

Dear guests,

Welcome to the United Nations on this 3rd of March which has been declared by the General Assembly World Wildlife Day in 2013.

I extend a particular warm welcome to the students of PS 40 as well as to the students of the Salk School of Science. The United Nations

The UN is our common home. The SDGs are our tools to make the world a better place. If you haven't done it yet I urge you to get acquainted with the 17 Goals adopted in 2015 and in particular 12, 13, 14, and 15, which are more relevant to today's topic.

I hope that none of you has brought single use plastic items inside as they are banned in the UN Headquarters since last year. NY State has banned single use plastic bag as of March 1st which is necessary to contribute in fighting plastic pollution. Monaco did it a few years ago.

You may wonder why I raise this particular issue? Well unfortunately, plastic is a major polluter and we end up ingesting micro particles of plastic by simply eating fish. But we can and we must curb that addiction.

Today we want to showcase how when we work together here at the United Nations, we can make a positive difference to protect our planet and its inhabitants and in particular its fauna and flora.

Governments have developed sets of rules to protect the Earth Biodiversity.

I won't bore you and just name 2 very important documents.

One is called CITES. Since 1975 it is the Treaty that regulates the international trade of endangered species of wild fauna and flora.

The second is the Convention on Biological Diversity that is best known under its acronym CBD.

Both are core elements of Monaco's policy towards the protection of the environment and world biodiversity. From the native Mediterranean seagrass Posidonia to the European eel, from heritage plant species to the Peregrine Falcon, the Princely Government and the Prince Albert 2 Foundation spare no efforts to combat pollution in all its forms and preserve endangered species.

The Permanent Mission of Monaco is particularly thrilled to partner with multiple award-winner Roie Galitz to celebrate this year theme "Sustaining all life on Earth".

You will soon learn or better understand how all species are intrinsically linked. We are very grateful that he accepted to share with us the beautiful and amazing images captured during his many expeditions as he's a great advocate and an effective ambassador of those endangered animals.

We couldn't pick a best teacher today for explaining why it is so important to protect what we call the wildlife and why the extinction of one specie is not only a great loss for the whole humanity but can also have catastrophic consequences.

Roie Galitz's passion has brought him from the Arctic Ocean to the most unhospitable Continent of Antarctica.

Let us remind ourselves that by celebrating the Planet's biodiversity we ultimately celebrate our own life on Earth. If it is our duty to work to preserve the Planet for future generations, it is also an act of survival instinct as humans.

Dear guests, please welcome Explorer Roie Galitz!