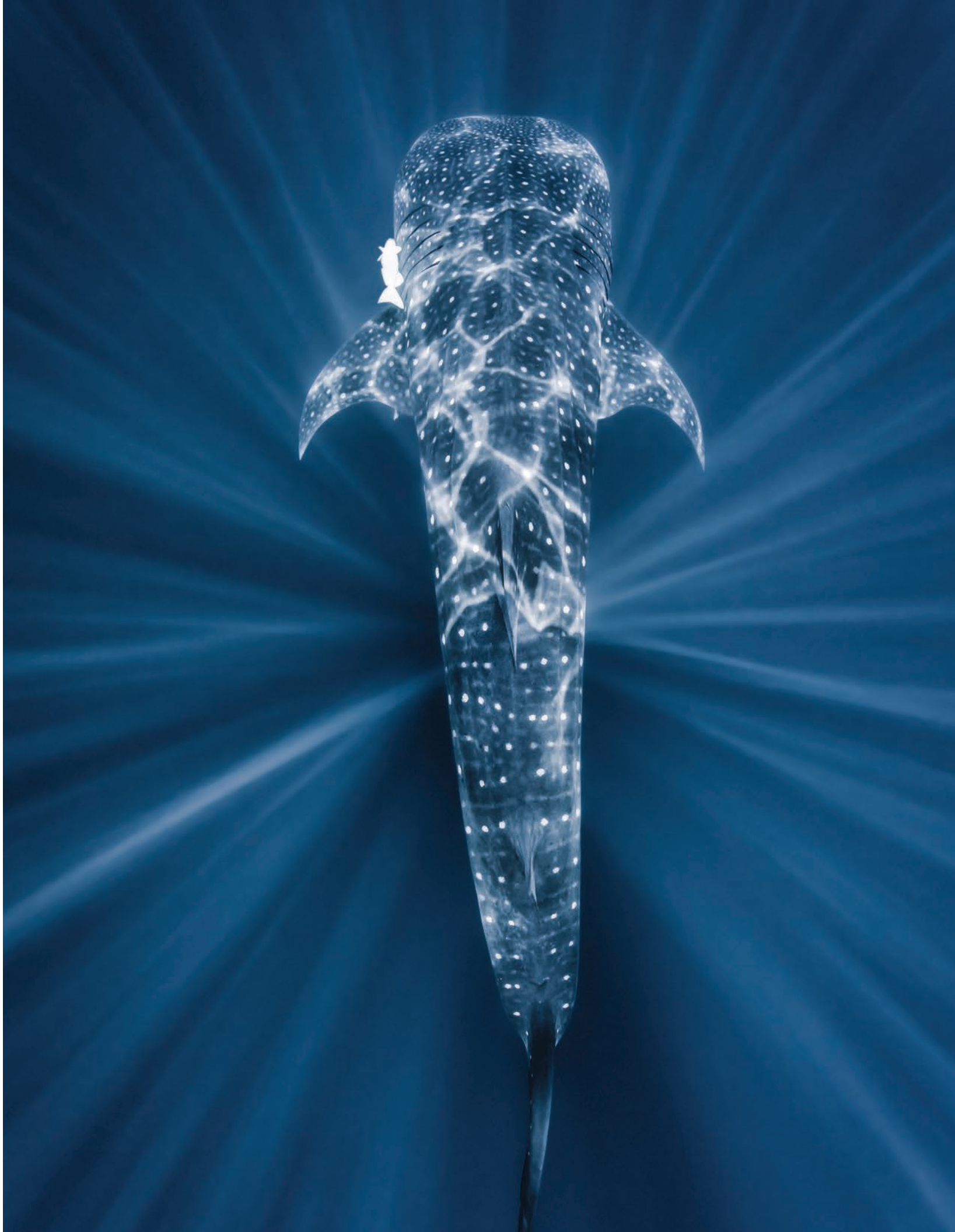
Though we activated 28,000 people to take part in the Racing Extinction Challenge, it was a relatively small number when compared with the 38 million who viewed the film during the premiere and the 18 million we reached with online content. Behavior change is difficult to start, sustain and measure, a lesson that should factor into future strategies.

## 2. A BROAD-BRUSH STRATEGY SPREAD IMPACT THIN.

Multiple objectives spread impact thin. With multiple stakeholders and objectives for the project, we executed a campaign that activated people on a number of different fronts: wildlife trafficking, climate change policy, plant-based diet, and more. This broader strategy attracted participation from different audiences and partners, expanding our credibility and reach, but made it more difficult to mobilize resources in pursuit of a singular campaign objective.

## 3. SHORT-FORM CONTENT IS A MORE MEASURABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND FLEXIBLE TOOL FOR SPARKING ACTION.

The feature film was the central resource that attracted attention, built momentum and created community, but short-form content proved invaluable to our effort. Because of the nature of the platforms (e.g. Facebook and Instagram), we could watch audience behavior in real time and measure actions taken in response to specific content pieces. Short-form content is also far more affordable, audiences don’t expect the same expensive production quality they see in feature films, and because we control the direct line to audiences, we can continue storytelling as long as we want — even years after initial film release. Lastly, with web content we can act quickly, producing short video in response to new developments with an issue.





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PRODUCTIONS

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